Asian Cross-border Marriage Migration

Demographic Patterns and Social Issues

Edited by Wen-Shan Yang and Melody Chia-Wen Lu

Amsterdam University Press

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Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Figures

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I

INTRODUCTION

1 Introduction

Melody Chia-Wen Lu and Wen-Shan Yang

The past ten years have witnessed a rapid increase in the intra-Asia flow of cross-border marriage migration, particularly between Southeast Asia and East Asia. In Japan, the number of international marriages has been steadily growing since the 1970s, from 0.43 percent in 1965 to 0.93 percent in 1980, and then to 5.77 percent in 2005, with Chinese and Filipina female spouses at the top of the list. In Taiwan, cross-border marriages, with brides from Indonesia, Vietnam and the PRC, increasingly gained numerical significance from the mid-1980s onwards, and by 2002 they comprised 27.4 percent of all Taiwanese marriages of that year; and one out of every eight children in Taiwan was born in a cross-border family. In Hong Kong, the number of cross-border marriages between Hong Kong residents and Mainland Chinese has risen ten-fold from 1995 to 2005, accounting for more than one-third of registered marriages involving Hong Kong residents in 2005. In South Korea, the number of international marriages rose 9.2 times between 1990 and 2005, which constituted 13.6 percent of the newlyweds in 2005.[1] The phenomena of 'brides from Asia' (*Ajia no hanayome*) in Japan, '*Chosonjok* brides' and 'mixed marriages' in South Korea and 'foreign and Mainland brides' (*waiji/dalu xinniang*) in Taiwan all attract huge media attention, cause public panic, and generate scholarly and political interest.

These intra-Asian flows of cross-border marriages share characteristics of 1) gender imbalance, in that the majority are between men of wealthier countries marrying women from economically less developed countries; and 2) mediated marriages, in that the majority of the couples are introduced, either by marriage brokers or via social networks, with a prior intention of marriage and involving either no or a comparatively short period of courtship.

How do we understand the phenomenon of rapidly growing cross-border marriages in East and Southeast Asia? Building upon the scho-

larship on women's international labor migration, particularly in the domestic work sector, earlier scholarship (at the end of the 1990s and early 2000s) has treated intra-Asia cross-border marriages as a *new* phenomenon as part of the 'feminization of migration' trend in the globalization process (Hugo 2005; Yamanaka & Piper 2005). The feminization of migration refers not only to the increasing percentage of female migrants in the total migration stock[2], but also to a visible pattern of women from developing countries (with a large percentage from Asia), migrating to developed countries/regions to work in the export processing zones or as domestic and care workers – what Parreñas calls international division of reproductive labor (2006; see also review and discussion in Liaw et al. and Tseng in this volume). This division of labor sustains global production by providing cheap and disposable domestic and care services, thus creating a gendered and racialized order (Sassen 1998; Parreñas 2006). In this framework, cross-border marriage immigrants, female migrants in domestic work as well as sex work, are commodification of reproductive labor (Piper 2000; Hsia 2002; Wang 2001).

While providing a useful framework to explain global structural factors in shaping women's migration in general, these studies do not look into the specificity of marriage migration as compared to labor migration and trafficking in women. It is only recently that empirical research on marital and migratory motivations and processes has started to flourish. Several scholars working on marriage brokerage or matchmaking industries point out that the marriage brokerage industry is distinct from migrant labor recruitment agencies in its organization and practices as well as in the selective criteria of the pool of women. It is observed that the matchmaking practices vary from one country to another (both at the sending and receiving ends) and are constantly changing. In Japan and Korea governments take initiatives to recruit brides or sanction marriage brokering agencies (Nakamatsu 2002; see also Liaw et al., in this volume); in Vietnam and the People's Republic of China international marriage brokerage is banned; and in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore it remains unregulated. In Japan many Filipina wives of Japanese men entered Japan with an entertainment visa (Piper 2000); in Taiwan the 'maids' seldom turn into 'brides' as the Taiwanese men and families have different preferences over brides' and domestic workers' ethnicities, and the matchmaking agencies play an important role in determining desirable ethnicity and origins of the brides (Lu 2008).

A more recent wave of scholarship looks at social and demographic changes in the regional marriage market. All receiving countries of cross-border marriage migration in Asia share the characteristics of delayed or no marriages, extremely low fertility rates, high divorce rates, and skewed sex ratios at birth in some countries. These factors coupled

with rural-urban internal migration, cause male squeeze and a chronic shortage of care labor in these ageing societies. Cross-border marriage is, among others, a strategy for men and families in disadvantageous marriage markets to form households for sustenance and reproduction – what Ochiai calls 'internationalization of householding' (see discussion in Liaw et al.; Yang & Schoonheim in this volume).

In contrast to the Mail-Order Brides (MOB) phenomenon in the West, which is often conflated with trafficking in women (Glodava & Onizuka 1994; Wijers & Lin 1997), commercially arranged cross-border marriages in Asia are tolerated. This is partly due to the state discourse in some East Asian countries that see cross-border marriage as a solution to low fertility rates and shortages of wives and reproductive labour. It is also partly due to the fact that matchmaking among locals is practiced widely, and the customary marriage rites often involve some forms of monetary transactions (bride-price and dowry). In this regard, scholarship on cross-border marriages in and from Asia has made a valuable contribution in theoretical development. Constable's edited volume (2005) of cross-border marriages in Asia places the changing social positioning before and after migration at the center of analysis in the migratory process. She proposes the concept 'paradoxical hypergamy' – that migrants may find that their economic position and opportunities have improved after migrating to a richer country while their social positions in the receiving society and in the husbands' kin groups are lower than the ones they had prior to migration in their sending society. This stream of research particularly challenges the economic and rational explanation of migration motivations and decisions.

Palriwala & Uberio's edited volume (2008) is another attempt to situate cross-border marriages in the existing yet changing marriage and family institutions and practices in Asia. They point out that the rules of patrilocality and territorial exogamy in many Asian societies imply that marriage means migration for women. Marriage for upward social mobility – the hypergamy principle – and material considerations in marriage decisions by the families and brides and bridegrooms themselves is also common. These cultural principles bring nuances to our understandings of the motivations and processes of cross-border marriage and blur the lines between the 'traditional' and 'modern' forms of marriages. It also challenges the theoretical outlook of transnational marriages in Western scholarship that emphasize the 'racial' aspect of international (inter-racial) marriages and the essentialized difference of marriage immigrants.

These nuances, however, do not suggest that cross-border marriage immigrants are well accepted and integrated in the receiving societies, nor does it mean that cross-border marriages are not perceived as grave social problems and associated with negative images. Other than the

stigma derived from the commercial operation of marriage brokerage industries (in that the public perception equate all cross-border marriages as commercially arranged), as well as from the implicit equation of foreign brides as migrant domestic workers, the state policies play an important role in regulating cross-border marriages and transnational families. Toyota (2008) argues that institutionalization of marriage is at the heart of the state-building and modernization process. In the context of the citizenship regimes and guest worker regimes in most of the East Asian countries, marriage is almost the only means for a foreigner to obtain citizenship or long-term residence, and regulating international marriages is a means for the state to maintain social and political security. The states regulate not only by applying immigration policies to screen who is eligible to marry foreigners, but also by sets of population, social welfare and labor policies that determine differentiated citizenship towards foreign spouses of different nationalities and ethnic and religious backgrounds. Tseng points out (in this volume) that comparative research on these regulating mechanisms and their underlying assumptions of gender roles and citizenship in these countries are much needed and require scholarly collaboration.

Another large body of scholarship focuses on migrants' strategies of coping with these policy constraints and resisting stigmatized images. This includes the 'adaptation' or 'acculturation' of marriage immigrants and their children, with particular focus on mothers' reproductive health, fertility behavior and children's education. Much of these studies challenge the state's anxiety over 'population quality' and stereotypical images of foreign brides and their children as 'inferior others'. They also propose valuable policy recommendations in ways of protecting immigrants' rights and allocating resources for improving the political, economic and social life of immigrants in the receiving society. Another newly developing line of research inquiry, inspired by the scholarship on transnationalism, concerns immigrants' strategies of mobilizing resources beyond national borders and building transnational support networks.

1.1 Contribution and organization of this book

In view of the fact that recent scholarship has vigorously uncovered a wealth of data on these topics, interdisciplinary and comparative approaches concerning cross-border marriages in the East and Southeast Asian region are much needed. This book is the first edited volume focusing on the 'new' receiving and sending countries of cross-border marriages, namely Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand and Vietnam. It brings together in-depth research conducted by scho-

lars in the fields of demography, sociology and anthropology in showcasing the above-mentioned research trends and recommends future research directions.

In Chapter 2 Tseng gives an excellent synthesis of the existing scholarship on cross-border marriages. In addition, she calls for several common propositions for future research. Firstly, echoing Liaw et al.'s call, she proposes to place marriage migration in the context of other migrations in order to better understand the motivations and the constraints for women to migrate. Secondly, she proposes to structurally study the reception in the receiving societies, as this influences the way in which marriage migrants construct their new lives and integrate into new homes. In particular, research should look into the social construction of womanhood of being wives, daughters-in-law, workers, and mothers in the receiving society. Tseng also advocates for researchers from the sending societies to turn to the sending countries and study gendered patterns of survival.

Tseng's last proposition for research concerns the need to compare differences and similarities in being marriage migrants for men and women to detect the gender logics behind the immigrant adaptation and integration. One good example is that the wide age gap has been regarded as one of the major problems of cross-border marriages. Although demographic analyses in many chapters in this volume confirm that the age gap of cross-border couples, particularly those between East Asian men and Southeast Asian women, is much bigger than the local marriages in the host societies, Nguyen and Tran point out that a wide age gap is not uncommon in local marriages between Vietnamese and therefore is socially accepted. It requires comparative research in both sending and receiving communities as well as of transnational transactions of cultural practices to further unravel the meanings and implications of demographic characteristics.

Chapters 3 to 6 consist of demographic studies using census or large-scale sampling surveys to analyze overall or specific demographic features of cross-border marriages. These detailed national and regional data, which have only recently become available, make it possible to analyze the macro factors and patterns of mate choice, fertility and divorce and other marital behaviors of cross-border couples in the context of kinship systems.

Chapters 7 to 10 contain case studies adopting qualitative methods and ethnographic observations, or a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, on the living experiences and strategies of cross-border families in the receiving societies, sending communities and transnational networks. With diverse and combined methodologies, these papers examine and challenge the existing assumptions in the immigration policies and popular discourse.

1.2 Demographic features of cross-border marriages

In Chapter 3, Liaw, Ochiai and Ishikawa aptly situate cross-border marriages as part of the feminization of immigration into Japan since the 1990s, in that 52.8 percent of the total number of new immigrants between 1995 and 2000 were female. Although in recent times Japan has shared the common phenomenon of the feminization of immigration and has experienced an increase in cross-border marriages with other economically well-off Asian societies such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea, from a demographic view the marriage mechanisms in Japan can be quite different from those of other Asian societies for two main reasons. Firstly, the distortion in the sex ratio at birth due to gender-selective abortion does not exist in Japan. The high male marriage squeeze in some areas is a result of internal female migration rather than skewed sex ratios at birth. Secondly, and more importantly, the Japanese government does not allow the immigration of domestic workers due to its strong restriction on low-skilled immigrants. These two main differences make Japan a particularly interesting case to study.

As the census data of immigrants include both marriage immigrants and Brazilian immigrants (mostly *Nikkeijin*, second-generation ethnic Japanese who might not marry native Japanese nationals), the authors scrutinize the data by classifying the new female immigrants by their relationship to the household head, and comparing this information with the marriage and divorce registrations from the National Department of Vital Statistics, and the registration data of foreign residents. They discover that about 40 percent of the 1995-2000 new female immigrants were the brides of Japanese nationals. This high proportion helps highlight the fundamental difference in immigration between Japan and other East Asian countries where domestic and healthcare workers represent the main components of female migrants.

By analyzing the changes in patterns of nationality, education, employment, areas of residence and household composition before and after 1995, Liaw et al. discovered the following research findings: 1) The majority of foreign brides in Japan come from China, the Philippines, and Korea, which accounted for 83.4 percent of foreign brides in 2000. 2) Contrary to popular images, the education level of Chinese and Korean brides is not particularly low, with about one-third having university degrees. 3) More than 60 percent of the brides are not employed. Contrary to the images of foreign brides doing harsh farm work, those employed mostly work in the manufacturing and service sectors. This corresponds to their next finding: 4) The most concentrated areas of residence of foreign brides (as compared to the percentage of the population) are Tokyo and other industrial metropolitan areas, although some

rural peripheral regions also have their share of cross-border marriages. However, most of the rural and peripheral areas do not have a high percentage of cross-border marriages despite the shortage of potential brides. The geographical patterns of cross-border marriage in Japan have changed in two decades. 5) The divorce rate of cross-border marriages is increasing rapidly.

In Chapter 4, Ma, Lin and Zhang compare demographic characteristics between local and cross-border couples: average age; age gaps; past marriage status; and occupation; by using a sample of around 270,000 marriage registration records in Hong Kong between 1998 and 2005. Despite differences in demographic characteristics of the couples, the authors conclude that grooms, whether marrying a Hong Kong or Mainland woman, tend to follow the basic pattern of assortative mating: grooms are usually older than their brides and they have a higher educational level, occupational prestige, and higher income. The grooms with comparative advantages of their personal traits in the local marriage market tend to find local partners with slightly weaker traits in order to achieve the goal of assortativeness according to the cultural traditions, although it is no longer easy to achieve; while those grooms with comparative disadvantages due to their personal traits and past marriage backgrounds, which still make it difficult for them to find local partners even in a marriage market favoring males, tend to utilize the mechanism of societal disparity to seek cross-border marriages with Mainland brides to attain their assortative marriages.

In Chapter 6 Kim reviews the patterns of socio-demographic characteristics of married and divorced couples in cross-border marriages, including both Korean men and women and their foreign spouses, by using micro data from marriage and divorce registrations for the period 1990-2005. He focuses on analyzing gendered patterns of age at marriage, previous marital experience, education, occupation, and residence of married couples. Attention is also focused on analyzing the duration of marriage of divorced couples. Results of analyses reveal that there exists a great deal of diversity. A notable aspect is the profound difference between Korean men and women in their characteristics as well as the characteristics of their foreign spouses. Another prominent factor emphasized in the analysis is the nationality of the foreign spouse. It is indicated that the stereotype of international marriage facilitated by marriage squeeze can mainly be applied to marriages between Korean men and foreign women from China, Southeast Asian countries and the CIS of the former Soviet Union. On the other hand, direct effects of value transformation and globalization are emphasized in the explanation of marriages between Korean men and foreign women from more developed countries as well as marriages between Korean women and foreign men.

1.3 Why cross-border marriages? Socio-demographic factors and policy implications

Rather than situating the phenomenon of cross-border marriage migration in globalization, the articles in this book pay attention to the specific local (national) socio-demographic factors and economic developments of receiving societies. In all these countries, male marriage squeeze is commonly identified as the main component of pull factors, though the causes of marriage squeeze are different according to geographical and temporal variations. In Japan, the marriage squeeze is the consequence of internal migration, and the incidence of areas with a high sex ratio generally corresponds to the residence of cross-border marriages, i.e. the rural countryside and the metropolitan areas. Other than marriage squeeze, Liaw et al. have demonstrated that the immigration policy has a determining effect on the ethnicities and origins of the brides. Despite the shortage of domestic and care labor, the Japanese government does not issue working visas to migrant domestic workers. As a result, Chinese, Filipinas and Koreans enter Japan via cross-border marriages in search of employment. In contrast, Brazilian *Nikkeijin* who have rights of residence and employment have a very low percentage of marrying native Japanese despite their common ethnicity. The authors conclude with some advice: Firstly, the Japanese government should help to substantially increase the acceptance of foreign students, especially those from Brazil and the Philippines, in its post-secondary educational institutions. Secondly, the Japanese government should start issuing visas to domestic workers. Thirdly, the Japanese government should do a better job in monitoring the working conditions of the 'trainees' and 'entertainers' to prevent exploitation by their employers. Finally, the Japanese government should not engage in the search for foreign brides for Japanese men, especially in China and South Korea where the shortage of potential brides as a consequence of gender-selective abortions is already a serious demographic problem.

Ma et al.'s study shows that in the 1960s a male marriage squeeze caused by the influx of male migrants and increased economic relations with China were primary factors of cross-border marriages in Hong Kong. The high proportion of cross-border marriages has caused tensions at both societal and personal levels. As the immigration policy did not grant Mainland spouses and children rights to abode, the geographic separation of married couples and young parents from their children strained family resources and educational opportunities for the children. Mainland wives and their children have also been reported to suffer from discrimination and abuse. However, when the sex ratio in Hong Kong became balanced after the 1980s, the phenomenon of cross-border marriages remained and actually increased. The authors argue that

although the sex ratio at birth is balanced, the rate of unmarried women and delayed marriage increased as a result of women's growing education attainment and participation in the labor force. As a result, Hong Kong men of lower socioeconomic status, older age and 'disadvantageous' personal traits still have difficulties finding local wives.

Kim also identifies the rapid decline in fertility, rise in sex ratio at birth, urban migration of young women, rising awareness of gender equality among Korean women as key pull factors in cross-border marriages. Similarly, the Taiwanese government also considers cross-border marriages as a solution to the extremely low fertility rate and shortage of wives and reproductive labor. However, such socio-demographic analyses should be coupled with analyses of other economic and social factors and immigration policies; otherwise it is difficult to explain why China, which has the highest sex ratio at birth of the studied countries and a greater male marriage squeeze, has become a prime sending country of brides. It is also important to look at the push factors at the sending sides in order to complete the picture.

Nguyen and Tran's article (Chapter 7) situates its analysis in the context of local development (Vietnam's renovation) and in the globalization process. They analyze both macro structural factors and micro personal (familial) motivations for cross-border marriage in the sending communities. They examine demographic, economic and cultural factors as identified by existing scholarship: 1) Unbalanced sex ratio and marriage squeeze: their conclusion is that in Vietnam's case the shortage of marriageable men is not empirically observed, therefore female marriage squeeze from the sending side is not a pushing factor for marriage migration. 2) Poverty: indeed in the major sending region (Mekong region) the poverty rate is higher and educational levels and other development indicators are lower than the national average. However, as argued by many other scholars, poverty alone cannot explain migration motivations (cf. Tseng in this volume). The Mekong region is not the most underdeveloped region in Vietnam. The total out-migration rate of the Mekong region only ranks sixth among all provinces, yet its marriage migration rate is the highest. The authors attribute the high rate of marriage migration in the Mekong region to its multicultural characteristics and inter-ethnic marriage traditions among the locals. 3) Shared culture: sexual division of labor and submissiveness of women influenced by Confucianism have made Vietnamese women a popular choice among Taiwanese men. 4) Trade: Taiwanese investment and trade relations in Vietnam correspond to the increase of Taiwan-Vietnam marriages. Unfortunately, due to the limited length of the paper, the authors were not able to critically examine the latter two topics.

Nevertheless, they have been dealt with by some Taiwanese scholars (Hsia 2002; Wang & Chang 2002).

1.4 Beyond push and pull factors: from cross-border marriages to transnational families

Nguyen and Tran's chapter explains that at the micro level, marrying their daughters to Taiwanese or other foreign men in richer countries is one of the very few options poor families have in this region to get out of poverty or to achieve social mobility. This connects with the examples of earlier and successful cross-border marriages, and is exemplified by the instant improvement of a family's economy and positive changes in material well-being and lifestyle of the married women who visit home. Such experiences motivate younger women and families who have daughters at marriageable age to actively seek out cross-border marriages. This explains the chained migration and network-based migration in which earlier migrant women take up the role of being a matchmaker for other cross-border marriages (Lu 2008). While Nguyen and Tran use quantitative data to compare the living standard of households before and after cross-border marriages and results of a survey investigating migratory motivations to support this claim, Tosakul (Chapter 8) uses ethnographic accounts to document the process of this chained and network-based migration in both women's labor and marriage migration, and demonstrates how a village in Northern Thailand became a 'Swiss village' with a very high rate of Thai-European marriages starting from the first woman who made the move.

Tosakul looks at the social and cultural advantages and opportunities that cross-border marriages offer. She situates the traditional values of 'dutiful daughters' against a background of a lack of social security for single mothers and an insufficient provision of social security for the elderly in an aging population. As married daughters in Northeast Thailand are expected to continuously support their aged natal parents, they actively engage in economic, social and cultural transaction with their native community. By marrying Western men and still maintaining their original social ties, the social status of themselves and their families in their natal communities is enhanced. The visible economic improvement and invisible social mobility should both be taken into account in order to understand their migratory motivations. In addition, Thai women may choose Western husbands to escape the social stigma from earlier failed marriages/relationships, widowhood or loss of virginity. They could also enjoy a greater degree of and control over their own sexuality.

The emphasis on mediated marriages and networked migration signals a conceptual shift in the scholarship of marriage migration in East and Southeast Asia from border-crossing to transnational networks. The terms *cross-border marriages* and *transnational marriages* are often used interchangeably but are often not defined clearly. To make it more confusing, both terms can be used to refer to cross-ethnic/cultural or same-cultural marriages. The term *cross-border marriage* emphasizes geographical, national, racial, class and gender and cultural borders constructed in the hosting societies. This stream of scholarship concerns the impact of marriage migration on the receiving societies in terms of population pressure and social security, the political and social citizenship of marriage migrants and their integration and assimilation. The term *transnational marriage* emphasizes a transnational network and space created by the actors themselves; as well as the transactions of economic resources, symbols and political and cultural practices between the sending and receiving communities; and how these transactions influence local development, social practices and cultural norms in both sending and receiving societies. Nguyen and Tran's, Tosakul's, and Takeshita's articles in this volume are examples of scholarly work and interests in transnational marriages and families.

Nguyen and Tran point out that with the economic transactions at the time of marriage and remittances from the brides after marriage, cross-border marriages indeed improve the economic situation of the brides' natal families and communities in Vietnam considerably. As a result, young women (and their families) aspire to find a foreign husband. This affirms Tosakul's research finding in Northeastern Thailand. This has several social consequences. Firstly, the marriage age and education level of women are lowered, as girls quit schooling in preparation for marrying foreign men. This is a setback for gender equality in the aspects of women's education and labor participation achieved before the Renovation period. Secondly, with more and more young women marrying foreign men, the sex ratio of the marriageable population becomes high. Men in rural Vietnam, Northeastern Thailand and China are experiencing a similar marriage squeeze that some Japanese, Korean, Hong Kongese and Taiwanese men do. The long-term demographic projection for these peripheral communities is so dim that some might be extinct within decades as a result of women's out-migration.

Tosakul adopts the concept of *global/local synergy* to study how marriage migrants create a transnational cultural space connecting the traditional and the global modern. One example is building new houses with modern-style decorations and space arrangements in the villages in Northeast Thailand, while in Europe Thai traditions are reinvented through Buddhist religious beliefs and practices, festivals, food, folk

dance and music, language, and social interactions to remind the migrants of home. Buddhist monasteries are built, which function as a social space for fellow marriage migrants to get together for collective local identity re-construction and expression.

Takeshita's paper (Chapter 10) on transnational families of Pakistani men and Japanese women address several issues that are seriously understudied in current literature on cross-border marriages in Asia. Takeshita points out that unlike female marriage migration which is predominantly mediated, male migrants often enter the country with the intention to work with either a legitimate working visa or tourist visa. They marry Japanese women either because the relationship developed during their stay in Japan or because of the change of the guest worker policy making marriage migration the only possibility for them to obtain long-term residence permits in Japan. This pattern is also observed in Taiwan among Thai male migrant workers later marrying Taiwanese women.

Secondly, Takeshita's research shows that besides economic motivations (job opportunities or wealth) or cultural practices (e.g. patrilocality), there are other factors affecting the transnational families' decisions and choices of residence, such as children's education and transmission of cultural identity. In this case Takeshita studies the importance of religion in children's education and socialization. As Tseng points out, the citizenship regime and various mechanisms of social exclusion (for instance, the education system) in East Asia concern mainly how marriage migrants can assimilate and blend into the receiving society, the latter offering very limited space for migrants to express their cultural and religious identities. The only possibility for Pakistani men and Japanese wives who converted to Islam to transmit their religious beliefs and cultural identities is to relocate to a place where children can receive education that they deem appropriate.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) are chosen as migration destination of Japanese wives and their children for, again, various economic, social and cultural reasons. Takeshita shows how Pakistani find a niche in the global market as entrepreneurs selling used vehicles as a result of being excluded from the Japanese labor market and Pakistan's migration policy rewarding returned migrants, and actively develop a transnational, kin-based business network between Japan, UAE and Pakistan. Japanese women prefer UAE rather than Pakistan because of the modern lifestyle, less control from kin members (tolerance of nuclear family) while they can still enjoy the social support of some kin members. The transnational kinship network therefore provides business opportunities, social support and helps maintain religious and cultural identities. Japanese women in Takeshita's study are active agents in this multiple migration process. They not only form a support network among

themselves, but also develop educational strategies for their children who learn English and Japanese while being socialized in an Islamic environment.

1.5 Contesting stereotypes and dominant discourses

Most of the articles in this volume have the explicit or implicit objective of examining and challenging the discourses and stereotypes in public policies and popular representations of marriage immigrants. As mentioned earlier, Liaw et al.'s analysis challenges the stereotype of foreign brides living in isolation in rural communities in Japan. Yang and Schoonheim set out to examine whether foreign and mainland brides in Taiwan have higher fertility rates, as the government policy assumes. They show that Mainland Chinese and Vietnamese migrant mothers tend to have fertility patterns similar to the local Taiwanese mothers. After the first birth right after marriage, the foreign migrant mothers tend to delay a second birth to a certain extent, and only a few of them have a third child. They argue that one of the major reasons is that both the Mainland Chinese and Vietnamese brides are from societies where strong family planning programs are practiced. This finding has the significant policy implication that cross-border marriages should not be regarded as a solution to the low fertility rate in Taiwan. It also shows that marriage migrants have a certain degree of autonomy and awareness of reproductive behavior and health.

Several articles in this volume give nuanced pictures of the impacts of macro structural factors and individual (or collective) agency. Both Nguyen and Tran's and Tosakul's analyses on migratory motivations show that although cross-border marriages are a way to escape poverty, young women are not victims of poverty and/or trafficking (cf. Tseng in this volume). Through cross-border marriages they achieve economic improvement and social mobility; however, these women suffer the stigma of being morally degrading and bringing shame not only on themselves and their family but also on the nation. They experience social exclusion in both their natal communities and receiving societies.

Contrary to media representations that migrant wives are isolated in the husbands' local community and kin network, the Thai-European marriages show that wives' social networks are often more active than those of their European husbands. Migrant women actively create social networks by meeting regularly or by bringing women relatives from home to Europe.

As all papers of this volume point out, in the majority of cross-border marriages in East and Southeast Asia, it is women who migrate and move to the husband's country, with the exception of some transna-

tional couples who choose to live in the wife's country or to establish residence in both countries (Yeh, Tosakul, and Takeshita in this volume). While scholars have theorized the feminization of migration, male marriage migrants receive little attention. As all the receiving and sending societies of marriage migration in Asia, with the exception of some ethnic minorities, practice a patrilocal system and women's hypergamy, the 'feminization of marriage migration' is often taken for granted. The state's overriding concern for migrants' reproductive function and role, and their and their children's integration, is likewise justified.

Yeh's article (Chapter 9) studies both male and female marriage migrants and compares migrants from developed countries and from Southeast Asia and China, the latter two being coined as a social category 'foreign or Mainland brides' in Taiwan. These comparisons challenge several assumptions of existing scholarship and policies and render insights into the gender and racial aspects of marriage migration. She studies the perceptions and experiences of migrants' acculturation in the family, community and society by using quantitative research methods. Yeh's findings challenge the receiving societies' concern over migrants' assimilation; more specifically, the ability of migrants to be able to speak local languages is used to measure their social-economic status and children's education attainment. Yeh shows that children of English-speaking parents often speak English at home, while children of a parent (often mother) from developing countries are pressured into speaking Mandarin and not learning the mother's language. Yeh attributes this to the hegemony and hierarchy of culture and language in which Americans and Europeans are perceived to be superior. In other words, Southeast Asian and mainland spouses and their children are excluded in Taiwanese society not because they are not 'one of us', but because their ethnicities and cultures are deemed 'inferior'.

Yeh's findings also challenge the dominant perception in media representations and academic scholarship that Southeast and Mainland spouses are responsible for the 'population quality' and their children's bad educational performance because of their own low education level. She discovers that, contrary to her own earlier assumption, that migrants' acculturation degree has a low correlation with migrants' education and sex. In fact, foreign spouses with lower educational levels, whether men or women, adjust better and felt accepted in Taiwan, while higher educated spouses have higher degrees of dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, she concludes that ethnicity plays a key role in migrant's acculturation, while sex and education are less influential factors.

As cross-border marriages are perceived to be a serious social problem and undesirable and vulnerable forms of marriages in both the sending and receiving societies, the researchers need to be sensitive to the implications of their research findings towards policymakers and

public opinion. Though not intentionally, many chapters of this volume implicitly ask the questions, *What is a successful marriage? How do we evaluate cross-border marriages?* Various criteria of measurement are used: divorce rate (Kim; Liaw et al.); happiness of the actors and respect towards migrants (Nguyen & Tran; Tosakul); economic contributions they bring to their home community and nation (Nguyen & Tran; Tosakul); social capital and opportunities they create for themselves (Tosakul; Takeshita); cultural adjustment in the receiving community (Yeh); and equal gender relations and sexual emancipation (Tosakul). The success of a marriage is, of course, a subjective experience. Nevertheless, as it is obvious that cross-border marriages are no longer a private matter between the couples themselves, researchers should be careful in their judgment and interpretation of research data and be open to these various criteria of evaluation and their cultural contexts.

Notes

1 Jones and Shen provide an overview of statistics on cross-border marriages in various East Asian countries (2008: 10-13).

2 Women account for 46 percent of the overall international migration from developing countries. In Asia, female migrants make up 44.4 percent of total international migrants from South Asia, 50.1 percent from East and Southeast Asia (Zlotnik as quoted by Thapan 2008: 9, Table 1).

2 Marriage Migration to East Asia

Current Issues and Propositions in Making Comparisons

Yen-Fen Tseng

2.1 Introduction

In the last two decades, in Asia, women have increasingly been involved in migration, both internally and internationally. Such a phenomenon is distinctive in its historical trend (Hugo 2006: 155). There are several important migratory flows where women are dominant. Firstly, Asian women have traditionally been the major labor supply of domestic workers in Asia and beyond (Hugo 2000: 157).[1] Secondly, women from Asian nations have married across borders to spouses both in Asia and in the rest of the world (Constable 2005; Cahill 1990; Penny & Khoo 1996).

Until recently, there was relatively little research on marriage migration (Wang & Chang 2002). On the one hand, migration is usually studied as labor migration because it is considered more important to understand economic migration than family-related migration; the latter is less significant because the migrants are viewed as dependents or reproducers rather than economically significant forces (Kofman 2004). On the other hand, marriage migration is understood mainly within the framework of family-related migration streams. But even when studied as part of family-related migration, this phenomenon has long been marginalized theoretically and empirically.

In countries such as those in East Asia covered by this book, studies on marriage migration are relatively abundant. One of the reasons behind such attention has to do with responding to societal anxiety. East Asian countries are unique in their ethnic homogeneity compared to other parts of the world.[2] This ethnic homogeneity is partly due to state efforts in adopting some of the most restrictive immigration policies (Castles & Davidson 2000). For example, despite the fact that foreign immigration to these countries has accelerated significantly during these past two decades, the migrant population comprises mostly low-

end laborers brought in as guest workers but not as potential settlers. From the very beginning, governments in these countries carefully planned and controlled the movement of low-skilled foreign workers. Therefore it is a rather sudden shock for these societies to come to terms with the significant increase in the presence of foreigners as spouses.[3] Marriage has become one of the very few legal channels for people seeking to settle in these societies, and for lower-skilled people, marriage is indeed the only channel available for becoming a long-term resident.[4] It is within this context that the sudden increase in marriage migration to several East Asian countries has provided very fertile research ground for social scientists, and studies on this issue have become an important specialty in immigration research in East Asia.

This article provides an overview of what has happened to marriage migration in East Asian countries, mainly focusing on Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea, the countries covered by this book. I will do so by highlighting and appraising the theoretical and empirical implications of current research in this region. Secondly, I would like to offer a few propositions to facilitate the comparisons between East Asian countries about the processes and consequences of marriage migration from other parts of Asia to this region.

2.2 Overview of current trends

Past research on marriage migration to East Asia has furthered our understanding of the dialectics between the structure and agency related to immigration processes. It is important that we capture both individuals as agents, and social structure as delimiting and enabling factors. On the one hand, researchers have pointed out that structural forces responsible for this increase in movement are associated with globalization, such as the proliferation of international media, improved transport systems and the internationalization of business and labor markets (Hsia 2002; Hugo 2006). On the other hand, research has increasingly paid attention to the situations of individuals, their propensity to move, and the nature of the decisions they make (Constable 2005). Studies adopting feminist approaches have enhanced our understanding of the migration outcomes by acknowledging marriage migrants who use the international marriage channels not as 'mail-order brides' but as an agency in their decision to adopt social, cultural, and economic life in new societies (Constable 2005).[5] Therefore, studies on women migrants' aspirations, strategies, and limitations should constitute an important part of the narratives about marriage migration. The following brief sketch of what is happening in marriage migration to East Asian

countries is meant to find a balance between structural factors and agency.

2.2.1 Why does marriage migration begin?

There are supply and demand factors to account for such emerging increases in marriage migration to East Asia. On the demand side, cross-border marriages are typically the product of lower-class men, who suffer from disadvantageous positions in the domestic marriage market, utilizing globalizing resources to improve their marriageability. In Taiwan, the largest proportion of men marrying Southeast Asian women come from rural areas where farming and low-skilled manufacturing jobs are the major livelihood (Hsia 2002; Ministry of the Interior 2004). As Hsia (2002:173) points out, rural families are reluctant to have their daughters marrying into other rural families, and the 'marrying out to city' expectation has created a serious problem for rural men by making it difficult to find suitable future wives. Japan's situation is somewhat similar, but the eldest sons in rural families are found to be the most likely candidates for marrying foreign wives due to the cultural expectation that the eldest son in a family should stay in a farming occupation to sustain the land and communities (Suzuki 2005: 137). These heirs to land and farming have difficulty finding local women who want to live in farming communities. Cross-border marriages in South Korea have taken a somewhat different historical turn. According to Lee (2006), in the initial stage of the early 1990s, rural men were the first group seeking foreign wives, just as in Taiwan and Japan. However, more recently after commercial brokers became more and more popular, the foreign wives have been marketed to urban, lower-class men, some of whom are divorced or widowed. As a result, in 2005, 75 percent of all foreign spouses lived in urban areas in South Korea (Lee 2006: 8). Hong Kong's case presents another interesting twist. Although in general men of lower-class status can gain a better exchange in the cross-border marriage market, the demand is also created by a serious imbalance of the sex ratio. In the inflow of migrants from Mainland China which has continued for decades, the new migrants have mostly been men. This immigration has raised the sex ratio to 115.8, and the male surplus increased to 228,000 (So 2003: 525). A unique living arrangement can be found among Hong Kong cross-border marriages with Mainland Chinese, who constitute the largest proportion of cross-border partners. Due to the high living cost, especially housing expenses, many wives stay in Mainland China and raise the children, while the men still work in Hong Kong and travel back and forth between their families in China and their residence in Hong Kong (Leung & Lee 2005).

As to the supply side, the increase in migrants via marriage channels in East Asia is largely due to the economic hardships of several sending countries, especially in their rural areas. The available channel of marriage migration offers women opportunities to better their life. According to a study on the motivation behind Indonesian women marrying Taiwanese men, these migrants are very often persuaded by their parents as part of the family strategy (Hsia 2002). Previous researchers attributed women's motives for marriages with foreigners in economically advanced countries solely to economic goals. Most of these studies failed to analyze the women's own definitions and understanding of 'a better life' and how this is related to marriage migration across national borders. In other words, many women involved in international marriages are motivated to pursue better economic opportunities and 'good' marriages at the same time. Cultural understandings of wifehood and modernity also constitute part of the pull factors that account for motivations of marriage migration, via media and other forms of cultural globalization. Such pull factors also include the ideology of establishing a stable family life with middle-class resources that only lie beyond their borders. As Suzuki (2005:128) points out, there is a cultural logic of marriage to foreigners that is 'considered an easy and secure entry to wealth, stability, and mobility'.

2.2.2 How is the migration sustained?

The marriage migration stream into East Asian countries has been sustained by commercial brokers, social networks, and matchmakers with characteristics of both commercial agents and network members. While many Asian women are engaged in correspondence or mail-order processes to marry out of Asia (Simons 1999), the marriage migration within Asia mostly relies on networks and commercial brokers (Constable 1995). The intermediate processes involve brokers or matchmakers via networks, and the courtship between future brides and grooms is nonexistent or very short (Constable 1995; Piper 2003; Wang & Chang 2002). Two mechanisms involving intermediaries have been especially influential in sustaining the marriage migration flow around Asia. The first is the proliferation of social networks. The growing numbers of Asians living outside their country of birth constitute anchors in a rapidly spreading network of connections facilitating migration. The chain of migration has become a female migratory chain in which women have brought over other women – sisters, nieces, and friends – to marry future spouses whom they usually know as network members. Studies on processes sustaining marriage migration to Taiwan have shown that network-mediated marriage migration is most commonly found when the marriage migrants form a geographical concentration (Hsia 2002).

I would like to share a personal observation about how marriage migration often involves chain migration. In 2001, on a flight from Ho Chi Minh City back to Taiwan, two Vietnamese women were sitting next to me. I noticed they were exchanging words excitedly. I tried to chat with one of them adjacent to me and found that she spoke some Mandarin Chinese. She married a Taiwanese man two years ago and just went back to Vietnam to bring her friend, whom she had known from her elementary school years, to marry her brother-in-law. That was the other woman sitting next to her. She told me that she was very lonely in Taiwan, and now with the company of her good friend, she expected to have a happier life.

The second facilitator is the vast migration industry comprising migration agents, recruiters, travel providers, and even immigration officers who form chains linking Asian communities with overseas destinations. In destination countries, there is another migration industry waiting to exploit the profit along the chains. This industry has greatly expanded and become increasingly sophisticated with globalization as pointed out by Wang and Chang (2002). However, the intermediaries linking the prospective couples can take many forms and are often woven together in a very complex web consisting of kin or friends as matchmakers, brokers, travel agents and other organizers (Wang & Chang 2002). On the one hand, the long distance between supply and demand has created many information gaps for entrepreneurs to fill. On the other hand, both sending and receiving countries' governments create many hurdles for such migration including health checks, interviewing, and documentation provisions, further reinforcing future couples' reliance on commercial agents to assist in the process.

2.2.3 Marrying foreign women: Taiwan's experience

Among East Asian countries, international marriages have grown most dramatically in Taiwan (Wang 2002). Cross-border marriages only started in the mid-1980s, and have grown at a fast pace since the 1990s. In 2005, such marriages represented 20 percent of the nation's total registered marriages.[6] Figure 2.1 shows that the great majority of the marriage migrants were women. In 2005, Mainland China, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand were the top four countries sending marriage migrants to Taiwan (Ministry of the Interior 2006). Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 show that while marriage migrants from Mainland China continue to grow, the number of such migrants from countries other than Mainland China continues to decline.

The supply of spousal migrants has been induced by closer regional connections between Taiwan and nearby countries. Such regional con-

Figure 2.1 *The number of marriages involving foreigners as opposed to the total registered marriages (2001-2005)*

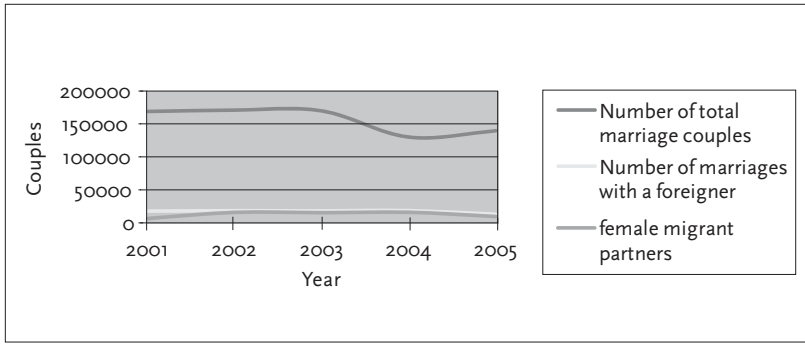


Table 2.1 *Changes in number of Chinese from PRC as spouses (2001-2005)*

Year	*Number of couples marrying*	*Number of marriages with a Chinese*	*Marriages with a Chinese*	
			%	*Growth rate*
2001	170515	27342	16.03%	–
2002	172655	29545	17.11%	8.06%
2003	171483	34426	20.08%	16.52%
2004	131453	10972	8.35%	-68.13%
2005	141140	14619	10.36%	33.24%

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, "The Report of the Ministry of the Interior", various years (http://www.gov.moi.tw/w3/stat), various years

Table 2.2 *Changes in number of non-PRC spouses (1998-2005)*

Year	*Number of total marriage couples*	*Marriages with non-PRC spouses*	
		%	*Growth rate*
1998	140010	7.44%	-
1999	173209	8.47%	40.88%
2000	181642	11.75%	45.46%
2001	170515	11.38%	-9.06%
2002	172655	11.65%	3.62%
2003	171483	11.45%	-2.31%
2004	131453	15.47%	3.54%
2005	141140	9.78%	-32.11%

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, "The Report of the Ministry of the Interior", various years (http://www.gov.moi.tw/w3/stat)

nections with Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand are effects of foreign direct investments from Taiwan.

Studies show that internationalization of Taiwanese capital in several Southeast Asian countries has induced the inflow of spousal migration from this region (Hsia 2002). For example, a large proportion of introduction agents are capital-linked migrants to Southeast Asia such as expatriates working in Taiwanese factories and small business owners relocating to Southeast Asia who later became commercial matchmakers (Hsia 2002; Wang & Chang 2002).

Taiwan has more complex connections with Mainland China. A significant proportion of Taiwan residents came from Mainland China, and a large migration stream occurred as recently as post-1949, so there are still familial connections across the straits. Besides, Taiwanese investment in Mainland China has grown exponentially, and reportedly there are around a million Taiwanese currently living in China. Such close interrelations provide fertile ground for people's interactions. According to a general survey on spouses of foreign origin, networks of kin and friends play the most important role in introducing these marriage couples, while the commercial brokers are ranked as the second major introduction channel (Ministry of the Interior 2004). Among couples that involved Mainland Chinese, the great majority (nearly 90 percent) reported meeting each other via non-commercial channels; 60 percent of them were introduced via friends and relatives, and another 29 percent met each other on their own.

The demand for foreign spouses is most evident in areas where farmers and low-skilled manufacturing workers reside (Ministry of the Interior 2004). Men with drawbacks like low income, low prestige and even handicaps tend to resort to the spousal pool from less developed countries. However, studies also found that marrying 'foreign brides' presents a solution for lower-middle and middle-class men, and a way of buttressing their masculinity in response to a decline in the willingness of Taiwanese women to be obedient wives (Tien & Wang 2006).

Marriage migration has presented several challenges to a society endowed with a mono-ethnic ideology. Firstly, marriage migrants reproduce offspring deemed to change the ethnic composition of the population. Children borne by foreign spouses are already significantly affecting the demographic future; in 2006, one out of every ten children was born to parents of cross-border marriages (Ministry of the Interior, statistics report).[7] Secondly, it challenges the government to provide needed resources to lower-class families whose mothers come from different cultural-linguistic backgrounds. Lastly, the inflow of new immigrants challenges the whole society to rethink who we are and whom we ought to include. The reluctance to accept these new immigrants as

full members is shown in many regulations and media discourses (Tseng 2005).

2.3 Propositions for making comparisons

I would like to formulate several propositions for making comparisons across countries in this region. Only in this way are syntheses likely to be drawn from comparing cases in different countries. The following propositions are what I consider especially interesting and relevant for comparing situations across countries in East Asia.

2.3.1 Marriage migration vs. other channels

> ***Proposition 1*** Placing marriage-linked migration in relation to other immigration channels to a particular destination would help us to understand the motivations and the constraints for women to migrate.

For women seeking migration to better their life chances, to migrate as wives or as workers might involve a process of considering what constitutes a better option. Such decision-making often has a lot to do with cultural images of wives and workers. For example, in Japan, many Filipina women who migrated to work as entertainers are often stigmatized as prostitutes or sex workers of all kinds (Tyner 1996). Suzuki (2000:128) argues that for Filipinas, compared with other types of labor migration such as domestic work and entertainers, women's marriage migration is considered 'moral and less risky sexually, mentally, and physically.' Studies on Taiwanese marriage migrants found that even when some of these migrants had previously moved to other countries as foreign workers, they were persuaded by their families to come back to marry when they reached marriage age. For single women, working overseas may delay their marriages, and such a situation is usually stigmatized (Hsia 2002).[8]

The availability of channels for migration also involves the policy provisions by both sending and host countries. For example, in Japan migration channels for foreign women as workers are mainly reserved for the category of entertainers (Piper 1996). Therefore, the stigma associated with labor migration to Japan might cause more Filipina women to opt for marriage migration. Moreover, the option of migrating as marriage spouses or labor migrants might not exist in sending contexts. For example, in Thailand, where the government used to forbid women to migrate outside to work as domestic laborers, it was more difficult for women to migrate overseas as workers (Fan 2005). In other words,

in many situations, available channels for women to migrate out of the country are limited, so marriage migration becomes a way out. How do they project their migration future as workers vs. wives? For example, one of the major supplies of foreign spouses concerns Filipina women who came in to work as entertainers, so marriage might be considered a much better option for migration compared to the stigmatized image of entertainers (Piper 2003). In East Asian countries, where the governments only permit short-term residence for foreign workers, for those who want to pursue long-term residence in these countries, the only channel is via marrying the nationals. They are guest workers turned spousal migrants. Another interesting way of looking at marriage migrants in relation to labor migration is to investigate their working experiences once they work. Indeed, many marriage migrants take part in the labor market after they are permitted to work. In South Korea, the labor market participation rate is even higher (by 10 percent) among marriage migrants than women in the general population (Lee 2006). It would be interesting to compare women's labor market experiences between those who migrated via labor recruitment schemes and those who migrated via marriage channels.

2.3.2 *Citizenship regimes matter*

> ***Proposition 2*** The context of citizenship regimes shapes the way in which marriage migrants construct their new lives and integrate into new homes.

States have their ways of checking the eligibility of potential citizens. These modes of receiving foreigners constitute a citizenship regime regulating incorporation or naturalization processes. Citizenship regimes affect the marriage migrants' degree of integration into their new countries. Comparing these immigration control and incorporation policies in East Asia, one can find similarities across these countries of interest. On the one hand, marriage migration challenges the closed nature of citizenship regimes in East Asian countries. To prevent marriage as a 'side door' for migrants coming to work, states often adopt many procedures to create hurdles for admitting spouses as migrants to detect their motivations other than marriage. In some countries, it is a struggle for spouses to obtain citizenship because many more hurdles are placed ahead of them, making it difficult to become full members. For example, in many circumstances, spousal migrants must give up their original nationality in order to acquire new citizenship on the request of receiving countries and/or sending countries. However, there are policy differences in assuming who is innocent and who is suspect. Therefore, it will be a fruitful research direction to compare these im-

migration control policies across countries to uncover these assumptions.

Another set of citizenship regulations which require further research and theorizing is the family citizenship regime as coined by Ito (2005: 60). Spousal migrants' status in residency rights is often tied to the family ideology. In many of these societies, for marriage migrants who obtain a divorce, their continued resident status depends on whether or not they are the caregivers of their children. In other words, marriage migrants become legal residents in relation to their status either as spouse to a national or as parents of a child. Such policies can be found at least in Taiwan and Japan. Historically in the US, the discourse over offering migrant women new citizenship has often involved their performance of family duties for American men (Bredbenner 1998).

The lack of a concept of citizenship independent of nationality, ethnicity, or race in East Asian mono-ethnic citizenship regimes denies the diversity of ethnic identities of the marriage migrants. Assimilation is expected so that they can blend into the background without sticking out. Multi-culturalism is a rare concept in these countries. There are variations in terms of practices that put pressure on new immigrants to blend into different countries. Comparing differences in such citizenship regimes and the effects they have upon marriage migrants' journey of belonging is a research direction full of potential.

2.3.3 Social construction of womanhood

> ***Proposition 3*** Research on women marriage migrants enhances our understanding of the social construction of womanhood in terms of being wives, daughters-in-law, workers, and mothers in a society and culture where they have not been brought up.

As spouses from abroad, how have these migrant women been negotiating their roles as women within the new culture? In an article entitled 'The loss that has no name', Imamura (1988) utilized the concept of social construction of womanhood, by referring to the problems and strategies of women who 'learned to be women in one world, but who had to behave as women in another' (1988: 294). For these women, Imamura argued that achieving social womanhood in their husbands' societies meant not achieving it in the way they were originally taught. However, as Imamura's study found, these women were not likely to achieve full social womanhood in their husbands' societies either.

2.3.4 *'Feminization of survival'*

Proposition 4 Marriage migration is part of the gendered patterns of survival in sending countries.

Saskia Sassen (2002) used the notion of feminization of survival to refer to the fact that households and whole communities in some of the so-called 'migrant sending' countries are increasingly dependent on women for their survival. While the total amount of remittances may be small, they are often very significant for household survival. There is a general tendency for women to remit a greater proportion of their earnings (although the amounts may be lower) and to be more regular and reliable remitters than their male counterparts (Hugo 2005).

According to Hugo (2005: 108), almost all remittances in Asia are sent to families and individuals and are used at a grass-roots level. Consequently, this money supply has considerable potential for poverty reduction. Especially since migrants are drawn selectively from poverty-ridden areas, this magnifies their impact in those areas. To what extent such survival is sustained by women migrating as workers versus wives awaits further empirical research in sending countries.

2.3.5 *Products of interactions of gender, ethnicity, and class*

Proposition 5 Marriage migrants are situated at the intersection of gender, ethnicity and class.

Marriage migration has great implications for understanding the intersection of gender, ethnicity and class systems in host societies. When host countries want to keep ethnic homogeneity, female foreigners especially are deterred from entering the country or staying for good because of their reproductive potential. In Taiwan and Singapore, female migrant workers used to be subject to outright deportation if they were found to be pregnant during regular health checks (Chen 2003). These have always included a pregnancy check, regardless of whether the baby's father was a native.[9] In terms of marriage migrants, they are supposed to become future citizens without exception and hesitation; therefore, the mechanism of controlling their numbers is almost non-existent. However, in societies with a high degree of ethnic homogeneity, societal anxiety over the lack of effective 'control' over the flow of marriage migrants is high, since marriages of international couples produce mixed-blood offspring that will eventually change the ethnic profile. Such discrimination also implies class bias since most women who migrate to marry in large numbers are from lower-class origins. They are especially unwelcome since the host society believes that they lack good qua-

lities for reproducing and educating their children. For example, in Taiwan, it is thought that since spouses from Southeast Asia are less educated, it must be that they cannot bring up high-quality future citizens. The government used to encourage them to limit the expected number of children by providing them subsidies for contraception.[10] Therefore, in countries where policymakers intend to preserve the ethnic composition of their population to be as homogeneous as possible, lower-class women tend to be the group of migrants most discriminated against, regardless of their being wives or workers. This vividly demonstrates that gender issues inherent in immigration control cannot be examined independent of class and ethnicity systems at work in host societies.

2.3.6 Cross-border equals cross-cultural?

Proposition 6 Cross-border marriages are not necessarily cross-cultural.

Previous research has found that some international marriages might be another form of intra-ethnic marriages, such as second-generation Vietnamese American men marrying women from Vietnam via arranged marriages (Constable 2005). Another example is the women from the Miao ethnic group in China marrying those from Laos (with the same Miao ethnicity) in the US (Constable 2005).

What has been happening in international marriages within Asia is an increase of the type of spousal migration that involves marriages between persons of the same ethnic or religious background. Such a phenomenon constitutes what can be called 'endogamous' marriage relating to a specific preference among natives for marriage partners from their own ethnic or religious groups in other countries. Examples in East Asia are the preference for Taiwanese Hakka to marry Hakka women from Indonesia and Mainland China to maintain their unique language and culture, while Hakka men in India have sought their marriage mates in the Mainland Hakka community (Oxfeld 2005).[11] Another example is that South Korean men often marry members of their ethnic diaspora, *Chosenjok*, from Mainland China (cf. Table 2.3).

The preference for intra-ethnic marriages has created an interesting phenomenon in global marriage chains. This provides support for what Constable called the global marriage-scapes, where marriage migration flows do not occur in random geographic topologies, but are rather 'shaped and limited by existing and emerging cultural, social, historical and political-economic factors' (Constable 2005: 4). By global marriage chains, I am referring to a phenomenon in which intra-ethnic marriages across borders are often triggered by a previous wave of within-group marriage migration. For example, while Hakka Chinese women

Table 2.3 *Destinations (East Asia) and origins of marriage migration*

Destinations	*Top origins of marriage migrants*
Hong Kong	Mainland China
Taiwan	Mainland China, Vietnam, Indonesia
Korea	Chosenjok (Korean Chinese), Chinese
Japan	Philippines, Chinese, Korean

The table is based on a survey of literature on cross-border marriages in these countries (So 2003; Suzuki 2005; Wang & Chang 2002; Freeman 2005)

in India are sought after by Hakka Chinese men who have moved from India to Toronto, Canada, there is a bride shortage for Hakka Chinese men in India, whose demand is filled by international matchmakers who bring in Hakka Chinese from China. Therefore, there is a chain of migratory flows of women that operates like 'moving up musical stairs' (Oxfeld 2005). Every move involves hypergamy within the same ethnicscapes.

2.3.7 Migration experiences are gendered

> ***Proposition 7*** We need to compare differences and similarities in marriage migration for men and women, in order to detect the gender logic behind immigrant adaptation and integration.

So far, we have been referring to women while discussing situations surrounding marriage migrants. However, there is also an increase in the number of East Asian women marrying foreigners who follow their wives to settle in new lands. On the one hand, this is partly due to the increase in the presence of male migrant workers in these countries. On the other hand, a growing number of women working, traveling, or studying abroad now have abundant opportunities to marry foreigners. However, male marriage migrants receive very little research attention, both because the number is relatively small, and because as men they are assumed to be more independent and therefore problem-free. However, more research attention should be paid to this emerging phenomenon for empirical and theoretical reasons. This is because the number of male marriage migrants is on the rise. Such studies will also enhance our understanding of how migration processes and consequences are gendered. To understand and compare the experiences of these women and men, we can learn more about how gender as a system affects both women and men. For those who migrate with their wives to other countries, there are a number of important questions which need to be answered: what motivates such migration, how are these male 'followers' perceived both in their original and host socie-

ties, what are their typical adaptation experiences, and how do they differ from their female counterparts? This is the kind of research direction that can move our perspective from 'women and migration' to 'gender and migration' by recognizing gender as a set of social practices shaping and shaped by immigration.

2.4 Conclusions and discussion

Research on marriage migration in East Asia has advanced our understanding about what motivates marriage migration and what sustains the migratory stream. Issues about the initiation of migration have been investigated evenly by looking at the intercepts of economic factors, familial obligations, cultural fantasies and imagination. As to what sustains marriage migration, research has been focusing on a wide range of possible intermediaries such as networks and commercial brokers and the closely knit web between the two. By looking at these findings, one is impressed by the way in which marriage migration is the strategy for laypeople to utilize globalizing resources. Marriage migration is indeed part and parcel of 'globalization from below'.

Immigration research had been criticized for neglecting the role of women in migration until the last decade's research efforts in 'rediscovering' migrant women (Pedraza 1991). However, in researching what motivates marriage migrants' move and their adaptation in the host countries, past literature concentrates only on studying woman migrants themselves. An exclusive interest in woman migrants as research subjects neglects their overall relations to others that play a significant role in motivating and facilitating their move and eventual adaptation. Very few researchers examine the varied perspectives, motivations, and adaptations of cross-border couples, brides as well as grooms, and their respective family members. The exclusive focus on women as marriage migrants also tends to neglect the fruitful potential for gender as a constitutive process in immigration by comparing women and men's experiences as marriage migrants. In an attempt to devote research attention to the social consequences of gender in immigration, Pedraza (1991: 305) raised the following issues: How is gender related to the decision to migrate? What are the causes and consequences of female- or male-dominated flows of migration? How is gender related to the patterns of incorporation? Answers to these issues from marriage migration after comparative research across regions will certainly contribute to this long journey of understanding the relationship between gender and immigration.

Notes

1 For research on Asian women as domestic workers working in respective countries, please refer to the following: Lan (2003); Yeoh & Huang (1999).
2 Castles and Davidson (2000: 187) illustrated the ethnic homogeneity in East Asian countries by showing the following figures: Japan, 99 percent Japanese; Hong Kong 98 percent Han Chinese; South Korea: 99 percent Korean; China, 93 percent Han Chinese.
3 For example, the media reports about these new immigrants have been very negative, and they are treated as social problems (Hsia 2007).
4 In the past decade, East Asian countries began to introduce migration schemes ranging from long-term settlement to permanent residency to highly skilled workers to move in, in order to increase the supply of highly skilled manpower in fields such as IT and business services.
5 For example, in putting together articles on Asian women as marriage migrants, Constable (2005: 13) pointed out that the volume 'contributes to a critique of the notion of wives as simply objects of exchange, and highlights instead women's agency in relation to wider structural constraints'.
6 *The Report of the Ministry of the Interior*, various years (see http://www.gov.moi.tw/w3/stat).
7 Ministry of the Interior, statistics reports (see http://www.gov.moi.tw/stat/week/week9503.doc).
8 In Hsia's research, an interviewed Indonesian woman's story can illustrate such a dilemma. Before she married her Taiwanese husband, she used to work in Singapore as a domestic worker. When she planned to renew the contract to continue her career as a foreign worker, her family, worrying about her delay in getting married, arranged for her to marry a Taiwanese man via introduction of her neighbors. She said: 'I wasn't planning to get married and only wanted to save money to go home to have a small business of my own. I don't want my family to worry about me not getting married, so I married and came to Taiwan' (Hsia 2002: 185).
9 In Taiwan, this policy was abolished in 2003. However, female migrant workers had to pass non-pregnancy checkups both before their departure and right after their arrival. Once they are found to be pregnant, they are not allowed to enter, and if they have entered the border, they are to be deported.
10 In 2004, the Deputy Minister of Education publicly urged 'foreign brides' to have fewer children since the 'poor quality' of their offspring would deteriorate the 'population quality' of Taiwan (Hsia 2007: 56).
11 The Hakka are an ethnic group with a persistent linguistic culture whose settlement dispersed throughout Southern China and later the rest of the world.

II

DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS

3 Feminization of Immigration in Japan

Marital and Job Opportunities

Kao-Lee Liaw, Emiko Ochiai, and Yoshitaka Ishikawa

3.1 Introduction

Van de Kaa (1999) argued that during a period of 'second demographic transition', the decline in fertility below the replacement level is compensated for by cross-border migration. During this period, an 'international migration turnaround' takes place, in which an emigration excess is replaced by an immigration excess. One of the authors of this paper, Yoshitaka Ishikawa, examined this hypothesis in a Japanese context, and demonstrated that such an international migration turnaround happened in Japan around 1990 (Ishikawa 2005a: 346-348).[1]

The theory of international migration turnaround is concerned with the quantity of the migrating population, but notable changes in the quality can also be observed. The 'feminization of migration' or the dramatic increase in the proportion of women in cross-border migration since the 1990s is one of them. What are the causes of this feminization of migration? A Japanese sociologist, Akihiro Koido, sees two main reasons: male immigrant workers bringing their wives and children to join them; and the migration of workers involved in the domain of human reproduction (Koido 2005: 12-13). Regarding the latter, Saskia Sassen states that the 'professional household without a wife' started to hire foreign domestic workers to solve the care crisis (Sassen 2004: 259). Cross-border transfer of reproductive workers is, according to this line of explanation, a part of the global reconfiguration of gender roles.

It seems probable that a connection exists between quantitative change and qualitative change in cross-border migration. The decline of fertility to a sub-replacement level in developed countries has, together with the lengthening of life expectancy, also resulted in an aged society. One of the authors of this paper, Emiko Ochiai, has previously shown that aged societies are burdened not only with the decline of the labor force, but also with an even more serious shortage of domestic labor in-

cluding care labor (Ochiai 2000: 167). The increase in cross-border migration of women for human reproduction is a response to this demographic change rather than only being the solution to gender role changes in developed countries.

In a large part of Asia, there is another characteristic of societies with low fertility that influences the feminization of cross-border migration: a shortage of potential brides due to the extensive practice of sex-selective induced abortion favoring males in the process of fertility transition (Poston & Glover 2005). Consequently, since near the end of the 20th century when the generation of babies born in the period of low fertility reached marriageable age, cross-border marriages have become a very common phenomenon. This shortage is aggravated by the contradiction between the cultural tradition that wives are expected to be younger than their husbands and the demographic reality that the age pyramid of the population is evolving towards the shape of a spindle.

Here, as a phenomenon which accompanies the 'feminization of cross-border migration', we may introduce the concept of 'globalization of reproduction'. By this we primarily mean the phenomenon of migrants taking on roles such as housekeeping; care for children, the elderly, and the ill; moral and social cultivations of children; and sex and reproduction. Behind the globalization of reproduction is the population structure of each particular society as well as the hierarchical structure of the international economy. The migrants who perform this role are known, depending on their function, as domestic workers (maids), caregivers, nurses, nannies, entertainers, sex workers, and wives.

While it may seem strange to list 'wives' together with all of these other roles, the fact is that the various roles performed by reproductive workers come from the specialization of the tasks that have traditionally been performed by the wife in the modern family. From a historical perspective, until the advent of the modern family unit, the employment of domestic workers was universal (Fauve-Chamoux 2005). With the decrease in the employment of domestic workers in the 20th century, reproductive labor became primarily the task of the wife; after more than half a century, the employment of domestic workers – this time mostly from abroad – has returned. Recently, the tendency in international migration research that has separated 'family migration' from 'labor migration' and overemphasized the latter has been criticized by researchers of cross-border women's migration (Piper & Roces 2003).

Although in recent times Japan shares the common phenomena of the feminization of immigration and an increase in cross-border marriages with other economically well-off Asian societies such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea, the mechanisms in Japan can be quite different from those of other Asian societies for two main reasons. Firstly, the distortion in the sex-ratio at birth due to gender-selec-

tive abortion does not exist in Japan. Secondly, and more importantly, the Japanese government does not allow the immigration of domestic workers due to its strong restriction on low-skilled immigrants. These two main differences make Japan a particularly interesting case to study.

The main purpose of this paper is to gain better insights into the feminization of immigration and cross-border marriages in Japan, based mainly on two sources of data: 1) marriage and divorce registration data from Vital Statistics; and especially 2) a large representative sample of the 2000 census of Japan.[2]

The organization of the remaining part of the paper is as follows. In section 2, we present a temporal overview of the feminization of Japan's immigration and the changing patterns of Japan's cross-border marriages. In sections 3 to 7, we focus on an in-depth analysis of the 1995-2000 period, based mainly on the rich micro data of the 2000 census. In section 8, we make a brief comparison between Japan on the one hand and China and Canada on the other. The paper ends with a concluding discussion in section 9.

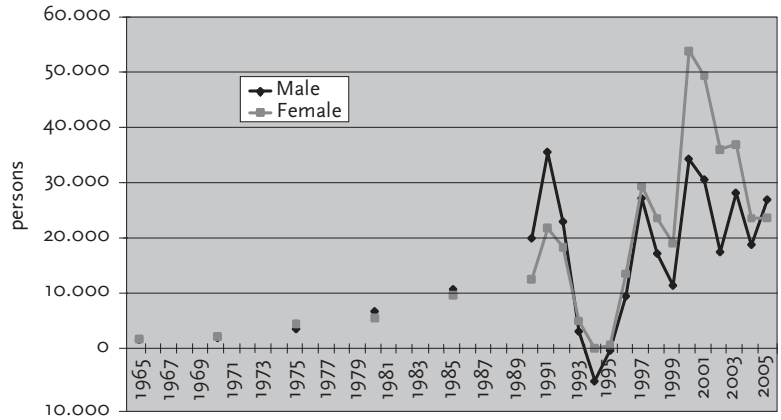
3.2 Female immigration and cross-border marriages to Japan: temporal overview

3.2.1 Changes in the pattern of immigration to Japan

Japan's net inflow of immigrants was very small and was approximately equal for males and females from the rapid growth period of the 1960s until 1987 (Figure 3.1; Population Statistics of Japan 2007, Table 10-6). During the 'bubble' economy in the late 1980s and the very beginning of the 1990s, Japan's net gain of immigrants, particularly males, increased sharply, reaching a height of 35,000 male immigrants and 22,000 female immigrants in 1991. The increase was mainly induced by a shortage of low-skilled workers and laborers in the manufacturing and construction sectors.

To deal with this new trend in immigration, after a long and heated debate, the Japanese government revised the immigration law in 1990, based on the idea of dividing foreign immigrants into two categories, 'Professionals and Technicians' and 'Low-skilled Laborers', and accepting only the former. This dichotomy became the principle of Japan's immigration policy since then. To fill the gap between the necessity of low-skilled labor and its formal restriction, the new law granted *Nikkeijin* (foreign citizens of Japanese descent), mostly from Brazil and partly from Peru, the privileged status of 'long-term resident', which gives them the freedom not only to reside but also to hold and change jobs in Japan. The statuses of company 'trainee' and 'student' were also used

Figure 3.1 *Net migration of foreigners to Japan by sex, 1965-2005*



Source: Population Statistics of Japan 2007, Table 10-8

as loopholes by some employers to recruit low-skilled and low-wage labor into Japan (Suzuki 2006: 190-192, 196-199).[3]

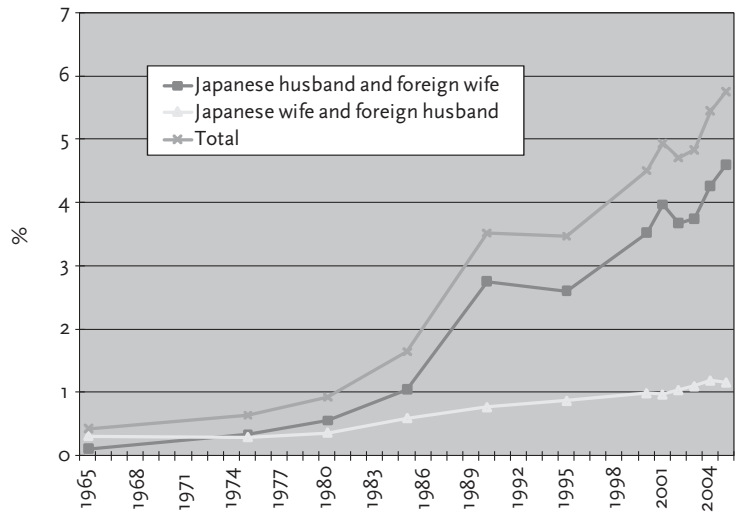
The bursting of the economic bubble resulted in a zero net gain of female immigrants and a net loss of male immigrants in 1994. Despite the prolonged economic stagnation since the bursting of the bubble, the shortage of cheap and low-skilled labor became serious not only in manufacturing and construction but also in the service sector, mainly as a consequence of the lagged effect of Japan's sharp fertility decline and the unwillingness of Japanese young adults to take menial and dead-end jobs. Despite the Japanese government's stance of not wanting low-skilled immigrants, this shortage induced a large increase in Japan's net gain of mostly low-skilled immigrants since the late 1990s. In the meantime, the pattern of female-dominant immigration became established as a consequence not only of Japan's increasing shortages of low-skilled female workers but also its localized shortages of potential brides. When we reconsider the international migration turnaround in Japan verified by Ishikawa (2005a) from the viewpoint of gender, the contribution of women stands out clearly. The marked downward swing of the number of female immigrants in recent years is partly due to a reduction of 'entertainers' (Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice 2006), who actually work in bars or even in the sex industry, as a consequence of the policy change influenced by the criticism from the United States government and human-rights groups.[4]

3.2.2 Increase in cross-border marriages

Cross-border marriages with one party being Japanese have increased dramatically since the 1980s. The percentage of cross-border marriages in Japan has grown from 0.43 percent in 1965 to 0.93 percent in 1980, and then to 5.77 percent in 2005 (Figure 3.2). Although the 2005 level is still quite low in comparison to Taiwan and South Korea, it certainly shows that Japan is not immune to the global trend towards more cross-border marriages. Viewing the particulars of these marriages, we find that the increase mostly consists of marriages of non-Japanese women to Japanese men. The number of such marriages increased by a factor of eight between 1980 and 2005 (Figure 3.2; Population Statistics of Japan 2007, Table 6-16).

A greater opportunity to meet potential spouses due to increased exchanges with foreign countries, and interaction with foreign 'entertainers' in Japan, can certainly be cited among the causes for the growth in cross-border marriages of non-Japanese women to Japanese men. However, the initiatives of local government and private matchmaking services for Japanese men and Asian women have also been an important cause. In rural and agricultural areas, there has been a marriage squeeze for men since the high-growth period of the 1960s, so much

Figure 3.2 *Increase in the proportion of cross-border marriages in Japan, 1965-2005*



Source: Population Statistics of Japan 2007, Table 6-16

so that the term 'bride famine' was coined by the 1980s (Mitsuoka 1989: 13-15). A true milestone in this story took place in 1985 in Asahi Town in Nishimurayama County, Yamagata Prefecture, when the local government acted as a go-between for local Japanese men and Filipina women. Before long, a large number of local governing bodies were involved in policies which tried to reduce the marriage squeeze by promoting cross-border marriages (Shukuya 1988: 40-82). By the mid-1980s, private matchmaking companies had also appeared. The situation was described at the time as 'Dozens of companies advertise openly in the weekly magazines, targeting the many unattached men' (Shukuya 1988: 136).[5] These included both traditional matchmaking enterprises that extended their scope to cross-border marriages as well as brand-new endeavors (Shukuya 1988: 5). Even programs sponsored by local governments were often linked with private businesses.

3.2.3 Causes of marriage squeeze

What was the cause for the marriage squeeze that was presumably the main reason for the growth in cross-border marriages in Japan? Unlike other regions of East Asia, Japan has not experienced sex-selective induced abortion of female children in its fertility transition. This could be partially because in the 1950s, when the fertility transition happened in Japan, methods for identifying the sex of an unborn fetus had not yet been well developed. But even after such methods were available, an imbalance in the sex ratio at birth did not occur in Japan. Japan's sex ratio at birth from the 1970s to 2004 has been fixed in the range between 105.2 and 106.7. This may be contrasted with areas in East Asia like Taiwan and South Korea, in which the imbalance in the sex ratio at birth remains high even today.

What needs to be emphasized here is the difference in the structure of the kinship system between China, Korea and Japan. The patrilineal descent group that exists in China and Korea does not exist in Japan. 'When a family has only daughters, the practice is not to adopt a nephew from the father's side into the family, but rather to make the daughter's husband the adopted son-in-law so that he can become the family heir' (Kurosu & Ochiai 1995). Parents do not feel pressure to have sons to maintain the family line. If anything, the trend for young Japanese couples at present seems to be to prefer a girl.[6]

However, similar to other regions of East Asia, the internal migration process in Japan has been highly selective with respect to gender. Yoshitaka Ishikawa examined the geographic distribution of 'marriage squeeze based on unbalanced sex ratios in the marriageable population' and found out that 'the proportion of unmarried persons in mountain villages was especially high'. Also, 'in urban areas, and especially in the

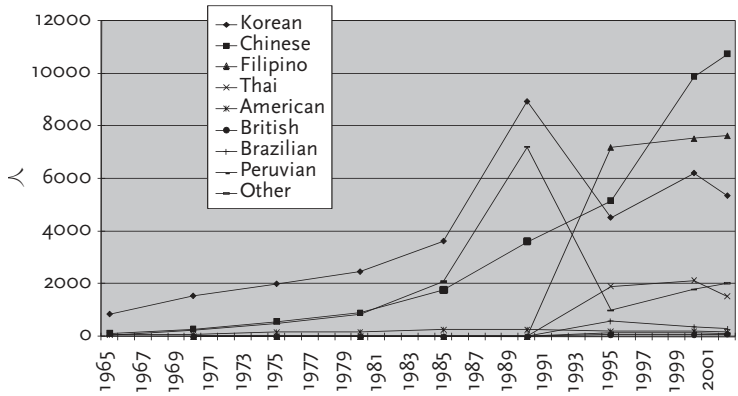
main cities of the three largest metropolitan regions (Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya), many wards had figures of 30 percent or higher' (Ishikawa 2003). In the prime marital age interval (i.e. between the ages of 25 and 30 years of age), there has been a much greater net loss of females in rural and peripheral areas, especially in remote rural villages and towns.[7] On the other hand, the rapidly growing large metropolitan areas, especially the Tokyo metropolitan area in eastern Japan, has also experienced a relative shortage of female migrants in the prime marital age interval compared to the rest of the country. Thus, as a consequence of gender-selectivity in the internal migration of the Japanese, shortages of potential brides in Japan are relatively serious at the two extremes of the rural-urban hierarchy of the settlement system. Ishikawa also found that 'the marriage squeeze for men is most pronounced in Eastern Japan, especially in the Kanto region. In contrast, the situation in Western Japan is less severe' (Ishikawa 2003: 293).

From a broader socioeconomic and cultural perspective, the marriage squeeze in Japan is related to such factors as the hard work of farming, low income, the inconvenience of village life, conflicts between brides and their co-resident mothers-in-law, the low status of women, old-fashioned customs, and the lack of employment opportunities (Mitsuoka 1990: 40-60). Some also see the source of the problem in the men themselves (Kuwayama 1995). All of these issues may not only lead Japanese women to want to avoid living in rural areas; often they also deeply disappoint women who have come from abroad to marry Japanese men, and can contribute to stress, illness, domestic discord and divorce (Kuwayama 1995).

3.2.4 Changes in nationality of foreign brides

The dramatic increase in the number of marriages between foreign women and Japanese men since the 1980s was accompanied by changes in the major nationalities of the foreign brides. Just prior to the increase in cross-border marriages, in 1980, the nationality of the foreign brides in 56 percent of these marriages was Korean (there is a large population in Japan of ethnic Koreans that have retained their original nationality). Subsequently, the numbers from China (including Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong) and other Asian countries also increased. In 1990, at the height of the bubble economy, the share of those from Korea and other countries (Philippines, Thailand, etc.) reached its peak.[8] After the collapse of the bubble economy, the positions of Korea and the Philippines were reversed, while from 2000 onward the share of brides from China rose far above these, a situation which continued at least to 2002 (Figure 3.3; from Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2002; Population Statistics of Japan 2005, Table 6-17).

Figure 3.3 *Changes in nationality of foreign wives of Japanese husbands, 1965-2002*



*Filipino, Thai, British, Brazilian, and Peruvian were included in the category "Other" through 1991. Source: Population Statistics of Japan 2005, Table 6-17

What are the reasons for these changes? In Mogami County, Yamagata Prefecture, the groundbreaking region for cross-border marriages, international marriages have been divided into three periods: the 'Philippine period' prior to 1990; the 'Korean period' between 1990 and 1992; and then the 'Chinese period'. The changes in marriage-broker firms might be one cause of the changes in primary nationality. There were also cases where they tried to set the course for the future by promoting their own preferences. Advertisements by marriage brokers claimed that 'Women from... do not make good matches for Japanese men. They have strong personalities and are very self-assertive. But this time everything will be fine! She's a pure country girl from Vietnam – perfect for Yamagata!' Ironically, the slogans point to the potential for trouble caused by illusions about Asian women (Kuwayama 1995: 16-17).

Another reason for the peak and decline in the increase of Filipina brides may have been the criticism from human-rights groups and the United States government, which led the Japanese government to tighten limits on the immigration of Filipina 'entertainers'.

3.3 Research data for the analyses of the patterns in the late 1990s

The late 1990s was an important epoch in Japan's immigration history. It was the period of recovery of cross-border migration to Japan after the stagnation caused by the collapse of the economic bubble in the

early 1990s. The international migration turnaround took place, and the feminization of immigration started in this period (Figure 3.1). In the meantime, the rapid increase in cross-border marriages resumed (Figure 3.2), while the major nationalities of the brides changed (Figure 3.3). The late 1990s was also the period when the selective effects of the ethnocentric principle underlying the 1990 revision of the immigration law became apparent.

Our examination of the salient features of Japan's female immigration and cross-border marriages in the late 1990s is based mainly on our original analyses of the data we obtained from the Statistics Bureau and partly on the marriage and divorce registration data in Vital Statistics and the entry and residence registrations of foreigners in Japan. The data from the Statistics Bureau are a representative sample taken from the complete records of the 2000 population census of Japan. The sample includes 5 percent of all foreign residents who entered Japan in 1995-2000 and were aged 15 or over as of the census date of 1 October. The 2000 census includes 1,157,316 foreign residents aged 15 or over, and 358,631 among them were what we call 'new immigrants' in the sense that they entered Japan sometime between 1 October 1995 and 30 September 2000. Our sample contains 17,931 of these new immigrants. With this large sample, we are no longer subject to the tight constraint of the limited numbers of published tables from the census.[9]

In order to get some insight into cross-border marriages, we used the relationship with the head of the household recorded in the census to classify new female immigrants into three categories: 1) wife of the head of the household; 2) daughter-in-law of the head of the household; and 3) 'other'. The distinction between 1) and 2) is important, because the latter is closely connected to the problem in sustaining the traditional stem family system which is called the *ie*. Although our sample from the census is limited by the lack of information on the nationality of the husbands of foreign wives, we can safely assume that most husbands of those in the first two categories are Japanese, with two exceptions. The first exception involves the *Nikkeijin* (foreign citizens of Japanese descent), mostly from Brazil and to a lesser extent Peru, who were welcomed by the Japanese government to come with their family members since the 1990 revision of the immigration law. The second exception involves Koreans who for historical reasons have had a large ethnic community in Japan for several generations. The majority of those in the third category were workers and students who have no spouse in Japan.

It is useful to keep in mind that the census may substantially undercount immigrants, because visa overstayers may choose to avoid being covered by the census in order to reduce the risk of being deported. Ta-

ble 3.1 shows the difference in the size of the immigrant population between the census and registration sources for the year 2000, disaggregated by nationality. Overall, the number captured by the census (1.3 million) is 78 percent of the number recorded in the registration at the end of the year. For every nationality group, the census figure is smaller than the corresponding registration figure. Among Asian nationalities, the gap is the largest for Filipinas. For an analysis of these gaps, see Ishikawa (2005b).

3.4 The increase and the nationality changes of new female immigrants and foreign wives in the late 1990s

3.4.1 Sex ratio and nationality of immigrants

The number of 'new' female immigrants (i.e. those arriving in 1995-2000) appearing in the 2000 census is 189,446, which consists of 52.8 percent of the total number of new immigrants, 358,631. The sex ratio of new immigrants to Japan is 89. Feminization of migration can certainly be revealed by the census data as well.

According to census data (Table 3.1), the top four nationalities of the immigrants in Japan in 2000, on stock basis including men and women, are: 1) Korean (40.4 percent); 2) Chinese (19.3 percent); 3) Brazilian (14.4 percent); and 4) Filipino (7.1 percent). However, among the new female immigrants, the Chinese share is the largest (35.7 percent), followed by Brazilians (19.1 percent), Filipinas (14.3 percent) and Koreans (10.2 percent) as shown in Table 3.2. The ascendance of China and Brazil as the top two sources of new immigrants by the late 1990s is

Table 3.1 *Immigrant population in Japan, according to the 2000 census (Oct. 1) and the foreign resident registration as of December 31, 2000*

Nationality	*Census Data*		*Registration Data*		*Difference*	*Ratio*
	Size	*Distribution*	*Size*	*Distribution*		
	(persons)	*(%)*	*(persons)*	*(%)*	*(persons)*	*(%)*
British	10,073	0.8	16,525	1.0	-6,452	61.0
Filipino	93,352	7.1	144,871	8.6	-51,519	64.4
Peruvian	33,478	2.6	46,171	2.7	-12,693	72.5
Brazilian	188,190	14.4	254,394	15.1	-66,204	74.0
Chinese	252,680	19.3	335,575	19.9	-82,895	75.3
Thai	23,862	1.8	29,289	1.7	-5,427	81.5
Korean	528,904	40.4	635,269	37.7	-106,365	83.3
American	38,575	2.9	44,856	2.7	-6,281	86.0
Other	141,431	10.8	179,494	10.6	-38,063	78.8
All	1,310,545	100.0	1,686,444	100.0	-375,899	77.7

Source: Census Report and *Vital Statistics*

Table 3.2 *Compositions of the 1995-2000 new female immigrants (aged 15+ in 2000) by nationality and household status*

Nationality	*Volume (persons)*				*Composition by HH Status (%)*			*Composition by Nationality (%)*			
	Wife of head	*Daughter-in-law*	*Other*	*All*	*Wife of head*	*Daughter-in-law*	*Other*	*Wife of head*	*Daughter-in-law*	*Other*	*All*
					A. In Japan						
Chinese	24,701	3,080	39,861	67,642	36.5	4.6	58.9	29.9	41.3	40.1	35.7
Brazilian	20,181	320	15,701	36,201	55.7	0.9	43.4	24.4	4.3	15.8	19.1
Filipino	12,080	2,060	12,960	27,101	44.6	7.6	47.8	14.6	27.6	13.0	14.3
Korean	8,740	660	9,880	19,281	45.3	3.4	51.2	10.6	8.8	9.9	10.2
Thai	2,900	660	2,060	5,620	51.6	11.7	36.7	3.5	8.8	2.1	3.0
Peruvian	2,140	20	2,080	4,240	50.5	0.5	49.1	2.6	0.3	2.1	2.2
Indonesian	880	80	1,540	2,500	35.2	3.2	61.6	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.3
Other	10,940	580	15,341	26,861	40.7	2.2	57.1	13.3	7.8	15.4	14.2
All	82,563	7,460	99,423	189,446	43.6	3.9	52.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
					B. In Tohoku Region and Niigata Prefecture						
Chinese	2,000	1,180	3,840	7,020	28.5	16.8	54.7	41.3	55.1	53.8	49.7
Brazilian	500	20	400	920	54.3	2.2	43.5	10.3	0.9	5.6	6.5
Filipino	840	420	1,220	2,480	33.9	16.9	49.2	17.4	19.6	17.1	17.6
Korean	840	380	300	1,520	55.3	25.0	19.7	17.4	17.8	4.2	10.8
Thai	140	80	60	280	50.0	28.6	21.4	2.9	3.7	0.8	2.0
Peruvian	40	0	0	40	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.3
Indonesian	80	0	160	240	33.3	0.0	66.7	1.7	0.0	2.2	1.7
Other	400	60	1,160	1,620	24.7	3.7	71.6	8.3	2.8	16.2	11.5
All	4,840	2,140	7,140	14,120	34.3	15.2	50.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Inflated from the 5% representative sample of the 2000 population census

particularly impressive. The sharp increase of Brazilian immigrants (mostly *Nikkeijin*) was facilitated by the 1990 revision of the immigration law as mentioned in section 2. The sharp increase in Chinese immigrants was accomplished via several channels such as company 'trainees', 'students' in post-secondary educational institutions as well as dubious language schools for illegal workers, and brides for Japanese men. Since they are the four largest components of both the stock and the flow of immigrants, our analysis focuses mainly on these four nationalities.

The 2000 census data show that the feminization of Japan's new immigrants was highly selective with respect to nationality. Consistent with the reports about the recruitment of entertainers from the Philippines, new Filipino immigrants were dominated by females, i.e. 81.1 percent of them were females. The increasing recruitment of Chinese and Korean female immigrants into the low-wage stratum in manufacturing and service sectors as well as into the cross-border marriage market also helped make these two groups highly female-dominant: 59 percent of new immigrants from each of these two sources were females. In contrast, given the freedom to choose and change jobs and to reside as family units in Japan due to the 1990 revision of the immigration law, new Brazilian immigrants (with 46.0 percent being females) were somewhat male-dominant. Those from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Western European countries also remained male-dominant, with less than 40 percent being females. Many of them were foreign language teachers and professionals with at least a university degree. Most of these Westerners in Japan are at a temporary stage in the development of their professional careers that are rooted in their home countries (Kajita 1994).

This Asian versus non-Asian contrast in the feminization of Japan's immigration should not be taken as a simple geographical phenomenon. What is important is to be aware of the underlying cultural and socioeconomic reasons for the apparent geographical contrasts, as demonstrated by the following two exceptions. Firstly, the 11,280 new immigrants from Indonesia, with only 22.1 percent being females, were strongly male-dominant. This strong male domination is related to the strong moral sanctions against commercial sex and the consumption of alcohol imposed by the teaching of Islam in their home country. Secondly, the 2,620 new immigrants from Russia and Romania, with as many as 76.3 percent being female, were strongly female-dominant. This is related to the fact that white women under the post-communist economic hardships in these Eastern European countries were recruited by the entertainment industry of Japan to extract large sums of money from Japanese businessmen and bureaucrats who have fat expense accounts and a preference for white women.

3.4.2 The nationality of foreign wives

Classifying the new female immigrants by their relationship to the household head, we find that there are 82,563 wives of the head of the household, 7,460 daughters-in-law of the head of the household, and 99,423 persons in the 'other' category. These categories constitute 42.6 percent, 3.9 percent and 52.5 percent of the total number respectively (Table 3.2). Although practically all of those in the second category are wives of Japanese nationals, some of those in the first category such as Brazilians are not married to native Japanese. Using the data of the 2000 census, the marriage registration, and the registration of foreign residents, together with a set of reasonable assumptions, we have determined that about 40 percent of the 1995-2000 new female immigrants were the brides of Japanese nationals (Ochiai, Liaw & Ishikawa 2007).[10] This high proportion helps highlight the fundamental difference between immigration into Japan and into other countries where domestic and healthcare workers represent the main components of female immigrants.

The fact that the increase in new immigrants in the late 1990s was closely connected to a sharp increase in cross-border marriages of foreign women to Japanese men can also be revealed by the data of marriage registration (Table 3.3). The number of such marriages in Japan increased from 20,787 in 1995 to 28,326 in 2000 – a 36.3 percent increase in five years.

There were very distinct differences in the patterns of the increase in foreign brides with respect to nationality (Table 3.3). The greatest increase was in brides from China, which nearly doubled between 1995

Table 3.3 *The nationality of foreign brides of Japanese men registered in 1995 and 2000*

Nationality	*Number of marriages*					
	1995		*2000*		*Increase*	
	(person)	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*
Chinese	5,174	25	9,884	35	4,710	91.0
Filipino	7,188	35	7,519	27	331	4.6
Korean	4,521	22	6,214	22	1,693	37.4
Thai	1,915	9	2,137	8	222	11.6
Brazilian	579	3	357	1	-222	-38.3
American	198	1	202	1	4	2.0
Peruvian	–	–	145	1		
Total	20,787	100	28,326	100	7,539	36.3

Source: Vital Statistics

and 2000, so that they now make up the highest share of brides of all foreign nationalities. As well as the rising numbers of Chinese brides, the number of Korean brides also increased sharply by 37.4 percent. These two nationalities made up 85 percent of the increase in foreign brides between 1995 and 2000. In comparison, the number of Brazilian women marrying Japanese nationals, which was already relatively small in 1995, decreased by 38.3 percent. The number of Filipina brides, which had the largest share in 1995, increased by a mere 4.6 percent in the following five years.

In 1995 and 2000 alike, the main sources of foreign brides for Japan were China, the Philippines and Korea. In combination, these three countries accounted for 81.2 percent and 83.4 percent of foreign brides in 1995 and 2000, respectively. Coming in fourth was Thailand, but the numbers were far lower. Numbers from South America and the United States were insignificant. The vast majority of foreign brides came from East and Southeast Asia.

Of particular interest is the fact that despite their biological affinity to Japanese nationals, the *Nikkeijin* from Brazil (and to a lesser extent Peru) had an extremely low propensity to become brides of Japanese nationals: in 2000, there were only 357 Brazilian brides, compared with 6,214 Korean brides, 7,519 Filipina brides and 9,884 Chinese brides. The first reason for this extremely low propensity is that, as suggested by the gap between Table 3.3 and Table 3.2, Brazilians were already married among themselves. As the second reason, we assume that the cultural difference between Japanese and *Nikkeijin* who were brought up in a Latin American culture was a stronger factor than biological affinity. We can also consider the possibility that under Japan's restrictive immigration law, many foreigners may use such a marriage as a strategy for gaining the opportunities to work and reside in Japan on a long-term basis. Based on this perspective, the extremely low propensity of the Brazilians to become brides of Japanese nationals can be explained as the lack of necessity to do so under the immigration law that gave them the privileged status of 'long-term resident'.

3.5 Education and employment of new female immigrants

3.5.1 Education levels

Among the new female immigrants aged 15+ in the 2000 census, 84.3 percent had graduated from school at some level and 15.0 percent were attending school as of the census date. For simplicity, we call the latter group 'students'. With respect to nationalities, the shares of students in the new female immigrants were as high as 24.1 percent for both Chinese and Koreans, and only 4.0 percent for Brazilians and 2.0 percent

for Filipinas. The census data show that among the in-school new female immigrants from China, 63.7 percent were at the university level, 27.5 percent were at the college level, and only 6.9 percent were at the high school level, while the corresponding figures for the Koreans were 63.9 percent, 23.9 percent, and 9.0 percent, respectively.[11] The sharp contrast between Chinese and Koreans on the one hand and Brazilians and Filipinas on the other suggests that by going through the education system in Japan, a higher proportion of the female immigrants from China and Korea have a better chance to develop successful working careers in Japan (Zeng & Xu 2004) and to become more compatible brides for Japanese men.

The education level of female immigrants is not necessarily low as usually believed (Table 3.4). More than 37 percent of all female immigrants had university or college education. On the other hand, one-fifth of them had a lower level of education than high school. Thus, the variation of their educational level was large. Hidden beneath this variation were the effects of household status and especially nationality.

With respect to household status, 'wives' and those in the 'other' category had similar levels of educational attainment, although the variation is larger for the latter. 'Daughters-in-law' were the least well educated among the three categories. Only 22 percent of 'daughters-in-law' had college or university education, compared with 35 percent of 'wives', and 40 percent of the 'other' category (Table 3.4). This finding suggests that potential foreign brides tend to prefer the status of 'wife' over the status of 'daughter-in-law' and that those who have become 'wife' and 'daughter-in-law' were recruited from different social groups in sending countries.

Table 3.4 *New female immigrants in 1995-2000 (aged 15+ in 2000) by education level*

Education level	*Wife of head*		*Daughter-in-law*		*Other*		*Total*	
	(person)	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*
University	20,421	24.7%	1,140	15.3%	28,741	28.9%	50,302	26.6%
College	8,800	10.7%	520	7.0%	11,300	11.4%	20,620	10.9%
High school	31,721	38.4%	3,620	48.5%	31,121	31.3%	66,462	35.1%
Lower than high school	15,000	18.2%	1,640	22.0%	21,421	21.5%	38,061	20.1%
No education	440	0.5%	60	0.8%	680	0.7%	1,180	0.6%
Unknown	6,180	7.5%	480	6.4%	6,160	6.2%	12,820	6.8%
Total	82,562	100.0%	7,460	100.0%	99,423	100.0%	189,445	100.0%

Note: At each level of education, both the graduated ones and those still attending school are included.
Source: Inflated from the 5% representative sample of the 2000 population census.

In addition to having many students studying in Japanese universities among them, the new female immigrants of Chinese and Korean nationalities were also much better educated than their Brazilian and Filipina counterparts. For example, among the new female immigrants aged 25-59, 38.4 percent of Koreans and 31.3 percent of Chinese were university graduates, while the corresponding figures for Brazilians and Filipinas were only 14.3 percent and 18.1 percent, respectively. This sharp difference suggests that in Japan, Chinese and Korean females are less likely to be stuck in a dead-end job than are Brazilian and Filipina females.

Why were the new female immigrants from Brazil and the Philippines not as well educated as their Korean and Chinese counterparts? The low educational qualifications of those from the Philippines could be largely explained by the fact that they were mainly recruited as entertainers and that these jobs were not appealing to well-educated females. The low educational qualifications of those from Brazil were largely due to the fact that most of the *Nikkeijin* in Brazil had acculturated to the Portuguese language and Brazilian customs and could not use the Japanese language at the level necessary for functioning as a professional in Japan. Therefore, those with post-secondary education had little reason for developing their professional career in Japan, despite the clear intent of the 1990 revision of Japan's immigration law to welcome their return to the 'motherland'.

3.5.2 Employment status and types of jobs

Regarding employment status, 62.2 percent of 'wives' and 69.7 percent of 'daughters-in-law' were not employed, while 67.5 percent of 'other' new female immigrants were employed (Table 3.5). Most of those who were employed were regular or temporary employees. The proportion of family workers was small, in spite of the common idea that foreign wives in farming households are used as family labor. Although among these three groups of new female immigrants, daughters-in-law were most likely to be family workers, yet only 6 percent of daughters-in-law were family workers. The primary role of a foreign wife in her husband's household seems to be doing unpaid reproductive work rather than contributing to a household income. Daughters-in-law were much less likely to be employed, not only because their educational attainment was relatively low but also because they were probably more confined to their reproductive and domestic duties.

With information on both industries and occupations, our sample from the census enables us to obtain substantial insights into the types of jobs held by the employed new female immigrants. We define a job type as a cell in a cross-tabulation of the sample by seven industry cate-

Table 3.5 *New female immigrants in 1995-2000 (aged 15+ in 2000) by employment status*

Employment status	*Wife of head*		*Daughter-in-law*		*Other*		*Total*	
	(person)	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*	*(person)*	*(%)*
Not employed	51,362	62.2%	5,200	69.7%	32,341	32.5%	88,903	46.9%
Unknown	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	20	0.0%	20	0.0%
Employee regular	17,561	21.3%	1,060	14.2%	38,701	38.9%	57,322	30.3%
Employee temporary	11,680	14.1%	740	9.9%	27,461	27.6%	39,881	21.1%
Manager	380	0.5%	0	0.0%	340	0.3%	720	0.4%
Selfemployed with employee	160	0.2%	0	0.0%	200	0.2%	360	0.2%
Selfemployed without employee	340	0.4%	0	0.0%	220	0.2%	560	0.3%
Family worker	920	1.1%	440	5.9%	120	0.1%	1,480	0.8%
Side worker	160	0.2%	20	0.3%	20	0.0%	200	0.1%
Total	82,563	100.0%	7,460	100.0%	99,423	100.0%	189,446	100.0%

Note: "Family worker" is "Katei-juugyousha", whereas "Side worker" is "Katei-naishokusha".
Source: Inflated from the 5% representative sample of the 2000 population census.

gories and ten occupation categories. The three most important industry categories are: 1) the manufacturing industries; 2) the sales industries (including wholesale, retail, and eating and drinking outlets); and 3) the service industries (including accommodations such as hot springs where many female immigrants are employed to entertain male guests).[12] The five most important occupation categories are: 1) manual workers (e.g. workers in physical production processes such as assembly); 2) service workers (e.g. waitresses, hairdressers, massagers, hostesses, and 'companions'); 3) professionals (including not only such highly skilled workers as engineers and computer scientists but also 'singers' and 'dancers'); 4) sales workers; and 5) clerks.[13] Among the 70 job types, the new employed female immigrants were strongly concentrated in a small number of job types: 1) 52.1 percent were manual workers in the manufacturing industry; 2) 14.4 percent were service workers in the sales industry; 3) 8.9 percent were professionals in the service industry; 4) 3.2 percent were manual workers in the service industry; and 5) 3.1 percent were service workers in the service industry.[14]

Although we have so far focused on the reproductive functions of the new female immigrants, our analysis of the census data reveals that the feminization of the manufacturing industry has provided the female immigrants with a large number of manual jobs.[15] Most of these manu-

facturing jobs are offered by the subcontracting and sub-subcontracting firms of large corporations and are characterized by poorly paid, tedious, and repetitive work. The need to keep pace with fast-moving assembly lines in these jobs also shortens the employees' productive and endurable working life (Ioshiaqui 2004). Due to such negative aspects, these firms have serious difficulty in filling these jobs with native workers.

Due to various contextual reasons, the jobs held by the employed new female immigrants differed substantially among the four major nationalities. The sharpest difference was between Brazilians and Koreans. Brazilians were extremely concentrated in a single job type: 1) 82.9 percent were manual workers in the manufacturing industry; 2) 4.5 percent were manual workers in the service industry; and 3) 1.7 percent were service workers in the service industry. By contrast, Koreans were dispersed among several job types, mostly in sales and service industries: 1) 38 percent were service workers in the sales industry; 2) 10.1 percent were manual workers in the manufacturing industry; 3) 8.7 percent were sales workers in the sales industry; 4) 7.7 percent were professionals in the service industry; 5) 6.3 percent were service workers in the service industry; 6) 3.8 percent were clerks in the service industry; and 7) 3.5 percent were manual workers in the sales industry.

Between these two extremes, Chinese were similar to Brazilians in the sense that a large majority of them (60.3 percent) were manual workers in the manufacturing industry. Chinese were also similar to Koreans in the sense that they were somewhat dispersed in sales and service industries: 11.8 percent were service workers in the sales industry; 3.5 percent were professionals in the sales industry; 3.1 percent were manual workers in the service industry; 3.0 percent were service workers in the service industry; and 2.9 percent were manual workers in the service industry.

Filipinas were more similar to Koreans than Brazilians at first glance: 1) 44.9 percent were service workers in the sales industry; 2) 20.1 percent were manual workers in the manufacturing industry; 3) 12.1 percent were 'professionals' (mostly 'entertainers') in the sales industry; and 4) 5.8 percent were 'professionals' in the service industry. Those from the Philippines who had the occupational status of 'professional' are inferred to be mostly entertainers, because only 9 percent of them had a university education and as many as 35 percent of them were in the 20-24 year age group. In addition, as many as 98 percent of them were neither the wife of the head of a household nor the daughter-in-law of a head of the household, compared with 62 percent and 75 percent of their Chinese and Korean counterparts.

Next, we consider whether the jobs taken by university-graduated new female immigrants also differed substantially among the major for-

eign nationalities. Our more detailed analysis reveals that the mismatch between educational qualification and job type was the least serious for Chinese and Koreans and by far the worst for Brazilians.[16] This sharp difference might be largely due to the fact that Chinese and Korean females were more likely to have gotten their university degree in Japan and were more proficient in using the Japanese language than their Brazilian counterparts.

3.5.3 The effects of household status

The effects of household status were much weaker than the effects of nationality. Overall, the most important job type was manual worker in the manufacturing industry for each of the three household statuses (59 percent for 'wives'; 49 percent for 'others'; and 51 percent for 'daughters-in-law').

The finding that a very high proportion of 'wives' (59 percent) were manual workers in the manufacturing industry is rather misleading. It reflects mainly the fact that a very high proportion of the employed 'wives' (47 percent) were Brazilians who represented only 19 percent of the employed 'others' and 11 percent of the employed 'daughters-in-law'. Irrespective of household status, the employed Brazilians had an extremely strong tendency to be manual workers in the manufacturing industry: 84 percent for 'wives'; 81 percent for 'others'; and 92 percent for 'daughters-in-law' (the last number is based on only twelve persons in the sample). Among the employed Chinese, manual workers in the manufacturing industry actually represented only 36 percent of 'wives', compared to 67 percent of 'others' who were mostly brought into Japan as 'trainees'. Among the employed Koreans, being a manual worker in the manufacturing industry was a rather unimportant job type for at least two household statuses: representing only 16 percent of 'wives'; 5 percent of 'others', and 44 percent of 'daughters-in-law' (the last number is based on only nine persons in the sample).

Among the employed Filipinas, manual workers in the manufacturing industry represented a rather high proportion (44 percent) of 'wives' but only 12 percent of the 'others'. This finding reflects the fact that most of the Filipinas in the entertainment industry have no spouse in Japan. The top two job types for the employed Filipinas of the 'other' household status were: 1) service workers in the sales industry (53 percent); and 2) 'professionals' in the sales industry (15 percent).

The information on job type reveals that 'daughters-in-law' were more likely to enter agricultural households than were 'wives' and 'others'. Agricultural, fishery and forestry workers represented 11.5 percent of the employed 'daughters-in-law', compared with 1.3 percent of the employed 'wives' and 0.9 percent of the employed 'others'. But,

among all the three major source nationalities, the employed 'daughters-in-law' were much more likely to be manual workers in the manufacturing industry than agricultural, fishery, and forestry workers: 55 percent versus 11 percent for those from China; 44 percent versus 11 percent for those from Korea; and 44 percent versus 13 percent for those from the Philippines. This finding is related to the fact that the 'daughter-in-law' status was associated with low educational qualifications, and the fact that low educational qualification is associated with manual work in manufacturing.

In the next section, we show that the differences among the four major nationalities with respect to educational attainments and job types will help us understand better the destination choice patterns of the new female immigrants.

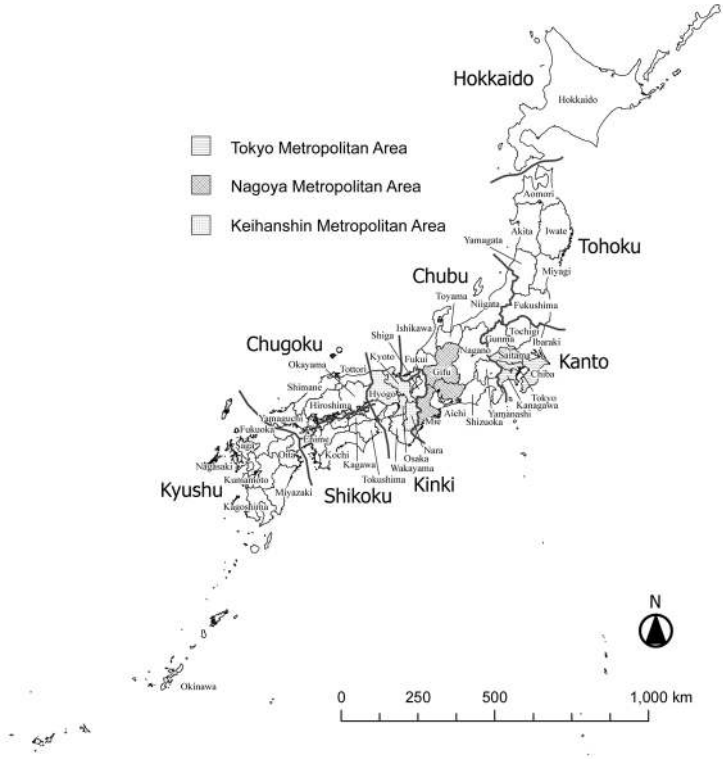
3.6 Spatial patterns of new female immigrants and foreign brides

3.6.1 The patterns of destination choice and educational and employment backgrounds

Both female and male new immigrants show strong preference for two areas: 1) the Kanto Region around Tokyo Prefecture; and 2) the Nagoya metropolitan area plus Shizuoka, Nagano, and Yamanashi Prefectures to its east and Shiga Prefecture to its west (Figure 3.4 and Table 3.6). The first area is the Tokyo metropolitan area plus three prefectures on its northern fringe. For both sexes, the strong concentration in Tokyo Prefecture is particularly impressive. While sharing 9.8 percent of the national population, Tokyo Prefecture was chosen by 16.6 percent of the new female immigrants and 18.4 percent of the new male immigrants. Underlying this very strong preference for Tokyo Prefecture were large concentrations of 1) both skilled and unskilled jobs in sales and service industries; 2) marriage brokerage firms; and 3) educational institutions; as well as the existence of large well-established co-ethnic communities in the case of Chinese and Korean immigrants. In northern Kanto, including Gunma, Ibaraki, and Tochigi Prefectures, where subcontracting firms in the manufacturing industry had attracted many foreign workers, the share of the new immigrants was also higher than the population share.

Being the most important stronghold of Japan's manufacturing industry, the second large concentration area of new immigrants in central Japan contains the home base of large manufacturing corporations like Toyota (in Aichi Prefecture) and Suzuki and Yamaha (both in Shizuoka Prefecture). For simplicity, we label this area as the 'Manufacturing Stronghold'. The manual jobs offered by the subcontracting and

Figure 3.4 *The prefectures, the regions and the three largest metropolitan areas of Japan*



sub-subcontracting firms of the large corporations in the Manufacturing Stronghold represented a strong magnet to attract the new immigrants of both sexes into this region. The attractions of Aichi (where Nagoya City is located), Shizuoka, and Nagao Prefectures in this region are particularly noteworthy (Table 3.6).

Reflecting their differences in educational attainments and major job types, the destination choice patterns of the new female immigrants differed sharply by nationality. Being best educated and preferring non-manufacturing jobs, those of Korean nationality were strongly concentrated in the four prefectures of the Tokyo metropolitan area. The share of them in Tokyo Prefecture was a very high, 33.7 percent! Tokyo metropolitan area's share of them was 54.6 percent, whereas its share of the national population was 26.7 percent. Being mostly modestly educated and actively recruited into the subcontracting and sub-subcontracting firms in manufacturing as manual workers, the new female immigrants with Brazilian nationality were very strongly concentrated in the Manu-

Table 3.6 *Comparison of interprefectural distribution between the 1995-2000 new immigrants and the 2000 total population of Japan: all restricted to those aged 15+ in 2000*

Prefecture	Distribution (%)				Deviation from Pop. of JPN (%)			Sex ratio of the 1995-2000 new immigrants	Prefecture
	Pop. of Japan in 2000	New 1995-2000 Immigrants			New 1995-2000 Immigrants				
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total		
Hokkaido	4.5	1.3	1.2	1.2	-3.2	-3.3	-3.3	100	Hokkaido
Aomori	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	82	Aomori
Iwate	1.1	0.3	0.7	0.5	-0.8	-0.4	-0.6	39	Iwate
Miyagi	1.9	1.0	1.5	1.3	-0.8	-0.4	-0.6	61	Miyagi
Akita	0.9	0.2	0.7	0.5	-0.7	-0.2	-0.5	25	Akita
Yamagata	1.0	0.3	1.2	0.8	-0.6	0.2	-0.2	24	Yamagata
Fukushima	1.6	0.7	1.4	1.1	-0.9	-0.3	-0.6	47	Fukushima
Ibaraki	2.3	3.6	3.2	3.4	1.3	0.8	1.1	103	Ibaraki
Tochigi	1.6	1.9	2.2	2.1	0.4	0.6	0.5	80	Tochigi
Gumma	1.6	3.3	2.6	3.0	1.8	1.0	1.4	115	Gumma
Saitama	5.5	5.7	5.1	5.4	0.2	-0.3	-0.1	99	Saitama
Chiba	4.7	4.8	5.0	4.9	0.1	0.3	0.2	84	Chiba
Tokyo	9.8	18.4	16.6	17.5	8.7	6.8	7.7	99	Tokyo
Kanagawa	6.7	7.4	5.7	6.5	0.7	-1.1	-0.2	117	Kanagawa
Niigata	1.9	1.0	1.6	1.3	-1.0	-0.4	-0.7	55	Niigata
Toyama	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.9	-0.1	0.1	0.0	76	Toyama
Ishikawa	0.9	0.9	0.6	0.7	-0.1	-0.3	-0.2	122	Ishikawa
Fukui	0.6	1.0	1.2	1.1	0.3	0.5	0.4	76	Fukui
Yamanashi	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.2	0.5	0.6	0.6	84	Yamanashi
Nagano	1.7	4.2	4.1	4.2	2.5	2.4	2.4	91	Nagano
Gifu	1.6	2.9	3.7	3.3	1.3	2.0	1.7	71	Gifu
Shizuoka	3.0	6.4	5.0	5.7	3.4	2.1	2.7	113	Shizuoka

Aichi	5.5	9.0	8.0	8.4	3.5	2.5	3.0	101	Aichi
Mie	1.5	2.4	2.3	2.3	1.0	0.8	0.9	95	Mie
Shiga	1.0	1.8	1.4	1.6	0.8	0.4	0.6	112	Shiga
Kyoto	2.1	1.4	1.5	1.5	-0.7	-0.6	-0.6	79	Kyoto
Osaka	7.0	4.6	4.6	4.6	-2.3	-2.3	-2.3	89	Osaka
Hyogo	4.4	2.6	2.5	2.5	-1.8	-1.9	-1.8	92	Hyogo
Nara	1.1	0.4	0.4	0.4	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	95	Nara
Wakayama	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.3	-0.7	-0.5	-0.6	43	Wakayama
Tottori	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.4	-0.2	0.0	-0.1	44	Tottori
Shimane	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.7	-0.2	0.3	0.1	44	Shimane
Okayama	1.5	0.9	1.1	1.0	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5	74	Okayama
Hiroshima	2.3	1.6	1.6	1.6	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	92	Hiroshima
Yamaguchi	1.2	0.4	0.7	0.6	-0.8	-0.5	-0.6	51	Yamaguchi
Tokushima	0.7	0.3	0.6	0.5	-0.3	0.0	-0.2	48	Tokushima
Kagawa	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.7	-0.2	0.0	-0.1	64	Kagawa
Ehime	1.2	0.4	0.8	0.6	-0.7	-0.4	-0.6	51	Ehime
Kochi	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3	76	Kochi
Fukuoka	3.9	1.7	2.0	1.9	-2.2	-2.0	-2.1	77	Fukuoka
Saga	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.3	-0.5	-0.3	-0.4	49	Saga
Nagasaki	1.2	0.5	0.6	0.6	-0.7	-0.6	-0.6	71	Nagasaki
Kumamoto	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.5	-1.1	-0.8	-0.9	51	Kumamoto
Oita	1.0	0.5	0.6	0.5	-0.5	-0.4	-0.4	68	Oita
Miyazaki	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.3	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6	77	Miyazaki
Kagoshima	1.4	0.3	0.6	0.5	-1.1	-0.8	-0.9	51	Kagoshima
Okinawa	1.0	0.6	0.5	0.6	-0.3	-0.5	-0.4	115	Okinawa
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	26.3**	21.6**	23.2**	89	Total

** dissimilarity indices

Source: Inflated from the 5% representative sample of the 2000 population census.

facturing Stronghold: it contained 47.4 percent of these Brazilians versus 15.0 percent of the national population. To underscore the importance of job type over geographical contiguity, we note that the three manufacturing prefectures on the northern fringe of the Tokyo metropolitan area were overrepresented by those from Brazil and underrepresented by those from Korea. The share of new female immigrants in these three prefectures was 12.6 percent for those from Brazil and 4.5 percent for those from Korea, compared with 5.5 percent of the national population. The importance of job type in determining the destination choice behavior of the new female immigrants from Brazil is also reflected by their nearly complete absence in the Tokyo Prefecture: only 1.4 percent of them ended up there.

With their educational attainment being much closer to that of Koreans than to that of Brazilians, and with their proportion of students being as high as that of Koreans (24 percent), the new female immigrants from China displayed a rather strong tendency to go to the Tokyo Prefecture: 20.1 percent of them went there. At the same time, with a rather high proportion of them employed as manual workers in manufacturing, those from China were overrepresented in the Gifu and Nagano Prefectures within the Manufacturing Stronghold: the shares of them by these two prefectures were 4.1 percent and 2.5 percent, compared with only 1.6 percent and 1.7 percent of the national population. However, the Chinese female manual workers in the manufacturing industry were very widely distributed in many prefectures in both northern and southern Japan.

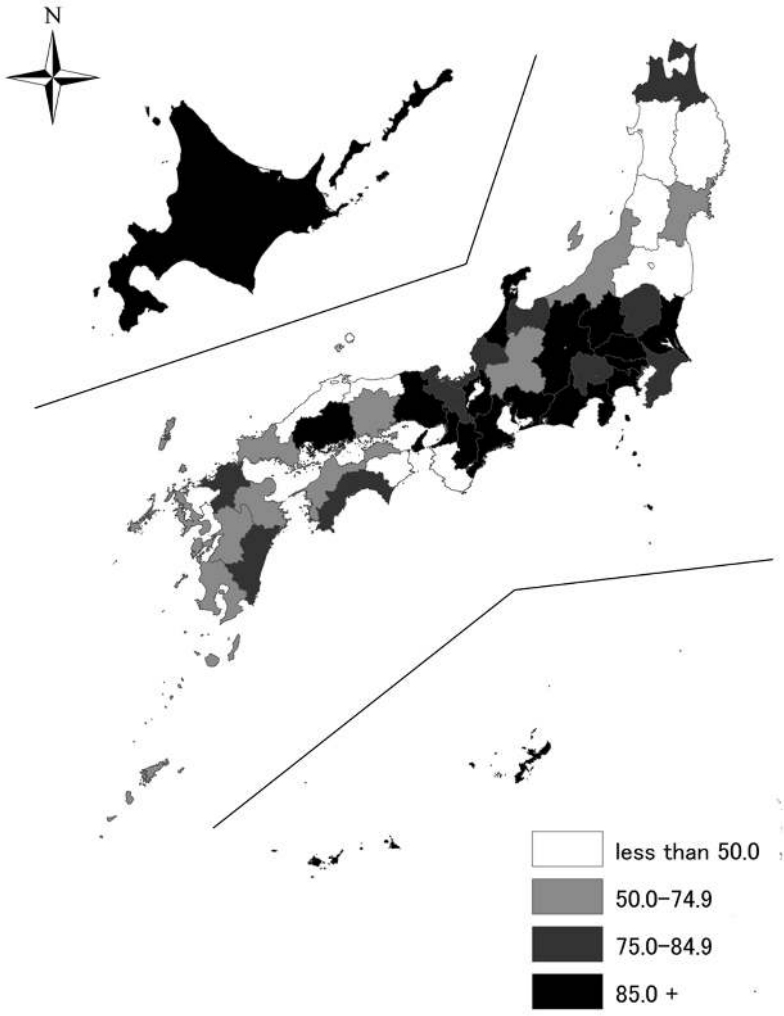
Focusing only on manual workers in the manufacturing industry, we find several additional distinctive features possessed by the new female Chinese immigrants. Firstly, whereas the new Korean, Brazilian, and Filipino immigrants working in this job type were all male-dominant, the new Chinese female immigrants working in this job type were much more numerous than their male counterparts: 20,101 versus 9,380 persons. Secondly, relative to those of other nationalities, they had the highest proportion (84.2 percent) of being neither wives of the head of the household nor daughters-in-law. Thirdly, their destination choice pattern was much more dispersed than that of their male counterparts. These distinctive features suggest that most of them were brought into Japan as 'trainees' by Japanese firms that had branch plants in China and production sites at many locations in the peripheral areas of Japan.[17]

With 20.1 percent of the employed being manual workers in manufacturing, the new female immigrants from the Philippines also showed a strong preference for the prefectures in the Manufacturing Stronghold: 24.5 percent of them ended up there, compared with only 15.2 percent of their Chinese counterparts. Since the clubs, bars, and resorts

like hot springs that employed most of the Filipinas were widely distributed all over Japan, their destination choice pattern was also quite dispersed.

Finally, there were systematic gender differences in the destination choice patterns of the new immigrants. Figure 3.5 shows the sex ratio of new immigrants by prefecture. The sex ratio is lower than 100 in most prefectures, reflecting the trends of feminization of migration. It is relatively high in the Pacific belt, including Tokyo and Nagoya metropolitan areas, which form economic centers attracting a large propor-

Figure 3.5 *Sex ratio of the 1995-2000 new foreign immigrants aged 15+ in 2000*



tion of new immigrants, both male and female, as seen above. In the rest of the country, the regions on the northeastern and southwestern ends see a considerable excess of female immigrants: relative to their male counterparts, newly arrived female immigrants were more prone to going to rural or peripheral prefectures. The main reason for this difference could be that although the spatially concentrated demand for low-skilled foreign workers is similarly strong for both males and females, the spatially dispersed demand for low-skilled foreign manufacturing and service workers (including 'trainees' and 'entertainers') is mostly limited to females. We can also assume that the effect of marriage migration was largely limited to females.

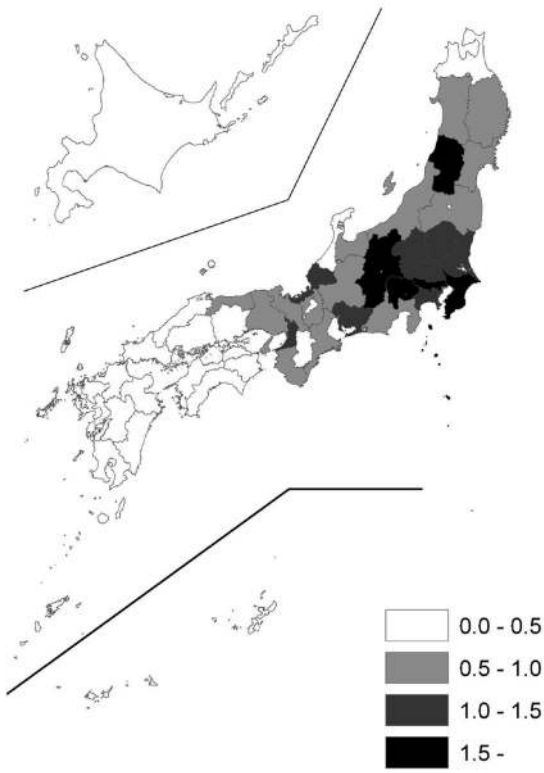
3.6.2 The distribution of foreign wives of Japanese husbands

Now, let us examine the geographical patterns of cross-border marriages employing the two sets of data, one from the Vital Statistics and another from the 2000 census. The marriage registration data in Vital Statistics show that the inter-prefectural distribution of cross-border marriages has been more uneven than that of the total population of Japan. In both 1995 and 2000, cross-border marriages with Japanese husbands were very heavily concentrated in the Tokyo Prefecture: its share of all cross-border marriages was 19.6 percent in 1995 and 19.9 percent in 2000. We can say that the Tokyo Prefecture had much more than its 'fair' share of foreign brides, because its share of the total population of Japan was only 9.4 percent in 1995 and 9.5 percent in 2000. In addition to the Tokyo Prefecture, all other prefectures of the Kanto Region, especially those bordering the Tokyo Prefecture such as Chiba, also had more than their 'fair' share of cross-border marriages. The extent of the overconcentration of such marriages in a prefecture like Tokyo can be represented by its 'marriage quotient', which is defined as its share of such marriages divided by its share of the total population. The map of this indicator is shown in Figure 3.6.

The core prefectures of Osaka and Nagoya metropolitan areas also had more than their 'fair' shares of cross-border marriages (i.e. marriage quotient > 1). However, the concentration in these two areas is not as strong as in the Tokyo metropolitan area. The share of the Osaka Prefecture even decreased from 1995 to 2000.

The concentration of cross-border marriages in the Tokyo metropolitan area and Aichi and Osaka Prefectures is explained to some extent by the high proportion of unmarried men in metropolitan areas suggested by Ishikawa (2003). The concentrations of ethnic populations there (e.g. Chinese, Filipinas and Thais in the Tokyo metropolitan area; Koreans in the Osaka Prefecture; and Brazilians and Peruvians in Aichi) also underlie this phenomenon. In addition, the concentration of inter-

Figure 3.6 *Prefecture's share of cross-border marriages divided by its share of population in 2000 (marriage quotient)*



national marriage brokerage firms in metropolitan areas would have some effect.

The rural and peripheral prefectures of 1) Yamanashi, Nagano and Fukui in the Central Region; and 2) Yamagata in the Tohoku Region also had more than their 'fair' share of cross-border marriages in both 1995 and 2000. Considering the economic structure of these areas, we can assume that a high proportion of these foreign brides married into farming families. However, of particular interest is the fact that, with the above exceptions, most of the rural and peripheral prefectures did not have more than their fair shares of cross-border marriages, despite the shortage of potential brides in many rural and peripheral villages and towns. The Tohoku Region, which was the forerunner in the field of cross-border marriages in the 1980s, does not show a high level of cross-border marriage except in Yamagata Prefecture. The geographical patterns of cross-border marriage have changed in two decades.

If we draw another map of marriage quotients based on the information about household status from the 2000 census, the pattern is almost the same as Figure 3.6, but Shizuoka, Mie, Gifu and Shiga also show a heavy concentration (marriage quotient > 1.5) in addition to the prefectures highlighted in Figure 3.6. The patterns of distribution of cross-border marriages in Japan from the two sources reveal the strong attraction of the Kanto Region including the Tokyo metropolitan area, and the Central Region including the Nagoya metropolitan area just as shown in Table 3.6. We can assume that the logic behind marriage migration is not very different from that of labor migration.

We can also observe from the overall pattern of the quotients of cross-border marriages that they are relatively higher in the eastern prefectures and lower in the western prefectures. This finding reminds us of the pattern of marriage squeeze observed by Ishikawa, i.e. heavy in the east and weak in the west (Ishikawa 2003). This logic is only applicable to marriage migration. However, we should note here that the degree of marriage squeeze is not enough to explain the pattern of marriage migration. Demand for labor is also a very important factor to attract foreign females through marriage.

3.6.3 The channeling of daughters-in-law into the Tohoku Region

Under the influence of Tadashi Fukutake, a leading rural sociologist who contrasted the vertical social structures found in villages of eastern Japan with the more egalitarian structures in villages of western Japan (Fukutake 1949), many Japanese sociologists continue to share an implicit assumption that the typical *ie* (stem family), which is large in size and complex in structure with patriarchal power centering around the head and the eldest son, was and still is prevalent in the Tohoku Region (the northeastern part of Honshu Island). These views seem to be supported even by recent statistics that show distinct regional differences in household size and structural complexity. An important point about the stem family is the obligatory co-residency between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law that makes it extremely unappealing to most young Japanese females. Thus, the search for brides to sustain this family system became a daunting challenge to the small villages and towns of the Tohoku Region. As demonstrated by the examples mentioned in section 2, the prospect of finding willing Japanese females has been so dim that a serious search for foreign brides started in this region in the mid-1980s.

Although the 2000 census data show that the quotients of cross-border marriage in this region are in general not high, another indicator clearly reflected the outcome of this effort. While representing only 3.9 percent of all new female immigrants in the whole country, daughters-

in-law represented more than 6 percent of the new female immigrants in every prefecture of the Tohoku Region: 28.4 percent in Akita; 22.6 percent in Yamagata; 17.4 percent in Iwate; 12.9 percent in Fukushima; 9.2 percent in Miyagi; and 6.1 percent in Aomori. As we have seen in section 5, the education level of daughters-in-law is lower than that of other household categories. We can assume that daughters-in-law were deliberately chosen by match-making agencies for this particular purpose from social backgrounds that were different from those of other kinds of immigrants to Japan.

Then, which nationalities of the new female immigrants were more likely to be daughters-in-law? The census data show that among the new female immigrants from Asian countries, 11.7 percent of Thais; 7.6 percent of Filipinas; 4.6 percent of Chinese; and 3.4 percent of Koreans became daughters-in-law, while the corresponding figures dropped to a very low level for the two major groups of *Nikkejin* who were granted freedom to work and reside in Japan by the 1990 revision of the immigration law (only 0.9 percent for Brazilians and 0.5 percent for Peruvians). One possible hypothesis is that the likelihood of becoming a daughter-in-law depends to a large extent on whether the possibility of working and residing in Japan has been highly restricted by the immigration law.

Although those from China were less likely to be daughters-in-law than those who were from Thailand and the Philippines, the new female immigrants of Chinese nationality made up by far the greatest share (41.3 percent) of the new foreign daughters-in-law, mainly because they represented as many as 35.7 percent of all new female immigrants. Filipinas made up the second largest share of daughters-in-law, contributing 27.6 percent. Koreans and Thais made up the third largest share, each contributing 8.9 percent.

The top destinations of the daughters-in-law from China, the Philippines and Korea were all in the Tohoku Region but in different prefectures within the region: Akita for those from China; Yamagata for those from Korea; and Fukushima for those from the Philippines. In the cases of Koreans and Filipinas, the foreign daughters-in-law of the same nationality were mostly channeled into a single prefecture. This finding suggests that recruitment agencies in different prefectures tended to focus their efforts in single but different source countries. And the literature suggests that the most preferred source country could change as disappointing outcomes become apparent.

3.7 Rapid increase of divorce among female foreign residents

Among the female foreign residents of Japan, the prevalence of divorce increased faster than the prevalence of marriage. The number of divorces involving a female foreign resident increased from 6,153 in 1995 to 9,607 in 2000, with the growth rate being 56.1 percent. This growth rate is higher than the growth rate of foreign brides of Japanese husbands in the same period (36.3 percent). The prevalence of divorces involving female foreign residents also increased faster than the increase in foreign residents (aged 15+) attributable to the 1995-2000 immigration (44.9 percent).

We use two methods to compute the divorce rates for female foreign residents. In the first method, the denominator is the number of female foreign residents (aged 15+) as of the 2000 census date. In the second method, the denominator is restricted to the combined number of wives (of household head) and daughters-in-law among the female foreign residents (aged 15+) as of the 2000 census date. For both methods, the numerators are the numbers of divorcees registered in 2000. The second method is better in the sense that the denominator is a better approximation of the at-risk population. The overall divorce rate comes to 1.57 percent according to the first method and 2.89 percent according to the second method.

According to the divorce rates computed by either of the two methods, the Tohoku Region, where the stem family tradition was strong, had relatively high divorce rates. Within the Tohoku Region, the Yamagata Prefecture, where daughters-in-law represented as many as 22.6 percent of the new female immigrants arriving in 1995-2000, was distinguished by having the highest divorce rate (6.23 percent according to the first method and 8.78 percent according to the second method) in the whole country. These findings suggest that foreign brides had the greatest difficulty in adjusting to the stem family system of farming households. Relatively high divorce rates were not rare in the rural and peripheral prefectures of other regions. In contrast, among the three largest metropolitan areas, only the four prefectures of the Tokyo metropolitan area had relatively high divorce rates. The relatively high divorce rates of the Tokyo metropolitan area might be the result of a greater prevalence of 'paper' marriages.

The divorce rates of foreign wives also differed by nationality. The divorce rates calculated by the second method for each nationality are 5.54 percent for Filipinas; 4.60 percent for Thais; 4.24 percent for Chinese; 2.17 percent for Koreans; 0.21 percent for Brazilians; and 0.52 percent for Peruvians. It should be kept in mind that most of the Brazilian and Peruvian cases and a considerable proportion of the Korean cases are not supposed to be cases of cross-border marriage. Although they

could be partly attributed to the dissolution of 'paper' marriages, the high divorce rates of Filipina, Thai and Chinese wives suggest that they might have experienced substantial difficulties in adjusting to the familial and societal contexts of Japan.[18]

3.8 The effect of Japanese immigration policy reconsidered: a comparison with China and Canada

In the early 1990s, one of the co-authors of this paper, Kao-Lee Liaw, was analyzing with Zhongdong Ma the migration data from the 1987 national survey of China (Ma & Liaw 1994). They found an unusual educational selectivity in long-distance marriage migration made by females from several interior provinces to relatively well-off coastal provinces. It turns out that whereas the inter-prefectural marriage migration in Japan was clearly positively selective with respect to educational attainment for both females and males (Liaw & Kawabe 1994; Otomo & Liaw 2003), this marriage migration in China was negatively selective with respect to the educational qualification of the females. Behind the difference between these two countries is the fact that internal migration is free in Japan but was severely restricted in China by government regulations. Under the severe restrictions, marriage to a man in a relatively well-off province was considered the most effective way to escape from poverty and to gain an opportunity for a better life by many poorly educated women.

Similarly, the very severe restriction on the long-term residence of unskilled foreigners in Japan due to the regulations of the Japanese government is an important structural factor for explaining the marriage and divorce patterns of foreign females who came to Japan from other countries. Under this severe government restriction, marriage to a Japanese man has become a likely strategy to be used by foreign females, especially those with low educational attainment. Since this strategy can outweigh true affection as the basis for marriage in many cases, it is not surprising that foreign wives of Japanese men have a particularly high probability of divorce.

In contrast to Japan's official stance of not permitting the entrance of unskilled workers, Canada's immigration program allows the entrance of not only skilled workers and family members of landed immigrants and Canadian citizens but also a large number of refugees who tend to be poorly educated. Are Japan's immigrants better educated than Canada's immigrants as a consequence of this difference? It has been revealed and explained by Liaw and Ishikawa (2007) that the opposite is true. Here we want to make the comparison specifically for female immigrants.

Our computation, based on the 2000 census data of Japan and the 1995-2000 immigration records of Canada, reveals that among the 1995-2000 female immigrants aged 25-59, those who went to Japan were much less well educated than those who went to Canada: 20.6 percent versus 13.7 percent with less than high school education, 37.1 percent versus 21.3 percent with high school education, 11.1 percent versus 28.7 percent with college education, and 31.1 percent versus 36.3 percent with university education (Table 3.7). Compared with Canada,

Table 3.7 *Educational qualifications of the new female immigrants (aged 25-59) landing in Japan and Canada in 1995-2000: by source of immigration*

Host Country	*Less than high school*	*High school level*	*College level*	*University level*	*Total female immigrants*
		(%)			*(persons)*
	Source of immigration: China (including Taiwan and Hong Kong)				
Japan	24.3	30.5	13.9	31.3	43,641
Canada	13.2	19.4	30.1	37.3	95,202
Difference	11.1	11.1	-16.3	-6.0	-51,561
	Source of immigration: Brazil				
Japan	30.6	48.2	6.9	14.3	20,281
Canada	9.4	12.1	25.2	53.4	1,248
Difference	21.2	36.1	-18.3	-39.1	19,033
	Source of immigration: Korea				
Japan	5.8	37.7	18.1	38.4	15,060
Canada	4.9	26.2	22.4	46.4	9,060
Difference	0.9	11.5	-4.4	-8.0	6,000
	Source of immigration: Philippines				
Japan	20.1	54.3	7.5	18.1	18,221
Canada	5.9	17.4	32.2	44.5	24,676
Difference	14.2	36.9	-24.8	-26.4	-6,455
	Source of immigration: All Sources				
Japan	20.6	37.1	11.1	31.1	122,604
Canada	13.7	21.3	28.7	36.3	358,098
Difference	6.9	15.8	-17.6	-5.2	-235,494

Note: For Japan, the new female immigrants are defined as the female foreign residents who (1) resided outside Japan in 1995, (2) resided in Japan on the date of the 2000 census, and were aged 25-59 in 2000. For Canada, the new female immigrants are defined as the female immigrants who got landed immigrant status between January 1, 1995, and December 31, 2000, and were aged 25-59 at the time of landing.

Source of immigration is defined in terms of the citizenship for Japan and the place of birth for Canada.

Data sources: The 2000 population census of Japan and the administration records of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

File: Japan_2005.wb3 (page=JPN_CAN_female)

Data generated by ED_2559.sas for Japan and 2001LIDS_ED.sas for Canada.

Japan had an overabundance of immigrants at the two lower levels of education and a shortage of immigrants at the two upper levels. This is true for each of the four major nationalities of Japan's immigrants. The underlying reasons for this large and pervasive difference could be that Canada tends to offer better economic prospects to the immigrants, not only for career development but also for home ownership, and that the acquisition of citizenship is much easier and faster in Canada than in Japan.

It is worth noting that among the three nationalities that provide most of the brides to Japanese nationals, the Japan versus Canada education gap was much greater for Filipinas than for Chinese and Korean women (Table 3.7). There could be two main reasons for this large difference. First, it is easier for Korean and Chinese women to learn the Japanese language up to the level of an office worker than for Filipinas, because Koreans benefit from the grammatical similarity between Japanese and their native language, whereas the Chinese benefit from the sharing of a large number of Chinese characters between their native and host languages. Second, as a former American colony, the English language is widely used in the Philippines, and most university-educated Filipinas are highly proficient in English. This difference in language affinities naturally makes well-educated Filipinos much less likely to look for white-collar and professional jobs in Japan than in Canada.

An additional factor that helps make many better-educated Filipina women prefer Canada over Japan is that because of their excellent training, Filipina nurses are in high demand in Canada, especially in less well-off places like Manitoba. In fact, the provincial government of Manitoba has sent its medical staff to the Philippines to interview and test hundreds of healthcare workers. Those who were selected were given licenses to practice in Canada (SPPR 2001). Clearly, Japan lags far behind Canada in its effort to attract well-educated Filipina immigrants.

3.9 Concluding discussion

In this study, we have used statistical materials to examine the global phenomenon of the feminization of migration as it is manifesting itself in Japan. The feminization of migration can be seen as occurring in Japan insofar as the share of women among the new arrivals in Japan is increasing. However, the Japanese government has adopted strict immigration procedures that severely limit the entry of foreigners to work in Japan and prohibit the employment of foreigners as domestic workers. These limitations and prohibitions were reflected by our findings that among the 1995-2000 new female immigrants, about 40 percent of them immigrated to marry Japanese men and over 50 percent of the

employed were recruited as manual workers in the manufacturing industry. However, the propensities to marry a Japanese man and to be employed as a manual worker differed markedly among the four most important foreign nationalities: Chinese, Brazilian, Filipina and Korean.

Japan's ethnocentric immigration law that has granted *Nikkeijin* the freedom not only to reside but also hold and change jobs in Japan since 1990 set those from Brazil apart from those from China, the Philippines and Korea. With this freedom, extremely low numbers of new female immigrants from Brazil chose the option of marrying a Japanese national, despite their biological affinity. Without this freedom, their Chinese, Filipino and Korean counterparts relied heavily on this option as a strategy to achieve the possibility of working and residing in Japan on a long-term basis as well as the ease of reentering Japan after returning to their countries of origin for compelling and other reasons. Among those from China, the Philippines and Korea, those with relatively poor educational qualifications were much more likely to end up as daughters-in-law in the villages and towns of the Tohoku Region where the traditional stem family system is extremely unattractive to young Japanese women and where the economic prospects for both foreigners and Japanese nationals are relatively poor. The unusually high divorce rate of foreign brides in this region suggests the seriousness of the problems of such marriages.

Our empirical investigation has revealed that Japan's ethnocentric immigration law has failed in the sense that a large majority of the new immigrants from Brazil were poorly educated. This failure applied to both males and females. It is related to the fact that for the best educated *Nikkeijin* in Brazil, their career prospects tend to be poorer in Japan than in Brazil or in North America, mainly because of the difficulty in developing Japanese language proficiency at the professional level. In the end, a huge majority of the Brazilian immigrants were employed as manual workers in the manufacturing industry.

Consistent with Michael Piore's thoughtful theory of a dual labor market (1979), a fundamental driving force of Japan's immigration has been a very strong demand for low-skilled workers that cannot be met by the shrinking native-born labor force. This mismatch between demand and supply, together with the feminization of manufacturing work and the shift towards the service sector, has compelled Japanese employers to increase their search for female low-skilled workers in countries of lower wages.

Reflecting their different socioeconomic backgrounds, the female immigrants from the three main Asian source countries, as well as Brazil and to a lesser extent Peru, filled Japan's low-skilled jobs in rather different ways. From China, where the salary level is much lower than in South Korea, a large number of young female workers who had dexter-

ous fingers and good mind-eye-hand coordination and the willingness to accept very low wages were brought into Japan as 'trainees' by many Japanese firms from their overseas branch plants. From the Philippines, the entertainment industry of Japan recruited a large number of their workers. The female immigrants from Korea, with better educational qualifications and closer language affinity as well as being accustomed to a higher wage level in the home country, were 1) much less likely than their Chinese counterparts to be employed as manual workers in manufacturing; and 2) also less likely than their Filipina counterparts to be employed in the entertainment industry.

The destination choice patterns of the new female immigrants from the four major source countries differed substantially according to the job opportunities offered to them. The majority of those from Brazil were recruited by the subcontractors and sub-subcontractors of the major corporations like Toyota that were highly concentrated in the Manufacturing Stronghold and the Northern fringe of the Tokyo metropolitan area. Hence, the pattern of their chosen destinations was highly concentrated and most different from the distribution of the total population of Japan. Being brought in mainly as 'trainees' and dispatched to the production sites of many peripheral areas of Japan, the employed new female immigrants from China had a rather dispersed destination choice pattern. Being mainly employed by the widely scattered outlets of the entertainment industry, the new female immigrants from the Philippines also had a rather dispersed destination choice pattern. Being more fortunate than their Chinese and Filipina counterparts, the new female immigrants from South Korea were highly concentrated in the Tokyo metropolitan area and hence had a destination choice pattern that was much less dispersed. In addition to job opportunities, marital opportunities also played important roles in the destination choices of the new immigrants. Although the overall pattern of strong concentration in the Tokyo metropolitan area and Kanto and Central Regions is the same as with labor migration, marriage migration followed a different logic as demonstrated by the strong concentration of Chinese, Filipina and Korean daughters-in-law in the Tohoku Region.

After revealing and explaining the complexity of Japan's female immigration, we offer the following advice for improving immigration outcomes. Firstly, the Japanese government should help to substantially increase the acceptance of foreign students, especially those from Brazil and the Philippines, in its post-secondary educational institutions. This is the most effective way to prevent *Nikkeijin* from being relegated to and stigmatized at the bottom of Japanese society. It will also make Japan a more effective competitor among other countries like Canada and the United States for skilled workers in healthcare from the Philippines. Secondly, the Japanese government should start issuing visas to domes-

tic workers. This is unlikely to open up a flood gate, because most of the Japanese households that are capable of taking care of their own household chores are much less likely than their counterparts in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore to hire maids, because of the reluctance of Japanese people to allow an outsider into the intimacy of their households. Thirdly, the Japanese government should do a better job in monitoring the working conditions of the 'trainees' and 'entertainers' to prevent exploitation by their employers. Finally, the Japanese government should not engage in the search for foreign brides for Japanese men, especially in China and South Korea where the shortage of potential brides as a consequence of gender-selective abortions is already a serious demographic problem. The anti-Japan sentiment in both places can be seriously magnified by such a measure. To the extent that married life is still considered to be highly desirable, measures that are consistent with Japan's demographic reality and do not create unnecessary antagonisms with its neighboring countries should be chosen for the future of this region of the world.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1 This was well over a decade after the total fertility rate began to fall below the replacement level in the mid-1970s. Ishikawa argued that this delay represented the period before the generation (cohort) born after the fertility decline grew old enough to enter the labor market. Ishikawa's work verified van de Kaa's hypothesis, modifying it to take the time difference into account.

2 Note that in the case of Japan, legal immigrants are defined as foreign residents who are permitted by the Japanese government to stay in Japan for longer than 90 days, whereas illegal immigrants are mostly foreigners who stay in Japan after the expiration of their visa. Illegal entry by foreigners is much less common in Japan than, for example, in the United States.

3 The number of foreigners entering Japan with a 'trainee' visa was 39,795 (including 15,688 from Mainland China) in 1993 and increased substantially to 92,846 (including 61,963 from Mainland China) in 2006. The number of foreigners entering Japan with *shuugaku* visa (for entry into pre-college educational institutions such as Japanese language schools) was 18,127 (including 9,162 from Mainland China) in 1993 and then fluctuated to 27,362 in 2003 and 19,135 (including 9,543 from Mainland China) in 2006 (Tanaka 2000; website of Immigration Bureau http://www.immimoj.go.jp/toukei/index.html accessed on 11 September 2007). For Japanese compa-

nies, an important advantage of bringing manual workers from overseas plants to Japan under the guise of 'trainees' is that it is not illegal to pay them wages lower than the minimum wage set by Japan's labor law during the so-called 'training period'. According to Kajita (1994: 44), the trainees are at a higher risk of being exploited by their employers than are illegal immigrants. It was reported in an online news story of NHK (22 December 2006) that according to an investigation carried out by the Ministry of Health and Labor, there were more than 200 cases in which trainees experienced improper treatment such as being paid less than the minimum wage or being sent to work in a different firm.

4 *Trafficking in Persons Report 2004* (State Department, US 2004) included Japan in the 'Watch List'.

5 If one requested more information, pamphlets and personal histories of potential brides with photos attached would be sent. Common bargains included a 5-day and 4-night visit for meeting the bride followed by a week-long honeymoon, or a week-long visit which took care of the visit and the wedding in one week. The fee was typically 2 to 4 million yen (Shukuya 1988: 136).

6 Sex-selective infanticide occurred during the Tokugawa era, primarily in Tohoku (Northeastern) Japan, but this disappeared in the 19th century as regional economic conditions improved (Ochiai 2006).

7 For example, in Asahi Town, at the time that the local government began its attempts to assist with cross-border marriages, a full one-third of the population had left during the rapid growth period, while the population aged as a whole; in 1985 there were 239 unmarried men in their 30s, while the number of unmarried women in the same age group was less than 50 (sex ratio = 478) (Shukuya 1988: 42).

8 Data on the Philippines, Thailand, England, Brazil, and Peru were collected starting in 1992; until 1991 they were included in the category 'other countries'.

9 Note that the coding scheme of the 2000 census does not allow the immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong to be separated from those from the People's Republic of China. Thus, the origin of a Chinese immigrant can be Mainland China, Taiwan, or Hong Kong. The coding scheme also does not allow the distinction between South and North Koreans. However, due to the extremely unfriendly relationship between Japan and North Korea, practically all the new immigrants of Korean nationality were from South Korea.

10 Details of this estimation are available from the authors on request.

11 It is well known that many foreigners are enrolled in language schools as a way to work in Japan under the formal restriction of low-skilled immigrant workers (Tanaka 2000). Perhaps language schools (officially defined as 'pre-college' institutions) were put into the category of colleges when the sample for our research was created by the Statistics Bureau. And probably many language school students avoided the census in order to reduce the risk of being deported. Note that in Japan university education lasts for four years, whereas college education lasts for two years.

12 The remaining four categories of industry are: 'construction'; 'transportation and communication'; 'finance and insurance'; and 'other'.

13 The remaining five categories of occupation are: 'managers'; 'safety workers'; 'agricultural, forestry and fishery workers'; 'transportation and communication workers'; and 'other workers'.

14 A share of 3.9 percent of the employed new female immigrants were in the job type of 'other workers in other industry'. Since this is the 'residual' job type which usually represents only a relatively small share, we ignore it in reporting our results.

15 Among the new immigrants employed as manual workers in manufacturing, 59,362 were males and 52,402 were females. Thus, the new immigrants in this job type were still somewhat male-dominant in 2000. The increase of females among manual

workers in manufacturing actually occurred early in Japan's modern economic history when the expansion of the textile industry created numerous such jobs for adolescent females. As the sharp decline of the textile industry occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, many such jobs were retained in the electronic industry. As the products of the manufacturing industry as a whole continue to shift from bulky and heavy things to small and light items, the demand for female manual workers remains high. What is new since the 1990s is the massive recruitment of foreign females to fill these jobs.

16 The top three job types were for the university-graduated Chinese: 1) service workers in the sales industry (25.1 percent), 2) professionals in the service industry (17.3 percent), and 3) manual workers in the manufacturing industry (12.2 percent); for the university-graduated Koreans: 1) service workers in the sales industry (32.9 percent), 2) professionals in the service industry (15.7 percent), and 3) clerks in the service industry (8.6 percent); for the university-graduated Brazilians: 1) manual workers in the manufacturing industry (76.3 percent), 2) professionals in the service industry (3.6 percent), and 3) service workers in the service industry (3.6 percent); and for the university-graduated Filipinas: 1) service workers in the sales industry (33.0 percent), 2) manual workers in the manufacturing industry (24.5 percent), and 3) professionals in service industry (10.6 percent).

17 The fact that the wage level was much lower in Mainland China than in South Korea suggests that Chinese manual workers were less likely to complain about low wages than were their Korean counterparts.

18 A case of divorce of a Chinese wife and a Japanese husband reported by a Japanese newspaper tells us something about the missing link between the 'daughter-in-law' marriage in Tohoku Region, divorce, and demand for labor. A man in Fukushima Prefecture married a Chinese woman from the Northeastern region of China introduced by a Chinese colleague in the factory he was working for. They started a new life in November 2006 but the wife left home within one month, complaining of loneliness and difficulties in taking care of her old father-in-law. She was later found in an 'esthetic shop' in Osaka run by a Chinese woman. Thirteen out of fourteen Chinese women working in the shop had Japanese husbands. Many of them had to work to make remittances to their family in China. After divorce, the former wife took a train to Tokyo and the former husband muttered, 'People might think ours a case of "paper marriage"' (*Asahi Newspaper*, 19 April 2007).

4 Examining Cross-border Marriage in Hong Kong: 1998-2005

Zhongdong (John) Ma, Ge Lin and Frank Zhang

4.1 Introduction

While cross-border and international marriage behavior has a long history in Hong Kong, recent cross-border marriage has been driven mainly by the following two factors: the marriage squeeze in the local marriage market, and increased connections and communications between Hong Kong and other economic and political entities in the nearby regions. The two variables central to this discussion of cross-border marriage in Hong Kong are: assortative mating and social disparity. Focusing on males, this study examines the influence of these two main forces in driving demographical change in cross-border behavior in Hong Kong during 1998-2005.

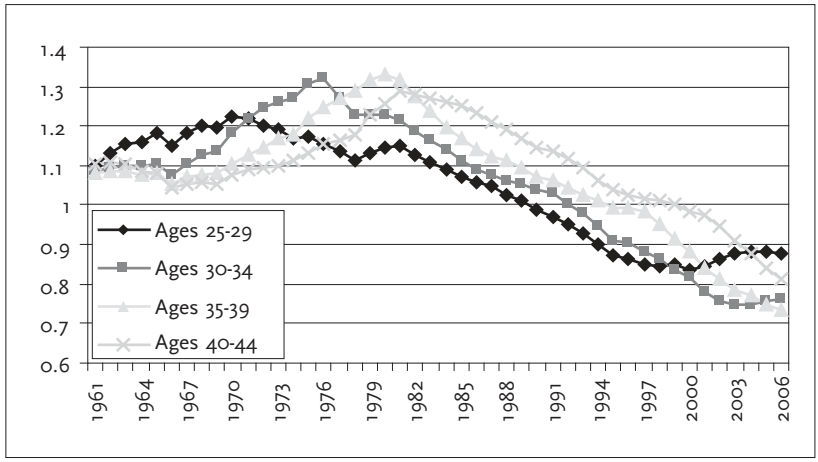
In the 1960s, labor shortages led to a policy which welcomed all those who reached the shores of Hong Kong (So 2005). This policy caused a long-term marriage squeeze that slightly favored women of marrying age. For example, prior to 1990, the sex ratio between ages 25-44 was persistently greater than 1, with a peak of around 1.22 in 1980 and 1981. In other words, there was 1 woman for every 1.22 men. After 1978, China gradually opened its doors and loosened travel restrictions to encourage cross-border economic development activities between Hong Kong and Mainland China. The resulting increased cross-border economic activities and increased foreign direct investments boosted interactions between residents in Hong Kong and the Mainland, which helped push the level of cross-border marriages between persons in Hong Kong and the Mainland to new heights, rising from 1,545 marriages registered in Hong Kong in 1995 to 19,501 in 2005 (Hong Kong Monthly Statistics Digest, April 2006). If registered cross-border marriages from both sides are included, by 2005 such marriages accounted for more than one-third of registered marriages involving Hong Kong residents.

This high proportion of cross-border marriages has been a source of tension on both societal and personal levels. At the societal level, the Hong Kong government has restricted Mainland brides whose marriage is registered in the Mainland from immediately settling in Hong Kong, and many of these women must wait a long time before being permitted to reside in the territory. Such restrictions, however, do not effectively prevent Mainland China female brides or quasi-brides from migrating. In 1996, there were 105,241 female temporary residents, who had residence permits valid for between 3 months and 7 years; by 2001, that number increased to 178,415 (Census and Statistics Department 2001). The increase in the number of females settling in Hong Kong has contributed significantly to the recent decrease in Hong Kong's sex ratio. At the personal level, the geographic separation of married couples, and of young parents and their children, significantly strains family resources and educational opportunities for their children. Mainland wives and their children have also reported suffering discrimination and abuse on both sides of the border (Ho et al. 2003).

Given these emerging societal and personal consequences of cross-border marriages, we find that the immediate reason for the changes seen in cross-border marriages over the past decade is divergent from demographic forces. During the period between the 1960s and 1980s, the sex ratio was the prime driver for efforts by Hong Kong men to seek cross-border brides. The sex ratio in the last ten or fifteen years has, however, gradually moved to favor men. As shown in Figure 4.1, for every 913 men between 25 and 44 years of age, there were 1,000 women in the same age range in 2005, and this number did not include domestic helpers. Apparently, there are forces, other than the sex ratio, maintaining and reinforcing the cross-border wife-seeking behavior of Hong Kong men. By reviewing demographic dynamics in Hong Kong during the same period, we find that labor force participation rates and the educational level of women have increased markedly, which tends to reduce their opportunities for marriage. If many Hong Kong women remain unmarried, there will likely be some social consequences, such as discrimination against Mainland wives, unstable marriage unions, and shortages of care-giving to the elderly.

Hong Kong is not alone in this cross-border marriage phenomenon. Cross-border marriages in Taiwan, Japan and South Korea have also increased substantially in the past ten to fifteen years. In Taiwan, for instance, cross-border marriages increased three-fold between 1998 and 2003, and accounted for 32 percent of newly registered marriages in 2003 (Tsay 2004). As a result, one in eight newborn babies in Taiwan is now the product of a cross-border marriage. Previous studies have shown that bringing in a bride from a less developed country tends to be favorably selected for in terms of age and education. However, most

Figure 4.1 *Sex ratio by major marriage age groups in Hong Kong: 1961-2006*



of these studies tend to be ethnographic or anthropological in nature, documenting the impact of family and community resources, rural-to-urban female migration, and matchmaking on the decision to seek a foreign spouse, and on the experiences of foreign spouses in their host communities and families. It is, therefore, unsurprising that while these studies have identified individual mechanisms operating on the supply and demand sides of the cross-border marriage equation, they rarely provide a dynamic picture at the population level, which is required for policy formation.

Fortunately, the Hong Kong government keeps fairly clear and accessible marriage registration records, which not only contain demographic information, but also record the place of residence of newlyweds. Making use of data from the Hong Kong marriage registry, the current study examines factors that differentiate Hong Kong residents who marry cross-border brides from those who marry natives.

4.2 Theoretical background

The study of cross-border marriage intersects two streams of study: international migration and marriage (including interracial marriage). Much of the literature on international marriage is either rooted in theories of interracial marriages in general, or focused on Asia and mail-order brides in particular (Piper 2003). In a perfectly frictionless marriage market, people should be able to marry freely among different socioeco-

nomic strata, races and religious creeds. Theorists of international marriage, however, suggest that an individual is most likely to select a partner of a similar socioeconomic, racial/ethnic and religious background (Kalmijn 1998). According to Kalmijn's review, three forces operate to determine existing marriage patterns: 1) individual preferences for socioeconomic and cultural resources from potential partners; 2) social group identification and sanctions on the individual mate selection process; and 3) geo-demographic and social constraints (Kalmijn 1998). Therefore, social sanctions and social group identifications may distort the frictionless marriage market, creating a fragmented market in which there are clusters of similar personal traits among potential marriage partners. At the same time, individuals may continue to seek marriage with someone of higher social status. This sets up tension between socially expected homogeneity and individually anticipated heterogeneity in the marriage partner selection process. Moreover, an ideal marriage market also assumes that there are an equal number of males and females. This condition, however, has not been met in Hong Kong. The degree to which people marry across socioeconomic, racial/ethnic and geographic boundaries reflects levels of openness in the social structures of societies (Smits, Ultee & Lammers 1998), and the marriage market is not composed of equal numbers of males and females. Both cross-social groups and cross-border marriages are more likely to occur in smaller jurisdictions, such as Hong Kong, due to their smaller geographic area and relatively smaller populations.

The above notion has its roots in the 'Utility Maximization Theory' for households put forward by Becker (1974), which states that individuals will attempt to maximize their income and status by seeking partners with attractive socioeconomic characteristics, so that the market, as a whole, will maximize the total number of matched pairs or marriages through positive assortative mating according to complementary aspects of household production. There is also a focus on negative assortative mating on dissimilar traits that are substitutes. Certainly, a successful marriage depends upon the availability of potential spouses to an individual's liking in relation to the desirability of their own characteristics (England & Farkas 1986). In his empirical analysis of personal traits, such as education, race, income and height, Becker found that marriages between people with similar traits are usually optimal, although some marriages between people with different traits or negative associative mating may present a second optimal point. Empirical evidence suggests that negative assortative mating, such as a wide income gap, albeit less common, does also occur in interracial and international marriages, where ascribed traits of group membership have become less important (Alba & Golden 1986). When a society is less open and less tolerant, intermarriage will be seen as a means of breaking down

social barriers (Merton 1941), one that is associated with physical attractiveness (Taylor & Glenn 1976), romance, and financial gain (Schoen & Wooldredge 1989; Kalmijn 1993).

The traditional Chinese notion of assortative mating is reflective of culturally ingrained male chauvinism in that a man should marry a woman of lesser educational or professional status. In the 1970s, this tradition inevitably excluded many of the young male migrants from the Mainland – who were typically less educated and worked primarily in the manufacturing industry – from the pool of eligible, educated women of Hong Kong (So 2003). This is especially true in rapidly industrialized societies, such as Hong Kong, because cultural changes tend to occur much more slowly than do social changes, which include rapid improvements in education and employment opportunities for women. Hence, the theory of utility maximization – as evidenced in assortative mating – may be interpreted as differently affecting the locally born and immigrants of Hong Kong. If both males and females wish to adhere to traditional Chinese notions of assortative mating, marrying a cross-border (i.e. Hong Kong) wife with a lower educational level was not a realistic, competitive strategy for many young male migrants in Hong Kong in the 1970s given their lower social standings.

Rather than setting up tension between assortative mating and intermarriage at the personal level, a societal perspective exploits the society-wide disparity between rich and poor countries. Within this broad framework, many explanations have been offered for the various forms of international marriage, such as mail-order brides, workers/entertainers or wives, careers or wives. The mail-order bride industry transports women internationally and is believed to take advantage of huge income differences between developed and developing countries for personal gain (Mallare 2006); it usually features a man from a rich and economically developed country 'ordering' a bride or young woman from a developing or less developed country through an Internet website or by other commercial advertisements or means (Robinson 1996). In such cases, cultural differences are either considered attractive, or accepted as a given in male-dominated decisions. Most often a need, on the part of the older male, for care or companionship in the host society is evident, although this is not necessarily the stated purpose. However, not all brides are found via the mail-order industry. In Japan, for instance, entertainers are often hired from Southeast Asian countries, especially from the Philippines (Liaw, Ochiai & Ishikawa, this book). When they marry local citizens, the boundary between entertainers and wives becomes blurred (Piper 2003); similar situations have been reported with Thai women marrying Northern European men (Tosakul, this book). Here, again, age difference and need for care are observed. The societal disparity perspective as evidenced by female-dominated migration from

developing societies to more developed societies with different cultures is applicable to cross-border marriage in Hong Kong, given differences in economic development, but the ethnic and cultural dimensions tend not to be an issue as the people of Mainland China and Hong Kong are of the same ethnic and cultural groups.

Cross-border marriage can also be driven by demographic forces. In Hong Kong, prior to 1990, there was a shortage of local females of marrying age, meaning that the chance of a Hong Kong male maximizing his income and status through assortative mating was not great. This might have provided the initial impetus for cross-border marriage, particularly in cases where Hong Kong men sought Mainland women. Then, since the mid-1990s, driven by reasons other than the decreasing sex ratio, an ever-increasing number of Hong Kong men have continued to seek Mainland brides. On the one hand, this trend is consistent with assortative mating, because as many as 40 percent of Hong Kong residents were born in Mainland China, and many wished to have a wife from their home country. On the other hand, increases in educational levels and work force participation rates among females in Hong Kong have reinforced this trend, because traditional assortative mating – which requires a slightly higher educational or social status for the male partner – is now often untenable. According to Hong Kong Population Statistics, there were 137,000 males between the ages of 20-29 who had a tertiary degree in Hong Kong in 2005, while the corresponding figure for females was 149,000. For the 30-39 age group, although the number of those with a tertiary degree is comparable for both sexes (141,000 for females versus 140,000 for males), females with some tertiary education but without a degree far outnumber the number of males (62,800 female versus 47,600 male). Looking only at the sex ratio, the marriage market seems favorable for males, but this provides a false impression, because it is no longer easy for a male to find a female of lesser educational achievement in Hong Kong.

Comparing the assortative mating and social disparity perspectives to demographic reality, we see that the border between Hong Kong and China divides two societies of primarily the same ethnic group; one is developed, while the other is rapidly developing; one is rich, and the other has large pools of rich and poor in almost all provinces. Consequently, the motivation for cross-border marriage for each individual becomes quite complicated. Some seek assortative mating by marrying hometown girls, or follow the more weighty tradition of marrying those more compatible with their educational and/or occupational indicators of personal traits. Some, who take advantage of the social disparity between Hong Kong and China, may seek a Mainland bride as a second marriage, while other cross-border marriages may simply arise due to demographic reality. In the following analysis, we examine the force of

the assortative mating tradition and the social disparity perspective, which are thought to contribute significantly to cross-border marriage in Hong Kong.

4.3 Data

Data are drawn from the Hong Kong marriage registry from 1998 to 2005. The Hong Kong government issues two types of marriage permits: one allows the applicant to seek marriage in Mainland China, the other certifies marriage between a Hong Kong resident and a recent arrival from the Mainland. Accordingly, Hong Kong residents may marry a Mainlander in two ways. They may apply for a Certificate of Absence of Marriage Record (CAMR) and then get married in the Mainland. They may also register their brides/grooms in Hong Kong while they are on visitor or other visas. The current study only includes the latter, because the Hong Kong government does not have full records of the former. Based on the Hong Kong marriage records, cross-border marriage is defined as the union between a Hong Kong resident and a recently arrived bride or groom. Here, *recent* means within one year since arrival, and their origin must be from Mainland China. In addition, the dataset has the following variables for brides and grooms: age, duration of residence, place of birth, educational attainments and occupation. Education is divided into five categories from elementary to college degree or higher. Occupation is divided into ten categories, from management to economically inactive: 1) managers and administrators; 2) professionals; 3) associate professionals; 4) clerks; 5) service workers and shop sales workers; 6) skilled agricultural and fishery workers; 7) craft and related workers; 8) plant and machine operators and assemblers; 9) elementary occupations; and 10) economically inactive. These occupations can generally be ranked from high (1) to low (10), similar to Blau-Duncan's occupational categories, although craftsmen were ranked higher by Blau and Duncan (1967).

4.4 Results

In our sample of 269,624 marriage registration records, the 'Hong Kong grooms-Mainland brides' marriage type accounts for 23.2 percent, or 62,552 registrants; the 'Hong Kong grooms-other brides' marriage type accounts for 8.25 percent or 22,246 registrants; the rest of the 184,826 (68.55 percent) registrants are matches between 'Hong Kong grooms-Hong Kong brides'. Such a result clearly shows that cross-border marriages are quite common between Hong Kong males and Main-

land brides, and have become a very important resource in support of Hong Kong males' practice of traditional marital norms. As cross-border marriage in Hong Kong is so common, special attention has been made to compare some important demographic characters of local and cross-border marriage couples.

4.4.1 Age structure and age gaps

In marriages of all types, females tend to be married before the age of 30, while males tend to postpone marriage until after reaching 30 (Table 4.1). The proportion of males being married between the ages of 30-45 increased from 46 percent in 1958 to 55 percent in 2005. During the period of 1998-2005, the marrying age for Hong Kong grooms married to local brides was significantly centered in the 30-45 age range, while during the same period, the distribution of marrying ages for Hong Kong grooms married to Mainland brides tended to be more spread out: the proportion of men marrying under the age of 30 decreased from 36.75 percent in 1998 to 23.06 percent in 2005, while those greater than the age of 45 increased from 17.39 percent to 36.31 percent. Within those years, the 'golden marrying age' for Hong Kong females married to local grooms was constantly below 30, which is similar to the situation for Mainland brides. The proportion, however, of women

Table 4.1 *Age profiles of Hong Kong grooms/brides versus Hong Kong grooms and Mainland brides*

		HK grooms-HK brides									
		1998	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total N*	*Col%*
Grooms	Age < 30(%)	46.94	47.02	46.05	44.97	42.87	41.82	38.97	37.51	80260	43.4
	Age 30-45(%)	46.38	46.59	47.54	49.00	50.44	52.28	55.62	55.36	92888	50.3
	Age > 45(%)	6.68	6.39	6.41	6.03	6.69	5.90	5.41	7.13	11678	6.3
Brides	Age < 30(%)	67.22	66.53	65.52	64.49	61.21	60.27	57.68	55.62	115545	62.5
	Age 30-45(%)	28.90	29.51	30.92	32.42	35.41	36.94	39.59	40.76	63029	34.1
	Age > 45(%)	3.88	3.96	3.56	3.09	3.38	2.79	2.73	3.62	6252	3.4

		HK grooms-Mainland brides									
		1998	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total N*	*Col%*
Grooms	Age < 30(%)	36.75	33.76	31.12	28.71	27.43	24.20	22.23	23.06	16065	25.7
	Age 30-45(%)	45.86	45.85	45.15	44.02	44.18	46.04	44.76	40.63	27429	43.8
	Age > 45(%)	17.39	20.39	23.73	27.27	28.39	29.76	33.01	36.31	19058	30.5
Brides	Age < 30(%)	75.76	73.87	69.48	67.72	65.88	64.24	59.72	54.73	39106	62.5
	Age 30-45(%)	21.63	23.64	27.67	28.46	30.01	31.76	35.33	39.68	20683	33.1
	Age > 45(%)	2.61	2.49	2.85	3.82	4.11	4.00	4.95	5.59	2763	4.4

aged 30-45 marrying shows a constantly lower rate for Mainland women compared to local brides, although the number of Mainland brides in that age group marrying Hong Kong grooms also grew. The overall pattern here is that Hong Kong males tend to marry later than local and Mainland females, and Mainland brides marry at a younger age than local brides. At the same time, Mainland brides were more attractive to Hong Kong males aged 30 or above than those who were below 30. Also, the average marrying age for Hong Kong grooms who marry Mainland brides tends to be higher than that of grooms who marry local women.

The age gap, which is measured by the age difference between groom and bride, is an important indicator of assortative mating, because traditionally in Chinese societies, grooms are older than their brides. In Table 4.2, negative values of the 'Age Gap' variable indicate grooms younger than their brides, while positive values denote the number of years that the grooms were older than their brides. The data from 1998 to 2005 illustrate the same pattern: positive age gap values, especially +4 years or greater, constitute the majority of our records. Hong Kong, as an international metropolis, however, also shows some diversity in the marriage market. From 1998 to 2005, the relative proportion of negative age gaps, denoting grooms younger than their brides, increased from about 8 percent to around 10 percent. Despite such diversity, tradition still prevailed, and seems to have grown even stronger during this period of time, for the average age gap between Hong Kong grooms and their Mainland brides was greater than 11 years. The number of such brides continually increased according to our data, rising from 29.57 percent of brides in 1998 to 41.98 percent in 2005, and peaking at 42.66 percent in 2004. At the same time, the proportion of the groups 'age gap 0-3' and 'age gap 4-7' decreased from 21.49 percent and 22.01 percent to 15.4 percent and 16.79 percent respectively. Such a situation seems to run contrary to expectations flowing from Hong Kong's status as a continuously growing international – indeed global – city.

4.4.2 Grooms' past marital status

Section 4.4.1 demonstrates the age gap between Hong Kong grooms and their Mainland brides, making it quite clear that after 1998, the age gap between married couples in the 'Hong Kong groom-Mainland bride' group became wider. According to common sense and Chinese tradition, there is the expectation that before marriage to Mainland brides, there must be a significant number of grooms who are not marrying for the first time.

Table 4.2 *Age gaps between Hong Kong grooms and Mainland brides across 1998-2005*

Age Gap?	*1998*		*1999*		*2000*		*2001*		*2002*		*2003*		*2004*		*2005*		*Total*
	Freq	*Col.%*	*Freq*	*Col.%*	*Freq*	*Col.%*	*Freq*	*Col.%*	*Freq*	*Col.%*	*Freq*	*Col.%*	*Freq*	*Col.%*	*Freq*	*Col.%*	
< -5	25	0.94	16	0.51	26	0.68	36	0.7	45	0.58	73	0.73	156	1.2	433	2.59	810
-5	15	0.56	11	0.36	16	0.42	14	0.27	34	0.44	41	0.4	57	0.43	133	0.79	321
-4	17	0.63	12	0.39	27	0.7	25	0.48	46	0.6	64	0.63	95	0.72	184	1.1	470
-3	35	1.3	38	1.24	43	1.12	53	1.03	90	1.17	98	0.96	127	0.97	247	1.47	731
-2	51	1.9	70	2.29	61	1.59	74	1.43	109	1.41	139	1.36	202	1.54	319	1.9	1025
-1	82	3.05	98	3.21	100	2.61	116	2.24	200	2.59	225	2.21	304	2.32	419	2.5	1544
0-3	577	21.49	616	20.17	775	20.21	955	18.48	1357	17.57	1672	16.42	2005	15.28	2583	15.4	10540
4-7	591	22.01	633	20.73	739	19.27	959	18.55	1435	18.58	1858	18.24	2353	17.93	2816	16.79	11384
8-11	498	18.55	533	17.45	691	18.02	849	16.42	1290	16.7	1773	17.41	2228	16.97	2599	15.49	10461
> 11	794	29.57	1027	33.63	1356	35.37	2088	40.39	3118	40.37	4242	41.65	5599	42.66	7042	41.98	25266

The result shows that for the overall pattern, the majority of grooms marrying Mainland brides have not previously been wed. In the 'Hong Kong groom-Hong Kong brides' group, around 90 percent (165,854) of Hong Kong grooms were marrying for the first time, and only around 10 percent (18,970) of them were married at least once before they married their current wives. The situation for the 'Hong Kong groom-Mainland brides' group is quite different: the proportion of first-time married grooms was only 67 percent (41,917). The results, therefore, suggest that Hong Kong grooms, especially those who have been married at least once, tend to seek Mainland brides. This reality can partially explain the reason why the age gap between Hong Kong grooms and Mainland brides widened between 1998 and 2005.

4.4.3 Occupation and occupational differences

In addition to age gap and marital status of grooms, the occupational differences between Hong Kong grooms and their marriage partners from different places are also indicative of assortative mating. For Hong Kong grooms who married local brides, Table 4.3 shows that the largest proportion (about 53 percent) claimed the occupation of 'associate professionals' while their brides claimed the occupation of clerks, service/sales workers, and professional positions (although around 16 percent of them quit their jobs after marriage). Table 4.3 also shows that Hong Kong grooms who married Mainland brides had a much lower occupational status than those of locally married grooms: the three largest employment categories for them are elementary occupations, no/other/unknown occupations, and craft-related workers. At the same time, their Mainland partners' occupational status is concentrated in the no/other/unknown occupation category. These results suggest that men who marry local women tend to have higher occupational status than those who seek Mainland brides. The Mainland women who marry Hong Kong grooms, however, had lower occupational levels than their Hong Kong counterparts. Given these results and their implications, we found that the proportion of grooms who have 'higher occupational prestige' in the group of 'Hong Kong grooms-Mainland brides' was 81.14 percent as opposed to 69.92 percent for the group of 'Hong Kong grooms-Hong Kong brides'. In other words, even though the overall pattern suggests that Hong Kong grooms tend to have higher occupational status, the group of 'Hong Kong grooms-Mainland brides' have the highest proportion in this category.

Table 4.3 *Occupations of grooms and brides by marriage types*

Occupations	*Grooms'*				*Brides'*			
	HK-HK		*HK-Mainland*		*HK-HK*		*HK-Mainland*	
	Freq	*Col. Percent*	*Freq*	*Col. Percent*	*Freq*	*Col. Percent*	*Freq*	*Col. Percent*
1) Managers and administrators	30277	16.38	7067	11.30	19900	10.77	4082	6.53
2) Professionals	34777	18.82	2298	3.67	25934	14.03	1820	2.91
3) Associate professionals	30454	16.48	5447	8.71	20247	10.95	1525	2.44
4) Clerks	17526	9.48	3600	5.76	57242	30.97	7236	11.57
5) Service workers and shop sales workers	24612	13.32	8150	13.03	24291	13.14	4924	7.87
6) Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	388	0.21	354	0.57	170	0.09	385	0.62
7) Craft and related workers	10184	5.51	9096	14.54	1330	0.72	2362	3.78
8) Plant and machine operators and assemblers	11976	6.48	6148	9.83	503	0.27	124	0.20
9) Elementary occupations	13536	7.32	10423	16.66	4640	2.51	709	1.13
10) No/Other/Unknown occupations	11096	6.00	9969	15.94	30569	16.54	39385	62.96

4.4.4 Educational matching

Another index measuring 'assortative mating' is 'educational matching', as grooms tend to have the same or higher educational level than brides. Table 4.4 is a cross-tabulation of grooms' and brides' educational levels. For every marriage group, the majority of grooms tend to have at least the same educational level as their brides, whether the brides were local, Mainlanders, or from other regions. In addition to this traditional pattern, the table shows that grooms who only had elementary school education were more attractive to Mainland brides than to local ones. Thus, 25.5 percent of Hong Kong grooms who only had elementary school education found Mainland brides with the same or higher educational levels; however, this proportion in the 'Hong Kong grooms-Hong Kong brides' group is only 5.9 percent. It suggests that even though the overall pattern of educational matching is true for every marriage type, the observed variation is consistent with the social disparity perspective. The educational level for Hong Kong grooms who married Mainland brides tends to be lower than those who married local women. At the same time, the educational level of local brides was higher than that of Mainland brides.

Table 4.4 *Educational matching between grooms and brides*

Grooms	*Brides' educational levels*					*Total N*	*Col %*
HK-to-HK	*No school*	*Primary*	*High school*	*College*	*College+*		
Less elementary	61.58	19.21	17.68	0.89	0.64	786	0.4
Elementary	5.37	67.69	26.08	0.6	0.26	10976	5.9
High school	0.16	2.27	94.6	1.76	1.22	137716	74.5
College	0.05	0.85	42.41	52.5	4.23	18783	10.2
College+	0.04	0.38	31.96	13.3	54.33	16565	9.0
HK-to-Mainland							
Less elementary	33.72	44.9	21.09	0.29	0	1029	1.6
Elementary	2.63	80.42	16.68	0.19	0.08	15927	25.5
High school	0.36	14.32	84.09	0.71	0.52	43686	69.8
College	0	7.92	66.7	21.5	3.86	985	1.6
College+	0.11	5.62	59.14	10.6	24.54	925	1.5
Other HK mating							
Less elementary	38.74	36.13	23.04	0.52	1.57	191	0.9
Elementary	3.67	69.68	25.31	0.29	1.05	3054	13.7
High school	0.35	11.44	84.56	1.88	1.77	13709	61.6
College	0	3.04	46.79	46.7	3.49	2693	12.1
College+	0.12	2.81	36.63	10.9	49.6	2599	11.7

4.5 Conclusion

In this paper, four personal traits were employed as indicators of assortative mating between Hong Kong men and Mainland or local women. Assortative mating, as a traditional practice imbedded in Chinese culture, has proven to have a significant bearing on choice in the Hong Kong marriage market. No matter whether men choose local or Mainland brides, they tend to follow the same basic patterns of assortative mating – they tend to be older than their brides and have a higher educational level, occupational prestige and, of course, a higher income level. One could also argue that the traditional pattern of the four indicators also illustrates two significantly different stories for Hong Kong grooms who marry Hong Kong brides and Hong Kong grooms who marry Mainland brides, due to the joint effect of assortative mating traditions and the social disparity under the context of demographic changes, especially the changes in sex ratio, females' educational level and the age of marriage during the period of 1998 to 2005.

Among the Hong Kong men who married a local woman from 1998 to 2005, grooms tended to postpone marriage until the ages of 30-45. Of these marriages, the marriage registry shows that 90 percent of local brides were marrying for the first time, and in accordance with traditional culture, about 70 percent of the grooms tended to have higher occupational prestige than their local wives. Finally, the educational levels

for Hong Kong newlyweds were concentrated at the high school level and above. Therefore, although it is not easy nowadays for Hong Kong males to find assortative partners who fit all four personal traits, the Hong Kong grooms with high occupational prestige and educational backgrounds still appear to be doing their best to first marry a local girl who meets traditional assortative mating criteria and falls within the 'golden marriage' period.

For Hong Kong grooms who married Mainland brides during the same period, however, the story is quite different. These grooms married their Mainland wives much later in life than their counterparts who married locally. Nearly one-third of these grooms had been married at least once before the marriage registered. During the period of 1998-2005, the age gap between Hong Kong grooms and their Mainland wives also rose dramatically, so that in 2005, nearly 60 percent of the grooms were at least 11 years older than their wives. Not surprisingly, the educational level and occupational ranking of these men are significantly lower than their locally married counterparts. The interesting thing here, however, is that the occupational gap between those grooms and their Mainland wives is also significantly larger than the gap in marriages between Hong Kong grooms and Hong Kong brides. Thus, the average occupational level and the mean educational level of those Mainland brides were both undoubtedly lower than that of the local brides. Hong Kong grooms who married Mainland wives, therefore, had a considerably weaker personal standing compared with local wives due to the disadvantages of possessing a lower occupational and educational background. Their cross-border marriage story is a mixture of assortative mating tradition and taking advantage of the social disparity between Hong Kong and Mainland China.

In summary, this paper reveals two different partner selection strategies for relieving tensions due to homogeneity and heterogeneity in the Hong Kong marriage market. Grooms possessing comparative advantages due to their personal traits in the local marriage market tend to find local partners with slightly weaker traits in order to achieve an ideal match according to Chinese tradition, although this is no longer easy to achieve. Hong Kong grooms with comparative disadvantages due to their personal and past marriage backgrounds tend to utilize the mechanism of social disparity to seek cross-border marriages with Mainland brides to achieve a better result according to the precepts of assortative marriage.

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5 Minority Group Status and Fertility

The Case of the 'Foreign Brides' in Taiwan

Wen-Shan Yang and Marloes Schoonheim

5.1 Introduction

In November 2005, the 'Foreign Spouse Care and Counseling Fund' proposed by the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) of Taiwan passed its preliminary review by the supreme national legislature, the Legislative Yuan. Ideas for this Fund were developed as a result of the growing numbers of female marriage immigrants, to the dismay of the women concerned, who in popular Taiwanese terms are referred to as 'foreign brides' (*waiji xinniang*) in the case of Southeast Asian marriage immigrants, and 'Mainland brides' (*dalu xinniang*) for women from the People's Republic of China (Hsia Hsuao-Chuan 2005). One month before the Fund passed the Legislative Yuan, the number of female marriage immigrants reached 350,000; enough reason for the MOI to reserve a budget of NT$ 3 billion (USD 89.27 million) for a period of ten years for the Foreign Spouse Fund. From this budget, medical subsidies will be provided for female marriage immigrants as well as community services, legal aid and counseling sessions. The Fund is evidence of the determination of MOI to improve the position of female marriage immigrants in Taiwan and to encourage immigration of 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' to Taiwan, as the Minister of the Interior Su Jia-Chyuan stated. Female marriage immigrants are believed to be the solution for Taiwan's notoriously low birth rate (Lin 2005: 2).

During the last fifty years, the decline of the total fertility rate (TFR) has become a worldwide phenomenon. Starting with Japan, Hungary and Latvia, before 1965, the fertility decline in most European countries passed the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman in the 1970s (van de Kaa 2002: 11). In the whole of Asia (excluding the Middle East), the total fertility rate dropped from around 5.9 children per woman between 1950 and 1955 to 4.1 children between 1975 and 1980. Together with Japan, Korea and Singapore, Taiwan was leading this trend. At the

start of the fertility decline, during the first five years of the 1950s, Taiwan's fertility was higher than the Asian average (6.5 and 5.6 children per woman, respectively). It declined much faster though, and by the 1960s, Taiwan's TFR was lower than the Asian average. Taiwan's TFR declined below the replacement level in 1984 and stabilized in the period 1985-1990 at around 1.8 children per woman (Population Division UN 2005).

The declining growth and eventual decrease of the population of Taiwan will have huge impacts on the island's economy. Because immigration has the potential to offset declines in the working-age population, it is not surprising that the government is eager to welcome 'new Taiwanese' (Grant et al. 2004). Interestingly enough, however, it is a different idea that makes legislators call for immigration agencies abroad: namely the idea that 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' have higher fertility than Taiwanese-born women. Not by working but by giving birth, it is believed, immigrants could boost Taiwan's economy. Is there reason to argue that the minorities constituted by female marriage migrants have higher fertility than Taiwanese-born women? What has previous research shown about the relation between minority group status and fertility? Is there empirical evidence to support the government's policy to stimulate cross-border marriages between Taiwanese men and brides from Southeast Asia and Mainland China? In this paper, we mean to investigate exactly these matters.

This paper is divided into three parts. First we will develop a theoretical framework for our research topic. We will discuss concepts and methods from four articles that have played a key role in understanding the relation between minority group status and fertility. In the second part of the paper, we turn to the fertility of female marriage migrants in Taiwan. Finally, in the conclusion we will argue how the minority status theory can help us to understand the fertility patterns among Taiwan's 'foreign brides'. In addition, we suggest some topics for future discussion.

5.2 Theoretical framework: minority group status and fertility

Few scholars will deny the relation between minority group status and fertility, and many will in fact argue there is a strong causal relation between the two. But a theoretical and methodological framework in the 1970s was only developed with the greatest effort, and distinctive facts about how a minority group status affected fertility remained scarce. This part of the paper will discuss the theoretical progress of the minority group approach. The debate starts with the introduction of general concepts that are associated with the relation between minorities and their fertility: assimilation and socioeconomic status. Subsequently, we

discuss the improvements in conceptualization – what constitutes a minority – and data selection. Finally, the structural setting of minority groups is drawn into the discussion. We will end the paper with a short conclusion.

5.2.1 Assimilation or socioeconomics: the first methodology

Theories on the relation between minority group status and fertility date back to 1969. In that year, Calvin Goldscheider and Peter Uhlenberg, two sociologists who then worked at the University of California, Berkeley, published their article 'Minority Group Status and Fertility' in the *American Journal of Sociology* (Goldscheider & Uhlenberg 1969). Point of departure for the now famous article was the idea that fertility changes among minority groups are features of social cultural change and only one aspect of behavioral and cultural assimilation. 'The distinct fertility of minority group members,' Goldscheider and Uhlenberg (1969: 361) argued, 'at any point in time merely reflects a matrix of social, demographic and economic attributes which characterize the minority group.' This view resonated with the 'assimilationist' hypothesis, which argued that the fertility of a minority and the majority converge as social, economic and demographic characteristics of the two population groups become similar. The two authors, however, argued that minority group status exerts an independent effect on fertility, apart from socioeconomic and demographic variables. Goldscheider and Uhlenberg found support for their argument by analyzing 1960 census data on the relationship between educational level and fertility among five minority groups in the USA: African-Americans, Jews, Japanese-Americans, Chinese-Americans and Roman Catholics.

Previous research on the first group, African-Americans, suggested fertility among this minority group was higher than among 'white' Americans and had believed ethnicity to be an index for social class, rural versus urban differentials, social and cultural segregation and racism. While analyzing the effect of education though, the 1960 census showed the difference between African-American and 'other' fertility behavior was much more complex than previously assumed (Goldscheider & Uhlenberg 1969: 362). Urban African-Americans for example appeared to have lower fertility than whites of the same educational level. In fact, in the whole of the northern central region of the USA, fertility levels of 'non-whites' were lower than those of 'whites', and this seemed the case not only for the 1960 but also for the 1940 and 1950 census data. Regarding the relation between education and fertility among African-Americans, Goldscheider and Uhlenberg (1969: 364) concluded that 'other factors independent of social and economic characteristics' must have been at work. Like with the case of African-Americans, other

minority groups in the USA failed to support the 'assimilationist' approach. Census data showed the fertility of Jews was lower than that of comparable urban and educated non-Jewish groups (1969: 365). Among the Japanese and Chinese-Americans, the 'assimilationist' approach failed, as particularly younger generations of Chinese appeared to have lower fertility than the majority group (1969: 367-368). Catholics on the other hand had higher fertility, and this pattern seemed not to be affected by developments in the social and educational status; fertility was in fact highest among well-educated, urban groups. The misapprehension that socioeconomic characteristics determined a minority's fertility level was most clear among the Catholic minority, Goldscheider and Uhlenberg argued. 'Part of the differential may be attributed to the opposition of the church to efficient methods of contraception and to the normative encouragement of the church for larger families' (1969: 368).

Key elements in explaining how minority status suppresses fertility, Goldscheider and Uhlenberg concluded, were the social context of the minority as well as its degree of, and desire for, acculturation (1969: 370). Social disadvantages, for example, are counteracted by limiting childbearing, while resistance to assimilation might stimulate fertility. On some socioeconomic levels, however, the relationship between minority group status and fertility fails to operate because these levels imply better access to and knowledge of birth control, Goldscheider and Uhlenberg argued. Nevertheless, norms and values regarding family size and birth control might still outbalance socioeconomic stimulus for family limitation, like among the Catholics. 'Only when minority groups are viewed as involving sub-communities and subcultures and only when fertility is viewed as social behavior or social process,' Goldscheider and Uhlenberg formed their verdict, 'can we expect beginning solutions to the sociological understanding of the fertility patterns of minority populations.'

While Goldscheider and Uhlenberg succeeded in putting the independent role of minority group status and its relation with fertility on the scientific agenda, David Sly, then at Brown University, was the first to take it up. Using 1960 census data on the number of children born among African-Americans only, Sly (1970) tested the 'assimilationist' hypothesis against the 'minority group status' hypothesis. The results of his research showed the limitations of both approaches. Once again, ethnicity proved a poor indicator of fertility, as non-African-American women in the Northeastern region of the USA appeared to have higher fertility, and their counterparts in the West and South lower fertility. Socioeconomic variables (Sly used education level, income and the husband's occupation) failed to completely explain fertility differentials as well. In most regions of the USA, non-African-American women of all educational levels had higher fertility than African-Americans (Sly 1970:

448). Data on husband's occupation showed that the fertility difference between African-Americans and others was not to be explained by rural and urban regions: for all of the USA except the South, only African-Americans from the three lowest occupational groups showed higher fertility than non-African-American counterparts (1970: 450). The results on the effect of income level on fertility also cast doubt on the 'assimilationist' approach.

Obviously, the most interesting result from Sly's research was that the relation between characteristics, region and ethnicity in the South of the USA appeared completely different from the rest of the country. Eliminating the data of the region that distorted the research outcomes, Sly showed that minority status did not contribute independently to fertility (1970: 457). Though socioeconomic characteristics and region were important in determining fertility, the 'assimilationist' approach failed to account for the difference in fertility between African-Americans and other population groups. The analysis of the effect of education on fertility on the other hand seemed to support the 'assimilationist' hypothesis. Like Goldscheider and Uhlenberg before him, these results led Sly to underline the importance of cultural values in affecting fertility behavior.

5.2.2 Building a theoretical framework: concept and data

The first severe criticism directed at the minority group status theory concerned not the theory itself but the conceptualization and methodology with which it was introduced. Robert Roberts and Eun Lee (1974), then both at the University of Texas, formulated three objections against Goldscheider and Uhlenberg's ideas on the development of the minority group status theory as well as Sly's enhancements. First of all, they criticized the statistical analysis used in both papers: Goldscheider, Uhlenberg and Sly had used cumulative fertility (all children ever born to women aged 40 to 49). Surely cohort data would be a better choice for demonstrating that succeeding generations will be more assimilated than previous ones (Roberts & Lee 1974: 504). The second point of criticism concerned the fact that neither Goldscheider and Uhlenberg nor Sly looked at the age of the woman at the time of marriage and her employment status, which, obviously, was decisive in determining fertility.

Finally, the most important concept in the debate, minority group status, remained largely undefined. Goldscheider and Uhlenberg indeed sometimes defined minority by ethnicity while at other times chose religion and national origin to label the concept. Sly used the white/non-white differential – a huge mistake, Roberts and Lee argued, since non-whites did not constitute a minority in the USA, and as a population group the 'whites' did not have any utility. In the South and West of the USA for example, Hispanic Americans make up a considerable part of

the 'white' population – but they have markedly different socioeconomic characteristics than non-Hispanic whites in Northeast America. Similarly, the non-white population of the USA consisted not only of African-Americans but also of Native Americans, Japanese- and Chinese-Americans – all groups with different socioeconomic patterns and different fertility (Roberts & Lee 1974: 506). As a sociological concept, Roberts and Lee argued, minority group status was meaningful only in a specific community context – where it concerned the USA, region seemed to determine what constituted a minority.

Calling for more and precise observations to test the 'assimilationist' explanation for minority group fertility patterns, Roberts and Lee not only concentrated on a specific region in the USA (the Southwest), but also used cumulative and current fertility data (average number of children under the age of five for women aged 25-29 years). In addition, they selected only those women who were married before the age of 25 and who were unemployed at the time of the 1960 census. Furthermore, they used three minority/majority differentials to analyze group membership. The first category concerned whites versus non-whites; the second non-whites and whites with a Spanish surname versus all other whites. The third category contained three: those with a Spanish surname, all other whites and African-Americans. Socioeconomic factors that were taken into account were female education level, family income and husband's occupation.

Roberts and Lee's data analysis showed the superiority of current fertility data over cumulative data. Using the latter, high fertility rates appeared to occur mainly in rural areas in the Southwest and among lower socioeconomic groups. In addition, minorities as defined by three categories (those with a Spanish surname and African-Americans) showed higher fertility than the majority population groups. The cumulative fertility of those Americans with a Spanish surname appeared higher than that of other white women and of African-Americans – independent of the socioeconomic variables used. Among all minority and majority groups, women's educational level seemed to have a stronger influence on fertility than family income and husband's occupation. Though cumulative fertility seemed to support the 'assimilationist' approach, the more 'accurate' current fertility data yielded other results. Using these data fertility levels in urban and rural areas did not seem to produce different results, and African-Americans did not appear to have higher fertility than whites. Only the relationship between Spanish-surnamed women and high fertility was significant. 'The consistently high fertility of Spanish-surnamed women is striking,' the authors remarked (Roberts & Lee 1974: 517).

With these results, Roberts and Lee showed that a simple white/non-white dichotomy is not enough to study the effects of a minority group

status on fertility behavior. Ethnicity rather than race appeared to be the predictor for deviating birth rates – at least in the Southwestern part of the USA. The definition of 'minority', using race or ethnicity, proved to thoroughly affect the research outcomes. But the choice for cumulative or current fertility data seemed to be at least as important, for the latter showed fewer significant results with regard to the link between minority groups, their socioeconomic characteristics and fertility.

'All things considered,' Roberts and Lee (1974: 519) concluded, 'the results indicate that structural variables such as place of residence, income, occupation, education, and ethnic status do not provide much explanation for fertility differentials.' Even while using the three categories of minorities, these group definitions only accounted for 20 percent of the fertility differentials in cumulative fertility and less than 6 percent in current fertility. Despite the considerate selection of variables and data though, the relation between minority status and fertility still seemed obscure. The efforts of Roberts and Lee, however, had given the minority group status theory a proper sociological framework. And like Goldscheider, Uhlenberg and Sly before them, Roberts and Lee ended their paper suggesting studying social psychological factors like values, beliefs and lifestyles and their role in determining fertility behavior. The interaction between structural and cultural factors, they felt, would prove to be the key to the minority group fertility patterns.

5.2.3 Structural setting: marginality or minorities

Attention for the broader social context of minority groups soon followed. In 1975 the sociologist P. Neal Ritchey published an article in *Population Studies* re-examining concepts used in the debate on minority group status on fertility (1975). Like Roberts and Lee, Ritchey discarded the white/non-white differential in defining majority and minority population groups. But he had a different agenda from his fellow scholars, as he called for awareness of social constraints that affected African-Americans while comparing their fertility with that of 'white' Americans. Interested in the effects of insecurity and marginality on fertility, Ritchey was most interested in the independent effects of minority status on fertility. Previous papers already showed that, particularly among more educated groups of African-Americans, fertility was lower than among whites. The minority status theory, however, failed to explain why, as it only offered an account of lower fertility among African-Americans. And why, Ritchey wondered, do socioeconomic factors influence the fertility of African-Americans? And why does the South deviate in this respect from other regions in the USA? To find an answer to these questions, Ritchey argued, studying individual characteristics is not enough: also structural settings ought to be

taken into account. For that reason, he used a measure for racial inequity that included variables like income, college education, male unemployment, proportion living in the fringe of urbanized areas, infant mortality and enrollment in segregated schools (Ritchey 1975: 254).

Ritchey used a sample from the 1970 census to test various hypotheses on the relation between situational constraints and fertility, structural assimilation and acculturation and, thirdly, social mobility and fertility. As expected, education and fertility appeared to be inversely related. This relationship did not seem to be affected by the level of racial inequity. African-Americans did seem to have higher fertility in general, but that relationship weakened as racial inequity decreased. The effects of education once more proved to be strong: fertility appeared to decline as education increased, regardless of race and level of racial inequity. African-Americans in lower socioeconomic levels seemed to have higher fertility than whites; however, this relation weakened with the decrease of racial inequity. With these results, Ritchey proved that the structural setting of minorities was another factor in the relationship between minority status and fertility apart from socioeconomic characteristics. 'That is, the attribute of being black – and therefore, of minority group status – gains its significance as an independent influence on behavior to the extent that the social milieu maintains social distance and discriminates on the basis of these attributes.' Though adding another factor to the relation between minority status and fertility, Ritchey's conclusion was clear: differences between African-American and 'white' fertility would converge in the end.

5.2.4 Minority group status and fertility: the fruits of the debate

Though the existence of a direct link between minority group status and fertility remains undisputed, the theoretical and methodological framework is complex. The first elaboration of the relationship between minority group status and fertility, by Goldscheider and Uhlenberg, concerned the socioeconomic context of a minority group but also its social disadvantages and assimilation and (religious) ideology regarding family size. Initially, 'race' was taken up by Sly as the most obvious minority/majority fertility differential. With Roberts and Lee, however, the definition of 'minority' itself and particularly the white/non-white categorization became a topic of debate. In their paper, data selection and analysis were more sophisticated than previously, and thanks to their efforts, the type of data used to analyze minority group fertility became more important. In the mid-1970s, as social inequity drew more attention, Ritchey issued a call to include structural settings of minorities in addition to their socioeconomic characteristics. As the discussion among social scientists continued and conceptualization as well as data

selection improved, research results showed fewer definite results on the relation between minority status and fertility. It is with these results in mind that we turn to the fertility of another minority – that of the 'foreign brides' in Taiwan.

5.3 Fertility of Taiwan's 'foreign brides'

From the mid-1980s, the proportion of cross-border marriages has been on the rise in Taiwan. In 2002, 27.4 percent of all marriages registered in Taiwan were cross-border marriages; by 2003 this had risen to a third. The following year, the proportion of cross-border marriages declined to a fourth of all registered marriages due to the border screening of the 'Mainland brides' based on separate interviews of couples (Kojima 2006). In total, by 2005 Taiwanese citizens had married 234,000 Mainland Chinese and 177,230 spouses from other countries. Since then statistics on foreign brides have probably been underreported, as many Mainland Chinese women who married Taiwanese men did not move to Taiwan after the wedding but stayed in China. Since most of the Taiwanese men and women do not establish neo-local residence before they get married, the Taiwanese men who marry 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' in Taiwan have the tendency to stay with their family of origin until they get married. In addition, many of the newlywed cross-border couples stay with the parents even after they get married due to lack of financial resources to purchase a residence of their own. The Taiwanese men who marry female marriage migrants will as a result have the tendency to form three-generation and extended households (Yang 2006).

In the following part of the paper, we will study the fertility of these 'foreign brides' and will establish to what extent their fertility deviates from that of native Taiwanese women. We will start with an introduction to the data used. Subsequently, we discuss the selected variables and, thirdly, the statistical model employed in the analysis of the data set.

5.3.1 Data: the foreign brides' living condition survey

In order to analyze current fertility levels and birth histories of the female marriage migrants living in Taiwan, we used registration data of 'foreign brides' as collected by the Foreign Brides Living Condition Survey (FBLCS) of 2003. This survey was undertaken with the support from the Ministry of the Interior of Taiwan in order to get more information on and insight into the fertility and reproductive histories of 'foreign brides' in Taiwan. The data set concerns a cross-sectional face-

to-face survey with detailed information about fertility and family formation behavior of female marriage migrants of all ages residing in Taiwan. Respondents were both Vietnamese and Mainland Chinese brides.

The FBLCS data set has several interesting aspects that are most useful for the analysis of fertility behavior and birth history of female marriage migrants. First of all, the FBLCS is not a representative sample, but a complete data set, as it is based on registration data from the Department of Household Registration Unit in the Ministry of the Interior of Taiwan. The registration data cover all legal female marriage migrants in Taiwan as well as their home addresses, recorded as they apply for their permanent resident status after entering Taiwan. Secondly, the data include detailed information on the fertility behavior of both 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides', allowing a precise analysis of their age-specific birth histories. In addition, the data set not only includes socio-demographic characteristics of female marriage migrants but also those of their husbands. Other variables of the data set relate to their living conditions in Taiwan, such as household composition, childrearing, economic conditions, employment situation, status of medical insurance, legal status and social welfare assistance needs. In this way we are well positioned to see the effects of these variables on the fertility and birth histories of the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' in Taiwan.

To understand fertility behavior, it is of the utmost importance to have precise records of marriage dates and birth timing. In the FBLCS questionnaires, each respondent retrospectively reported her marriage date and birth history, including the exact moment she gave birth. The life-history calendar as reported by the respondents was then validated through the household registration record. Each birth reported by the respondent was defined as a birth spell. The FBLCS respondents recorded a total of 91,017 and 36,304 of first and second births, respectively, by the foreign brides who were residing in Taiwan by the time of the interview. Since most of the female marriage migrants had resided in Taiwan for less than seven years by the time of the interview, we limit our analyses to the first and second birth spells only and ignore the possibility of a third birth. A preliminary analysis of the data indicates that less than 1 percent of the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' have three or more children in the data set. Therefore, the third and subsequent births recorded in the data set will not be used in the analysis.

5.3.2 Variables

To map the socioeconomic and family background characteristics of the female marriage migrants we used several time-constant variables. We created instance-specific variables that were based on the respondents' marriage and birth histories. Because of the design of the FBLCS study

and time limitation, respondents did not report changes in their life-course status during the interviews. We are, therefore, limiting our analyses by using time-constant variables only.

We divide the respondents into two distinct groups: brides from Vietnam and brides from Mainland China. Since female marriage migrants from Vietnam have in general migrated more recently to Taiwan compared to those from Mainland China, they are usually younger and less familiar with Chinese culture in Taiwan. The Vietnam/Mainland China distinction will show different adaptation strategies and decisions with regard to having children between brides from different cultural settings. Measures of respondents' as well their husbands' social backgrounds included education (primary school, middle school and high school graduates). The questions about employment concerned whether the respondent and her husband had a steady occupation or whether they did not have a paid job at the time of the interview. The age of the respondent, which captures the duration dependence of the estimated probability of giving birth, is measured in years. Since fertility of the female marriage migrants peaks in their early twenties and then declines at older ages, the statistical model includes age-squared terms to demonstrate the fecundity of the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides'. The analysis includes two characteristics of the personal and family status of the female marriage migrants. Her legal residency and whether or not she can permanently stay in Taiwan cover the respondent's legal status. The family status of female marriage migrants is captured by the status of their husband: whether he is a retired veteran, disabled, receives low income welfare benefits and if he is of indigenous origin. The place of residence of the respondents at the time of the interview has been grouped into regional categories: the North (from Taipei to Miaoli), the Central part (from Taichung to Tainan), the South (Kaohsiung and Pingtung), the East (including Ilan, Hwa-Liang and Taitung) and the offshore islands (including Penghu, Kinmen, Matsu).

5.3.3 Statistical model

In order to analyze the fertility decisions for the female marriage migrants, a sequential model of childbearing that assumes each birth as a distinct event is used here. Two separate birth spacings (from time of marriage to first birth, and first to second birth) are considered here. Since most of the female marriage migrants were wed after the year 2000, third and higher births are quite rare in the data. It will be demonstrated later that this model will allow for the effect of socioeconomic conditions and other socio-demographic variables on fertility to vary at each birth.

The statistical model used here is a discrete-time survival analysis model for the birth-history file of FBLCS data. The discrete-time survival model was first proposed by Cox as a type of logistic regression (Cox 1972) to analyze life-tables, and was later adopted by other social scientists to analyze event occurrence over time (Allison 1982; Singer & Willett 1991, 2005). More specifically, the survival function is the cumulative proportion of cases surviving up to the respective time interval. In our analysis, those foreign female migrants who gave birth are considered 'failures', and those who have not are the survivors. The hazard function, $h(t)$, is the conditional probability that a birth will occur in a particular time interval, provided that the foreign female migrants 'survived' through the end of the previous time period. Suppose that T is a discrete random variable indicating the time interval between births by a foreign female migrant. Hazard $h(t)$ or the conditional probability that the birth occurred at $T = t$, given that the birth did not occur before $T = t$, can be expressed as follows:

$$T(t) = Pr(T = t/T \geq t),$$

In contrast to the continuous-hazard model where the hazard is an 'instantaneous rate', the hazard for the discrete-time event model is a conditional probability bound in the range from 0 to 1. The 'conditionality' in the discrete-time survival analysis has one advantage in which the censoring problem is fixed by the hazard probability objectively by allowing all individuals to remain in the risk set until end of the episode, i.e., the risk of giving birth.

All the dependent and explanatory variables are either dummy variables (variables with only two values – zero and one) or categorical variables estimated with a reference group for each variable. The dependent variable of the statistical model represents whether the female marriage migrants had a first and second birth after they married their Taiwanese spouse. In addition to the time intervals between first and second birth, we included variables in our models that we expect to affect the risk of birth significantly. These variables include employment status and educational attainment of the female marriage migrant and her spouse, their place of residence, whether or not the spouse had a special welfare status, the legal status of the female marriage migrant after immigration to Taiwan, her age and her age squared.

5.3.4 Results

In order to study the relationship between fertility and female marriage migrant status, the Kaplan-Meier estimate of probability of childbearing decisions by birth order is used in the analysis. As less than 10 percent

of all the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' reported having more than three births, we consider only the first two births. The graph in Figure 5.1 shows the 'survival' probability of the first birth for both Vietnamese and Mainland brides. The horizontal axis shows the time interval between marriage and the first birth in units of years, the interval between the first birth and second birth in each of the two graphs. The vertical axis shows the percentage rate of 'survival', that is, the percentage of female marriage migrants who are yet to give birth to the particular order of births concerned. In order to give a more complete picture of the childbearing decision of the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides', we use the fertility behavior of native Taiwanese women as a comparative group in these two figures. As some observations from the data set are censored after the year 2003, one will find that the downward-sloping curve never approaches zero.

The graphs in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 display the effect of survival rate of the female marriage migrants and their Taiwanese spouse on their decision for a first and second birth from the time of marriage up to ten and eight years, respectively. The curves plotted in these graphs are based on event-history person-years files from all births retrieved from the data set. The curves in Figure 5.1 are the Kaplan-Meier estimates of the survival rate of three groups of brides. It shows that births of native Taiwanese women experience a steep declining curve right after they get married. This result is in accordance with recent demographic trends: Taiwanese couples tend to first become pregnant and then get married (Yang & Chen 2004). Since most of the female marriage migrants, both from Vietnam and Mainland China, do not know their spouse before they get married, the period until the first pregnancy and birth is longer. It is estimated that it takes at least one year before a couple becomes pregnant and gives birth. A useful tool of the Kaplan-Meier estimates is the median time of the event. Although native Taiwanese couples first get pregnant and then get married, half of them wait longer (2.58 years) before having the first birth. The female marriage migrants show a different pattern as half of them give their first birth after a shorter period – 2.17 years among Mainland Chinese and 1.98 years among Vietnamese brides. Many of the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' are married to middle-aged Taiwanese men, and their spouses may experience pressure to become fathers as soon as possible after they get married.

The graph in Figure 5.2 shows the survival rates for the second births of Taiwan-born, Vietnamese and Mainland Chinese brides. Not surprisingly, the Kaplan-Meier survival analysis indicates that Taiwanese women are waiting longer before having a second child (3.63 years) than the female marriage migrants, but then the curve declines sharply. From the plotted curves, one can see that compared to native Taiwanese

Figure 5.1 *Birth transitions first child*

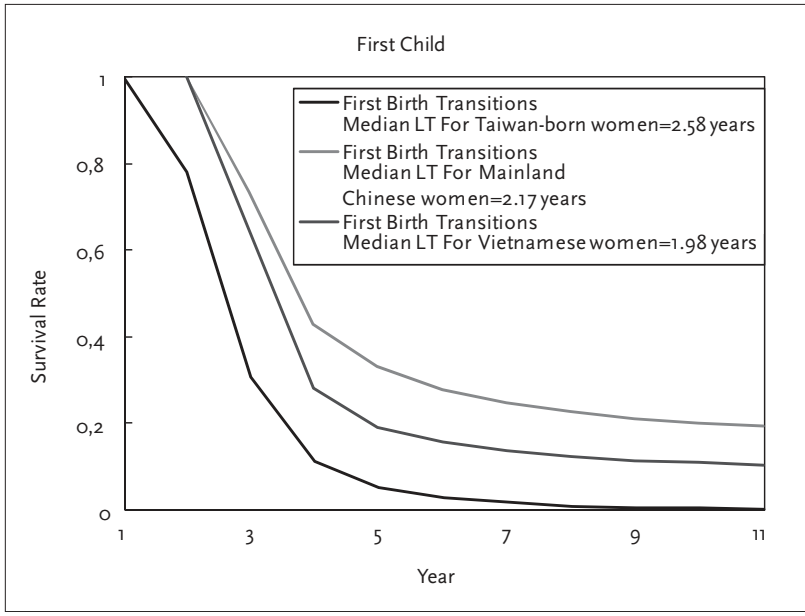
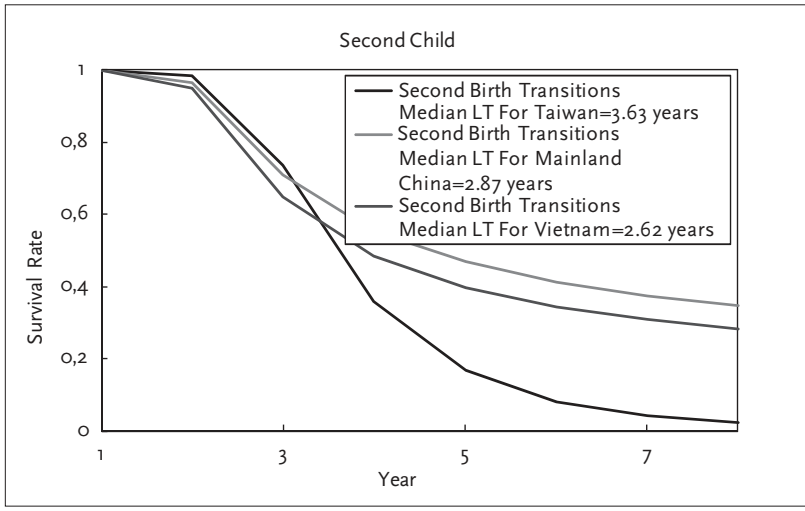


Figure 5.2 *Birth transitions second child*



women, the 'Mainland brides' have a much shorter period between first and second births (2.87 years) while spacing among Vietnamese brides is the shortest (2.62 years). The pattern among native Taiwanese women to wait longer before having a second birth, as shown in Figure 5.2, resonates with the recent fertility level in Taiwan, which has been declining sharply to reach the lowest-low level. Many Taiwanese women nowadays decide not have a second child or choose not to have any children at all. In addition, female marriage migrants generally marry into the more traditional sector of the society: their spouse's decision to have children with the spacing that suits a traditional family may result in shorter birth intervals.

While the graphs in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 demonstrate the general pattern of childbearing of female marriage migrants, multivariate analysis enables us to ascertain whether differences between Vietnamese and Mainland Chinese brides are significant. In addition, this type of analysis shows how other socio-demographic variables determine the fertility behavior of the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides'. We now turn to the results of the exponential piece-wise, or the discrete-time, survival models of fertility behavior for female marriage migrants in Taiwan. To provide for a more convenient interpretation, we also calculate hazard ratios for our models. The hazard ratios are the simple transformations of parameter estimates calculated by taking the exponential of the model parameter estimates ($e^{\beta x}$), which can be interpreted as the percentage change in the hazard rate of infant death. Hazard ratios greater than 1 indicate that the level of infant deaths was higher, while hazard rates below 1 are a sign of a lower level of infant deaths in a certain category of the variables. Five models are presented. We respectively examine the effect of the time interval, employment status, educational attainment of the female marriage migrants and their spouses, age and age squared (a quadratic term) with 'unemployed' and 'a higher level of education than high school' serving as the reference group. The second model adds welfare status of the spouse, with 'husbands receiving no welfare from the government' as the reference group. The third model incorporates the legal status (a temporary visa) of the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides', using permanent residency as the reference group. Finally, the last model incorporates four dummy variables for place of residence at birth, with offshore islands as the reference category.

The estimation results are summarized in Tables 5.1 to 5.4 (see Appendix). Most of the theoretically relevant variables included in the statistical models turn out to be empirically significant, with expected signs. The general results are presented below, followed by an evaluation of the model specification and a number of overall interpretations. Subsequently, we will address the implications of the model for policies regarding female marriage migrants in Taiwan.

5.3.5 *The spacing of births*

In our statistical model, the D*i* is a categorical variable representing different lengths of time intervals between marriage and first birth on the one hand and the intervals between first and second birth on the other. A value of 1 represents birth spacing of one year or less. In addition, this value refers to those newlywed couples that have not yet given birth. The value of 2 represents the period of one to two years, and so on. The coefficient of the second year for both Mainland China and Vietnamese brides appears to be the largest for the first birth, followed by the first year and the third. This suggests that a female marriage migrant is most likely to have her first child in the second year after marriage. The second birth soon follows, within the first two years after the first birth, though followed by the third and fourth year. It is most probable that Taiwanese men who choose to marry a female marriage migrant do not have an intimate relationship with their brides before marriage, resulting in few pregnancies before marriage.

Our data analysis clearly shows that the Mainland Chinese and Vietnamese brides do not tend to have their second birth right after the first one. This is in contrast with the often-heard popular opinion in Taiwanese society that female marriage migrants have higher fertility than native Taiwanese women. Our analysis also indicates that the sex of the first-born child determines whether the female marriage migrants will have a second child. If the first-born is female, the chance that Mainland Chinese and Vietnamese brides will have a second birth is 30 percent higher than in the case of a male first-born.

All in all, female marriage migrants do not seem to have a spacing behavior that deviates strongly from that of native Taiwanese women. One can even speculate that after getting married, the 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' practise family planning. Since the People's Republic of China has used the one-child policy to limit population growth for over two decades, it is quite reasonable to believe that Mainland Chinese brides prefer one child even if they marry Taiwanese men.

5.3.6 *Results on determinants of fertility*

Age: Our analysis shows that the age of the female marriage migrant is negatively related to her fertility. It seems that with the increase of age, the number of children they will have becomes smaller. Since the Taiwanese men who opt for a 'foreign' or 'Mainland bride' tend to be middle-aged, the pressure to perpetuate the lineage is quite strong.

Employment Status: The employment status of both the female marriage migrant and her spouse appears to have a strong yet gender-spe-

cific effect on fertility. If her husband has a steady job, this has a positive effect on the fertility of the female marriage migrant. If on the other hand she has a steady job, this affects her fertility in a negative way. It is understandable that if the spouse is employed and his bride does not work but fulfills the role of housewife, there might be little reason to postpone a pregnancy after an initial period of settling into the new environment and becoming acquainted with her new relatives.

Education Level: Female marriage migrants whose level of education is lower than high school tend to have higher fertility than those 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' with a high school diploma. This pattern is found for both first and second birth. Female marriage migrants with a higher education level are more likely to find employment in Taiwan and, as a result, might have fewer children.

Place of Residence: The results on the effects of the geographic location of female marriage migrants and their spouses on fertility are rather mixed when all the other variables are considered in the statistical model. Compared to 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' living on offshore islands, the female marriage migrants in all other parts of Taiwan tend to delay their first birth and have a lower chance of having one in the first place. In addition, the chance of Mainland Chinese brides living in the Northern and Central parts of Taiwan having a second birth is 40 percent lower than those living on offshore islands, while the chances of those in the Central and Southern part of Taiwan are 20 and 25 percent lower than the control group. It is most probable that many of the Taiwanese men who live on the offshore islands and marry female marriage migrants are fishermen, have slightly more traditional values, and prefer larger families than their counterparts in other Taiwanese regions.

Social Welfare: It is believed that during the initial stage of the phenomenon of cross-border marriage between Mainland China and Taiwan, many of the spouses were veterans. Since they enjoy the benefits of a pension plan, their newly built families are the recipients of social welfare. For this reason, we included the social welfare status of the husbands as a variable. Spouses registered in the veteran, disability and low-income welfare plans as well as those belonging to an indigenous group were compared to spouses without social welfare support. The results show a negative relation between social welfare and fertility for both the first and second births of female marriage migrants, indicating a strong income effect. That is, those 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' married to a Taiwanese man who has some kind of welfare sup-

port tend to have lower fertility than those married to men who are not registered for such plans.

Legal Status: Female marriage migrants without a residence permit for Taiwan appear to have lower fertility than those who have a visa that allows them to stay in Taiwan permanently. Instability of the household income has been shown to reduce the chances for Mainland Chinese and Vietnamese brides to have a child; a temporary status of their visa will lower those chances even more.

First Child's Sex: In addition, the sex of the first child has a strong effect on the decision by the couples to have a next child. We found that if the first child's sex is a female, the decision to have another child is 1.4 times higher for both Mainland and Vietnamese couples estimated from the data. It is clear that the cultural ideology to continue the patrilineage still has a very strong influence on cross-border marriage families. For many of the Taiwanese husbands who married foreign brides, one of the major reasons to do so is to continue the family lineage. But, on the other hand, if their first birth is a male child, many of them tend to not have a second child to follow the pattern of other Taiwanese couples nowadays and decide to have only one child on the island.

5.4 Conclusion and discussion

The suggested link between a minority group status and deviating fertility behavior is anything but new. In the late 1960s Goldscheider and Uhlenberg introduced the minority group status theory. They argued that apart from socioeconomic variables, the minority group status exerts an independent influence on fertility. African-Americans living in urban areas, they showed, had lower fertility than white Americans of the same educational level. Sly, on the other hand, showed that the relation between minority group status, socioeconomic variables and fertility was region-specific. Race, in that sense, seemed a bad indicator for a certain fertility pattern. That conclusion was drawn by Roberts and Lee, who severely criticized previous utilization of concepts and data. Based on their research outcomes, they suggested the source of minority group fertility patterns was the interaction between structural and cultural factors. Finally, Ritchey drew social inequity into the debate and argued that insecurity and marginality constituted the independent influence of the minority group status on fertility.

The unexpected inflow of the female marriage migrants which started in the mid-1990s from Mainland China and then was boosted after the year 2000 by female marriage migrants from Southeast Asia

has caused alarm among many local Taiwanese politicians, who warn of the high birth rate and unhealthy babies of the foreign migrant mothers. In 2004, the foreign marriage migrants' total births reached a record high of more than 20,000, but since then, the total of births by foreign migrant mothers has subsided.

According to the popular and mass media images, female marriage migrants in Taiwan are associated with high fertility. In November 2005, the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Legislator Lai Shyh-bao expressed his concerns about Taiwan's low fertility rate. He urged the government to set up agencies abroad to encourage foreign spouses to come to Taiwan (*Taipei Times*, 11 November 2005, p. 2). Though Taiwanese fertility continues to show a decreasing trend (with an average of 0.91 children per woman in 2005, which set a record low), our research has shown that 'foreign' and 'Mainland brides' will not boost Taiwan's fertility level (*Taipei Times*, 19 June 2006, p. 3). The Mainland Chinese and Vietnamese migrant mothers tend to have fertility patterns similar to the local Taiwanese mothers. After the first birth right after marriage, the foreign migrant mothers tend to delay their second birth to a certain extent, and only a few of them have a third birth. One of the major reasons is that both the Mainland Chinese and Vietnamese brides are from societies where strong family planning programs are practised. For the Mainland Chinese marriage migrants, they are brought up with a one-child policy which is enforced throughout the country; whereas in Vietnam, a very effective family planning program has become a national policy in recent years. One limit of our analysis, though, is that we cannot observe the occurrence of additional births by the foreign marriage migrants in their later childbearing years from the data set because most of them arrived in Taiwan within the last ten years and are still young, so they have not yet reached their later childbearing years. But limited data analysis from many Mainland Chinese mothers at later childbearing ages has demonstrated that even they seldom have more than two births. We therefore believe the foreign marriage migrants' fertility behavior will be comparable to the local Taiwanese women's fertility patterns in the long run.

Appendix

Table 5.1 *Parameter estimates and goodness of fit statistics for the hazard models fitted to data on timing of first birth and goodness of fit statistics of Mainland Chinese brides in Taiwan*

	Model 1		*Model 2*	
	Log-odds	*Odds ratio*	*Log-odds*	*Odd ratio*
Duration in years				
t1	.44***	1.55***	3.62***	37.48***
t2	.26***	1.30***	3.48***	32.26***
t3	-.55***	.58***	2.64***	14.06***
t4	-.97***	.38***	2.19***	8.92***
t5	-1.32***	.27***	1.77***	5.87***
t6	-1.59***	.20***	1.35***	3.88***
t7	-1.87***	.15***	.89***	2.43***
t8	-2.08***	.12***	.45***	1.58***
t9	-2.30***	.10***	-.01	.99
t10	-2.36***	.10***	-.16	.85
Working status (work = 1)			.16***	1.18***
Spouse working status (work = 1)			.48***	1.62***
Educational status (0 = university)				
Primary			-.32***	.73***
Middle			-.10***	.91***
Spouse primary			-.46***	.63***
Spouse middle			.06***	1.06***
Age of respondent			-.04***	.96***
Receive social welfare benefit (1 = no)			.20***	1.22***
Legal status (1 = no residence permit)			-1.92***	.15***
Place of residence (0 = offshore island)				
North			-.71***	.49***
Central			-.56***	.57***
South			-.70***	.49***
East			-.95***	.39***
-2LL	-97394.77	-97394.77	-89813.37	-89813.37

*$p < .05$
**$p < .01$
***$p < .001$

Table 5.2 *Parameter estimates and goodness of fit statistics for the hazard models fitted to data on timing of first birth and goodness of fit statistics of Vietnamese brides in Taiwan*

	Model 1		*Model 2*	
	Log-odds	*Odds ratio*	*Log-odds*	*Odd ratio*
Duration in years				
t1	.75***	2.12***	1.38***	3.96***
t2	.72***	2.05***	1.32***	3.75***
t3	-.27***	.76***	.23	1.26
t4	-1.00***	.37***	-.64***	.53***
t5	-1.25***	.29***	-1.17***	.31***
t6	-1.63***	.20***	-1.82***	.16***
t7	-1.81***	.16***	-2.14***	.12***
t8	-1.63***	.20***	-1.93***	.15***
t9	-1.10***	.33***	-1.32***	.27***
t10	-.24	.79	-.11	.89
Working status (work = 1)			-.39***	.67***
Spouse working (work = 1)			.28***	1.32***
Educational status (0 = university)			-.00	1.00
Primary			.02	1.02
Middle			-.29***	.75***
Spouse primary			.17***	1.18***
Spouse middle			-.39***	.67***
Age of respondent			.03***	1.03***
Receive social welfare benefit (1 = no)			.12***	1.12***
Legal status (1 = no residence permit)			-1.33***	.26***
Place of residence (0 = offshore island)			-.49**	.61**
North			-.38*	.69*
Central			-.50**	.61**
South			-.55**	.58**
East				
-2LL	-50988.92	-50988.92	-49231.15	-49231.15
			.03***	1.03***

Table 5.3 *Parameter estimates and goodness of fit statistics for the hazard models fitted to data on timing of second birth and goodness of fit statistics of Mainland Chinese brides in Taiwan*

	Model 1		*Model 2*	
	Log-odds	*Odds ratio*	*Log-odds*	*Odds ratio*
Duration in years				
t1	-1.15***	.31***	.16	1.17
t2	-.18***	.83***	.37***	1.45***
t3	-.58***	.56***	-.11	.90
t4	-1.02***	.36***	-.66***	.52***
t5	-1.36***	.26***	-1.13***	.32***
t6	-1.74***	.18***	-1.65***	.19***
t7	-2.17***	.11***	-2.24***	.11***
t8	-2.64***	.07***	-2.81***	.06***
Working status (1 = working)			-.24***	.79***
Spouse working (1 = working)			.33***	1.40***
Education status (0 = university)				
Primary			.22***	1.25***
Middle			.21***	1.24***
Spouse primary			-.13***	.88***
Spouse middle			.15***	1.16***
Age			.00	1.00
Receive social welfare benefit (1 = no)			.18***	1.19***
Legal status (1 = no residence permit)			-1.33***	.26***
Place of residence (0 = offshore island)				
North			-.62***	.54***
Central			-.39***	.68***
South			-.56***	.57***
East			-.55***	.58***
First child sex (1=female)			.31***	1.36***
-2LL	-84438.13	-84438.13	-70693.27	-70693.27

*$p < .05$
**$p < .01$
***$p < .001$

Table 5.4 *Parameter estimates and goodness of fit statistics for the hazard models fitted to data on timing of second birth and goodness of fit statistics of Vietnamese brides in Taiwan*

	Model 1		*Model 2*	
	Log-odds	*Odds ratio*	*Log-odds*	*Odds ratio*
Duration in years				
t1	-1.32***	.27***	-.91***	.40***
t2	-.45***	.64***	-.62***	.54***
t3	-.92***	.40***	-1.29***	.28***
t4	-1.29***	.27***	-1.98***	.14***
t5	-1.72***	.18***	-2.71***	.07***
t6	-2.15***	.12***	-3.31***	.04***
t7	-2.46***	.09***	-3.68***	.03***
t8	-2.88***	.06***	-4.11***	.02***
Working status (1 = working)			-.34***	.71***
Working status (1 = working)			.18***	1.19***
Spouse working			.05	1.05
Education status (0 = university)			.04	1.04
Primary			-.14***	.87***
Middle			.05**	1.05**
Spouse primary			-.34***	.71***
Spouse middle			.18***	1.19***
Age			.06***	1.06***
Receive social welfare benefit (1 = no)			.11***	1.11***
Legal status (1 = no residence permit)			-1.33***	.26***
Place of residence (0 = offshore island)				
North			-1.00***	.37***
Central			-.75***	.47***
South			-.96***	.38***
East			-.84***	.43***
First child sex (1 = female)			.31***	1.36***
-2LL	-45041.66	-45041.66	-37948.74	-37948.74

*$p < .05$
**$p < .01$
***$p < .001$

6 The Rise of Cross-border Marriage and Divorce in Contemporary Korea

Doo-Sub Kim

6.1 Introduction

Koreans are generally well-known for maintaining a tradition of ethnic homogeneity. However, a silent and pervasive revolution is underway in Korea: Koreans are now getting a taste of diverse types of marriages. A rapid upward trend in the number of cross-border marriages has been observed since the early 1990s. The number of cross-border marriages has increased 9.2 times during the period 1990-2005. Cross-border marriages composed 13.6 percent of overall marriages registered in 2005 (KNSO 2006). It is also noted that the nationality of foreign spouses has become more diverse in recent years along with the tide of globalization and labor force migration.

Marriage migration across the border is also pervasive in Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, and Southeast Asian countries (Goodkind 1997; Piper 2003; Tsay 2004; Yang & Liu 2005). In Taiwan, the proportion of cross-border marriages has reached 32 percent of overall marriages registered in 2003 (Tsay 2004). The rapid increase in cross-border marriage, both in absolute numbers and in relation to overall marriages, has significant consequences and implications for society.

Recently, a massive exodus of young women from Southeast Asian countries and their roles as workers and brides in Japan and Taiwan have received increasing attention from scholars (Piper 1999, 2003; Yu 2001; Piper & Roces 2003; Hsia 2004). There have also been anthropological studies on the communities of origin, many of them focusing on the commercialization of young women (Salt & Stein 1997; Wang & Chang 2001; Le Bélanger & Khuat 2005; Nguyen 2005). Recently in the US, the rise of interracial marriages as well as other types of non-traditional unions has become a hot research issue (Spickard 1989; Qian 1997; Moran 2001; Root 2001; Jacobs & Labov 2002; Romano 2003; Rosenfeld & Kim 2005).

Korean society has experienced a drastic increase in divorce recently. The increasing divorce rates have also been remarkable for those married to foreign spouses. The number of divorces between Koreans and foreign spouses rose from 1,689 in 2000 to 4,278 in 2005.

Based on sample surveys and in-depth interviews, studies on the marriage process and adaptations of marriage immigrants have been conducted in Korea (Kim 1998; Kang 1999; Min 2003; Yoon 2004; Lee 2005). However, we do not have satisfactory explanations of the causal scheme of the recent increase in cross-border marriages or the socio-demographic characteristics of the married couples. Nor is it clear what causal mechanisms operated in their divorces.

The main purpose of this paper is to review the increasing trends in cross-border marriage and divorce of Koreans. This paper first develops a conceptual scheme for the changing pattern of nuptiality. It is postulated that the increasing incidence of cross-border marriage represents a phase of nuptiality changes, which is facilitated by changes in sex-age composition and value transformation. The key forces behind the recent increase in cross-border marriage of Koreans, namely the effects of a rapid decline in fertility, rise in sex ratio at birth, urban-ward migration of young women, expansion of gender-equity norms, and globalization, are stressed. This paper focuses on exploring the pattern of the socio-demographic characteristics of married couples. Age at marriage, previous marital experience, education, occupation, and residence of the married couples are analyzed. Attention is also given to demographic characteristics and duration of marriage of the divorced couples. Micro data from the marriage and divorce registration for 1990-2005 are utilized in this study.

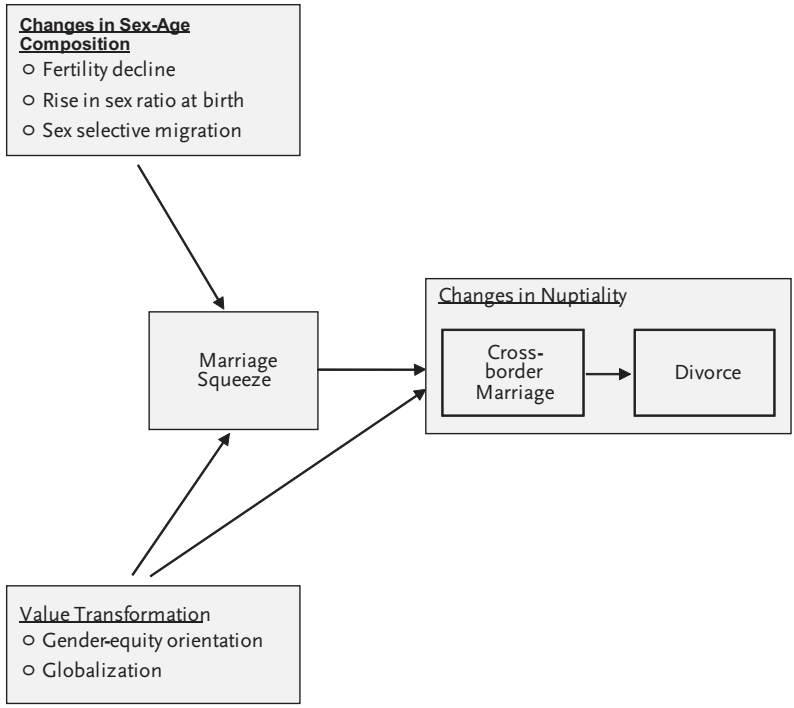
6.2 A conceptual scheme for cross-border marriage and divorce

6.2.1 Changes in sex-age composition

Without a doubt, making decisions on the timing of marriage and choice of spouse is an individual matter. However, the rapid rise of cross-border marriage in Korea and several Asian countries since the early 1990s can partly be explained by socio-structural factors. The rapid increase in cross-border marriage can be understood as a phenomenon of nuptiality changes mainly due to marriage squeeze, that is, imbalanced sex composition of the marriage-eligible population. Figure 6.1 presents the key concepts and the causal mechanisms of nuptiality changes including cross-border marriage and divorce.

Socio-structural factors responsible for rapid changes in the marriage-eligible population can be grouped into two key components: sex-age composition of the population and value transformation. It is postulated

Figure 6.1 *A conceptual scheme of cross-border marriage and divorce*



in this study that changes in the sex-age composition are caused by three factors: fertility decline, rise in sex ratio at birth, and sex selectivity in migration.

A prominent condition to be emphasized as an exogenous determinant of marriage squeeze in Figure 6.1 is fertility decline. Korean society has experienced a drastic decline in the level of fertility during the past several decades. The total fertility rate (TFR) decreased sharply from about 6.0 in the early 1960s to the replacement level (2.1 children per woman) in 1983 and has dropped to 1.08 in 2005, the lowest level in the world. Rapid and continued decline in fertility reduces the size of the birth cohort as years go by. The number of newborns was estimated as 1,007,000 in 1970, but dropped to 438,000 in 2005 (KNSO 2007). This implies that the number of newborns decreased by 1.6 percent every year on average during the past 35 years. If men look for younger women to marry and an age difference of 3-4 years between bride and groom is maintained, the excess proportion of men in the marriage market will grow as the absolute number of births becomes smaller every year. Unless there are inflows of female immigrants, fewer men will find eligible women to marry.

A rise in the sex ratio at birth is the most important cause of the imbalanced sex composition of the marriage-eligible population. When medical technologies for prenatal sex screening became widely available and accessible around the mid-1980s in Korea, the sex ratio at birth began to rise remarkably and reached a peak of 115.5 in 1994. Mainly due to strong government interventions, mass media campaigns and an improved status for women, a downward trend in the sex ratio at birth has been observed since the mid-1990s. The national average of the sex ratio at birth decreased to 108.2 in 2004 (Kim 2004a, 2004b; KNSO 2007). If high sex ratios at birth continue, then every successive group of men entering the marriage market will become larger than the number of women. The situation will become serious if the declining trend in fertility and the current age difference between bride and groom are maintained. A substantial proportion of men may face difficulty in finding a mate.

Another major factor contributing to the increasing imbalance between the number of men and women at marriageable age is sex selectivity in migration. Migration tends to be sex selective according to the development stage and culture of the society. If massive migration becomes sex selective, it is likely to result in sex imbalance leading to changes in nuptiality. Along with a continuous rise in age at first marriage, Korea has witnessed a phenomenon of an increasing number of old bachelors in rural areas since the mid-1980s. However, this phenomenon does not necessarily imply sex imbalance of the marriage-eligible population. Distortions in sex composition in rural areas can also be attributed to the massive migration of young women to urban areas in the course of industrialization and urbanization.

The sex composition of the marriage-eligible population can also be determined by international migration. In particular, international migration of those having adventurous characteristics tends to be highly male selective. The immediate result of sex imbalance is likely to be a rise in age at marriage in the places of origin and destination. Good examples can be found in the history of Chinese migration to Singapore, Malaysia and other Southeast Asian countries. However, the population of Korea can be regarded as almost 'closed' after the mid-1950s (Kim 2004c: 10). Thus, international migration has not exerted a significant effect on the sex composition of the marriage-eligible population in Korea.

6.2.2 Value transformation

Marriage squeeze due to changes in the sex-age composition does not appear to be the only factor explaining the recent increase in cross-border marriage. Korea maintained a certain number of women married to foreign men even before the sex ratio of the marriage-eligible popula-

tion became seriously imbalanced. It can be hypothesized that recent trends in marriage squeeze, contributing to changes in nuptiality, have been very much influenced by value transformation. This paper introduces the concepts of gender-equity orientation and globalization as key factors behind the continuing increase in cross-border marriage and divorce since the early 1990s.

Korea has experienced substantial improvements in gender equity during the past two decades. The number of women entering college and the labor market grew at an increasing pace, fostering a powerful economic and cultural transformation of Korean society. However, rigidly differentiated sex roles for married life still prevail inside the Korean family (McDonald 2000). Young Korean women are well aware that their careers and self-realization will be compromised once they get married. Therefore, young women tend to consider marriage as an 'option' rather than a 'mandatory' process in the course of their life. More and more young women with a high level of education and an economic capability for self-support tend to postpone or avoid it (Kim 2005). As indicated in Figure 6.1, marriage squeeze and changes in nuptiality have been reinforced by expansion of the gender-equity orientation.

The second set of arguments focuses on the effects of globalization. A tide of globalization and the movement of capital and people around the world have changed marriage-related norms, values and attitudes through effects on economic restructuring, job opportunities, the spread of the Internet and transnational mass media, and improvement in the status of women. This resultant atmosphere of globalization has been responsible for the tendency of the younger generation to postpone or avoid initial family formation as well as to get married to a foreign spouse.

In the proposed model in Figure 6.1, a direct path of causal flow between value transformation and nuptiality changes is hypothesized in addition to an indirect path through marriage squeeze. The direct path of causal flow is necessary to explain the increasing incidence of cross-border marriage and divorce of Korean women. There is little doubt that, along with the improved status of women and value transformation, expanded manpower movement across the border has directly facilitated cross-border marriage and divorce as well.

Individual preferences, tastes, and attitudes seeking freedom from traditional norms and authorities play an important role in the process of marriage and divorce. In the course of rapid socioeconomic changes, extended control of kinship over economic resources has loosened substantially in Korea. Therefore, the young are now less likely than the older generation to accept traditional norms and values regarding the timing of marriage, background of spouse, marriage rituals and divorce. Furthermore, as the tide of globalization has recently been prevailing,

those of marriageable age have increased opportunities for studying, working, and traveling abroad, and thus have many chances to come into contact with foreigners. It is also noteworthy that negative attitudes toward cross-border marriage have weakened substantially (Seol et al. 2005). Consequently, value transformation associated with expansion of the gender-equity orientation as well as the tide of globalization have played a prominent role in facilitating cross-border marriage and divorce.

6.2.3 Recent changes in Korean nuptiality

The increasing incidence of cross-border marriage and divorce is postulated in this study to represent a phase of nuptiality change. It is hypothesized that changes in sex-age composition and value transformation also result in delaying marriage, remaining single, and various marriage patterns in Korea. Marriage squeeze is introduced as an intermediate variable.

The year 1985 marked a significant turning point as the beginning of the stage of an excess number of males, although the magnitude of the excess was not substantial until 1995 (Kim 1997). If we assume ages at first marriage for men and women are 26-30 and 24-28, respectively, the sex ratio for the marriage-eligible population is estimated to have been 101.9 in 1995. In the year 2000, however, young men faced a great deal of difficulty in finding a mate for marriage, since young men outnumbered their female counterparts by 10.5 percent. The situation will be worse in 2010, as it is estimated that males will outnumber their female partners by 20.1 percent (KNSO 2007). If the imbalanced sex composition of the marriage-eligible population continues to go on, a substantial proportion of men may have to postpone their marriages, choose to remain single, or look for foreign brides, as some young men currently do in rural areas.

Korea has witnessed a trend of rapidly increasing age at first marriage during the past half century, reaching the highest level in the world (KNSO 2007). A substantial portion of this increasing trend is due to factors such as an expansion of education, urban-ward migration, and an increase in pre-marital employment of women along with socioeconomic development (Kwon & Kim 2002: 305-306). However, even after the above-mentioned factors reached very high levels in the early 1990s, the increasing trend has maintained a faster pace than in the 1970s and 1980s. The mean age at marriage was estimated as 27.4 and 23.7 years for men and women, respectively, in 1975, and increased to 27.8 and 24.8 years, respectively, in 1990. The mean further increased to 30.9 and 27.7 years in 2005, indicating an increase of 3.1 years for men and 2.9 years for women since 1990. The relatively fast

pace of the increase in mean age at marriage for the period 1990-2005 can be attributed to an increasing distortion of the sex ratio for the marriage-eligible population. This explanation is also supported by the evidence that the mean age at marriage for men in rural areas, which have experienced a massive out-migration of young women, has increased at a faster pace than that in urban areas since the mid-1980s (Kim 1997, 2006).

Marriage composition is also regarded as an important feature of changes in nuptiality. The proportion of married men and women tends to decline as age at marriage rises. According to the 1990 census, 42.4 percent and 77.3 percent of men and women aged 25-29, respectively, were married. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the proportion of those married had dropped to 28.5 percent and 59.2 percent, respectively. It can also be noted that the proportions of the never married and for those aged 30 or higher, which had dropped to a very low level until the late 1980s, have revealed a rapidly increasing trend (Kim 2004c, 2005; KNSO 2007).

An increase in the proportion of those remaining single reflects recent changes in lifestyle as well as attitudes of the young, who consider marriage an optional choice rather than mandatory in their life course. The lack of stable jobs for young men has been an important reason for remaining single since the mid-1990s. Decreasing confidence about their future employment prospects has kept young people from entering marriage. For women, increased opportunities in education and paid employment have also contributed substantially to the decrease in the married proportion.

It is inevitable that value transformation and marriage squeeze result in changes in marriage patterns. The age gap between brides and grooms has also changed recently. For example, marriages between older brides and younger grooms and between same-aged brides and grooms have greatly increased to 27.2 percent of all new marriages in 2005. Furthermore, 6.4 percent of all new marriages in 2005 were found to be between a man without previous marital experience and a woman who had been married before. In 14.7 percent of marriages, both brides and grooms had previous marital experience (KNSO 2006). Cross-border marriage, which has shown a rapid pace of increase since the early 1990s, can be regarded as one of the new features of marriage patterns.

6.3 Analyses of the marriage and divorce registration data

6.3.1 Trends in cross-border marriage

The frequency of cross-border marriage of Koreans maintained a negligible level until the mid-twentieth century. Koreans' marriages to Japanese, in particular to Japanese men, were not widely observed on the Korean peninsula even during the Japanese colonial period. Although Korean women married to US soldiers have continued to migrate to the US after the Korean War, the Korean population can be regarded as an almost 'closed population' until the end of the 1980s, as far as cross-border marriage is concerned. Cross-border marriages on a noticeable scale have been arranged by the unification church since the early 1980s, but data on those marriages are not available for systematic analysis. The year 1990 marked an important turning point in the marriage behavior of Koreans. Rapid expansion of economic ties and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and China in 1992 triggered massive waves of marriage migration by Korean-Chinese women to rural areas in Korea.

Figure 6.2 shows increasing trends in the cross-border marriage of Koreans since 1990. During 1990-2005, 241,000 Koreans registered their marriages to foreign spouses. Cross-border marriages constitute 4.1 percent of the total of 5,885,000 marriages during this period. In

Figure 6.2 *Trends in the number of cross-border marriages of Koreans, 1990-2005*

2005, 43,000 cross-border marriages were reported. The incidence of cross-border marriage has increased 9.2 times during 1990-2005, and 3.5 times since the year 2000. The increasing pace of cross-border marriage jumped remarkably recently, and reached a level of 13.6 percent of overall marriages in 2005. This implies that cross-border marriage is taking its place as just one type of marriage in Korean society, and it cannot be considered unusual marriage behavior anymore.

It is clear in Figure 6.2 that the pace of increase is much faster for marriages between Korean grooms and foreign brides than for those between Korean brides and foreign grooms. Incidences of cross-border marriages of Korean women were substantially higher than those of Korean men until 1991. However, the trend reversed in 1995, and the gap between the two has become wider since then. Among 43,000 cross-border marriages registered in 2005, marriages to foreign brides constituted 72.3 percent, and marriages to foreign grooms accounted for 27.7 percent.

Trends in the number of foreign brides and grooms by nationality are presented in Figures 6.3 and 6.4. An overwhelming majority of foreign wives are Chinese. Marriages between Korean grooms and Chinese brides totaled 107,000 in the period 1990-2005. The incidence shows a short-term decline after reaching a peak of over 9000 in 1996. However, the pace of increase has become much faster since 1999. Around 73.3 percent of these Chinese brides were found to be ethnic Koreans mostly residing in Liaoning, Heilongjiang and Jilin provinces, including the Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture.

Recently, an increasing trend in the proportion of Hans among Chinese brides is observed. Nonetheless, marriages to ethnic Koreans from China are predicted to continue to increase in the years to come. To cope with the labor shortage, the Korean government launched a 'migrant worker permission system' in 2004. A saving clause was provided to allow ethnic Koreans in China more employment opportunities. Expanded opportunities for labor migration to Korea are very likely to result in increased marriages between Koreans and ethnic Koreans from China.

According to the 2005 marriage registration, an overwhelming majority of foreign brides are Chinese (20,635), followed by Vietnamese (5,822), Japanese (1,255), Filipina (997), Mongolian (561), Uzbek (333) and American (285). After entry into the new millennium, the distribution of the nationalities of foreign brides has been expanding drastically into Southeast and Central Asian countries. This new trend reflects the fact that the massive marriage migration of Korean Chinese women since the early 1990s has come to a level beyond which it is somewhat difficult to expand.[1] Only 95 Vietnamese brides were reported in 2000, but the number jumped 61.3 times in 2005, leading to Vietnamese as

Figure 6.3 *Foreign brides by country of origin, 1990-2005*

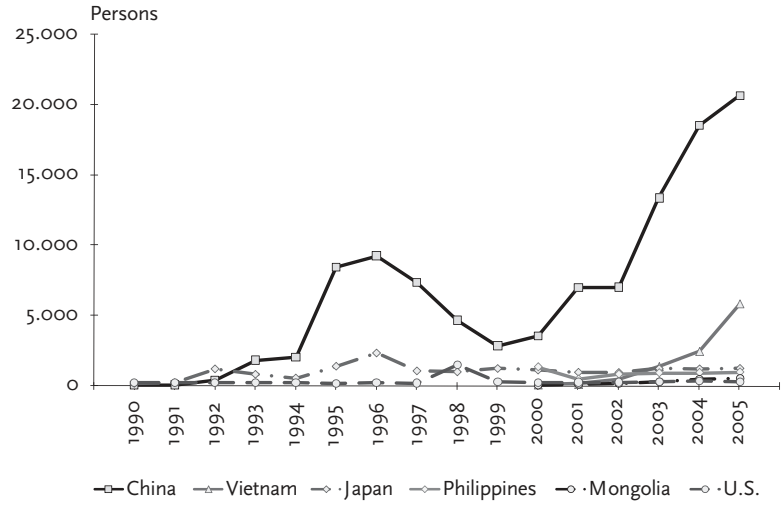
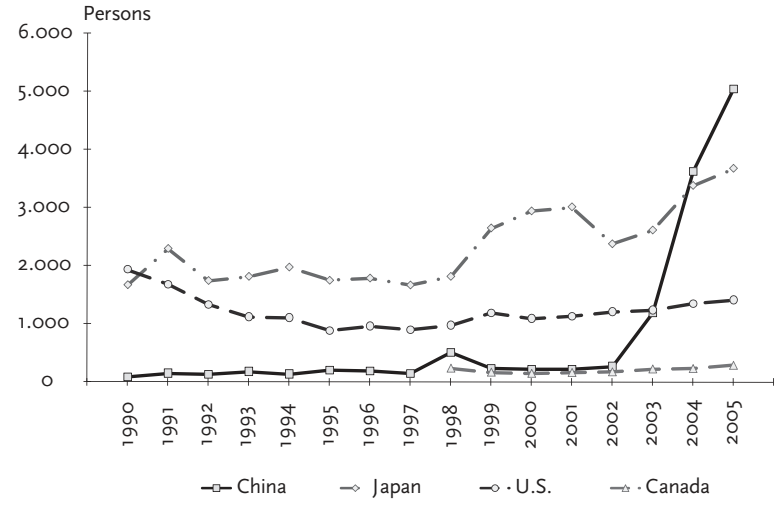


Figure 6.4 *Foreign grooms by country of origin, 1990-2005*



the second largest nationality after the Chinese. The abrupt increase in immigration of Vietnamese, Mongolian and the Central Asian brides in such a short period can be explained by the fact that these marriages were arranged on a large scale by cross-border marriage agencies.

As shown in Figure 6.4, the incidence of Korean marriages to foreign men is substantially less than that of marriages to foreign women.

Compared to foreign wives, a larger proportion of foreign husbands appear to be from more developed countries including Japan, the US, UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, etc. It can also be pointed out that the distribution of the nationality of foreign husbands is more concentrated in a smaller number of countries. A large majority (87.2 percent) of foreign husbands were from China (5,042), Japan (3,672), the US (1,413), and Canada (285) in 2005. Japanese husbands used to be the largest group until 2003, but they were replaced by Chinese husbands in 2004. It also deserves attention that the number of American husbands has maintained a lower level compared to the early 1990s.

6.3.2 Socio-demographic characteristics of foreign spouses

One of the main purposes of this study is to analyze the socio-demographic characteristics of the couples based on the entire set of marriage registration data. A notable aspect of cross-border marriage is the profound differences between Korean men and women in the characteristics of themselves and their foreign spouses as well. Another prominent factor to be emphasized as an exogenous variable is the nationality of the foreign spouse. Major findings from analyses of the 2004 marriage registration data are presented in this section.[2]

A phenomenon most notable in the demographic profile of Koreans married to foreign spouses is the rapid rise in age at marriage. Mean ages at marriage of Korean grooms and brides were estimated as 32.4 and 28.6, respectively, in 1990 and jumped to 41.4 and 36.6, respectively in 2004. These ages are markedly higher than mean age at first marriage for the entire Korean population, that is, male 30.6 and female 27.5 in 2004 (KNSO 2007).

The mean age of Korean grooms married to Chinese brides is estimated as 43.3 in Table 6.1. In contrast, Korean grooms married to Japanese and American brides appear to be relatively young. Table 6.1 shows that the mean age of foreign brides is 33.1, 8.3 years younger than that of Korean grooms. For Koreans married to Vietnamese, Filipina, and Mongolian brides, age differences between grooms and brides are found to be over 10 years. In particular, the average age difference between Korean grooms and Vietnamese brides is calculated as 17.1 years. On the other hand, the age difference between Korean grooms and Japanese or American brides turns out to be very small. For marriages between Korean grooms and foreign brides, 88.4 percent of grooms are found to be older than their brides, 4.0 percent are the same age, and 7.6 percent are younger than their brides.

As shown in Table 6.1, with the exception of Korean-Japanese couples, the age difference between Korean brides and foreign grooms tends to be relatively small. The mean ages of Japanese and Chinese

Table 6.1 *Mean age at marriage of brides and grooms by country of origin of foreign spouse, 2004*

Country of origin of foreign bride	*Age of groom*	*Age of bride*	*Age diff.*	*N*	*Country of origin of foreign groom*	*Age of groom*	*Age of bride*	*Age diff.*	*N*
Total	41.4	33.1	8.3	25,594	Total	39.6	36.6	3.1	9,853
China	43.3	35.9	7.4	18,527	China	40.1	40.8	-0.7	3,621
Vietnam	38.6	21.5	17.1	2,462	Japan	44.8	36.7	8.2	3,378
Japan	31.8	30.0	1.8	1,224	US	33.5	30.7	2.8	1,348
Philippines	38.0	25.5	12.6	964	Canada	32.2	29.2	2.9	230
Mongolia	38.7	27.8	10.9	504	Others	32.5	31.7	0.8	1,276
US	34.8	33.2	1.6	344					
Others	35.3	27.0	8.2	1,569					

grooms are estimated to be as high as 44.8 and 40.1, respectively. Although American and Canadian grooms are younger, as shown in Table 6.1, their mean ages are still higher than the mean age at first marriage for Korean men. Interestingly, the mean age of Korean brides married to Chinese grooms is 40.8, even higher than that of the grooms. For marriages between Korean brides and foreign grooms, 33.8 percent of brides are older than their grooms, and 7.1 percent are the same age.

The older age of brides and grooms in cross-border marriages can mostly be attributed to their previous marital experience. Table 6.2 shows that for marriages between Korean grooms and foreign brides other than Chinese, a large majority of both spouses do not have previous marital experience. However, both spouses in 46.2 percent of marriages to Chinese brides and 26.0 percent of marriages to American brides turn out to have been married before. On the other hand, more than one-fourth of Korean grooms married to Filipina, Mongolian, or Vietnamese brides are found to have previous marital experience while their spouses do not.

It is indicated in Table 6.2 that Korean brides married to foreign grooms are more likely to have been married before. The proportion of remarriage appears to be as high as 78.2 percent among those married to Chinese grooms, which is followed by those married to Japanese grooms. The counterpart figures are found to be substantially lower for those married to American and Canadian grooms. The proportion of remarriage for both spouses also appears to be very high for marriages between Korean brides and Chinese or Japanese grooms. For marriages between Koreans, the proportion of remarriage was 18.2 percent for grooms and 20.4 percent for brides in 2004.

Table 6.2 *Proportional distribution of previous marital experience of brides and grooms by country of origin of foreign spouse, 2004*

Country of origin of foreign bride	*K Groom/1st F Bride/1st*	*K Groom/2nd+ F Bride/1st*	*K Groom/1st F Bride/2nd+*	*K Groom/2nd+ F Bride/2nd+*	*Total*	*N*
Total	39.7	10.9	14.4	35.0	100.0	25,073
China	28.0	6.9	18.9	46.2	100.0	18,183
Vietnam	71.9	26.6	0.3	1.2	100.0	2,426
Japan	83.3	6.8	4.2	5.7	100.0	1,140
Philippines	70.0	28.8	0.7	0.5	100.0	945
Mongolia	59.7	28.2	3.4	8.7	100.0	496
US	62.0	7.0	5.0	26.0	100.0	342
Others	66.3	20.3	4.6	8.8	100.0	1,541
Country of origin of foreign groom	*F Groom/1st K Bride/1st*	*F Groom/2nd+ K Bride/1st*	*F Groom/1st K Bride/2nd+*	*F Groom/2nd+ K Bride/2nd+*	*Total*	*N*
Total	36.2	11.0	16.4	36.4	100.0	9,580
China	14.4	7.4	16.2	62.0	100.0	3,548
Japan	33.0	16.4	18.3	32.3	100.0	3,219
US	63.6	13.6	8.7	14.1	100.0	1,328
Canada	85.6	5.2	5.2	4.0	100.0	229
Others	67.8	5.1	22.6	4.5	100.0	1,256

A peculiar phenomenon is that for marriages between Koreans and Chinese, both spouses show unusually high proportions of remarriage. Table 6.2 reveals that 65.1 percent of Chinese brides and 69.4 percent of Chinese grooms married to Korean spouses have previous marital experience. The corresponding figures for Korean grooms and brides married to Chinese are also as high as 53.1 percent and 78.2 percent, respectively. This is a new phenomenon observed after the entry into the new century. Until the end of the 1990s, an absolute majority were first marriages. For example, in the year 2000 marriage registration data, 64.1 percent of Chinese brides and 85.6 percent of Chinese grooms married to Korean spouses were found to have had no marital experience. The corresponding figures for Korean grooms and brides married to Chinese were 65.6 percent and 83.7 percent, respectively. Without a doubt, the changes reflect the pervasive transformation of norms and values toward marriage and remarriage. However, the sudden changes can also be partly explained by the recent phenomenon of some Chinese getting married on paper for the purpose of obtaining an entry visa to Korea and permission to work.

The proportional distribution of educational level of the couple is presented in Table 6.3. Educational level differs, apparently, according to the nationality of the foreign spouse. Around half of Chinese and Viet-

Table 6.3 *Proportional distribution of educational level of brides and grooms by country of origin of foreign spouse, 2004*

Country of origin of foreign bride	*Education of Foreign bride*				*N*	*Education of Korean groom*				*N*
	≤Mid S	*High S*	*College*	*Total*		*≤Mid S*	*High S*	*College*	*Total*	
Total	41.0	44.1	14.8	100.0	24,568	27.3	56.9	15.8	100.0	24,870
China	48.0	45.3	6.7	100.0	17,894	29.9	59.3	10.8	100.0	18,072
Vietnam	50.1	45.3	4.6	100.0	2,379	27.9	60.2	11.9	100.0	2,440
Japan	4.3	36.3	59.4	100.0	1,023	6.3	36.5	57.2	100.0	1,030
Philippines	6.7	49.8	43.5	100.0	929	30.3	53.3	16.4	100.0	944
Mongolia	6.6	35.2	58.2	100.0	483	27.4	58.8	13.9	100.0	497
US	1.5	16.8	81.7	100.0	339	2.9	17.3	79.8	100.0	341
Others	10.5	38.9	50.6	100.0	1,521	14.0	48.1	37.9	100.0	1,546
Country of origin of foreign groom	*Education of Foreign groom*				*N*	*Education of Korean bride*				*N*
	≤Mid S	*High S*	*College*	*Total*		*≤Mid S*	*High S*	*College*	*Total*	
Total	16.7	47.4	35.9	100.0	9,464	19.3	50.3	30.4	100.0	9,491
China	36.5	55.6	7.9	100.0	3,511	37.1	56.7	6.2	100.0	3,507
Japan	7.2	58.4	34.4	100.0	3,142	12.1	62.8	25.1	100.0	3,170
US	0.7	26.6	72.7	100.0	1,339	3.6	28.3	68.1	100.0	1,339
Canada	0.0	6.6	93.4	100.0	227	0.4	9.2	90.4	100.0	228
Others	5.0	26.7	68.3	100.0	1,245	7.9	31.6	60.5	100.0	1,247

namese brides are found to have completed middle school education or lower, and only a very low proportion completed college education. In contrast, 81.7 percent of American brides turn out to have a college education. On the other hand, a majority of Korean grooms married to Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipina, and Mongolian brides are high school graduates.

In an effort to compare the educational levels of the couples, various analyses were carried out according to the nationality of the foreign spouse. A sharp contrast in educational level is found between Korean grooms and Vietnamese brides. When the educational level of the couple is divided into five subgroups, 37.9 percent of Korean grooms are more educated than their Vietnamese brides, 47.8 percent are in the same category, and 14.3 percent are less educated than their brides.

Table 6.3 shows that American and Canadian grooms are highly educated. For Japanese grooms, the proportion of high school graduates is estimated at 58.4 percent, significantly higher than those with college education. Among Chinese grooms, only 7.9 percent have a college education, and high school graduates constitute 55.6 percent. It can be noted that, in Table 6.3, the proportional distributions of foreign grooms and Korean brides are very similar to each other.

Distribution of the groom's occupation according to the nationality of the foreign spouse reveals a pattern similar to that of educational level. Table 6.4 shows that 29.3 percent of Korean grooms are service and sales workers. This is mainly due to the fact that service and sales workers compose the largest occupational subgroup among Korean grooms married to Chinese brides. The proportion of agricultural workers and simple laborers is estimated to be as high as 15.3 percent. In particular, Korean grooms married to Vietnamese and Filipina brides are found to show unusually high proportions in this category. Technical and manufacturing workers also constitute a proportion of one-fourth or higher. In contrast, the proportion of professional, managerial and clerical workers among Korean grooms married to Japanese and American brides is as high as 46.2 percent and 45.0 percent, respectively.

Distinctive patterns of occupational distribution according to the nationality of the foreign spouse are also found for foreign grooms married to Korean brides. The proportions of professional, managerial and clerical workers are estimated as 55 percent or higher for Canadian and Japanese grooms. The corresponding figures are also high for grooms from other countries except China. Among Chinese grooms, service and sales workers constitute the highest proportion, leaving four other occupational subgroups in Table 6.4 at levels around 17 percent.

Table 6.4 *Proportional distribution of occupation of grooms by country of origin of foreign spouse, 2004*

Country of origin of foreign bride	*Occupation of Korean groom*						*N*
	Prof/Manag/ Clerical	*Service/sales*	*Technical/ Manufacture*	*Agri/simple laborer*	*Others*	*Total*	
Total	25.2	29.3	24.4	15.3	5.8	100.0	24,643
China	23.7	32.2	25.0	13.9	5.2	100.0	17,904
Vietnam	20.0	21.8	24.7	30.2	3.3	100.0	2,412
Japan	46.2	18.6	13.3	3.7	18.2	100.0	1,035
Philippines	21.9	20.2	27.1	26.4	4.4	100.0	936
Mongolia	23.0	25.7	31.1	17.1	3.1	100.0	486
US	45.0	19.1	14.1	1.2	20.6	100.0	340
Others	35.0	23.9	23.7	11.7	5.7	100.0	1,530
Country of origin of foreign groom	*Occupation of Foreign groom*						*N*
	Prof/Manag/ Clerical	*Service/sales*	*Technical/ Manufacture*	*Agri/simple laborer*	*Others*	*Total*	
Total	38.6	21.8	16.0	8.0	15.6	100.0	9,287
China	17.4	27.2	17.8	17.7	19.9	100.0	3,358
Japan	54.9	22.5	15.1	2.8	4.7	100.0	3,141
US	36.9	14.4	11.5	0.4	36.8	100.0	1,329
Canada	59.3	17.9	11.2	0.0	11.6	100.0	224
Others	52.8	14.0	19.0	4.5	9.7	100.0	1,235

Analyses of the occupational distribution of brides reported at the time of marriage registration were also conducted in this study. Considering that most foreign brides tend to register immediately after their marriages and apply for an entry visa to Korea, a foreign bride's participation in the labor market is very likely to be seriously underestimated. According to the 2004 marriage registration data, 82.3 percent of foreign brides are students, unemployed, or household workers. Professional and managerial workers constitute only 1.6 percent. The counterpart figures for Korean brides married to foreign grooms are 61.8 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively. According to a recent survey on the economic activity of marriage immigrants, 60 percent of foreign brides work. Among those who work, service workers are 52 percent, factory workers 14 percent, and the self employed 13 percent (Seol et al. 2005). However, it should be noted that the working status of foreign brides is likely to be very dependent on the time gap between the point of marriage and the survey.

As indicated in Table 6.5, around 65 percent of those married to foreign spouses live in the Seoul metropolitan area, including Seoul, Incheon and Gyeonggi province. This implies that cross-border marriage

Table 6.5 *Proportional distribution of residence after marriage by country of origin of foreign spouse, 2004*

Country of origin of foreign bride	*Residence after marriage*						*N*
	Seoul	*Seoul metropolitan*	*Five large cities*[1)]	*Other regions*	*Foreign country*	*Total*	
Total	25.7	29.4	14.5	27.5	2.9	100.0	25,594
China	28.9	32.0	14.6	24.2	0.3	100.0	18,527
Vietnam	11.3	20.8	17.6	50.2	0.1	100.0	2,462
Japan	18.1	13.2	7.0	15.9	45.8	100.0	1,224
Philippines	13.0	18.9	14.3	51.6	2.3	100.0	964
Mongolia	22.2	34.9	10.9	31.9	0.0	100.0	504
US	37.5	29.4	7.9	9.0	16.3	100.0	344
Others	21.9	30.2	16.4	28.5	3.0	100.0	1,569
Country of origin of foreign groom	*Residence after marriage*						*N*
	Seoul	*Seoul metropolitan*	*Five large Cities*[1)]	*Other regions*	*Foreign country*	*Total*	
Total	29.6	25.3	11.7	15.4	17.9	100.0	9,853
China	34.6	32.8	13.4	18.9	0.4	100.0	3,621
Japan	22.5	14.9	11.2	13.5	38.0	100.0	3,378
US	35.3	26.0	9.3	11.4	18.0	100.0	1,348
Canada	38.7	25.2	11.7	17.8	6.5	100.0	230
Others	27.0	31.0	11.3	14.3	16.4	100.0	1,276

Note: [1)]Includes Busan, Daegu, Gwangju, Daejeon and Ulsan.

is not limited to old bachelors in rural areas anymore, and has spread widely into metropolitan areas. However, Korean grooms married to Vietnamese and Filipina brides are more likely to live in rural areas. The proportion of those residing in Seoul is found to be as low as 11.3 percent and 13.0 percent, respectively.

In Table 6.5, the proportion of Korean-Japanese couples with residence in Seoul also turns out to be relatively low. This is mainly due to the fact that a large proportion of Koreans married to Japanese live in Japan after marriage. Marriages can also be registered by reporting to a Korean consulate overseas. A substantial proportion of Koreans married to Japanese are believed to be long-term or permanent residents in Japan. A similar explanation can be applied to a fairly high proportion of foreign residence for those married to Americans.

6.3.3 Trends in divorce and demographic characteristics of divorced couples

Mainly due to the changing value orientations of family, economic hardship and the improved economic capability of women, Korean society has recently experienced a drastic increase in divorce. This is particularly true after 1990. The crude divorce rate had risen steadily from 0.4 in 1970 to 1.1 in 1990. The increasing pace of the crude divorce rate jumped remarkably after that, and reached 3.5 in 2003, the second highest level among OECD countries next to the US. In 2005, the crude divorce rate slipped slightly and was estimated at 2.6 (KNSO 2007).

Those married to foreign spouses are no exceptions to the increasing incidence of divorce. As shown in Figure 6.5 and Table 6.6, the number of divorces between Korean husbands and foreign wives rose from 320 in 2000 to 583 in 2003, and further jumped to 2,444 in 2005. Chinese wives, numbering 1,431 in 2005, account for 58.6 percent of the total foreign divorcées. Other major nationalities of foreign divorcées are as follows: Vietnamese 289, Japanese 168, Filipina 142, and Mongolian 116. The common factor drawn from the analysis is that the average duration of marriages of Korean men to foreign women has become remarkably shorter in recent years (Figure 6.5). This is particularly true for marriages of Korean men to Vietnamese, Filipina, Mongolian and Uzbek women, which began only 5-6 years ago.

The incidence of divorce between Korean wives and foreign husbands rose to 1,834 in 2005, revealing an increase of 34.0 percent from 1,369 in 2000. Considering that cross-border marriages between Korean men and foreign women number 2.6 times the marriages between Korean women and foreign men, divorce rates for the latter are likely to be higher than those of the former. Among the major nationalities of foreign husbands, Japanese ranked at the top at 1,343 divorces in 2005,

Figure 6.5 *Trends in number of divorces of couples married to foreign spouses and average duration of marriage, 1995-2006*

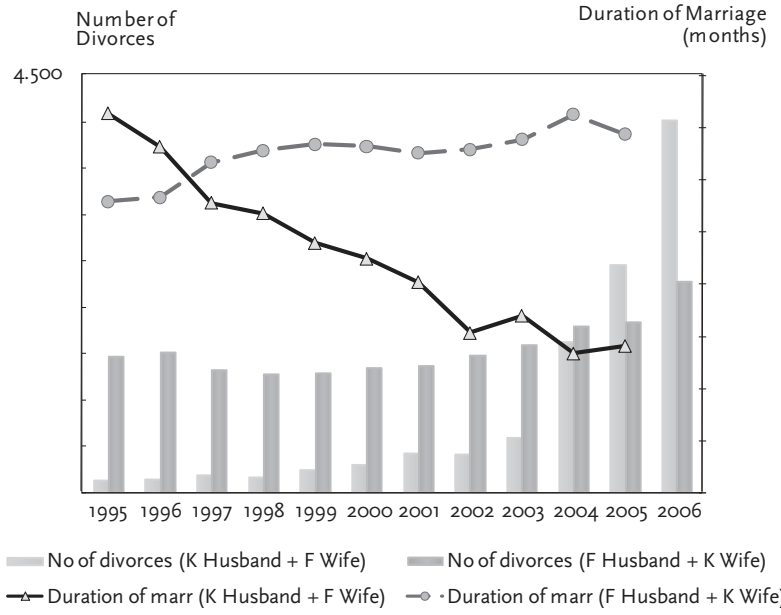


Table 6.6 *Number of divorces by country of origin of foreign spouse, 1995-2005*

Country of origin of foreign wife	*1995*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Total	269	320	462	401	583	1,611	2,444
China	19	96	170	181	275	841	1,431
Vietnam	-	-	-	7	28	147	289
Japan	215	180	140	97	121	145	168
Philippines	-	-	-	29	44	112	142
Mongolia	-	-	-	10	6	83	116
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	3	16	67	75
US	25	28	45	21	27	74	62
Others	10	16	107	53	66	142	161
Country of origin of foreign husband	*1995*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Total	1,721	1,369	1,407	1,465	1,581	1,789	1,834
Japan	1,344	1,114	1,097	1,160	1,218	1,351	1,343
US	275	199	195	180	226	264	219
China	44	31	46	51	36	45	124
Pakistan	-	-	-	3	9	16	25
Canada	-	2	9	7	20	11	21
Germany	-	5	8	10	9	17	16
Others	58	18	52	54	63	85	86

accounting for 73.2 percent of foreign divorcées, which is followed by US 219 (11.9 percent) and Chinese 124 (6.8 percent).

A majority of foreign wives tend to be divorced at young ages. As shown in Table 6.7, incidences of divorce from the age groups under 25 and 25-29 compose 26.3 percent and 26.6 percent of all divorces, respectively. In contrast, the proportion of divorces of those aged 40 or over turns out to be only 16.5 percent. In particular, 110 out of 147 Vietnamese divorcées, 74.8 percent of divorces registered in 2004, were found to be less than 25 years old. For reference, average ages at divorce for Korean men and women were reported at 42.1 and 38.6, respectively, in 2005 (KNSO 2006).

Average age at divorce of foreign husbands appeared to be significantly higher than that of foreign wives and the counterpart figure for Koreans. Table 6.7 shows that those who were divorced in their thirties number 380 (21.2 percent), and those in their forties or older total 1,298 (72.6 percent). This pattern is observed regardless of the nationality of the foreign husband. Though Pakistani husbands show an exception of a markedly high proportion in their thirties, it is calculated based on only 16 cases and cannot be generalized.

It is found that the existence of a child or children has a strong restraining effect on family dissolution. This is true regardless of the sex

Table 6.7 *Proportional distribution of divorces by country of origin, age of foreign spouse, and number of children, 2004*

Country of origin of foreign wife	*Age of foreign wife*					*Number of children under 20*				*N*
	15-24	*25-29*	*30-39*	*40+*	*Total*	*0*	*1*	*2+*	*Total*	
Total	26.3	26.6	30.6	16.5	100.0	91.1	6.3	2.6	100.0	1,611
China	20.3	26.5	34.8	18.4	100.0	94.4	4.0	1.6	100.0	841
Vietnam	74.8	12.9	8.2	4.1	100.0	93.9	4.1	2.0	100.0	147
Japan	7.6	20.0	43.4	29.0	100.0	72.4	19.3	8.3	100.0	145
Philippines	30.4	32.0	31.3	6.3	100.0	88.4	8.9	2.7	100.0	112
Mongolia	33.7	53.0	13.3	0.0	100.0	98.8	1.2	0.0	100.0	83
US	6.8	18.9	24.3	50.0	100.0	83.8	8.1	8.1	100.0	74
Uzbekistan	44.8	32.8	19.4	3.0	100.0	94.0	3.0	3.0	100.0	67
Others	24.7	29.6	33.7	12.0	100.0	88.0	9.9	2.1	100.0	142
Country of origin of foreign husband	*Age of foreign husband*					*Number of children under 20*				*N*
	15-24	*25-29*	*30-39*	*40+*	*Total*	*0*	*1*	*2+*	*Total*	
Total	1.2	5.0	21.2	72.6	100.0	86.5	9.3	4.2	100.0	1,789
Japan	0.2	2.2	14.0	83.6	100.0	90.2	7.2	2.6	100.0	1,351
US	4.9	15.2	39.0	40.9	100.0	79.1	11.0	9.9	100.0	264
China.	0.0	6.6	46.7	46.7	100.0	64.4	26.7	8.9	100.0	45
Germany	0.0	5.9	52.9	41.2	100.0	76.4	11.8	11.8	100.0	17
Pakistan	12.5	12.5	68.7	6.3	100.0	81.2	18.8	0.0	100.0	16
Others	3.1	14.6	49.0	33.3	100.0	66.7	25.0	8.3	100.0	96

or nationality of the foreign spouse. Table 6.7 shows that 91.1 percent of those who divorced foreign wives are found to have no child under age 20. Those who divorced foreign wives despite their child or children total only 143 in 2004. A rapidly decreasing incidence of divorce is also found for those married to foreign husbands who have a child or children. In particular, among couples with two or more children, only 75 divorces were registered in 2004.

6.3.4 Duration of marriage of the divorced couples

In an effort to understand the causal mechanisms of divorce, various analyses of duration of marriage were carried out in this study. Table 6.8 shows the general associations between the nationality of the foreign spouse and duration of marriages that ended. The average duration of these marriages between Korean men and foreign women was estimated at 26.5 months. The counterpart figure for marriages between Korean men and Korean women was 146.2 months. One of the striking findings is that the average duration of terminated marriages

Table 6.8 *Proportional distribution of duration of marriage by country of origin of foreign spouse, 2004*

Country of origin of foreign wife	*Duration of marriage*						*Average months of marriage duration*	*N*
	< 6 months	*6 mo-1 year*	*1-3 years*	*3-5 years*	*5 years +*	*Total*		
Total	26.0	18.9	33.1	11.2	10.7	100.0	26.5	1,611
China	21.3	20.6	39.6	11.4	7.1	100.0	22.2	841
Vietnam	47.6	25.2	23.8	2.0	1.4	100.0	10.1	147
Japan	6.9	6.2	28.3	20.0	38.6	100.0	64.2	145
Philippines	33.0	25.0	28.6	6.3	7.1	100.0	19.1	112
Mongolia	61.4	13.3	19.3	6.0	0.0	100.0	8.8	83
US	5.4	6.8	20.3	24.3	43.2	100.0	77.1	74
Uzbekistan	49.3	23.9	22.4	4.5	0.0	100.0	10.3	67
Others	24.6	18.3	33.1	13.4	10.6	100.0	27.6	142
Country of origin of foreign husband	*Duration of marriage*						*Average months of marriage duration*	*N*
	< 6 months	*6 mo-1 year*	*1-3 years*	*3-5 years*	*5 years +*	*Total*		
Total	4.9	6.8	24.3	20.4	43.6	100.0	72.5	1,789
Japan	4.4	6.4	25.1	21.1	42.9	100.0	71.0	1,351
US	5.7	6.8	17.8	18.6	51.1	100.0	86.3	264
China	11.1	11.1	31.1	6.7	40.0	100.0	58.9	45
Germany	0.0	0.0	23.5	35.3	41.2	100.0	73.9	17
Pakistan	18.8	25.0	37.5	0.0	18.8	100.0	29.8	16
Others	4.2	8.3	26.0	22.9	38.5	100.0	68.4	96

of Korean men to Mongolian, Vietnamese and Uzbek women is less than a year. It is found that among marriages ending in divorce, the absolute majority of Mongolian, Vietnamese, Uzbek and Filipina wives divorced within a year after getting married. In contrast, marriages between Korean men and Japanese or American women tend to last longer, revealing average durations of 64.2 and 77.1 months, respectively.[3]

It is clear in Table 6.8 that among dissolved marriages, those of Korean women to foreign men are more likely to continue for longer periods compared to Korean men's marriages to foreign women. The average duration of such marriages is estimated at 72.5 months, 46 months longer than the counterpart figure for Korean men. Variations in average duration of marriage ending in divorce are also found to be smaller, although such marriages to Pakistani and Chinese husbands tend to end within significantly shorter periods.

The patterns of terminated marriage duration revealed in Table 6.8 imply that Koreans' marriages to foreign spouses from more developed countries tend to last longer. To clarify the independent effects of sociodemographic factors of the couple on duration of marriage, regression

Table 6.9 *Regression analysis of factors related to duration of marriage of divorced couples (Korean husband + foreign wife), 2004*

	Korean husband + Foreign wife					
	[Model 1]		*[Model 2]*		*[Model 3]*	
	B	*Beta*	*B*	*Beta*	*B*	*Beta*
Child	31.79	0.24**	25.77	0.20**	21.25	0.17**
Husband's age	1.53	0.32**	1.33	0.29**	1.12	0.24**
Age difference	-1.75	-0.33**	-1.50	-0.31**	-0.95	-0.19**
Husband's education			1.23	0.10**	0.16	0.01
Educational difference			-0.41	-0.04	0.12	0.01
Husband's white-collar job			-2.34	-0.03	-3.41	-0.04
Wife's job			6.51	0.06*	2.65	0.02
Seoul			12.52	0.15**	9.33	0.11**
Non-metropolitan area			-2.50	-0.03	-3.05	-0.04
Nationality of foreign spouse					32.19	0.31**
(Constant)	-21.99		-33.01		-19.64	
R^2	0.20		0.24		0.30	
F ratio	129.95**		45.13**		56.43**	
N	1,569		1,313		1,313	

Note: Child (one or more = 1, no = 0); Husband's white-collar Job (white-collar = 1, no = 0); Wife's job (work = 1, doesn't work = 0); Seoul (Seoul = 1, other regions = 0); Non-metropolitan area (non-metropolitan area = 1, metropolitan area = 0); Nationality of foreign spouse (MDC = 1, others = 0)

analyses were carried out separately for marriages between Korean husbands and foreign wives and marriages between foreign husbands and Korean wives. Results of analyses from the two regression models are summarized in Tables 6.9 and 6.10.

In Model 3 of Table 6.9, the nationality of the foreign wife is found to exert the strongest positive effect on duration of terminated marriage between Korean husbands and foreign wives. As expected, the existence of a child or children in the family shows a significant positive effect on duration of marriage. It is understandable that the husband's age is positively correlated with duration of marriage. Table 6.9 shows a strong positive effect of husband's age, and a strong negative effect of age difference between husband and wife on the dependent variable. It also turns out that couples living in Seoul are more likely to continue their marriages longer than those in other regions. Model 2 of Table 6.9 implies that the educational level of the husband and the working status of the wife are positively related to duration of dissolved marriages. However, as the nationality of the foreign spouse is employed in Model 3, the independent effects of these two variables lost statistical significance.

As far as the effects of three demographic variables are concerned, similar patterns are found in Table 6.10 for marriages between foreign

Table 6.10 *Regression analysis of factors related to duration of marriage of divorced couples (foreign husband + Korean wife), 2004*

	Foreign husband + Korean wife					
	[Model 4]		*[Model 5]*		*[Model 6]*	
	B	*Beta*	*B*	*Beta*	*B*	*Beta*
Child	34.04	0.18**	37.55	0.20**	38.81	0.21**
Husband's age	3.14	0.52**	3.23	0.53**	3.17	0.52**
Age difference	-2.98	-0.39**	-3.03	-0.39**	-3.06	-0.39**
Husband's education			0.15	0.01	0.12	0.00
Educational difference			0.74	0.03	0.66	0.02
Husband's white-collar job			-2.66	-0.02	-3.29	-0.02
Wife's job			3.93	0.03	4.45	0.03
Seoul			7.88	0.06	7.63	0.06
Non-metropolitan area			5.44	0.04	5.96	0.04
Nationality of foreign spouse					14.07	0.05*
(Constant)	-56.24		-70.08		79.74	
R^2	0.17		0.20		0.20	
F ratio	117.97**		37.40**		34.16**	
N	1,684		1,403		1,403	

Note: Child (one or more = 1, no = 0); Husband's white-collar Job (white-collar = 1, no = 0); Wife's job (work = 1, doesn't work = 0); Seoul (Seoul = 1, other regions = 0); Non-metropolitan area (non-metropolitan area = 1, metropolitan area = 0); Nationality of foreign spouse (MDC = 1, others = 0)

husbands and Korean wives. In Models 5 and 6 in Table 6.10, however, the effects of socioeconomic variables and residence in Seoul turn out to be statistically insignificant. Between the two regression models, some differences in the pattern of relative importance of the independent variables in explaining the variance of the dependent variable are observed. In Table 6.10, the age of the husband turns out to have the strongest independent effect on duration of marriage, followed by age difference of the couple and the child variable. Though statistically significant at 0.05 level, the effect of the nationality of the foreign husband is found to be less strong in dissolved marriages between foreign husbands and Korean wives.

6.4 Summary and concluding remarks

The main purpose of this study is to review the increasing trend in cross-border marriage and divorce of Koreans since 1990. To enhance our understanding of cross-border marriage and divorce, this paper develops a conceptual scheme for changing patterns of nuptiality. It is postulated that the increasing incidence of cross-border marriage and divorce represents a phase of nuptiality change, which is facilitated by changes in sex-age composition and value transformation. The key forces behind the recent increase in cross-border marriage of Koreans, namely the effects of rapid decline in fertility, rise in sex ratio at birth, urban-ward migration of young women, expansion of gender-equity norms, and globalization are stressed.

To explore the pattern of the socio-demographic characteristics of married couples, micro data from the marriage and divorce registration for the period 1990-2005 are utilized. This paper focuses on analyzing age at marriage, previous marital experience, education, occupation, and residence of married couples. Attention is also focused on analyzing demographic characteristics and duration of marriage of divorced couples. Results from analyses of the marriage and divorce registration data can be summarized as follows:

The early 1990s marked an important turning point in the increase in cross-border marriage of Koreans. The incidence of cross-border marriage has increased 9.2 times during the past 15 years, and the pace of increase has become even faster in recent years. An overwhelming majority of foreign brides are found to be ethnic Koreans from China. A marked increase in brides from Vietnam, the Philippines and the Central Asian countries has been noticed since 2000. On the other hand, an absolute majority of foreign grooms are from China, Japan and the United States. However, cross-border marriages between

Korean brides and foreign grooms are relatively few in frequency and are less drastic in their increasing trends.

An overwhelming majority of foreign spouses of Koreans are Chinese, and the stereotype of cross-border marriage has developed accordingly. However, results of analyses reveal that there exists a great deal of diversity in cross-border marriages and divorces of Koreans. A notable aspect is the profound difference between Korean men and women in the socio-demographic characteristics of their foreign spouses and themselves as well. Another prominent factor emphasized in the analysis is the nationality of the foreign spouse. It is indicated that the stereotype of cross-border marriage facilitated by marriage squeeze can be applied mainly to marriages between Korean men and foreign women from China and Southeast and Central Asian countries. On the other hand, the direct effects of value transformation and globalization are emphasized in the explanation of marriages between Korean men and foreign women from more developed countries as well as marriages between Korean women and foreign men.

A notable phenomenon in the demographic profile of cross-border couples is the rapid rise in age at marriage. For Koreans married to Vietnamese, Filipina, and Mongolian brides, age differences between brides and grooms are found to be 11-17 years. In contrast, age differences between Korean grooms and brides from more developed countries tend to be very small. With an exception of Korean-Japanese couples, age differences between Korean brides and foreign grooms are relatively small. For marriages between Korean grooms and foreign brides other than Chinese, a large majority of both spouses do not have previous marital experience. On the other hand, more than one-fourth of Korean grooms married to Filipina, Mongolian, and Vietnamese brides are found to have had previous marital experience while their spouses have not. A peculiar phenomenon is that for marriages between Koreans and Chinese, both spouses have shown unusually high proportions of remarriage since the beginning of the 2000s.

Educational level differs apparently according to the nationality of the foreign spouse. Around half of Chinese and Vietnamese brides are found to have middle school education or lower, while most American spouses turn out to have a college education. For Chinese and Japanese grooms, the proportions of high school graduates are significantly higher than those with college education. A majority of Korean grooms married to Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipina, and Mongolian brides are high school graduates. A sharp contrast in educational level is found between Korean grooms and Vietnamese brides. The proportional distributions of foreign grooms and Korean brides disclose very similar patterns to each other.

Distributions of occupation and residence after marriage confirm that the cross-border marriages of Koreans are not limited to old bachelors in rural areas anymore, and have spread widely into metropolitan areas. Around three-tenths of Korean grooms are service and sales workers. Technical and manufacturing workers also constitute one-fourth. Among Koreans married to Japanese and American spouses, proportions of professional, managerial and clerical workers are very high. Due to the fact that the report is made immediately after marriage, foreign brides' participation in the labor market tends to be seriously underestimated in the marriage registration data. The pattern of occupational distribution is also supported by the fact that around 65 percent of those married to foreign spouses live in the Seoul metropolitan area. However, Korean grooms married to Vietnamese and Filipina brides are more likely to live in rural areas. Substantial proportions of Koreans married to Japanese and Americans are long-term or permanent residents abroad.

Couples with foreign spouses are no exception to the increasing incidence of divorce in Korea. Incidences of divorce have risen abruptly since the 2000s. Divorce rates for cross-border marriages between Korean wives and foreign husbands tend to be higher than those for marriages between Korean husbands and foreign wives, although among marriages which have ended, marriages of Korean women to foreign men are more likely to have continued for a longer period. The patterns of the duration of dissolved marriages revealed that Koreans' marriages to foreign spouses from more developed countries tend to last longer. One of the striking findings is that the average durations of terminated marriages of Korean men to Mongolian, Vietnamese and Uzbek women are less than a year. Without a doubt, the existence of a child or children has a strong restraining effect on family dissolution. This turns out to be true regardless of the sex or nationality of the foreign spouse. Results from regression analysis also indicate that the educational level of the couple, occupation of the husband, and working status of the wife reveal no significant effects on duration of marriage within the restricted dataset of dissolved marriages.

The next decade is expected to witness an even more rapid increase in cross-border marriage and divorce than the previous decade. It is projected that the sex composition for the marriage-eligible population in Korea will continue to be imbalanced and will reach the most distorted situation in the period 2015-2020 (Kim 1997). It is expected that the situation of bride deficit in rural areas will continue along with young women's tendency to postpone or avoid marriage. It is inevitable that more opportunities for labor migration and manpower exchanges across the border will lead to an increase in cross-border marriage. As

long as the tide of globalization continues, nationalities of foreign spouses will continue to diversify.

The rapid increase in cross-border marriage and divorce has major consequences and implications for various spheres of social life, and presents enormous challenges for Korean society. Marriage immigrants contribute to reducing the problems of labor shortage and low fertility in the destination countries to some degree, and enrich societies. It can also present socio-cultural challenges as well, even when the foreign spouse population is relatively small.

Finally, it should be noted that comprehensive data on marriage migration and the marriage life of foreign immigrants as well as divorce are not widely available in Korea. Mainly due to the lack of hard information, the nature of the physical, emotional and socioeconomic conditions as well as needs of foreign spouses have not been sufficiently explored. Most of the survey data currently available are based on small samples, and are thus not free from sampling bias as well as measurement problems. The marriage and divorce registration data have a great strength in that they cover all the cases of cross-border marriage. However, being official reports of the government, they contain a very limited amount of information, and do not enable scholars to carry out in-depth analysis. More comprehensive data on various aspects of the marriage lives of cross-border couples and their lives after divorce need to be supplemented to enhance our understanding of these issues and to assure adequate support for them. More data on the home societies of foreign immigrants also need to be collected.

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Notes

1 Marriage migration of Korean Chinese women has fomented a serious disturbance of the ethnic Koreans' marriage market in China, and resulted in an acceleration of the reduction of fertility among the Korean population in China. For reference, although the 1990 Chinese census counted the Yanbian Korean female population aged 20-29 at 82,455, this declined drastically to 48,465 in the 2000 census (Kim 2003; Kim & Kim 2005).

2 Micro data from the 2005 marriage and divorce registrations were not available at the time of the in-depth analysis for this study, and thus results from analyses of the 2004 data are presented in some sections of this paper.

3 These figures are calculated based on the divorce registration data. Those whose marriages continue are not considered in the calculation of average duration of marriage. Thus, the figures stand for average duration of marriages that were dissolved with divorce.

III

SOCIAL ISSUES

7 Vietnamese-Taiwanese Marriages

Xoan Nguyen and Xuyen Tran

7.1 Introduction

Over the last twenty years there has been a rise in the scale and complexity of international migration in Asia. One of the most prominent characteristics of this migration is that women outnumber men (Hugo 2003). A significant proportion of international female migration is cross-border marriage, which has become a vital part of international migration in Asia in recent years (Wang & Chang 2002). This global trend mainly comprises emigration from poor countries to more developed nations. In particular, during the 1980s a large number of women in the Philippines, Korea, China and other Southeast Asian countries became partners of Japanese men (Wang & Chang 2002). The number of women getting married to foreign men has been increasing over time. Indeed, in 1980 the number of cross-border marriages to Japan was 4,386, while it reached 20,026 in 1990. The current rate is 21,000 per year (MHLW 1995). In the same way, Taiwan has experienced massive immigration of around 160,000 females from countries such as China and Vietnam. According to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Ho Chi Minh City, from 1995 to 2003 about 72,000 Vietnamese women received partner visas to Taiwan. There is also a similar flow of young Vietnamese women moving to marry Chinese men in Southern China. The women are very young and mostly from rural areas, and have low levels of education. There are age gaps between marriage partners as well as language gaps. In Vietnamese newspapers, quite a few recent articles have shocked people by saying that at the destination, some girls are virtually treated as slaves by their husbands' relatives, and some have been sold to brothels by their husbands or have become victims of domestic violence. International marriage is not a new phenomenon in Vietnam. However, a substantial increase in the number of Vietnamese women marrying Taiwanese men and the disad-

vantages these women have faced in the last decade have concerned government organizations, non-government organizations, researchers at the national and international levels and even local communities. Not only has research been conducted to provide insight into this issue, but also several action programs have been designed in order to equip young females with knowledge on how to choose appropriate partners.

In 2002 Wang and Chang investigated the commodification aspect of international marriage. Undertaking in-depth interviews with six agencies, five Taiwanese business people in Vietnam, six Taiwanese and Vietnamese officials and 55 Vietnamese brides in Taipei, this research mainly focused on the roles of intermediaries in these cross-border marriages. They state that structural factors in Taiwan and Vietnam play an important role in prompting international migration for profit.

Thi Nhu Tam Do and her colleagues (Do et al. 2003) provide a quite comprehensive view of Vietnam-Taiwan marriage. They show that these organized and commercial marriages from less developed countries to more developed nations involve traffickers of women. Poor women in Vietnam are becoming victims of this type of trafficking. According to the authors, the rights of these females are significantly violated, and they call upon researchers from other countries to share information and to take collective actions in order to empower women and give them an understanding of how to choose their own partners.

In addition, several cross-border marriage-related projects at the international and national levels and some studies in the form of dissertations have been conducted in Taiwan and Vietnam. Each has used various methods to look at the problem from different angles. However, international marriage migration is an extremely complicated phenomenon, and our knowledge of this area is still limited. To understand the nature of such marriages, we need to look at the issue from different perspectives and use various approaches, but existing studies have applied only a single method, either quantitative or qualitative. Therefore, they can hardly cover all aspects, especially when this migration is a consequence of the globalization process (Tran 2004). Its nature has become more and more complex over time. Based on this evidence, in 2004 the Committee of Population, Family and Children, collaborating with the Department of Sociology at the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University in Ho Chi Minh City, carried out a large-scale survey which applied both quantitative and qualitative methods (henceforth: 'the 2004 survey'). It included 1,084 structured interviews with 624 households and 460 young people in six provinces in the Mekong Delta region, from which most of the brides come. Also, 110 in-depth interviews with 82 brides and 28 local authorities were completed. Moreover, 23 focus group discussions were conducted. Using data from the above research, this paper aims to better understand this trend from the

perspective of the place of origin of the migrants, especially in terms of the determinants of the marriage as well as the difficulties the brides are facing at the destination. It also examines the impact of the movement on the communities of origin. On the other hand, the areas to which many of these women are moving are also investigated in order to understand the factors which underline the migration.

7.2 Vietnamese context

Vietnam is located in the southeast of Asia, bordering the Gulf of Thailand, the Gulf of Tonkin and South China Sea, alongside China, Laos and Cambodia. The population of the country was 83,000,000 in 2005 with a population growth rate of 1.04 percent per year and sex ratio 0.98 males/female. There are more than 54 ethnic groups in the country. However, the majority (86.2 percent) of the population are Kinh (Vietnamese). Vietnamese is the official language; however English, French, Chinese, Khmer and mountain area languages are also spoken in Vietnam. After many years of war within the country, Vietnam obtained independence in 1975, and more freedom was experienced (Do et al. 2003). Because of serious devastation during the war, Vietnam faced a severe economic crisis. To overcome this condition, in 1986, the Vietnamese Government adopted renovation policies (*doi moi*), associated with market liberalization. The transition from a centrally planned economy to a multi-sector economy had a profound impact on socioeconomic development in the country. Since the renovations, the economy in Vietnam has grown considerably. In particular, the GDP growth rate increased from 5.8 in 1998 to 7.1 in 2002 (GSO 2003). This process has resulted in a considerable rise in foreign investment, and the living standards of people have increased dramatically. The renovation also gave Vietnamese people more opportunities to move out of their villages, and they can now easily access diverse cultures. As a result, Vietnamese people have become more open in terms of integration into the global culture. Although this process has brought about many advantages, it has also caused quite a few disadvantages for people. The income gap between rural and urban areas has markedly widened, and the percentage of people living in poverty in rural areas is still high (28.9 percent in 2002) (GSO 2004). Poverty, high population growth and natural disasters in rural areas have forced farmers (especially young people) to move out of their villages. Many of them migrate to the city, some move to more propertied areas within the country, and the others take part in international migration. International migration from Vietnam consists of labor migration, family reunion and cross-border marriage. In recent years not only labor migration but also inter-

national marriage migration has risen considerably (Do et al. 2003), especially the number of Taiwan-Vietnam marriages. The rate of this marriage migration has been increasing with unusual speed since 1995.

7.3 Vietnam-Taiwan marriage

7.3.1 A brief overview of Vietnam-Taiwan marriage

International marriage has a long history in Vietnam. However, before the 1980s international marriage was not very common in the country, and historically, families, especially respectable ones, were extremely strict in terms of allowing their children to have foreign partners (Hong Nhung 2001). Getting married to foreign men among Vietnamese females gradually became acceptable after the renovation. After the war with America, there was an imbalance between the number of men and women at a marriageable age in Vietnam, which is called the 'marriage squeeze' (Goodkind 1997), due to the high rate of male mortality during the war and male-dominated emigration. As a result, during that time young females were forced to seek potential partners in other countries. But having partners of non-ethno-Vietnamese origin was still not popular until the 1990s. Instead, they chose overseas Vietnamese males in countries such as America, Australia and Canada where in contrast there was a deficit of females of ethno-Vietnamese origin (Goodkind 1997; Wang & Chang 2002; Hugo & Nguyen 2004). As noted, getting married to foreign men has become more acceptable since the 1990s. This movement has recently steadily increased in scale and complexity. In Table 7.1 we can see the number of Vietnamese overseas brides from Can Tho province from 2000 to 2003 from which it is claimed that most international Vietnamese brides come. As shown in Table 7.1, in just one province in four years over 12,000 women chose international partners and migrated out of the country.

International marriage is an inevitable consequence of globalization. Vietnam, a country which has applied open-door policies, is not an ex-

Table 7.1 *Vietnamese overseas brides from Can Tho Province*

Year	*Number*
2000	2720
2001	2751
2002	3071
2003	3383
Feb/2004	151
Total	12,076

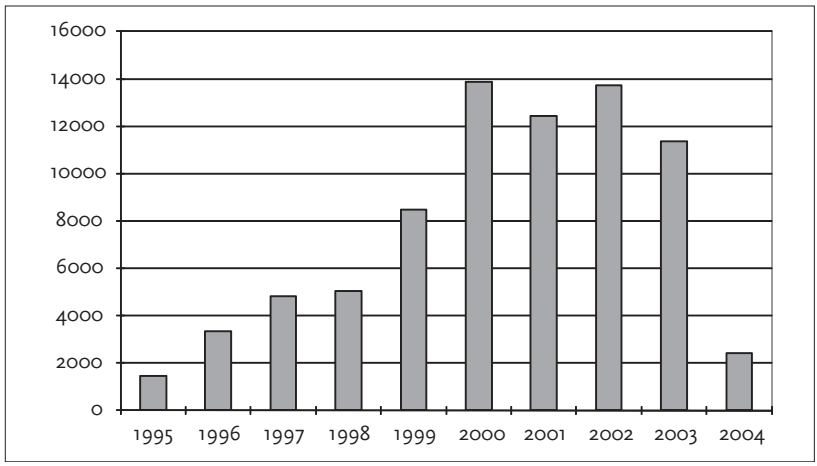
Source: Department of Justice in Can Tho Province, 2004

ception. However, when the numbers pick up with abnormal speed and spread throughout Vietnam it will create different challenges for the country. From Figure 7.1, it is obvious to see that throughout the country the number of females receiving partner visas to Taiwan has been on the rise since 1995, and it reached 75,251 in 2004. This number accounts for the very high ratio of females having foreign partners in general. It is surprising that these marriages are not distributed throughout Vietnam, but are concentrated in the South, especially in the Mekong Delta area (Table 7.4). In provinces where the study was undertaken, the proportion of females with Taiwanese husbands is significantly high. In some provinces this rate reaches 70 percent, or even 90 percent (Tables 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4).

Additionally, in the southern provinces of Vietnam, especially in rural areas of the Mekong Delta region, the rate of Vietnamese marriage migrants to Taiwan accounts for 64.14 percent of the Taiwan-Vietnam marriages in all the areas in Vietnam (Tran 2004). Among these provinces, Can Tho has the highest proportion of brides in Taiwan, followed by the provinces of Dong Thap, An Giang, Vinh Long and Tien Giang (Table 7.4).

Briefly, international marriage has become common in Vietnam since the renovation. In recent years, especially, there has been a sharp rise in the number of cross-border marriages in Vietnam. From 1995 to the

Figure 7.1 *Vietnamese brides in Taiwan 1995-2004*



Source: Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in HCMC as presented in Tran (2004)

Table 7.2 *Marriage to Taiwanese men in Can Tho Province*

Year	*Marriage to foreigners in general (number)*	*Marriage to Taiwanese men*	
		Number	*%*
2000	2720	2,502	92.0
2001	2751	2,610	94.9
2002	3071	2,817	91.7
2003	3383	3,165	93.6
2/2004	151	135	89.4
Total	12,076	11.229	93.0

Source: The Department of Justice of Can Tho Province, 2004

Table 7.3 *Marriage to Taiwanese men in Vinh Long Province*

Year	*Marriage to foreigners in general (number)*	*Marriage to Taiwanese men*	
		Number	*%*
1999	604	381	63.1
2000	899	710	78.9
2001	1065	862	80.9
2002	875	716	81.8
2003	657	467	71.6
Total	4100	3136	76.4

Source: The Department of Justice of Vinh Long Province, 2004

Table 7.4 *Provinces of origin of Vietnamese marriage migrants to Taiwan, 2003*

Province	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Province*	*Number*	*Percentage*
An Giang	604	5.32	Da Nang	8	0.07
Bac Can	1	0.01	Ninh Thuan	9	0.08
Bac Ninh	0	0	Dong Nai	577	5.08
Bac Lieu	623	5.49	Dong Thap	1756	15.46
Vung Tau	257	2.26	Phu Yen	2	0.02
Ben Tre	152	1.34	Quang Binh	1	0.01
Binh Duong	61	0.54	Quang Ngai	13	0.11
Binh Phuoc	31	0.27	Quang Tri	4	0.04
Binh Thuan	85	0.75	Phu Tho	1	0.01
Can Tho	2067	18.2	Soc Trang	716	6.3
CaMau	206	1.81	Tay Ninh	2221	19.55
Ha Giang	0	0	Hue	4	0.4
TpHCM	724	6.37	Thanh Hoa	1	0.1
Khanh Hoa	15	0.13	Thai Binh	0	0
Kien Giang	115	1.01	Tien Giang	204	1.8
Lam Dong	48	0.42	Tra Vinh	265	2.33
Long An	214	1.88	Vinh Long	363	3.2
Dac Lac	10	0.09	Total	11358	100

Source: Tran (2004)

present, Taiwan-Vietnam marriages in particular are becoming dominant. Interestingly, the origins of Vietnamese brides are concentrated in a particular area, the Mekong Delta region, which has some of the poorest communities in Vietnam, while in other areas in the country, the rate of marriage migration is very low. What is the cause of this regional difference in the number of women getting married to Taiwanese men?

7.3.2 Determinants of Taiwan-Vietnam marriage

As noted above, there is a difference in Taiwan-Vietnam marriage between regions in Vietnam. Therefore, to explain this difference, we should look at the problem at the macro level. Also, the causes of marriage at the micro level such as family influences and personal reasons will provide us with a more comprehensive view of determinants of cross-border marriage.

Reasons at the macro level

As Hugo (2004) asserts, 'marriage squeeze' has a significant effect on family-forming migration. Can we use his theory to explain this extreme increase in movement in Vietnam recently?

From Table 7.5 we can see that the sex ratio becomes higher and higher at younger ages. As a result, boys outnumber girls at ages under 19, and this ratio reaches 107 at ages 0-4. If this ratio keeps rising, concerns might grow about a female deficit very soon in Vietnam. Data from Table 7.6 show that the sex ratio of people aged 20-35 during the 1970s was very low. However, the sex ratio of young people aged 20-34 now is quite high (nearly 99.0). It is clear that there is no shortage of females at marriageable ages in Vietnam at present, so 'marriage squeeze' has little if no impact on the female marriage migration. Statistical data at the national level indicate that the sex ratio in the Mekong Delta region is similar to that in the other areas in the country (GSO 2002).

Table 7.5 *Age-sex ratio in Vietnam, 2003*

Age group	*Sex ratio*
0-4	107.3
5-9	106.4
10-14	105.7
15-19	105.7
20-24	98.5
25-29	97.6
30-34	99.2
35-39	97.1

Source: General Statistics Office, 2004 (GSO 2004)

Table 7.6 *Age-sex ratio in Vietnam, 1979*

Age	Number (000)		Ratio
	F	M	
0-4	3,766	3,946	104
5-9	3,762	3,929	104
10-14	3,407	3,633	106
15-19	3,061	2,954	97
20-24	2,601	2,281	88
25-29	1,976	1,742	88
30-34	1,315	1,177	89
35-39	1,104	967	87

Source: 1979 Census (Le 2004)

Therefore, in this case we cannot use the 'marriage squeeze' theory to explain the causes of the high numbers of international marriages. At the macro level we therefore suggest the following factors.

Firstly, the Mekong Delta region is located in the southwestern part of Vietnam and consists of eleven provinces. Although the region is one of the most fertile places in the country, it experiences natural disasters such as floods during the rainy season and severe droughts during the dry season. It is not surprising that many of the poorest communities are located in this area (Hugo & Nguyen 2004), and the levels of education of the people are very low in comparison with the Red River Delta. The rate of students in university per 1,000 persons is only 1.7 in the Mekong Delta region, while this ratio is 6 per 1,000 in the Red River Delta (GSO 2002). According to the Living Standard Survey (LSS) in 2002, in the Mekong Delta region, 23.4 percent of households are under the poverty line, and 17.8 percent have no property value to cope with risks (Tran 2004). In five provinces where the survey was conducted, the poverty rate is still high – nearly 50 percent in An Giang Province (Table 7.7). Also, access to public services such as health service, education and other essential services is still very limited. Indeed, nearly 3,000 people in this area have only one doctor, while in the Red River Delta this rate is much lower – 2,000 people per doctor (GSO 2002). Moreover, the proportion of women who serve as housewives and are unemployed is the highest (33.6 percent and 30.2 percent) in the nation (GSO 2004).

Population growth, natural disasters, low numbers of people participating in labor and low levels of education influence poverty rates in the Mekong Delta area. To escape poverty and avoid the severe climate, many people (particularly the young generation) move out of their villages to more prosperous regions; some migrate to cities such as Ho Chi Minh City while others take part in international migration. The

Table 7.7 *Poverty rate by province*

N	*Province*	*Poverty rate (%)*
	Tien Giang	30
	Vinh Long	36
	Can Tho	40
	Dong Thap	42
	An Giang	46

Source: IDS *Poverty and inequality in Vietnam* (2002)

out-migration rate in the Mekong Delta region was ranked number six in the country (GSO 2004); in terms of international marriage migration, it is the highest.

Secondly, the Mekong Delta region has visible multicultural characteristics. Besides Vietnamese culture, this region also has Khmer, Chinese and Indian cultures. In the second half of the 20th century, French and American influences were added to the culture (Tran 2004). This diverse culture has resulted in regionally specific characteristics of the people in this region. For example, they are able to adjust to changes and integrate into new environments, as these communities are not very tight. Consequently, interethnic marriage is very popular in this area.

Another important factor influencing marriage is that Vietnam and Taiwan share a common influence – Confucianism – which typically emphasizes different roles and responsibilities for men and women in the family. Males always have more power than females, both within the family and in society, and when the woman gets married she is forced to obey and serve her family-in-law (Do et al. 2003). Although this tradition has changed over time, it continues somewhat among Vietnamese people, especially in rural areas and among people with low levels of education. The Taiwanese have a strong preference for similarity in terms of people, culture and region (Tsay 2004). Therefore, Taiwanese men prefer getting married to Vietnamese females. Indeed, from 1999 to present, Vietnam is second to China in terms of the number of women gaining partner visas to Taiwan (Wang & Chang 2002).

Finally, Taiwan is one of the biggest investors in Vietnam. In 1993 the investment from Taiwan into Vietnam accounted for 36.5 percent of the total international investment of Taiwan in the Southeast of Asia (Table 7.8).

As of the year 2000 there were about 2,000 Taiwanese companies working in Vietnam (Phan et al. 2005). Phan also states that the number of Taiwanese people going to Vietnam for business and holiday has increased over time. In only six months in the second half of 1998, around 27,500 Taiwanese came to Vietnam. Taiwan-Vietnam marriages

Table 7.8 *Taiwan investment in Vietnam*

Year	*Amount (million USD)*	*Percent of investment in VN to total international investment amount from Taiwan in Southeast Asia*
1993	1583,96	36.52
1994	1083,78	27.24
1995	1081,46	33.16
1996	1004,76	17.11
1997	854,14	13.30
1998	1000,78	21.41

Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs, presented by Chao-Jen Huang, Phan et al.

started happening after the economic relationship between the two countries improved, and since then it has continuously increased in scale and complexity.

Reasons at the micro level

From 635 households interviewed in the 2004 survey, we found that the economic status of the brides is not very high. The results are summarized in Table 7.9. One can see that only 14.5 percent of households have living standards higher than average, while 41.1 percent of households live in poverty, with 19.8 percent very poor.

Additionally, the level of education of the brides' parents is very low compared with the average nationwide levels of education. According to the Survey on Living Standards in Vietnam in 2002, 10.67 percent of people aged over fifteen had a high school level education, 3.5 percent had higher education, and about 81 percent had an education level up to secondary school (GSO 2004: 42). Of 635 parents interviewed, less than 10 percent of them completed high school and only 0.1 percent have higher education, while 90 percent completed lower secondary school. Due to their low levels of education, most of them do hard and unskilled jobs on farms with very low pay. For them, getting out of poverty through work is impossible, so the majority of these parents hoped to improve their economic situation by means of their daughters' marriages to Taiwanese men. As shown in Table 7.10, 81.4 percent of the brides' parents had expectations of escaping poverty through their

Table 7.9 *Living standards of brides' families*[a]

	Very poor	*Poor*	*Average*	*Rich*	*Very rich*	*Hard to answer*
Number	126	261	191	43	10	4
Percent	19.8	41.1	30.1	6.8	1.6	0.6

Source: The 2004 Survey

[a] The living standards of the families are based on the parents' assessments compared with other families in their community.

Table 7.10 *Expectation of families – parents' education level*

Expectation		*Parents' education levels and their expectation from the daughter's marriage to a Taiwanese man*						*Total*
		Illiterate	*Primary*	*Secondary*	*High school*	*Higher education*	*Missing*	
Have expectation	%	79.7	84.8	79.7	67.2	.0	100.0	81.4
No expectation	%	16.9	12.3	15.2	31.1	100.0	.0	15.3
No answer	%	3.4	2.9	5.1	1.6	.0	.0	3.3
Total	N	59	374	138	61	1	2	635
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: The 2004 survey

daughters' marriages. The data also indicate that the parents with the higher levels of education were least likely to expect to receive financial assistance from their daughters after they got married to Taiwanese men. Indeed, as seen in Table 7.10, while 80 percent of parents with educational levels up to secondary school had this expectation of their daughters, only 67 percent of parents with high school levels had this expectation.

When the parents were asked about their opinions of the reasons why their daughters had married to Taiwanese men, 61 percent gave answers that their daughters were involved in this kind of marriage to 'help the family', and 10 percent of the parents said that their daughters wanted to have a better life (Table 7.11). Also, in-depth interviews with the brides show that many of the brides' families are heavily in debt due to business failure. Some families have members in critical financial conditions, and others are so poor that they have no opportunities to access essential services. Hence, the young women decide to get married to foreigners, even though they realize that there may be some risk involved. One bride, from An Giang Province, who came to visit her family said:

> My family was very poor, and my mother owed a lot of money due to failure in business, but we could not pay the loan off, hence we were forced to give our house to them. I was very sad and shy because when we were poor, people in the village looked down on us. Then a lot of girls in the village had Taiwanese husbands, and they sent back money to their parents, so I thought 'why don't I try?' So I decided to take a risk. But I am lucky, my husband is generous, and he allows me to help my family.

Similar results are found in focus group discussions with local people as well. In these conversations the informers also add that most of the

brides have very low levels of education, hence they cannot find good jobs with high incomes to help their families.

In short, economics is the main reason causing females from the Mekong Delta to get married to Taiwanese males. It is argued that low levels of education and the lack of vital occupational and social skills limit their flexibility in adjusting to labor market changes. Therefore, they have to undertake heavy work for very modest incomes that cannot meet their needs; consequently, they live in poverty. The only chance to escape this condition consists of their daughters marrying foreign partners so that their 'rich' sons-in-law can pay them a bride-price and support them later. The economics-based reason for marriage is also found in all Taiwan-Vietnam marriage studies.

Within Vietnamese tradition, children are taught to respect and to be grateful to their parents. They have the responsibility to look after their parents when they get older. This is the reason why many of the brides are willing to sacrifice their happiness to help their families, and a lot of them still follow their parents' decisions. Indeed, data from the survey indicate that only 40 percent of the women made the decision to choose a partner by themselves, and 23 percent discussed it with their parents and reached an agreement. But 37 percent left it up to their parents or someone else (Table 7.12). When the parents were asked whether they agreed to their daughters' marriages or not, 90 percent answered 'yes' (2004 survey). This also plays a very important role in encouraging the girls to engage in marriage migration. In addition, not only the parents', but also the community's attitudes toward this are supportive.

> Almost all of the brides go to Taiwan and send a lot of money to help their families. They build new houses, and buy expensive motorbikes, while we are here ... (smiling). Everyone in the village agrees with them; many people even feel unfortunate that they do not have daughters at marriageable ages. If anyone has girls at this age they will certainly allow them to get married to Taiwanese men. (a focus group discussion of middle-aged people in An Giang province).

Besides the above determinants, another very important cause of this marriage migration is that many women who previously married and moved to Taiwan have been sending money to their families left behind. Their success stimulates the interest of other females of marriageable age in the community in taking part in such a marriage. Moreover, the social network created between the homeland of the emigrants and their destination helps provide information on Taiwan to potential

Table 7.11 *The reasons for Vietnam-Taiwan marriages, based on the parents' opinions*

Reason	*Percent*
To help the family	61.6
For a better life	10.8
To make parents happy	6.3
Don't like local men	4.6
Influence of friends	3.7
Other	12.9

Source: The 2004 survey

brides, and in many cases the girls are introduced to Taiwanese men by her relatives or friends who have already moved there.

Dieu, a bride from Vinh Long province says:

> In my village a lot of girls have Taiwanese husbands and have not had any troubles. In contrast they have money to help their families, and they come to visit their parents every year, so I decided to go. Now I do the same as them, and come to visit my parents once a year.

Briefly, at the micro level the main reason for Taiwan-Vietnam marriage is economic. Poverty is causing people to move out of the villages through different ways. For families with daughters of marriageable age, getting married to foreigners, especially Taiwanese men, is a path to being better off. For this reason, the girls are strongly supported by their parents, relatives and even local people, and as a result, this phenomenon is becoming increasingly popular in these communities. This is a highly controversial issue and open to debate in the whole country. Many people criticize this trend, while some support it. The following section will give us insight into the benefits for the region of origin, as well as the disadvantages of this trend.

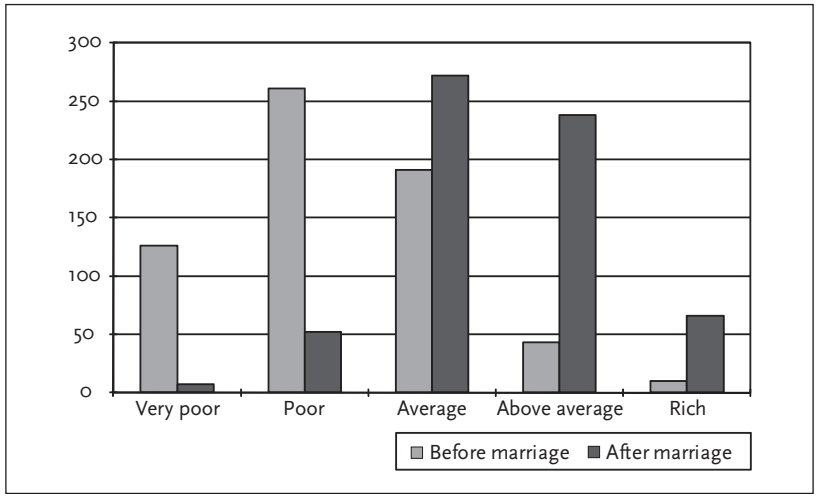
7.3.3 Consequences of Taiwan-Vietnam marriage on the community of origin

Economic impacts

As noted above, the main reason for this kind of marriage is economic. Poor families encourage their daughters to have foreign partners in the hope of escaping their difficult conditions.

Figure 7.2 indicates that the number of families improving their economic conditions as a result of this kind of marriage is very high. In

Figure 7.2 *Living standards of households before and after their daughters' marriages*



Source: The 2004 Survey

particular, the percentage of households who were very poor before their daughters married Taiwanese men decreased from 20 percent before to 1 percent afterward. And 31.6 percent of the families have crossed the poverty line as well. At the other end of the scale, the proportion of households that are rich is 38 percent, while this rate was only 8 percent before marriage.[1] These results match local people's opinions from the focus group discussions undertaken in the 2004 survey. Nearly all of them agree that the families with Taiwanese sons-in-law have become better off, and many of them have become rich. In a discussion in An Giang Province, they said:

> We see that the families with daughters married to Taiwanese males all have built two- or three-story houses. They are very happy and enjoy life; they do not have to do hard work because their daughters send money to them very often. Some of them even help poor neighbors and poorer people in the communities.

Also, the father of a bride said:

> Before my daughter's marriage, all members of our family were forced to work very hard; we were hired to do jobs with very low pay so we used to be short of money. But now our lives have changed because my daughter often sends back money. With this

> assistance now we have money to send our younger children to vocational school so that they will be able to find a good job later. We are much happier now.

It is clear that Vietnamese brides in Taiwan play an important role in improving their families' finances. From a local point of view, these marriages are successful, and this achievement is noticeable in the community. As a result, many families in this area are following in their footsteps. In short, from an economic standpoint, these marriages have had a positive impact on the local communities.

Social impacts

Quite a few people claim that this kind of marriage is not a result of love, but is a commodification process. There is no evidence that these parents sell their children for money, but the survey data show that the parents of the brides receive on average USD 1,000 to USD 2,000 from the grooms during the marriage process as well as later remittances from Taiwan (Hugo & Nguyen 2004). Some of the brides state that they bring money to their families once a year when they come to visit them; the amount being around USD 10,000. This raises the interest of younger girls in the community in having foreign partners when growing up, and this interest is strongly supported by their parents. According to Vietnamese culture, the main role of girls is inside the house; hence when they grow up they have to get married and take care of the husband and children. But since the renovation, this situation has changed, and a high percentage of women work outside the home to earn money for their family. Many of them get high positions and make significant contributions to the country. Improving the education of women has been one of the development targets in Vietnam in recent years, but marriage migration has hindered this in the Mekong Delta area. High rates of young girls end their schooling before or at the age of sixteen due to their aspirations of marrying Taiwanese men.

Moreover, although no research has been conducted so far to see the impact of this marriage migration on the sex ratio between the ages of 18 to 30, from focus group discussions, it is evident that local people are concerned with the shortage of females of marriageable age. For example, in Commune Tan Loc, District Thot Not, Can Tho Province, which is called 'Taiwan Island', one out of every ten households has a daughter married to a Taiwanese male. In District Thoai Son, An Giang Province, people said that 50 percent of total marriages there are Vietnam-Taiwan marriages. Young men in these communities worry about having no chance to find partners, and they said: 'It is very sad; all of the girls move out, so we may stay single our whole life; we are poor and have no money to marry.' Some girls were in love shortly before

the marriage, but left their Vietnamese boyfriends behind to get married to their Taiwanese husbands nevertheless. Poor men have limited opportunities to find partners.

It is clear that the sending communities, especially the brides' families, benefit economically from this marriage migration. However, up to now almost all researchers conducting Vietnam-Taiwan marriage studies focus only on its negative aspects. In their opinions, the trafficking of women is implicit in this process, and not only the parents but also brokerage agents gain profits from these cross-border marriages. The brides are being blamed for the loss of dignity of Vietnamese women when they 'sell themselves for money'. To be chosen by a Taiwanese man, some of these women have to win a competition by showing their bodies in front of Taiwanese men. If they are lucky they are chosen; if not they have to wait for a next round, increasing their living costs as well as agent fees. This is the reason why many people blame these women for degrading Vietnamese women's dignity. We disagree with these comments. Though nowadays there is in Vietnam a tendency among young women toward getting foreign husbands and leading a life dependent on their rich partners, the women in this survey almost all come from very poor families, and many are even in very serious situations such as debts and bankruptcy. So in order to help their family they look for a solution. Taiwanese males need partners and do not have many choices in their own country, whereas they are able to fully meet these Vietnamese women' needs. This is the reason why they easily become husband and wife. Obviously, this trend is inevitable, so we cannot stop it, although we know that a lot of negative social problems are implicit in this kind of marriage. In particular, the bride's life in Taiwan attracts a lot of attention.

7.3.4 Characteristics of the groom and the bride and her life in Taiwan

Generally, the education level of the brides is very low. Nearly all of them (84.8 percent) had a secondary-school education or lower (TECO 2004). The grooms' education is somewhat higher: 54.27 percent completed junior high school and 36.34 percent finished senior high school. Due to their low levels of education, the women had to do unskilled jobs or stayed home to help their parents. It is interesting that 90.63 percent of brides given visas to Taiwan reported that they did housework before moving (TECO 2004). But we should be careful when interpreting this figure, because this kind of marriage is very competitive, and these women were given information that Taiwanese men prefer to have a wife with good domestic skills. The data regarding occupations of the brides before moving found from the 2004 survey are shown in Table 7.13. Generally, before getting married and moving to Taiwan, the

Table 7.12 *Decision-makers of the marriage*

	Herself	*Father*	*Mother*	*Both parents*	*Parents and the bride*	*Someone else*	*Total*
Number	257	64	71	79	152	12	635
Percent	40.5	10.1	11.2	12.4	23.9	1.9	100

Source: The 2004 survey

Table 7.13 *Percent occupation of the brides before moving*

Farmers	*Housework*	*High school student*	*Small business*	*Worker in a factory*	*Apprentice*	*Others*
28.0	16.6	7.2	21.9	16.3	2.7	7.3

Source: The 2004 Survey

Table 7.14 *Percent level of education of the bride*

Never attended school	*Primary*	*Secondary*	*High school*	*Apprentice*	*Higher education*
0.8	35.4	50.6	12.9	0.5	0.3

Source: The 2004 Survey

majority of the brides did unskilled jobs such as farmhands or workers, and only 2.7 percent of them were apprenticed.

The reason for the brides doing unskilled jobs was due to their low levels of education. As indicated in Table 7.14, most of the brides (86 percent) had completed primary or secondary school, and only 0.3 percent had finished higher education.

When the brides have low levels of education and no skills, they face a lot of difficulties in adjusting in Taiwan. This is also a concern for potential grooms when they decide to get married to these Vietnamese girls. In in-depth interviews with some grooms coming to Vietnam to sign marriage certificates at the Department of Justice, all of them agree that their potential wives will not be able to have good jobs in Taiwan. They come to Vietnam to look for wives, but the brides have not been prepared for their new lives in their husband's country. When asked about their plans with their new family in Taiwan, not many of them were making preparations. They only hoped that everything would turn out all right, since Vietnamese girls are very nice and virtuous. The grooms worry about the bride's adaptation in Taiwan when their wives have no skills to do any kind of job. Richer men can support their wives and keep them at home, but for poorer ones this is a matter of concern. In spite of this worry, they still go to Vietnam to get married. The only reason is that they do not want to stay single, and their families want to maintain the continuity of a family line, while they cannot afford to get married to respectable women in Taiwan. Therefore, they agree to pay

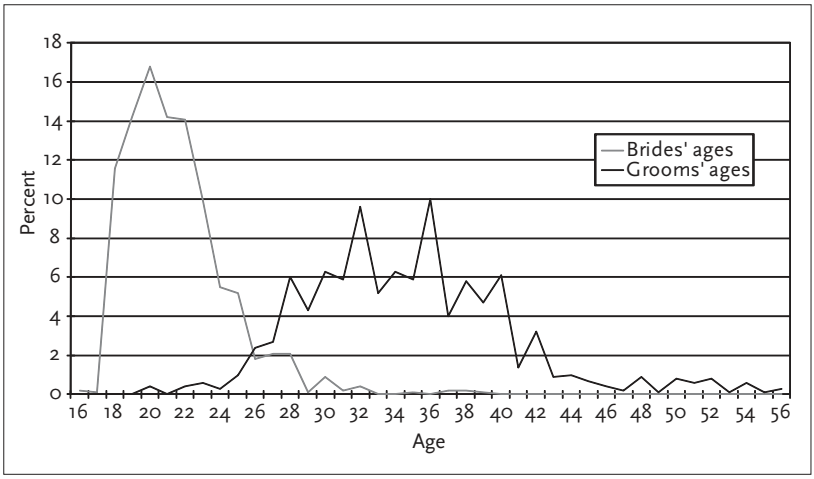
to have Vietnamese wives. They think very simply that Vietnamese women are suitable for them because Vietnam and Taiwan have similar cultures. When they are asked why they chose this woman to marry, their answers are very simple, e.g. 'I think that she is nice; I can feel that', though they have known them for only one week. Almost all of them, grooms and brides, believe that whether they will have a happy life or not depends on their destiny. While they decide to get married to the woman, they do not have much respect for her family. According to them, the woman's family is poor because they are terribly lazy, and these Taiwanese men accept that their wives marry them for economic reasons. Most of the grooms are serious about marriage; however, there are some cases in which the bride is tricked and becomes a victim of domestic violence or women trafficking. Some Taiwanese men take advantage of a weakness in Vietnamese law and use old divorce certificates to get married to Vietnamese women, even though they have already remarried in Taiwan. Incredibly, some Vietnamese women go along with this and agree to be a concubine. In many cases, these men use these 'wives' like goods, selling them to other men or to a brothel for profit. Some of them force their wives to work like a slave after marriage. Not many, but a few girls aged below eighteen use fake birth certificates to trick local authorities.

In reality, who are these grooms, how old are they, and what are their positions in Taiwanese society? According to Vietnamese statistical data from 2003, 80 percent of Taiwanese grooms are aged 30-50, and none was under 20, while 41.3 percent of the brides were aged under 20, and 53.57 percent were aged 20-30.

Figure 7.3 shows that the ages of Vietnamese brides are mainly concentrated between 18-25, but the grooms' ages are chiefly distributed around 28-40. So we can see that the age gap between husband and wife is on average quite high. There is one case of a woman who is 35 years old with a husband aged 62. However, not all of the brides have a big age difference with their husbands.

In terms of occupations, 21.7 percent of the grooms work in the service sector, 15.2 percent are workers, and 21 percent are masons and odd jobs men. Similarly, the brides do unskilled jobs at farms and factories or stay home to serve the husband and his family, 35 percent of the brides work outside e.g. as workers or servants, and 64.5 percent do housework. Although not common, there are some cases in which the wife becomes the servant of ill sons or parents of the husband. Since the brides' purposes of moving to Taiwan are to help their families, they try to work very hard. The ones who do physically demanding jobs in return for pay still feel luckier than others, because many of the brides have to stay home, do housework and are dependent on their husbands, so they have no savings to help their families. In these cases if the hus-

Figure 7.3 *Brides' and grooms' ages*



Source: The 2004 Survey

band gets a high income and he is generous enough in giving help to her family left behind, she feels happy. As noted already, all of the grooms acknowledge the fact that their wives got married to them for economic reasons, and they pay their wives for the housework so that they can support their parents in Vietnam. If some brides stay home to look after his family and get no money from the husband, they are disappointed and may even end their marriage. All of the brides from the survey prefer to have a job, even a very hard job, rather than stay home. They state that they want to work to earn money by themselves because they do not like being dependent on their partners. Like in Vietnamese culture, in Taiwan older people and men have the most power in a family. The decision-maker in the family is the husband, not the wife. Therefore, if they stay home they become fully dependent on their husbands. The data from the 2004 survey on Taiwan-Vietnam marriage in six provinces of the Mekong Delta region show that in nearly all of the families where the wife stays home, the husband decides everything, while the wife only does housework and looks after the children. Although these women have to do very hard work, and women who stay home to look after the family are dependent on the husband, 50 percent of them are satisfied with their present lives in Taiwan. Those are the women who earn an income by themselves and the women who stay home but have husbands giving them money to support their parents in Vietnam. The remaining 50 percent is divided into two groups: two-thirds of these women are fairly happy, and one third is not satisfied at

all. Those who are fairly happy said that anyway their lives in Taiwan are better than other women's in Vietnam. The unhappy women are those who do not get any respect from their spouse's family, and some of them are even disregarded by their parents-in-law due to their poverty. Therefore, they feel offended and ashamed even though their economic lives are better in Taiwan. They regret their marriage decisions. Some of these women cried when they talked because they have many troubles such as arguments with parents-in-law and their husbands. The main reason they want to keep their family life is that they can stay there to work to help their family in Vietnam. But 8 out of 51 brides questioned have already left their husbands and gone back to Vietnam, because they could not stand the troubles. The reason for these troubles is expressed in an interview with a 50-year-old groom:

> Most of the brides cannot do any good job in Taiwan. Not all families are rich in Taiwan; therefore they have to work, but they have no skills, no education and even no language abilities, so how can they work then? When they cannot do their jobs well the boss complains, and they are not happy, and they think that they are offended. The same when they do housework. Many of these women stay home to do housework as a housekeeper and their husbands pay them so they have money to send back to her family. And they say they are happy. I do not think this is happiness.

7.4 Conclusion

International marriage migration from Vietnam is increasing rapidly since the number of young women involved in this kind of marriage has dramatically increased in recent years. As this kind of marriage is mainly concentrated in a specific region, the Mekong Delta Region, it puts pressure on the Vietnamese authorities.

Economic reasons play an important role in this growing marriage trend. Poverty and a desire for being better off are the main determinants of marriage migration among young women in the south of Vietnam. Although this movement results in noticeable economic improvement in the sending communities, it also causes a series of social problems. The implication of the findings are that the place of origin in the near future may experience a female deficit at marriageable ages, as poor men in this area already have had limited chances of getting married in recent years. The success of some cases of this kind of marriage has become an example for young women in this area. As a result, many young people, especially young women, stop school at an early age to get married to Taiwanese men.

It was also found that at the destination, the low level of education of the brides and the fact that they have not been prepared for a life in a new place lead these young women to face a lot of difficulties. Doing hard jobs with low pay is common among these brides in Taiwan. In some cases, the woman is maltreated by the husband or his family. Additionally, as noted, the motive for these marriages is economic, and their partners acknowledge this fact. Since the grooms think that their wives' parents use their daughter as a tool for getting better off, they feel sorry for them and disrespect her family.

Many of the women were informed by brokers that if they have Taiwanese husbands, they will have a very good life. Their husbands will provide them with everything they need and support their families in Vietnam because in Taiwan people are very rich. Therefore, quite a few women become disillusioned with their real lives in Taiwan.

Since this marriage migration trend became important in Vietnam, there has been a growing body of research on it. However, this project was the first to cover such a large area (six provinces in the Mekong Delta) with an attempt to provide insight into this movement. Understanding the thoughts of the brides as well as those of their parents and people in their communities has helped researchers to have a more comprehensive view of the issue.

Based on the research results, the authors have some recommendations for policymakers:

1. According to Vietnamese marriage law, every woman above 18 and every man above 20 has a right to get married to anyone of the opposite sex whom they feel is suitable as long as their marriage is voluntary. Hence, Vietnamese and Taiwanese authorities cannot stop these marriages, so the policymakers and people in charge should make efforts to cushion the negative impacts of this trend on the woman herself and on society. The law regarding marriage to foreigners has to be strengthened.
2. Young women in the communities have to be equipped with an understanding of how to choose appropriate partners. If they decide to take cross-border husbands, they should receive preparation for this. Learning the language and studying the culture of the destination and understanding family and married life are very necessary for these women. And Vietnamese consultancy at the community level is the most effective place for providing these basic necessities to them. Coordination between Vietnam and Taiwan on this issue is necessary.

Note

1 Rich households are measured in comparison to households in this region only.

8 Cross-border Marriages

Experiences of Village Women from Northeastern Thailand with Western Men

Ratana Tosakul

8.1 Introduction

Over the past two decades, thousands of village women from economically deprived northeastern Thailand, where the Lao language is dominant, have chosen to marry Western men and migrate to live with their husbands overseas.[1] According to a recent survey conducted by the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) of the northeastern region, Thailand (2004), a total of 19,594 women in nineteen northeastern provinces chose to marry Western men. In some northeastern villages, it is reported that as many as one-third of families have female members who have opted for Western husbands.

I was intrigued by this phenomenon and decided to conduct a study pertinent to this issue. During 2004-2005, I chose to do my ethnographic fieldwork in Baan Roi-Et[2], a Thai-Lao village, located in the Thung Khao Luang District of Roi-Et province in northeastern Thailand. People told of Cinderella-like stories about women in the village who had experienced cross-cultural marriages with Western men.

My paper is about the experiences of village women from the northeast of Thailand (locally known as Isan) who have opted for Western (Caucasian) husbands with special reference to the case of Baan Roi-Et. In this paper, I seek to understand and explain the local/global cultural relations through this phenomenon. I argue that global/local relations do not cause the disappearance of local cultures in the global context. Village women from Isan who have married Western men and migrated to live abroad with their husbands retain a strong sense of belonging to and connection with their home villages, no matter where they are currently residing. Through transnational migratory experiences, those women have created a social space where traditions, norms and practices of gender, marriage and sexuality are exposed to inquiry and negotiations.

8.2 Theorizing global/local cultural dynamism

8.2.1 Local/global: the persistence of locality

I find that some aspects of the idea of geography of mobility and cultural space are useful for this study. Henri Lefebvre has argued in his influential work entitled *The Production of Space* that 'no space disappears in the course of growth and worldwide development: the worldwide does not abolish the local' (1991: 86). Lefebvre moves his analysis of space from the old discourses on space to the way in which understandings of geographical space, landscape and property are cultural and thereby have a history of change. He examines contestations over the meanings of space and considers how social relations across territories are given cultural meaning. In the process, Lefebvre attempts to explain the significance of grass-roots experiences and understandings of geographical space as fundamentally social and cultural.

Along the same line of argument, Wilson and Dissanayake (1996) have proposed a hypothesis of global/local synergy where we are at the crossroads of an altered and more fractal ground of a critical understanding of cultural complexity in the modern world. A new world space of cultural production is simultaneously becoming more globalized (superseding national boundaries, unified around the dynamics of capital moving across borders) and more localized (fragmented into contested enclaves of difference, coalition, and resistance) in everyday practice. Huge migrations of people across regions and national boundaries create special economic and cultural zones of uneven development and intercultural hybridity. This global/local synergy has also created a space for ambivalence of self and community fragmented identities. Also, the global/local relations produce a space for query, coalition, contestation and resistance between social actors and the defining social order. Surprisingly, through this ongoing process of disruption and manipulation by global discourses and technologies, local cultures still persist. In other words, global/local relations do not diminish local cultures in the course of national and worldwide development.

8.2.2 Global/local: contesting gender, marriage and sexuality

While local cultures persist despite worldwide development, global discourses are frequently intertwined with local ones. It is no longer adequate to regard global/local relations as binary zones of center and periphery. Wilson and Dissanayake look at the global/local synergy as the 'transnational imaginary' which regulates the textures of everyday life and spaces of subjectivity, and reshapes those contemporary structures of feeling of social invention, contestation, modification, coalition, reimagining or even resistance. The dynamic, ongoing process of disrup-

tion and manipulation of the local by global discourses and technologies is being rearticulated as a process of translating the transnational structures of nations, self, and community into 'translational', in-between spaces of negotiated language, borderland being and bi-cultural ambivalence (Wilson & Dissanayake 1996: 2-3).

Gender, marriage and sexuality in any society are culturally and historically constructed (Muecke 1981; Moore 1994; Mills 2003). The concepts of gender, marriage and sexuality today also share characteristics of global/local assemblage, as people in the contemporary modern world have increasingly migrated out and interacted with each other, mostly in different cultural spaces outside of their local world. Although conventional views and practices of those concepts are dominant in any society, they are subjected to alterations, modifications and negotiations. Mills has suggested that 'the naturalized aspect of most gender systems and of gendered identities they prescribe for social actors may be fertile terrain for conflicts and struggle' (2003:17). Adopting Mills's proposition, I find that the transnational migration of village women from northeastern Thailand to the West has somehow transferred them to a new global cultural space where they are exposed to Western cultural thinking and practices. Through cross-cultural interaction, these women have consciously reflected on their conventional views and practices of gender relations, marriage, and sexuality in comparison with emerging new ideas and practices. According to Mills (2003), when new forms of ideology arise to challenge conventional views and practices, this may cause a sense of stress, tension and conflict, either of personal identity and social interaction on a day-to-day basis, or within the social order itself.

Finally, to conclude this section, I find Appadurai's proposition useful. Appadurai (1991, 2003) has argued that in the modern world, groups are no longer tightly territorialized, conscious of their own history, spatially bounded, and culturally homogenous, as peoples of the modern age have migrated to a great extent both locally and internationally. Appadurai has further suggested that it is a task of ethnography to disclose the nature of locality as an experience within the spatially unbounded, globalizing world. Experiences of people relating to locality within modernity are commonly associated with the emergence of new cultural sources of reference and identity or reshaping from previous ones. Appadurai has pointed out that imagination has become an organized field of social practices where constant negotiation between individuals and globally defined fields of possibility are occurring.

8.3 The village in focus

Baan Roi-Et is about 200 years old. Prior to the 1940s, there were no significant material changes in the village. By the 1950s, the Thai government had built a primary school in the village and sponsored classes from the first to the fourth grades, which were later extended to the sixth grade. Similar to other Thai-Lao communities, most villagers in Baan Roi-Et have adopted Theravada Buddhism mixed with animistic beliefs. Also, they practise matrilocal residence after marriage. Land is traditionally inherited through the female line. Women, side by side with men, have played a significant role in supporting their households economically and spiritually.

The majority of villagers are from farm family backgrounds. Average farm landholding per household is between 7-10 rai (2.5 rai equals 1 acre or 0.4 hectare). Most are small-scale farmers. Similar to other villagers in Isan, villagers of Baan Roi-Et have long been in contact with the global market through an extension of the Thai state's development policies and their participation in the global market economy. Villagers have to rely on erratic rainfall for their rice farming. Rice is produced for both export and home consumption.

Over the past four decades of development[3] sponsored by the Thai state, most villagers in the community find themselves continuing to live in a cycle of poverty with high debts, despite a significant improvement in material conveniences in their locality, such as better roads, electricity, schools, and hospitals. The unfavorable terms of trade in the rural agricultural sector brought about by the export-led industrialization policies of the Thai state have pumped resources away from the rural agricultural sector into the urban industrial sector, thereby leaving the former in poverty. Women's responsibilities to provide for their households have led more and more women from the village and elsewhere in Isan to seek better security and livelihoods outside their locality. Rural migration to urban areas has become a common phenomenon for villagers from Baan Roi-Et and elsewhere in Thailand since the 1960s. At least one or two members of each household in Baan Roi-Et have migratory experiences through participating in manufacturing and service industries locally or internationally.

As of 2004, there were 437 households in Baan Roi-Et, with a total population of about 1391, of which 703 were male and 688 were female, as shown in Table 8.1.

Most villagers completed a compulsory primary education up until either the fourth or the sixth grade depending on their age. Generally, those above 35 years old by 2004 completed the fourth grade. A number of 53 youngsters (32 male and 21 female) are currently attending high school and some vocational schools in the city of Roi-Et. Only

Table 8.1 *Population of Baan Roi-Et classified by age and gender in 2004*

Age Range (years old)	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Lower than 5	83	50	33
5-9	137	84	53
10-14	147	69	78
15-19	133	65	68
20-24	57	37	20
25-29	61	32	29
30-34	88	42	46
35-39	84	42	42
40-44	94	50	44
45-49	91	39	52
50-54	74	37	37
55-59	112	52	60
60 and over	230	104	126
Total	1391	703	688

Source: A statistical survey for local development conducted by Tambon Thung Khao Luang Authority Organization, 2004

three youngsters (two male and one female) are continuing their higher education at the college level.

8.4 Village women's experiences through cross-cultural marriages

8.4.1 Pioneering exploration

The first woman from Baan Roi-Et to migrate overseas as a result of mixed marriage was Nang. She comes from a very poor farm household background. Nang turned 59 years old in 2004. For about 22 years, she has been married to a Swiss man. Unfortunately, I did not have a chance to talk to her in person, as she did not visit her home village while I was conducting my fieldwork in the community. Nonetheless, her younger sister and former brother-in-law kindly shared their information about her in this paper.

8.4.2 The story of Nang

Nang was born into a very poor farm family with nine siblings. She is the fourth child of her late parents. When Nang and her siblings were young, they did not have enough rice to eat due to their small farm landholding. They had to borrow money or rice occasionally from wealthier families in the village. Their parents finished compulsory primary education to the fourth grade, and

so did Nang and all her siblings. Her parents could not afford to provide them with higher education.

Everyone in the family struggled to make ends meet. Migration to urban areas, particularly to Bangkok, was their main survival strategy. When Nang was about ten years old, she had to leave her village and migrated to work as a maid in a furniture shop, which her elder brother-in-law, who was a furniture maker in the shop, had arranged for her. There, she met her first husband, who was a Sino-Thai from a central province. He worked there as a carpenter. They got married when she turned 30 years old. They had two daughters together and later divorced. Nang took care of her girls alone without any support from the girls' father.

Nang worked harder and harder but found it difficult to make ends meet. A friend who also worked as a maid was sympathetic towards her and convinced her to work in Pattaya where she met her current husband, a Swiss man, who is a little over ten years older than her. They decided to spend the first three months living together in Switzerland. After that time, Nang realized that her husband was a trustworthy person. He was a kind man with a kind heart. He showed respect for her Isan culture and was willing to learn about the culture. Moreover, he was willing to support her two girls from her former husband to have a better education in Switzerland.

In Switzerland, Nang realized that it was not possible to rely solely on her husband. In the beginning, she used to work at different available odd jobs. Gradually, with partial financial support from her husband and her own savings, Nang was able to open a small grocery store selling different kinds of food ingredients from Thailand, and later established a Thai food restaurant. Her business went very well due to her hard work, perseverance, creativity, thrift, and support from her husband and two daughters. Once Nang was able to stand on her own, she did not forget her home village in Isan. She went to visit her parents and siblings regularly while her parents were alive. She had her old dilapidated parental home renovated and bought a rice mill for her aged parents. She also bought them more farm land for rice cultivation. In addition, she invited her relatives to Switzerland and offered them jobs working in her grocery store and in the Thai restaurant during their first settling-in period. Most of Nang's female relatives who migrated to work in Switzerland ended up marrying Swiss men and resided with their husbands over there.

Nang's Cinderella-like story has greatly impressed many young girls in Baan Roi-Et. Some female students from a primary school in the village

told me that they want to go abroad and marry Western men when they grow up. This has set a norm of life in the village where many young girls are seeking advice and information from older cousins or neighbors who already have such experiences. For most of them, marrying a Western man means economic and social security in life.

Currently, the social stigma of Thai women marrying Western men is declining due to successful stories of many village women from Isan who have opted for Western husbands, and due to the power of the media portraying *luuk kreung* – children born from mixed marriages with a local Thai mother and a Western (Caucasian) father or vice versa – as successful movie actors and actresses, supermodels, pop singers, beauty queens and famous social celebrities in Thai society. Also, those *luuk kreung* are portrayed as being modern and cosmopolitan (Pattana 2005; Weisman 2000; Van Esterik 2000).

Although the majority of women from Baan Roi-Et are fortunate to have rather happy cross-cultural marriages, some do not share such fortune. They have to re-marry two or three times to find the right partner. Others remain single after divorce from their Western husbands, as in the case of Ta, the daughter of the family I stayed with during my ethnographic fieldwork in the village. Yet, I found almost no cases of abuse among my respondents under study, although I must confess that I had this preconception prior to launching my fieldwork. Ta was the only case (out of the total 49 cases studied by 2005) who encountered such an experience. I agree with Constable (2003) that abuse takes place in the larger discourse and popular mind more than is justified by the experiences of couples who have met through correspondence via the Internet and via the screening of family and friend circles. Nonetheless, this is not meant to discourage social workers and human rights activists from focusing on the serious issue of domestic abuse and violence when it does occur.[4]

While residing abroad, some female respondents in the village study served merely as housewives taking care of their aged husbands and doing the household chores, whereas others continued their part-time or full-time jobs to earn supplementary income to help support their families, both in Switzerland and their village homes of origin in Isan. Usually, the majority work as maids, waitresses, saleswomen, cashiers or entertainment service workers. A few of them are managers or owners of Thai food restaurants or grocery stores.

8.4.3 Village networking to the West

According to NESDB (2004), there are three major ways used by village women (totaling 219 respondents from northeastern Thailand who have already married Western men) to link up with Western husbands: 54.5

percent met their foreign husbands through their workplace, 20.2 percent met through a circle of family or friends, and 25.3 percent met through travel or personal contacts.

In the case of Baan Roi-Et, the majority of women met their Western husbands through family and friends. Only a few met their husbands through their workplace or match-making agencies. It is a local tradition in Isan that family, kin, and friend relations provide a strong foundation for social security of all members belonging to those circles.

Most village women under study began their transnational mobility by following other family members, relatives, or friends who had already settled overseas. Those people usually provide newcomers with initial logistical support, including orientation on how to live in a foreign land, visas, air tickets, temporary jobs and housing for an initial settling in, before the newcomers can get around in the new setting on their own. Usually, those who want to go abroad are responsible for all expenses of logistical arrangements. Generally, they do not need to pay commission fees to people in their circles of family and friends, but have to take care of necessary expenses incurred such as food and domestic transport of their intermediaries.

Occasionally, those village women from Baan Roi-Et already married to Western men invite the families and friends of their husbands to visit their home village in Isan. Often, those men are attracted to young village women and end up marrying them, thereby enlarging the village network to the West, especially Switzerland. This has given Baan Roi-Et a new, distinctive identity as *Muu Baan Swiss* (which literally means Swiss village), as people see a large number of Swiss men when they come over to visit their wives' parental families in the village from time to time.

Those who can afford the match-making service fee use company services to connect them to their Western husbands. The company charges each client from 70,000 baht (USD 1,750) to 150,000 baht (USD 3,750) depending on logistic expenses. Other means include Internet links[5] and advertisements in local and international magazines and newspapers. Nonetheless, none of these are popular among village women in the community, as they are too costly and too complicated for them.

As of 2005, there were 95 women from Baan Roi-Et, with ages ranging from 20 to 59 years old (almost one-third of the total 330 women from this age range), who have opted for Western husbands. Nationalities of the husbands include Swiss predominantly, constituting 96 percent, and smaller numbers from Germany 2 percent, England 1 percent and France 1 percent. Their occupations are diverse, including engineers, computer programmers, bankers, schoolteachers, university professors, medical doctors, pharmacists, postmen, policemen, public transport drivers, factory workers, farmers, electricians, pipeline water

technicians, house construction workers, plumbers, clerks, salesmen, convenience store owners, pub owners, and small food shop owners. Most are retired old pensioners. Usually, these men are about ten to eighteen years older than their young Isan wives. Two-thirds of the total village women from Baan Roi-Et who have opted for Western husbands are widows or divorcees from their first husbands, who were usually local Thai men. Likewise, most of their Western husbands are widowers or divorced.

8.4.4 East meets West

Economic motivation alone is not sufficient to unite a couple from different cultural backgrounds to live together through their marriages for over ten or twenty years as in the case of Nang and others. I agree with Klausner (*The Nation*, 24 June 2004) that looking at cross-cultural marriages of Isan women with Western men in the context of the social interaction of various cultural and philosophical backgrounds would have been far more fruitful and enlightening than considering these women as cash commodities that bring economic benefits to Thailand, as has been emphasized by the study of NESDB (2004). The focus would be then shifted away from the economic benefits to the country to the life experiences of those people – emotions, imagination, values, behavior and lifestyle of partners interacting through their shared experiences of cross-cultural marriages.

Many village women feel irritated by some images and stereotypes about them held by the general public of both Thai and Western societies, such as money-grubbers or immoral women. Frequently, some of these village women have encountered negative attitudes from sons, daughters, and relatives of their Western husbands. They have argued that, while the depressed economy from their rural family farms in Isan is certainly a major impetus for them to opt for Western husbands, they do share a common aspiration with other women from different socioeconomic backgrounds in Thai society and elsewhere in that they need a committed relationship in marriage. Chaba and Ruth, two of my female respondents, agree that their love for their Western husbands is not a romantic one as occurred when they were young girls. Rather, it has been a gradual development of a sense of commitment, understanding, sharing, adjustment, and patience throughout many years of living together.

In the following, I have chosen some sample cases to highlight women's experiences in mixed marriages. Chaba, 43 years old, comes from a poor farming background in a rural village of Khon Kaen. She married a German man and has lived in Germany for four years. Ta is from Baan Roi-Et. She does not have a happy family life with her Swiss

husband. Lastly, Ruth, a village woman from Srisaket, has been married to Tom, a Dutch man, for four years. They plan to be together in Isan for a while prior to moving to live in the Netherlands for better education of Ruth's daughter. They visit the Netherlands occasionally.

Chaba's experience of living in Germany has confirmed that with empathy, effort, and greater tolerance, potential conflicts can be avoided by expanding the intellectual and emotional horizons of both marriage partners, as Chaba has narrated in her own words:

> Life in Germany was initially very difficult. My husband and I could not communicate with each other at all. We used body language and drew pictures. After attending German classes for two years, I was able to communicate with him in simple German. Things seem to be better now. I do not like the cold weather there, whereas my husband does not like the heat and humidity in Isan. We share different religious beliefs. He goes to a Christian Church, but has no objection to my visiting the Buddhist temple. I do not like to live in a cramped, small apartment but love to be in the bright sunshine with open spaces, like in my home village in Isan. It is also difficult for me to mix with his German friends. I am very different from them. I never feel that I am one of them. I like to be with friends from Isan in our neighborhood. I feel less homesick when hanging out with them. We share our Isan food and chat in our language. We share similar jokes and stories. We occasionally go to the Buddhist temple and listen to *mo lam* music (traditional Isan music) together.
>
> I need to adjust a lot to life in Germany – language, food, weather, lifestyle, social milieu, and so on. My husband takes good care of me. He is not a wealthy man. He has just a modest salary from his pension to live on. He has nobody but me. He is a lonely old person. I have sympathy for him. I do all household chores for him. He also helps me occasionally with laundry and house cleaning. He is jealous of me, as I am much younger than he. He is seventeen years older than I. He likes to know where I go and with whom I hang out everyday. Frequently, I get bored of his excessive jealousy. I have to tolerate his behavior. Both my husband and I were married previously before getting married to each other.
>
> For two years, I have worked as a part-time cleaner for a medical clinic. I feel happy and feel more confident that I can earn my own income. I remit most of my income to support my poor parents in Thailand. They are taking care of my only son from my former Thai husband, who has never taken any responsibility for his son. Through interacting with my German husband and

> others in Western society, I have learnt a lot about their way of living and their ideas of gender roles and relations, sexuality, and marriage, which are different from my previous beliefs.

Ta, another village woman, 28 years old, is currently working as a saleswoman in a shopping mall in Switzerland. Ta went to Switzerland via a relative in Kalasin who was already established there. She began her work as a waitress in a restaurant and later as a saleswoman. She met her Swiss husband there, and they decided to marry. However, she is not as fortunate as others, as her husband had many women even after their marriage. When he got drunk, he was nasty to her. Having endured a miserable married life for some time, Ta decided to obtain a divorce from him and has remained single ever since. Ta remits money to her parental home occasionally, but not very much, as she has to support herself while living in Switzerland.

Ruth, currently 33 years old, has been married to Tom, 58 and a pensioner from the Netherlands, for five years. Prior to his retirement, Tom was the owner of a plumbing company in the Netherlands. He married twice prior to marrying Ruth. His first wife was a Western woman. The second one was a village woman from Isan who tricked him into purchasing a house in Thailand for her and then ran away with another Western man.

Tom and Ruth have proved to be an ideal mixed-marriage couple. Due to his bad experience with the second wife, Tom spent some time exploring Ruth's true personality by various means. Tom likes her spirit of motherhood and the way she takes good care of her baby girl from her late Thai husband, who died of cancer. Ruth and her baby were abandoned by her former husband's family in Udorn. As her husband had passed away, and she was poor, the family felt that she and the baby would add an extra economic burden on them. So, Ruth decided to bring her three-month-old baby back to Khon Kaen where she worked as clothes washer. Somehow, she met Tom because they lived in the same neighborhood. Tom began to have interest in her. But Ruth initially was afraid of Western men. She avoided meeting him privately. Tom finally hired Ruth to wash his clothes and went to collect his clean clothes regularly at her residence to observe her behavior. It took them about a year to really get together. Through interacting with each other, Tom has learnt to understand and attune himself to some aspects of Thai culture, in the following ways: Tom thinks that the increasing number of village women marrying Western men in Thai society is partly due to a lack of social security for single mothers and an insufficient provision of social security for the aging population. Thus, many women from poor villages in northeastern provinces and elsewhere in

Thailand have to look for financial security from Western husbands or other sources outside the Thai state sector.

Also, like many foreigners who have married Thai women, Tom wants to know what the Thai government will do to help cross-cultural marriage couples to live in Thai society. He comments that although the Thai authorities have recognized Western husbands' economic contributions to the nation, they are denied Thai passports no matter how well they speak, read and write Thai or how long they have lived in Thailand. The Immigration Department states that the new rules for visas are to ensure that foreigners do not become a burden on the Thai government. Tom feels that this is not a positive reciprocal relationship. Actually, most Westerners have their own social security and do not need it from the Thai government. Tom and his friends do not want to deal with too much paperwork or the bureaucracy of the Thai state. If there is any way to make things more convenient, that would be helpful for mixed-marriage couples.

Also, Tom observes that there are two main characteristics of local culture practised by Isan villagers – respect for elders, and taking care of poor parents and siblings. He has no objection to his wife's idea of helping her poor parents and siblings, but he wants to help them in a manner which enables them to further help themselves.

As for Ruth, she thinks that Tom has enabled her to be on her own and to fulfill her role as a dutiful daughter to her parents and a good mother to her girl more competently. Through his support, Ruth has been able to rent a small corner in a shopping mall in Khon Kaen city to sell women's shoes. She feels good to be able to earn her own income.

Ruth feels that she has learnt many things from Tom's character. In the beginning, she felt very anxious when he wanted her to speak her mind openly. Through interacting with Tom, Ruth has gradually learnt how to express her ideas candidly while Tom has become less confrontational. Both are willing to learn about each other's culture and religion. When Ruth goes to her Buddhist monastery, Tom accompanies her and observes Buddhist rituals and practices. Likewise, Ruth joins him to attend church services to observe their social interaction and activities.

Tom feels that Ruth takes good care of him in almost everything. In the Netherlands, Tom said if he asked his former (Western) wife for a cup of coffee, she would ask what was wrong with his hands. But living with Ruth, she simply understands and does it heartily. Both see their social interaction through cross-cultural marriage as a reciprocal relationship of understanding, sharing, and adjusting to each other.

Learning from their stories, I came to understand that social interaction through cross-cultural marriages of marriage partners is very intri-

cate. I agree with Klausner (2004) that each emerges from this cross-cultural experience with his/her individual identity, goals, values, sense of worth, attitudes, and perceptions finely modified and altered. There is maturing and growth spiritually as the joint self in the cross-cultural marriage becomes greater than the sum of the two culturally separable parts. Learning from and attuning to the cultures of each other, both marriage partners benefit from their cross-cultural experiences. The Isan wife profits from learning about Western thinking, lifestyle, and feeling, while the Western husband gains from adapting himself to Isan and Thai cultures.

8.5 Local/global relations

8.5.1 Connecting with home villages while aspiring to global modernity

Central to all narratives mentioned above is the moral impetus of a daughter's obligation to her home of origin. All village women marrying Western men in Baan Roi-Et still maintain close connections to their homes of origin and do share a similar gender ideology of being dutiful daughters to support their poor parents and siblings. As argued elsewhere (Ratana 1997), in Thai society, the concept of *bun khun* is prevalent. *Bun khun* is an expression of gratitude and reciprocity to parents, teachers or anybody who does good things to us. To reciprocate *bun khun* to others is also considered a way to improve our stores of merit in popular Buddhism.

The concept of *bun khun* is powerful among Isan villagers and others in Thai society. *Bun khun* is expressed in many forms, regardless of frequency, space and time. One important cultural characteristic of rural village women from Isan and elsewhere in Thailand is their close bonding and loyalty to their homes of origin. The stories of Nang, Chaba, Ta and Ruth have confirmed this point.

Nonetheless, many village women today are not confined by their local community world entirely. Through their migration and exposure to major urban industries of Bangkok and Western countries, they have been exposed to lifestyles, feelings, emotions, ideas and practices generated by growth and material conveniences of industrial modernity, which drive them to participate more and more in global development to achieve economic success. Most village women respondents have aspired to the material conveniences of industrial modernity, as expressed by Oom, a woman from Baan Roi-Et, who married a Swiss man and moved to reside in Switzerland:

> I want to build a modern house in the Western style in my home village in Isan for my aging parents and siblings as well as for

> my family when we return to live in Isan for good in the future. The modern house looks more elegant and lasts longer than a wooden house in the traditional Isan style.

Certainly, Oom and many other wives of Western men have brought some aspects of global modernity influenced by Western culture into their local world. Walking into Baan Roi-Et today, one is struck by the various elegant modern Western-style houses replacing the typical traditional wooden Isan-style houses with high wooden poles and an elevated ground floor where they usually kept their cattle underneath in old times. Most villagers told me that nearly all the modern houses belonged to wives of Western men. Those women are pioneers in introducing a modern Western housing style into Baan Roi-Et, which has become a vivid example of what modernity is to the entire community of people. This has posed a source of tension within groups of villagers in the community, as the majority of households are striving to achieve this economic success through transnational marriages and competitive individualism. Some are fortunate, whereas others are not. Those who are not able to achieve such economic success have shouldered high debts to renovate their old houses.

In addition, I observed that the use of space relating to their modern homes reflected a cultural hybrid of local and global relations. One finds a juxtaposition of local and global assemblage in many cultural spaces at different times. For example, although many families in Baan Roi-Et have modern homes, they hardly use their modern kitchens, but prefer to use an open space Isan-style kitchen where they sit on the floor to prepare all ingredients and chat with others who come to help with the work. They also like the traditional style of eating where all are sitting on a large mat in an open space while having meals and sharing food together, rather than sitting at a dining table in a room with individual dishes.

Today, all modern houses in Baan Roi-Et have fences to demarcate their boundaries clearly, with various species of dogs from the West to guard their houses. Thus, it is very difficult to enter their houses without permission in advance. I can see that a new sense of individualization has emerged alongside the traditional sense of their collective identity through the way their space is structured and used. Another interesting phenomenon is that although many parents and siblings of those village women are now living in modern houses, they still take care of their cattle during the day time and occasionally catch fish from nearby streams for home consumption.

As I have not yet done any ethnographic fieldwork with those village women in Switzerland, I am not able to explain the nature and social implications of their transnational families overseas in this paper. Judg-

ing from what they told me, I understand that they are reinventing their local culture in those foreign countries where they are currently residing. Usually, a Buddhist monastery in their neighborhood serves as a social space for them to get together for collective local identity reconstruction and expression. Chaba told me of her networking with Isan friends in Germany, which has contributed to the revival of their Isan community culture through Buddhist religious beliefs and practices, festivals, food, folk dance and music, language, and social interactions. I believe that when we examine everyday practices closely, we will find that these women exhibit the presence of their local cultures in the cultural complexity of national and worldwide development.

8.6 A shift in perspectives on gender identity, marriage, and sexuality

As mentioned earlier, people today find themselves at the crossroads of modernity where rapid social transformations produce bi-cultural ambivalence, dislocation and hybridity through large-scale migration. Appadurai (2003) has argued that cultural disjuncture and difference arise in the global/local assemblage. Imagination has become an organized field of social practices where constant negotiated dialogues between agency sites and the globally defined fields of possibility are taking place.

8.6.1 Negotiating gender and village images

During my fieldwork in Baan Roi-Et, I observed that some village elders felt uneasy discussing issues relating to mixed marriages of their village women with Western men. Similar to what Van Esterik (1988) and Mills (2003) have argued, I find that women's mobility to work outside of their communities on the one hand has strengthened their conventional gender role as dutiful daughters; on the other hand, images of modern village women participating in pubs, bars, night clubs, entertainment media, beauty salons, shopping malls and so on, where many of these places are linked directly or indirectly to the sex industry of Thailand, serve as a source of tension for many parents and village elders. Moreover, the nature of being wives of Western men has somehow rekindled the negative image of 'hired wives' of American soldiers during the Vietnam War period.[6]

These ambivalent views have caused the village administration to do their best to uphold the moral integrity of their community. The head of the sub-district (locally known as *kamnan*) and some of the village administration members repeatedly told me that not all the modern Western-style houses in the community belonged to women married to

Western men. About one-fifth of the houses belonged to villagers who had earned capital from several years of hard work and thrift.

Also, during my fieldwork, the *kamnan* frequently explained to me that their village women who married Western men were decent, as they were dutiful daughters, good wives, good mothers of their children and big patrons to support the village Buddhist temples. They nurtured Buddhism by organizing donation ceremonies almost every year to support Buddhist monks and temples. They had also provided financial contributions to purchase school teaching facilities and provide scholarships for poor students in the village.

The *kamnan* and other village elders felt irritated when numerous recent references in the media have portrayed Baan Roi-Et as an immoral village, comprising women who once were immoral due to their working backgrounds in the entertainment service industry. An elderly lady in the village mentioned that there were probably only a few women from this community who may have engaged in such sex-related business prior to marrying Western men, but surely not the majority, who are good women. They worked very hard just to support their poor households and with village moral values.

It is at this point that I would like to discuss some theoretical thinking of popular Buddhism to provide a broader social context for narratives of those village women related to gender, prostitution and Buddhism. Numerous studies on Thailand have agreed on the central role of Theravada Buddhism in shaping Thai people's lives (Tambiah 1970; Kirsch 1982; Keyes 1983, 1984; Muecke 1992). Some elders in the community explained to me that lustful and promiscuous women like those engaging in the sex trade are generally regarded as immoral, and such behavior was a symbol of cultural deterioration. Those women were born this way because they were destined by their previous *karma*[7] as a result of what they did in their past existences. Their past *karma*, however, is not fixed but can be corrected through intensive merit-making (*bun*) in their present existence on this earth. By organizing several donations for village temples and doing good deeds for others, they are improving their store of meritorious acts. This explanation is somewhat in line with some studies on prostitution in Thailand, confirming that prostitution is viewed as the product of an unchanging and uniform Buddhist-based culture that relegates women to secondary status (Thitsa 1980; Troung 1990). In this argument, women engaging in a sex-related business are perceived as having insufficient or no merit and are a cause of local and national cultural deterioration, even as they are deemed responsible for the maintenance of their households.

At the individual level, some village women felt reluctant to talk to me about their previous and present jobs. I visited Oom several times before she revealed to me that she used to work as a go-go dancer girl

in a night club in Bangkok and in Switzerland. She feels a tension in her mind between wanting to pursue her traditional moral village identity and aspiring to have economic success and material conveniences of global modernity through participating in a so-called 'deprecating' occupation. Yet, Oom feels that whatever women earn to support their poor parents and siblings without causing trouble to anyone can be considered a great meritorious act because they sacrifice themselves a lot to put up with so many things, ranging from the risk of contracting a sexual disease such as HIV/AIDS, bullying pimps, and indecent work, to public disdain. Obviously, Oom's remark shows that she has made use of some existing elements of Buddhist philosophy to negotiate the gender identity of women who are deemed polluted in the mainstream popular Buddhist discourses.

Nonetheless, mainstream discourses relating to those village women are context dependent, and subject to reinterpretation and modification. Surprisingly, today, village women and their Western husbands have gained more social recognition from the local authorities following their economic contributions to the region and the nation. Some provincial governors in northeastern provinces have organized an annual welcoming ceremony for those foreign son-in-laws. They want those village women and their Western husbands to help promote OTOP ('One *Tambon*[8] One Product') products overseas. This newly emerging official discourse has provided a rather different interpretation of what was once seen as an extension of hired wives to American soldiers during the Vietnam War era. Yet, some cross-cultural marriage partners doubt whether the Thai government is willing to provide assistance to mixed-marriage couples, rather than just viewing them and their Thai wives as cash commodities contributing to the economy of Thailand.

8.6.2 Negotiating marriage and sexuality[9]

The global/local relations through migration of people, overriding their regional and national territories, have produced a new social space in which the naturalized aspect of most gender systems and of gender relations they impose for social actors may be fertile terrain for conflicts and struggle, as already mentioned by Mills (2003). My female respondents agree that through cross-cultural marriages and migration to reside with their Western husbands, they benefit greatly from exposing themselves to new ideas and practices relating to marriage, gender and sexuality of Western cultures. Customarily, Thai women are supposed to remain celibate until their marriages. Female widows or divorced women are not an ideal type for most Thai men to marry. This is different from Western culture, where women's celibacy before marriage is no

longer thought of by many as an important issue (though certainly important segments with puritan values remain in Western societies).

Both Kony, Oom's husband, and Tom, Ruth's husband, mentioned that a woman's virginity is not an issue in their marriages. They were also divorced men before remarrying their current Thai wives. Thus, they do not think it fair to ask women to remain chaste while men go around and have sexual affairs with several women.

Over half of the women in Baan Roi-Et who opted for Western husbands were widows or divorced women prior to remarrying their current Western husbands. Some of my female respondents agreed that it was the first time they realized their rights over their bodies. Although they are widows or divorced women with children from previous husbands, their current Western husbands have convinced them that it was possible for them to remarry decent men. They are no longer confined by their local conventional concepts and practices of marriage. Previously, after divorce or becoming widowed, they felt treated as 'impure' women for the purpose of remarrying. Today, many village women perceive male foreigners as being more attractive than their local men because of the better treatment of women by those Western men. This has vividly posed a challenge to local Thai men and the conventional Thai moral code of marriage and sexuality relating to women's chastity before at least the first marriage. Exposure to Western thinking has opened up a new space for widows or divorced Thai women to negotiate with Thai men in terms of redefining the concepts of gender identity and marriage in the Thai cultural context.

At this point, I feel that this phenomenon can also be analyzed in terms of power relations. In Thai society, poor village women with low education are deemed to be socially and economically at the bottom of Thai social strata. The situation is even worse when they become widows or divorced with children from former husbands. They would have very little opportunity to remarry local men, especially single decent Thai men. Likewise, many Western men marrying poor women from Isan were aged and lonely widowers or divorced men. Some felt they were 'losers' at home, especially those from rural farming backgrounds or the working class with low education. It was difficult for them to find the right partners. They were neglected and not well taken care of by their former Western wives and others in their own societies. The meeting of these two disempowered groups is somewhat of a perfect match. Poor Thai wives need responsible and caring Western husbands who can provide them with some sources of social security in life and the financial means for them to fulfill their roles as dutiful daughters, whereas aged and lonely Western husbands need loving care from their young Thai wives. Cross-cultural marriages of these two groups

have provided a social space for them to regain their identities denied at home. They are empowering each other spiritually and materially.

Exposure to Western thinking on gender and sexuality through cross-cultural marriages leads many village women to feel a discrepancy between the two different worlds – the East and the West. Chaba, Ruth and many other Thai wives of Western husbands have confirmed that their Western husbands have impressed them in many ways. One of the most important aspects is the way they accept their wives' decisions about sexuality and their bodies. For example, Alfred, Chaba's husband, never has sex with her without her willingness. He would ask directly or indirectly if she is willing to have sex with him. Sometimes, she gets tired and refuses to do so; he understands and never gets angry. Chaba said that her former Thai husband could come to her anytime he wanted to have sex, without caring for her feelings, and she just had to put up with such behavior. This was because she was told by her parents and older relatives to please her husband sexually otherwise he might go to other women. Chaba never discusses sexual feelings and desires with any male, but through her interaction with Alfred, Chaba has learned how to understand herself physically and reveal sexual feelings to him.

8.7 Conclusion

This paper has focused on the synergy of local and global cultures through cross-cultural marriages of women from northeastern villages in Thailand with Western men. It argues that transnational mobility through cross-cultural marriages of those village women produces a sense of belonging and a close connection between these women and their homes of origin. Locality never disappears through national and global development. The modern world today is characterized by global/local relations where people are in transition through massive migration from one point to another. This global/local synergy has produced a social space of cultural complexity in the modern world where one finds the persistence of locality within the globalized world and vice versa. The global/local assemblage produces transcultural hybridity and bicultural ambivalence where groups are no longer firmly spatially bounded and culturally homogenous. The global/local relations also produce a social terrain for ongoing processes of coalition, contestation and negotiation between individuals and the naturalized aspects of the defined social order, as diverse experiences through cross-cultural marriages of those village women from Isan have confirmed.

I agree with Mills (2003) that it would be inaccurate to view these village women either as passive victims or liberated characters indepen-

dent from the existing socio-political-economic structures of regional, national and global development. Rather, they are conscious social actors who aspire to attain economic success by redefining and reinterpreting their cultural values in light of their own local cultural practices and those introduced by Western thinking that would serve their current interests and positions, despite their constrained and subordinated positions within the existing system.

Notes

1 This notable phenomenon of cross-cultural marriages also occurs in other Southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam and the Philippines. In Vietnam more than 86,000 Vietnamese women have married Taiwanese men over the past few years, according to recent media reports. See also Nguyen & Tran in this book.

2 Names of the village and respondents appearing in this paper are pseudonyms to protect their identities.

3 Prior to the economic downturn in 1997, Thailand had enjoyed a relatively satisfactory annual GDP growth averaging well over 10 percent per year, especially in the late 1980s, with a slightly less impressive rate in the early and mid-1990s. Several economic analysts predicted that Thailand was going to be the next Asian country to enter the status of an emerging newly industrialized country. Nonetheless, the economic crisis of Thailand in mid-1997 led to the sharp devaluation of the Thai currency and caused problems for the overall financial management system (Pasuk & Baker 1995, 1998; Bello, Cunningham & Li 1998). Despite all these years of economic progress, Parnwell (1996) and Medhi (1993) have argued that the overall economic growth of the country is not equally and evenly distributed among different sectors and among different groups of the population. The average per capita income of northeastern people is approximately ten times less than that of people living in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area (BMA) and its surrounding provinces. Export manufacturing and service industries have long been concentrated in urban areas, particularly in and around the BMA, while agriculture predominates in the rural countryside. The majority of farmers have encountered a fluctuation of market prices for rice and other farm export products. In comparison to urban manufacturers, farmers in Thailand enjoy very little economic benefit from the overall national development. Many have opted for migration as their survival strategy.

4 Prapairat Ratanaolan-mix, a coordinator of the Southeast Asian Division of Amnesty for Women, based in Hamburg, Germany, has discussed in her paper (2005) the experiences of Northeastern Thai village women who were abused by their German husbands. Those women are generally immigrants who have little or no skill in the German language. They are unfamiliar with laws and regulations and have been cut off from their families and friends while living in Germany.

5 Cf. http://www.ThaiLoveLinks.com, 15-22 June 2004; http://www.farang.com, 21-24 November 2004.

6 During the 1950s and early 1960s, cross-cultural marriages of Thai women with Western men were not accepted by the Thai public. Those women were looked down upon. People would assume that the majority of them (especially those from the rural Thai countryside) somehow had engaged in sex-related industries. This could be explained by the conventional moral code of sexuality in Thai society which places high value upon the chastity of women prior to their first marriage. Yet, this view

has been contested in Thai society today, especially by younger generations.

Jeffrey (2002) reported that wide-scale prostitution in Thailand began only during the Vietnam War in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when thousands of US troops were stationed in Thailand. Women mainly from poor villages of northeastern and northern provinces of Thailand began to migrate to areas outside American air bases in Thailand and to urban centers where American soldiers were taking rest and recreation (R&R) leave. Some became 'hired wives' to those American soldiers. Others provided sexual services in the thriving bars, night clubs, discos, and massage parlors built to cater to the military and, increasingly in the 1970s and 1980s, to tourists.

Even as the US military forces withdrew from Vietnam and Thailand by the early 1970s, prostitution continued to flourish in Thailand, as tourism picked up where the US military left off. Ironically, while these women have contributed to the expansion of the service industry of the Thai economy, they are regarded by the Thai public in general and denounced in the national discourses as being indecent women possessing low morality whose lifestyles have undermined the overall civilized culture of the Thai nation and Theravada Buddhism (Thitsa 1980; Troung 1990; Jeffery 2002).

7 *Karma* is a consequence of one's past meritorious and sinful deeds. *Karma* determines one's present and future lives. For a detailed explanation, see Keyes (1983).

8 *Tambon* in Thai means sub-district.

9 I have adopted the definition of sexuality proposed by Jacobs & Roberts (1989) as sexual behaviors, feelings, thoughts, practices, and people's sexually based bonding behaviors, such as bisexuality, heterosexuality, etc. Muecke (2004) further points out that sexuality is defined by and is reflected in social forces and discourses that situate a person socially and historically.

9 Foreign Spouses' Acculturation in Taiwan

A Comparison of Their Countries of Origin, Gender, and Education Degrees

Yu-Ching Yeh

9.1 Introduction

According to a 2001 OECD annual report, there has been a gradual upturn in immigration numbers in most OECD member countries since the mid-1990s, primarily for family reasons. This immigration trend peaked in 1992-1993 in countries such as Canada, Germany, Japan and the United States (OECD 2001).

A new trend in Taiwan is the number of Taiwanese men marrying Southeast Asian and Chinese women. This trend peaked slightly later than the OECD trend; in 1997, 2,243 foreigners were approved for Taiwanese citizenship via marriage, as opposed to only 318 the previous year. The number of immigrants doubled to 5,198 in 2000. According to the official statistics, there were about 384,000 foreign spouses: 134,000 (35 percent) of the foreign spouses were from Southeast Asia and the rest (65 percent) were from China (Ministry of the Interior 2007). The percentages of international couples (excluding Chinese[1]) increased from 7.13 percent in 1998 to 11.49 percent in 2003, and then fell to 6.7 percent in 2006. The 'Taiwanese-Chinese couples' amounted to 16.36 percent of all couples with one foreign spouse in 2001, increased to 19.89 percent in 2003, and then slid to 10.1 percent in 2006 (Ministry of the Interior 2007). Part of the reason could be due to the strict interviewing scheme conducted by the National Immigration Agency for foreign spouses before they are offered a residential visa. This is particularly true for the international marriages, as most of them are of a commercial type (Wang & Chang 2002).

9.2 Theoretical background

Immigrants need to acculturate psychologically and socio-culturally. The former indicates the immigrant's feeling of well-being and satisfaction (Lazarus & Folkman 1984), and the latter the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary to interact with people in the new culture and to deal with their daily life (Furnham & Bochner 1982). Acquisition of language and skills can bring better acculturation, and thereby increase an immigrant's feeling of well-being. On the other hand, feelings of being discriminated against can lead immigrants to an awareness of a racial stigma and the fact that they lack social support. The side-effects may include psychological stress (Gee 2002) and decreased self-esteem (Gil & Vega 1996).

9.2.1 Socioeconomic impact on acculturation

According to Abadan-Unat's (1985) findings, when the immigrant wives had no full-time jobs and they relied on their husbands for economic support, they became isolated and insecure – completely dependent on their husbands. Furthermore, their social status plays an important role in deciding the immigrant's adaptation to the new culture. Ataca and Berry (2002) studied 200 immigrants from Turkey and Canada, and concluded that the Turkish couples with a lower social and economic status faced the most problems and difficulties in adjusting to a new life. Wang and Chang (2002) indicated that Taiwanese men who married Vietnamese females were from low-income areas, and their socioeconomic status, in terms of education, occupational prestige and place of residence, was relatively low. More than 16 percent of their interview respondents showed dissatisfaction with their marriage. It has been suggested that social status needs to be considered as a key factor in such studies (Kagitcibasi & Berry 1989).

9.2.2 Acculturation within family

Jasinskaja-Lahti and Liebkind (2001) studied immigrants from Russia going to Finland, and concluded that parental support was important to a young immigrant's psychological adjustment. International research involving female immigrants focuses on the impact of gender, racial and cultural issues. Support from the families was an important factor affecting the migrants' acculturation. For example, Chiu (1999) related stories of Filipina brides in Japanese villages and how they were treated inappropriately in traditional Japanese society. She indicated that children of these Filipina brides seldom faced discrimination, but having been raised in a 'Japanese only' society, they knew nothing of Philippine

culture, and even worse, the Filipina brides' husbands and parents-in-law prohibited any physical contact or psychological attachment between the mothers and their children. The Filipina brides were warned not to teach their children anything about the Philippine language or culture.

Baltas and Steptoe (2000) pointed out that psychological well-being has no association with foreign spouses' age and year of marriage, but rather is related to their perception of cultural conflict within marriage, at least for the Turks who married Brits. For the foreign spouses, whether men or women, there were high levels of difficulties due to cultural differences, and problems also arose for those whose marriages were not accepted by their family and friends (Baltas & Steptoe 2000).

9.2.3 Acculturation within community and society

Some other researchers, such as Noh and Kaspar (2003), focused on social discrimination directed at Korean immigrants in Toronto, and indicated that 20-25 percent of these interviewees felt discriminated against when they received social services, while 35 percent said they were discriminated against by their families. Foreign spouses reported not only being discriminated against, but also feeling isolated. According to Hall (2002), South Asian women in West Yorkshire were not in paid employment owing to child-care responsibilities, ill health or inability to find work. They seldom participated in women's organizations or had any chance to use the services the organizations provided. One aspect of international migration is the degree of integration into the social, economic and cultural systems of the host society. Therefore, as Schuerkens (2000) suggested, to be admitted and to integrate are closely interrelated concepts. Political decisions influence the outcome of the integration process. In other words, the link to two social worlds depends on the atmosphere created by the policy.

Research and publication on foreign spouses have developed rapidly in recent years. There have been changes in both methodology and the issues of interest. Firstly, the research paradigms in Taiwan have recently shifted from case studies of limited numbers of foreign spouses to large-scale quantitative national surveys. Secondly, the subjects of the above-mentioned research extended from foreign spouses (such as Cho 2001; Tai & Chung 2002; Chiu 1999b) to their children (Yeh 2006). The findings at later stages are helpful to clarify the stereotypes indicated in previous research. Earlier case studies reported on the problems encountered by the foreign spouses and their families. For example, Chung (2003) pointed out that foreign spouses' children confronted serious educational difficulties, but a later national survey suggested that the children's academic achievement was related not to

their mothers' nationalities but to social-economic status (Wu & Lin 2007). Also, Wang and Yang (2002) indicated that foreign spouses gave birth soon after they came to Taiwan and had more children than the Taiwanese average. The percentages of newborn babies of foreign spouses increased from 5.12 percent (1998) to 13.37 percent (2003) and then fell slightly to 11.69 percent (2006) (Department of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior 2007). However, a national survey indicated otherwise, finding that the average number of children per foreign spouse family was not particularly higher than in fully Taiwanese families (Yeh 2004). The increased percentage of newborn babies of foreign spouses may be due to the overall decrease of newborns, particularly those of Taiwanese women.

The research mentioned above largely focused on acculturation of migrant women and not on men, though Yeh presented results on a very small percentage of 'foreign spouses' which included men (2004). In addition, the earlier research paid much attention to foreign spouses from Southeast Asia or China but ignored foreign spouses from other countries. In order to remedy these deficiencies, this research will explore the acculturation of foreign spouses from Southeast Asia, China, Europe and the USA, and will also provide a more overall look at migrants of both genders.

9.3 Methods

9.3.1 Research questions and assumptions

Two research questions are examined in this study: 1) Does foreign spouses' cultural adaptation vary by nationality? 2) Do foreign sons-in-law show better cultural adaptation than foreign daughters-in-law?

It is assumed that the foreign spouses' satisfaction is derived from having positive relationships with their children, their spouse, and the community they live in. The study explores how the foreign spouses acculturated within the family, community and society. The assumptions include:

1. The foreign spouses' adaptation is related to their nationality (a Southeast Asian country, the People's Republic of China [Mainland China]), a European country or the US. The researcher assumed that foreign spouses from Europe or the US adapted more easily than the others.
2. The cultural adaptations differ according to their roles as 'sons-in-law' or 'daughters-in-law'. The researcher assumed that the foreign husbands adapted better than the foreign wives.
3. Foreign spouses with higher educational degrees achieve better acculturation than those without university or college degrees.

9.3.2 *Definitions*

'Foreign spouses' in this study refers to foreigners of either gender who are married to Taiwanese citizens and hold legal resident status. They are from Southeast Asian countries such as the Philippines, Thailand, or Vietnam, from the People's Republic of China, or from other countries, such as the USA, UK, France, Japan, Korea, etc.

'Cultural adaptation' in this study can be illustrated in three dimensions:

1. adaptation within the family: the cultural identification for foreign spouses and their families; the dominant language spoken at home; and the degree to which each parent retains their own culture;
2. adaptation within the community: the foreign spouses' subjective perceptions of the community members' attitudes towards their children, which may include schoolteachers and other parents; how well their children were received by other pupils in the schools, and the foreign spouses' perceptions as to whether the school staff displayed any discrimination toward foreigners;
3. adaptation within society: the foreign spouses' perception and general impression of Taiwanese attitudes or prejudices.

9.3.3 *Survey*

A questionnaire was utilized for this study to explore the issues of foreign spouses' cultural adaptation. This was an official study authorized and sponsored by the Tainan City Government in Taiwan.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts: the first dealt with the interviewee's personal situation and included questions on their marriage status, gender, age, nationality, number of children, housing situation, years of marriage, and whether they lived with any other family members. The second covered the interviewee's cultural adaptation as defined in the last paragraph.

The questionnaire was designed by the researcher specifically for this study. It was piloted by the researcher and evaluated for factual validity. In order to carry out the necessary door-to-door interviews, the interviewers attended a workshop to understand the standard procedures and to acquire interviewing skills necessary for this study.

9.3.4 *Populations: international families in Tainan City*

The government provided an integrated immigrant database after the National Immigration Agency was set up in 2007. Before this, the numbers of Chinese spouses were tabulated separately from other foreign spouses. According to the statistics provided by the NIA (2007),

Table 9.1 *The nationalities and living areas of foreign spouses in Tainan City, compared with national data*

Nation	*East*	*West*	*South*	*North*	*Center*	*An-Nan*	*An-Ping*	*Total*	*National data*
Vietnam	157	53	233	138	18	348	51	998	42835
Indonesia	14	1	30	12	3	47	11	118	10662
Thailand	21	6	19	9	3	6	3	67	6114
Philippines	13	4	10	4	1	24	1	57	3830
Malaysia	5	0	6	6	1	1	2	21	1241
Cambodia	2	2	1	4	1	6	3	19	2399
Japan	5	2	7	7	2	1	2	26	2419
Korea	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	6	668
USA	4	0	0	2	0	1	1	8	1079
Others	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	3204
Total	240	79	309	185	32	435	75	1332	74451

Notes:

a. The original data were provided by the Police Bureau, Tainan City Government, and the numbers were accrued through December 2002. The table was made by the researcher.

b. National data were adopted from statistics provided by the Ministry of the Interior (2003). The data were through the end of 2002.

the total number of immigrant spouses in Tainan City amounted to 9,630, including 6,865 Chinese spouses (405 male and 6,460 female) and 2,765 other foreign spouses (260 male and 2,505 female) from 1987 until May 2007. Due to insufficient data in previous years, only the numbers of foreign spouses were available from 2002. According to the governmental statistics, the total number of foreign spouses amounted to 1,332, most of whom were from Vietnam (n = 998, 75 percent), Indonesia (n = 118), Thailand (n = 67) and the Philippines (n = 57). Foreign spouses from Southeast Asia amounted to 93.1 percent. Most Vietnamese spouses resided in the An-nan area, the largest but poorest area in Tainan City. The majority worked as farmers, fishermen or factory workers. The distribution of foreign spouses in different areas can be best explained by Table 9.1. We estimated the numbers of Chinese spouses at about 3,300 according to the NIA data (the ratio of foreign spouses to Chinese spouses was 1:2.48).

9.3.5 Sample

The Education Bureau of Tainan City requested that nursery schools and primary schools pass an interviewing consent letter to the concerned foreign spouses. If they agreed to the interview, the foreign spouses could choose a time most convenient for them. The interviewers would telephone them first, to reconfirm the interviewees' willingness and the time they preferred. The interview was carried out in Taiwanese or Mandarin.

Table 9.2 *Sample numbers and percentage compared with local/national data*

Nation	*Sample*		*Foreign spouses in Tainan City*		*Foreign spouses in Taiwan*	
Vietnam	70	32.9%	998	21.5%	42835	21.0%
Indonesia	28	13.1%	118	2.5%	10662	5.2%
Thailand	7	3.3%	67	1.4%	6114	3.0%
Philippines	5	2.3%	57	1.2%	3830	1.9%
Malaysia	5	2.3%	21	0.5%	1241	0.6%
Cambodia	0	0%	19	0.4%	2399	1.2%
Japan	3	1.4%	26	0.6%	2419	1.2%
Korea	2	0.9%	6	0.1%	668	0.3%
USA	4	1.9%	8	0.1%	1079	0.5%
Others	6	2.8%	12	0.2%	3204	1.6%
China	83	39.0%	3300	71.2%	129516	63.5%
Total	213		4632		203967	

There were a total of 213 interviewees. The sample included spouses from China (n = 83, 39 percent), Vietnam (n = 70, 32.9 percent), Indonesia (n = 28, 13.1 percent), Thailand (n = 7, 3.3 percent), the Philippines (n = 5, 2.3 percent), Malaysia (n = 5, 2.3 percent), USA (n = 4, 1.9 percent), Japan (n = 3, 1.4 percent), Korea (n = 2, 0.9 percent), the Netherlands (n = 1, 0.5 percent) and Brazil (n = 1, 0.5 percent). The couples were divided into three main categories in order to test the research assumption that European and American spouses had better acculturation than Southeast Asian spouses: 50.7 percent were from Southeast Asia, 39 percent were from China, and 10.3 percent were from Europe, the USA and other countries. The researcher increased the sample numbers of foreign spouses from Europe, the US, Japan and Korea in order to minimize the under-representation. The foreign spouses from the above countries were 4.9 percent of foreign spouses in Tainan City. Table 9.2 shows the sample numbers compared to the foreign spouse population of Tainan City and Taiwan. This research may over-sample Vietnamese and Indonesian spouses and under-sample the Chinese spouses.

As for gender concerns, 13 of the 213 interviewees were male (6.1 percent) and the rest were female (n = 200, 93.9 percent), a ratio of 1:15.4, compared with the population of 172 male and 1366 female foreigners, a ratio of 1:7.94. The nationalities of male interviewees included: Philippines (n = 1); China (n = 2); Thailand (n = 3); Japan (n = 2); Hong Kong (n = 1); and USA (n = 4).

9.3.6 Statistics

The valid questionnaires were numbered and coded; any invalid ones were excluded (for example, incomplete questionnaires). The statistics adopted in this study included frequencies and cross-tabulation. Gender and nationality were two independent variables for interpreting the correlations about family, school, and social adaptation.

9.4 Foreign spouses from Europe and the USA attained better adaptation than Chinese spouses or Southeast Asian spouses

9.4.1 Acculturation within families

Foreign spouses who believed their children accepted the fact that one of their parents was not Taiwanese were better adapted (cf. Table 9.3). Furthermore, the researcher assumed that when the children spoke the mother tongue of the foreign parent, the latter obtained more respect from their partners, and this led to better family adaptation. Therefore, foreign spouses from Europe or the US had better family adaptation than the other two types. Of them 77 percent thought that their children accepted the fact that one of their parents was not Taiwanese, compared with the Chinese spouses, among which 54 percent thought their children accepted this fact. For the Southeast Asian spouses, the percentage dropped to 39 percent.

In Taiwan, 54.5 percent of the European or American foreign spouses reported that they could speak their native tongue (English mainly), Mandarin and/or Taiwanese with their children. However, just over half of the Southeast Asian spouses (21.3 percent) expressed that they were bilingual at home. None of the Southeast Asian spouses spoke their native tongue at home, but 9.1 percent of the European or American foreign spouses spoke English only with their children. The Chinese spouses had fewer problems with the language because they spoke Mandarin, which is also the official language of Taiwan. So the language used in Chinese spouses' families is not presented in Table 9.4. The reasons why the Southeast Asian spouses would be less likely to use their native tongue interested the researcher. Hearst (1985) indicated that the problems of adaptation faced by cross-national marriage couples were often caused by a limited knowledge of the language necessary for living in the host society. The ability to communicate in English (or at least a common language) could alleviate misunderstandings and conflicts. Hence, the international families of Europe and the USA had better adaptation in the family. English is perceived as an important

language to learn in Taiwan, unlike Thai, Vietnamese, and so on. This explains why Southeast Asian languages were not popular at home.

Language is a necessary factor for international couples to be able to actively participate in daily activities. It appears that language assimilation is the first step in adaptation to the host society. So why do the Southeast Asian spouses speak Taiwanese and/or Mandarin at home whereas the European or American spouses do not? The researcher suggests that language spoken at home is not solely a family issue but also implies the impact of the dominant culture – that is, which culture is predominant within the family. Although Taiwan is the 'host society', the North American and European languages and cultures are perceived to be superior. This is supported by evidence that language courses provided by the government for foreign spouses mainly recruited spouses from Southeast Asian countries, whereas spouses from China, Europe or the USA were not found.

Foreign spouses from the USA and European countries obtained much more support from their Taiwanese partners in speaking their mother tongues at home. The results showed that 91 percent of European and North American spouses expected their children to be bilingual. Furthermore, 14 percent of Taiwanese partners expected their children to speak English only. This compared with 60 percent of the Southeast Asian spouses, who stated that their Taiwanese partners expected their children to speak only Mandarin or Taiwanese. Only 37 percent of them allowed their children to be bilingual and speak Thai, Vietnamese, etc.

It goes without saying that English is recognized as an international language. Its importance is revealed in both the primary school curriculum and the pervasive English cram schools in Taiwan. English is considered important in homes with American and European spouses. Compare this to the native tongues in the families with Southeast Asian spouses, where almost 60 percent of the Taiwanese partners spoke only Mandarin or Taiwanese with their children at home. In those families, the Taiwanese languages still remain 'dominant'.

Table 9.3 *Foreign spouses perceived children's attitude towards them as foreigners*

	Southeast Asia	*China*	*USA and Europe*	*Total*
Yes	42	45	17	104
	38.9%	54.2%	77.3%	48.8%
Reject/Deny	0	1	0	1
	0%	1.2%	0%	.5%
Don't Know	40	11	1	52
	37.0%	13.3%	4.5%	24.4%
Cannot Tell	26	26	4	56
	24.1%	31.3%	18.2%	26.3%

Table 9.4 *The languages spoken in the international families*

(1) Which language do you expect your children to speak at home?

	Southeast Asia	*USA and Europe*	*Total*
Unilingual: Mandarin	46	2	106
(and/or Taiwanese)	42.6%	9.1%	49.8%
Bilingual: Mandarin	57	20	100
(and/or Taiwanese) and	52.8%	90.9%	46.9%
native tongue of foreign spouse			
Don't know	2	0	2
	1.9%	0%	.9%
Others	3	0	5
	2.8%	0%	2.3%

(2) Which language do you mostly speak with your children at home?

	Southeast Asia	*USA and Europe*	*Total*
Unilingual: Mandarin	84	8	167
(and/or Taiwanese)	77.8%	36.4%	78.4%
Unilingual: native tongue	0	2	5
of foreign spouse	0%	9.1%	2.3%
Bilingual: Mandarin (and/or	23	12	40
Taiwanese) and native tongue	21.3%	54.5%	18.8%
Don't know	1	0	1
	.9%	0%	.5%

(3) Which language does your partner expect you to use when speaking to your children at home?

	Southeast Asia	*USA and Europe*	*Total*
Unilingual: Mandarin	65	5	137
(and/or Taiwanese)	60.2%	22.7%	64.3%
Unilingual: Native tongue	0	3	3
of foreign spouse	0%	13.7%	1.4%
Bilingual: Mandarin (and/or	40	14	68
Taiwanese) and Native tongue	37.0%	63.6%	31.9%
Don't know	2	0	4
	1.9%	0%	1.9%

Foreign spouses' social support was another issue related to their acculturation. Chinese spouses tended to share private issues with their own parents (13 percent) or other Chinese friends (27.7 percent), instead of their Taiwanese husbands/wives (42 percent). More than half of the Southeast Asian foreign spouses (51 percent) and European and North American spouses (64 percent) would share their private issues with their husbands/or wives instead of their parents (Southeast Asian spouses 9.3 percent and European and North American spouses 4.5 percent). This showed that Chinese spouses would rather speak with

their Chinese friends or family even though they were far away from Taiwan.

Chinese spouses' families were better gender equalized. In such families, 72 percent of the Chinese spouses reported that wives were the ones doing the most housework, compared with Southeast Asian families' 82 percent and European and North American families' 86.4 percent. As for the care of young children, the female Chinese spouses took most of the responsibility (52 percent), compared with 32 percent in both Southeast Asian families and European and North American families ($p < .001$).

Although Chinese spouses faced fewer language acculturation problems, they were more dissatisfied with how they were treated by their family (30 percent) (compared with Southeast Asian spouses' 15 percent and European and North American spouses' 18 percent, $p < .001$). Less than half would share private issues with their Taiwanese family including their husbands, and would prefer to talk to those from their hometown. This shows the difficulties of their acculturation and insufficient communication within their family. In addition, language acquisition appeared to be disadvantageous to their acculturation when they were aware of inappropriate treatment within the host society.

9.4.2 Acculturation within communities

The results show that the European and North American spouses have fewer problems adapting than other groups. For example, one of the questions was how their children felt about one of their parents not being Taiwanese. Some 70 percent of the European and North American spouses indicated that this was not a problem for their children, but only 48 percent of the Southeast Asian families felt the same.

The European and North American spouses felt that schoolteachers and staff did not show discrimination towards them (77 percent), slightly better than the Chinese spouses (63 percent) and Southeast Asian spouses (44 percent). The European and North American spouses seldom or never felt their children were discriminated against, nor did the children. The Southeast Asian spouses felt the strongest inappropriate treatment towards them and their children in schools. The Southeast Asian spouses were the most isolated from the community among the three groups. Their participation in the parent associations and activities was much lower (26 percent) than that of the Chinese spouses (41 percent) and the European and North American spouses (64 percent). The problems of the Southeast Asian spouses' parent-teacher communications were: insufficient time (8.3 percent), content of communications (6.5 percent), and language (5.6 percent); the Chinese spouses and the

Table 9.5 *Foreign spouses' attitude of acculturation within community*

Item examined	X^2	*d.f.*	*Sig.*
Nations*children were treated inappropriately by their classmates	29.180	8	.000***
Nations*children were treated inappropriately by their schoolteachers/administrative staff	28.708	8	.000***
Nations*foreign spouses were treated inappropriately by their children's schoolteachers/administrative staff	25.679	8	.001**

*: $p < .05$
**: $p < .01$
***: $p < .001$

European and North American spouses showed more difficulties in insufficient time (12 percent and 32 percent, respectively). See Table 9.5.

9.4.3 Acculturation within society

The Southeast Asian spouses felt the Taiwanese treated them 'very well' (56.5 percent), compared with the European and North American spouses' 36.4 percent and the Chinese spouses' 20.5 percent (cf. Table 9.6). The Chinese spouses spoke the same language with their husbands but had strong negative feelings towards the Taiwanese. This is related to the social climate in the host society and governmental policy towards the immigrants. For instance, Chinese spouses have to stay in Taiwan for at least eight years before they can apply for citizenship, according to the Regulations Governing the Approval of Entry of People of the Mainland Area into the Taiwan Area (announced in 2003 and amended in 2006), but the regulation for other foreign spouses according to the Nationalities Law is three years. The unequal treatment of Chinese spouses compared to Southeast Asian spouses due to political concerns is disadvantageous to their acculturation.

Table 9.6 *Nationalities and the foreign spouses' general impression of Taiwanese attitude towards foreigners*

	Very good	*Fair*	*Not good*	*Very bad*
European and US spouses	8	10	4	0
	36.4%	45.5%	18.2%	
Chinese spouses	16	51	9	2
	20.5%	65.4%	11.5%	2.6%
Southeast Asian spouses	61	42	5	0
	56.5%	38.9%	4.6%	
Total	85	103	18	2
	40.9%	49.5%	8.7%	0.9%

($X^2 = 37.194$, d.f. = 8, $p < .001$)

Hall's (2002) study of immigrants in the UK found that the British Home Office persisted with the stereotypes of Southeast Asian female immigrants and used strict standards when dealing with immigration procedures. I would suggest that immigrant issues have become a pervasive phenomenon in global society. Dealing with international marriages is a fresh experiment for Taiwanese society, since international marriages have boomed only during this past decade. Both Taiwanese in general and government officials have to find proper ways of treating foreign spouses equally, including their families, and of reducing their anxiety vis-à-vis acculturation.

9.5 The acculturation of foreign husbands

The second assumption I wanted to explore in this research was to investigate whether acculturation was different for foreign husbands and foreign wives. Husbands are perceived to be the dominant figure in the family. But if the husband is a foreigner, does the situation change? Will his authority be accepted or challenged? In this session, the researcher tried to clarify the interwoven patriarchy and gender issues.

Table 9.7 shows that the language used at home is related to foreign spouses' nationality and not to their gender. Some 73 percent of European and American spouses spoke English or both Mandarin and English at home. Only 22.6 percent of the Southeast Asian spouses were bilingual, and they spoke Mandarin and/or Taiwanese and their mother tongues. Foreign husbands spoke at least two languages at home (38.5 percent), and 54 percent of them spoke Mandarin only. The percentage of foreign wives who spoke Mandarin only (80 percent) was higher than with the foreign husbands. In fact, Taiwanese partners showed positive attitudes towards foreign spouses using their native

Table 9.7 *Languages spoken at home: comparison of gender and nationality*

Item examined	X^2	*d.f.*	*Sig.*
Gender*language you wish to speak with children	7.928	3	.048*
Gender*language used at home	5.671	3	.129
Gender*language that Taiwanese partner wishes you to speak at home	13.903	4	.008**
Nations*language you wish to speak with children	34.106	6	.000***
Nations*language used at home	37.356	6	.000***
Nations*language that Taiwanese partner wishes you to speak at home	50.941	8	.000***

*:$p < .05$
**: $p < .01$
***: $p < .001$

tongue or being bilingual. Foreign husbands expressed that their Taiwanese partner would prefer they speak English only (8 percent) or both (69 percent). Some Taiwanese husbands also preferred their family to be bilingual (29.5 percent), though the 'Mandarin only' was still higher (67 percent). This shows that Southeast Asian spouses have more constraints in speaking their native tongue. This could also be due to the fact that most foreign wives were from Southeast Asia.

The traditional family values embodied in Taiwanese society, which emphasize that men are the breadwinners and wives are subordinate to husbands, affect the marriage relationship. This was particularly true for the Taiwanese men who married Southeast Asian women. According to Wang and Chang (2002), the Taiwanese who chose Vietnamese wives were normally disadvantaged in the marriage market. The commodification of marriage imposed unparallel relationships in which men and/or their families perceived the foreign spouses as 'merchandised products'. Southeast Asian spouses were 'doubled-subordinated'; that is, in one way they were subordinated by the effect of patriarchy, and in another they were looked down upon by the mainstream culture.

Foreign spouses indicated that their children were treated fairly at school, and there were no significant differences between male and female spouses. However, the foreign husbands were less satisfied with the staff and teachers of the schools.

Table 9.8 indicates that the acculturation of foreign spouses differs among nationalities, but there is no significant variation between foreign husbands and foreign wives. However, the foreign husbands felt stronger negative attitudes from the Taiwanese towards them (n = 3, 23 percent) – much higher than the foreign wives (7.5 percent). Those foreign husbands who perceived that Taiwanese were very nice to foreigners were from Southeast Asia (n = 2), China (n = 1), Europe and the USA (n = 3). It was found that the foreign husbands who perceived that Taiwanese are unfriendly to foreigners were from Europe and the USA.

If foreign spouses expressed their satisfaction, there were two possible meanings: one could be that the foreign spouses actually felt they

Table 9.8 *Acculturation within society: comparison of gender and nationalities*

Item examined	X^2	*d.f.*	*Sig.*
Gender*satisfaction with living in Taiwan	1.022	4	.907
Gender*Taiwanese treatment of foreigners	4.981	4	.289
Nations**satisfaction with living in Taiwan	30.750	8	.000***
Nations* Taiwanese treatment of foreigners	37.194	8	.000***

*: $p < .05$
**: $p < .01$
***: $p < .001$

were treated well; and another could be that one had insufficient knowledge to make a correct judgment, as in the situation of some Southeast Asian spouses: when their Mandarin or Taiwanese was not good enough to comprehend the meaning of conversations, they would not be able to tell whether these expressions were friendly or not. This may explain why the Southeast Asian spouses thought the Taiwanese were 'very nice' to foreigners (55 percent), higher than the Chinese spouses (19.3 percent) and European and American spouses (40 percent).

Within Taiwanese culture, we tend to recognize that men are dominant in marriage relationships. This is illustrated when using the term 'marry'. It keeps the same form in English no matter whether a 'man marries a woman' or a 'woman marries a man'. However, the term 'marry' has two different meanings and words in Chinese: 娶 (sounds like "chu") means 'man takes a wife' and 嫁 (sounds like 'jia') means 'woman is given to a man' (passive form).

Daughters-in-law and sons-in-law may confront different problems in Taiwanese society, and this could be compounded in international families. According to the Nationality Law in Taiwan, one has to give up one's original citizenship before one can obtain a Taiwanese ID card.

Although foreign husbands had more freedom to speak their own language, gender appeared to be less influential than nationality. Foreign husbands' opinions of the whole society's attitude toward foreigners appeared to be split: there were high percentages of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Southeast Asian spouses' satisfaction could be due to their insufficient knowledge leading to an inability to correctly assess attitudes. Their awareness could be improved through better acculturation to the society. Foreign wives' subordination corresponded with the mainstream values in Taiwanese society. Foreign husbands may face more cultural conflict and social attitudes toward them, which challenges their patriarchal role. If nationality influences one's acculturation, we may conclude that European and American spouses attain better acculturation. However, they also have the greatest percentages of dissatisfaction.

Beiser et al. (1988) indicated that female immigrants are confronted with many more problems in a new culture and have more difficulty adjusting psychologically. It was revealed that foreign wives, particularly those from Southeast Asia, were labeled as 'socially and culturally disadvantaged', hence, they were encouraged to take different types of courses to assist their acculturation. Most social services were granted to foreign wives in order to distribute the social resources to the most needy. Because the Southeast Asian female spouses were the majority, it was very easy for the formal social services network to marginalize the foreign husbands as well as the foreign spouses from other countries. This research raises the issue of the need for more understanding

of the foreign husbands, as well as the equal provision of social services to all of these foreign spouses.

9.6 Acculturation or discrimination? A discussion of education

Another intention of this research was to compare the feelings of 'discrimination' and the foreign spouses' levels of education. The researcher categorized their degree of education into three types: 'primary school and below', 'secondary schools' (including junior high school and senior high school), and 'college and beyond' (including college, university, or graduate schools). Table 9.9 shows that foreign spouses' educational levels were related to the countries they were from ($p < .001$). European and American spouses had a higher education level than Chinese and Southeast Asian spouses. More Southeast Asian spouses had just a primary school education, while 79.5 percent of Chinese spouses had a secondary degree.

The foreign spouses with different levels of education did not feel much difference in terms of acculturation. Some 62 percent of the foreign spouses with higher degrees said their children accepted that their parents were not Taiwanese, higher than that of the couples with a secondary (47 percent) or primary school (47 percent) educational background. There was no correlation between levels of education and the foreign spouses' acculturation. The result showed that 60 percent of the foreign spouses were encouraged to speak Mandarin, no matter what their education. Compared with the other groups, the foreign spouses with primary school education appeared to encounter more restrictions in talking about their hometowns, or taking their children back to their countries.

Table 9.9 *Foreign spouses' nationalities and their education*

Education	*Southeast Asians*	*Chinese*	*European/ USA*	*Total*
Primary school	33	4	1	38
	28.7%	4.8%	6.7%	17.8%
Secondary school	72	66	6	144
	62.6%	79.5%	40.0%	67.6%
College or	10	13	5	28
university	8.7%	15.7%	33.3%	13.1%
Postgraduate	0	0	3	3
			20.0%	1.4%
Total	115	83	15	213
	54%	39%	7.0%	100%

($X^2 = 27.753$, d.f. = 4, $p < .001$)

Table 9.10 shows the acculturation within society correlated to foreign spouses' education ($p < .05$). Foreign spouses with a primary school educational level felt the Taiwanese society had an accepting attitude toward them. But the foreign spouses with university degrees were more dissatisfied. This contradicted the researcher's assumption. The researcher interpreted this to mean that the educated foreign spouses might be more sensitive about their rights and had higher expectations. The foreign spouses with college and university degrees showed the two extreme attitudes: on the one hand, they had better acculturation than the foreign spouses with secondary degrees; on the other, they showed the highest dissatisfaction with Taiwanese attitudes toward foreigners.

This research examined how foreign spouses' educational degrees and their nationalities are related to their acculturation. Table 9.11 shows that educational degree had an effect on the foreign spouses' acculturation within society but had no relationship to their acculturation within families or communities. Foreign spouses' nationality did however play a key role in their acculturation within family, community and even society. Southeast Asian spouses with lower education (primary school and below) were most satisfied with life in Taiwan (44 percent). Looking only at those with a college or university education, the Southeast Asian spouses had more satisfaction (62.5 percent), similar to the Chinese spouses (61.5 percent), and higher than the European and North American spouses (50 percent). Due to the limited cases of foreign spouses with higher degrees ($n = 31$), this conclusion needs further evidence when it is interpreted. One interesting issue is raised by this finding. The sample in this research included 37 foreign spouses whose education level was higher than that of their Taiwanese partners. It would be interesting to analyze their acculturation since these cases are not consistent with the assumption of the 'marriage ladder'.

Table 9.10 *Foreign spouses' education and their perceptions of Taiwanese attitudes towards them*

Education	*Very good*	*Fair*	*Not good*	*Very bad*
Primary school	23	13	2	0
	60.5%	34.2%	5.3%	
Secondary school	49	80	10	1
	35.0%	57.1%	7.1%	0.7%
College/university/	12	10	6	1
postgraduate	41.4%	34.5%	20.7%	3.4%
Total	84	103	18	2
	40,6%	49,8%	8.7%	1,0%

($X^2 = 18.768$, d.f. = 8, $p < .05$)

Table 9.11 *Foreign spouses' acculturation: comparison of their educational degrees and nationalities*

Item examined	X^2	*d.f.*	*Sig.*
Education*conflict with Taiwanese partner because of different lifestyles	.627	2	.731
Education*schoolteachers discriminate against children	8.853	8	.355
Education*schoolteachers discriminate against foreigners	11.849	8	.158
Education*classmates discriminate against children	12.282	8	.139
Education*satisfaction with living in Taiwan	11.738	8	.163
Education*Taiwanese treatment of foreigners	18.768	8	.016*
Nations*conflict with Taiwanese partner because of different lifestyles	5.768	2	.056
Nations*schoolteachers discriminate against children	28.768	8	.000***
Nations*schoolteachers discriminate against foreigners	25.679	8	.001**
Nations*classmates discriminate against children	29.180	8	.000***
Nations*satisfaction with living in Taiwan	30.750	8	.000***
Nations* Taiwanese treatment of foreigners	37.194	8	.000***

*: $p < .05$
**: $p < .01$
***: $p < .001$

9.7 Acculturation: an issue to learn about

The results of these statistics show that the factors influencing the foreign couples' acculturation were neither their gender nor their education. Ethnicity played the key role. In Taiwanese society, the foreign spouses from Europe and North America adapted better. The Taiwanese have shown a warm attitude towards the foreign spouses from Europe and America; this could assist their adaptation to Taiwan, no matter whether in using their native tongues at home or in sensing the attitudes of other Taiwanese toward them. This could be a pervasive situation among many Asian countries. However, the opinions were also diverse. Some European and American spouses also showed their dissatisfaction with their families, communities and society. Some 47 percent of European and American spouses expressed that they had conflicts with their Taiwanese partners because of different lifestyles. For Chinese spouses this was 23 percent and for Southeast Asian spouses, 12 percent. The researcher assumed that European and American spouses had better acculturation than Southeast Asian spouses. Although they had a high percentage of satisfaction, they also had a lot of difficulties in getting used to Taiwanese life, in terms of communicating with their Taiwanese partners, as well as the unfriendly attitudes from their children's schoolteachers. The Southeast Asian spouses get more attention from the government. This can be explained by the regular Mandarin learning courses provided for Southeast Asian spouses, and the govern-

ment regulation of language qualification before the foreign spouses can apply for a Taiwanese ID card. In the long term, the acculturation of the European and North American spouses was ignored or presumed not to be a problem. This research revealed that the European and North American spouses also need to spend a period of time acculturating themselves to life in Taiwan. The researcher would therefore suggest that the government pay more attention to them.

The researcher also compared the acculturation between foreign husbands and foreign wives. The foreign husbands can freely speak their native tongues at home with their children, but showed more dissatisfaction with the Taiwanese attitudes towards them. The foreign wives might be isolated without any support from their birth families, and they were described as 'oppressed' within the 'male' (husbands') cultures, so this should not seem surprising. What we may argue is that the foreign husbands, who were supposed to possess 'superior' positions in the families but now had to 'accommodate' themselves to their wives' culture and lifestyle, were dissatisfied with the Taiwanese attitudes towards them.

Racial issues were confronted and discussed in other countries earlier than in Taiwan. However, this is a new issue for the closed Asian societies, which must now learn about how to cohabit with immigrants. In the past, Taiwan did not have many immigrants, but suddenly cultural issues are appearing on the scene. This is not only a challenge for the government policymakers, but also a chance to 'educate' the Taiwanese. Acculturation is the result of mutual understanding. Instead of setting up a strict immigration law and expecting foreign spouses to 'accommodate' to Taiwan as a necessary request, people in the host society have to learn to appreciate the different cultures.

Due to the rapid growth in numbers of Southeast Asian spouses, Taiwanese society tended to focus its spotlight on them. The narrowest definition of the foreign spouse as 'female' and 'those from Southeast Asia' is commonly adopted, ignoring the fact that 'foreign spouses' can also include males, or those from American and European countries. As a consequence, foreign husbands and foreign spouses from other countries have been marginalized because they are a minority among foreign spouses.

To assist all immigrants should be the aim of national policy. An environment creating a social climate friendly to all immigrants and encouraging cultural integration should be a priority. We believe that there are only differences among cultures, not that they are superior or inferior.

The sensationalistic media in Taiwan have spotlighted the 'problematic' side of the international family, and in some cases reported them as 'trading marriages'. The host society is seriously worried about inter-

national families. The resultant collective anxiety fueled by media reports influences Taiwanese people's attitudes towards immigrants, particularly the racial stereotypes of Southeast Asian and Chinese spouses.

Jongkind (1992) reminded us that the Dutch government considered the immigrants to be economically disadvantaged, so social welfare was adopted as a vehicle to eliminate their social and economic disadvantages. The more complaints are heard, the more the government will pay attention, and the more resources the government will make available to the immigrants. The immigrants will therefore obtain more and more social welfare resources. The more social welfare is received, the further away from mainstream society the immigrant gets. As has been stated in this research, the immigrants' adaptation and needs should be looked at from many different aspects. When Southeast Asian women are regarded as problematic and disadvantaged, or if foreign couples constantly believe themselves to be the deprived ones, the distribution of social and welfare resources will inevitably accelerate their degree of dependence on the system. As a result, this could validate the belief that 'minorities are disadvantaged'.

This research explored an important issue of 'immigration policy for all' – an 'equal' policy looking at not only the needs of the Southeast Asian spouses or Chinese spouses, but also how the foreign husbands and the foreign spouses from other countries adjusted. The bias toward foreign spouses from Southeast Asia will not help in promoting their acculturation in Taiwanese society. The role of the government should be to promote an 'equal' immigration policy, taking language, culture and gender into consideration. Only when the members of the international families feel respected and are satisfied with their living conditions and the attitudes of society at large, will immigration policies be considered successful.

Note

1 Due to ideologically diverse politics, the Taiwanese government did not recognize the Chinese couples as 'foreigners' under the sensitive 'one China' or 'one China one Taiwan' policy. Therefore, the Chinese couples were not categorized as 'foreign immigrants' in the official documents.

10 Transnational Families among Muslims

The Effect of Social Capital on Educational Strategies

Shuko Takeshita

10.1 Introduction

Since the latter half of the 1980s, a large number of Muslims have come to Japan from Pakistan, Iran, Bangladesh and so forth with the purpose of working. Most of them were men in their 20s and 30s who came to Japan alone. During the 1990s, there was an increase in the number of Muslims who married Japanese women, forming families in Japan. Though the focus was originally on how Japanese wives who converted to Islam upon marriage adapted to Islamic culture (Takeshita 2004), the children of these families are now entering school age, and educational problems among second-generation Muslims have come to light. As a result of the difficulties in transmitting Islamic values to the children while living in Japan, there has been an increase in the number of cases of transnational families where the Japanese mother and children have moved to an Islamic country for the Islamic education of the children while the non-Japanese father remains in Japan to work.

This study focuses on the families comprised of Japanese wives and Pakistani husbands who topped the number of foreign Muslim residents in Japan married to Japanese women. First, this study captures an overall image of marriage between Pakistanis and Japanese by drawing on statistical resources. Secondly, it conducts case studies of the Japanese mothers and their children who relocated to Sharjah[1] in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) after Pakistani husbands and Japanese wives encountered difficulties in transmitting Islamic values to their children while forming families in Japan.

In past research on transnational families, there have been numerous studies on kinship networks used as life strategies to connect the new residence location with the parent's country of birth; that is, networks in which the children are taken in by the parent's kin, and the parents use kinship ties to send money to the kin members acting as caretakers

(Soto 1992; Wiltshire 1992; Basch et al. 1994; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997; Tacoli 1999; Levitt 2001; Nagasaka 2001).

This study investigates what the social networks supporting the relocation of mothers and children are like, and how the educational strategies are developed through the use of social capital arising from these networks. Furthermore, it focuses on the educational problems for Muslim children, and the issue of whether all their problems could be solved through relocation.

10.2 Marriage between Pakistani men and Japanese women from a statistical perspective

As Table 10.1 shows, Pakistan ranks sixth and Iran seventh among the top ten nationalities of foreign residents in Japan with Japanese wives in 2000. The percentage of increase from 1995 is very high, 86.1 percent and 154.9 percent, respectively, and the number of spouses of Japanese women from Islamic countries has been increasing.

According to Table 10.2, while the percentage of Pakistani men with Japanese spouses was 77.4 percent in 1995 and 83.4 percent in 2000 and thus is the highest among foreign men in both years, the percentage of Pakistani women who have Japanese spouses is extremely low, only 9.1 percent in 1995 and 3.5 percent in 2000. Thus, there is a sharp

Table 10.1 *Number of couples by nationality of husband and wife in Japan*

	Japanese wife and non-Japanese husband	*Cases (2000)*	*Compared to 1995*		*Japanese husband and non-Japanese wife*	*Cases (2000)*	*Compared to 1995*
	Nationality of husband				*Nationality of wife*		
1	Korea	32,455	+3.5%	1	Philippines	47,931	+36.9%
2	China	9,438	+26.9%	2	Korea	37,711	+23.9%
3	USA	8,327	+15.6%	3	China	36,297	+59.0%
4	UK	2,119	+37.9%	4	Thailand	11,468	+62.0%
5	Brazil	2,030	+80.4%	5	Brazil	5,153	+33.5%
6	Pakistan	1,669	+86.1%	6	USA	2,637	+5.5%
7	Iran	1,496	+154.9%	7	Peru	1,103	+53.4%
8	Canada	1,258	+69.5%	8	Indonesia	1,000	+95.7%
9	Philippines	1,060	+46.4%	9	Malaysia	890	+39.7%
10	Australia	996	+68.2%	10	UK	612	3.3%
	Others	11,775	+70.7%		Others	9,156	+46.1%
	Total	72,623	+22.9%		Total	153,958	+39.4%

Resources: Calculated from *the 1995 Census Report, Vol. 9*, and *the 2000 Census Report, Vol. 8.*
Note: 'Others' includes unknown nationalities.

Table 10.2 *Percentage of foreign residents in Japan with Japanese spouses*

1995			*2000*		
Nationality	*Male*	*Female*	*Nationality*	*Male*	*Female*
Pakistan	77.4	9.1	Pakistan	83.4	3.5
UK	65.0	46.0	Iran	81.5	22.3
USA	64.9	40.4	Canada	72.4	44.8
Australia	60.4	40.8	USA	71.6	45.9
Canada	60.0	39.3	UK	71.1	44.9
France	60.0	53.1	Australia	68.8	41.1
Iran	56.3	17.8	France	64.0	48.4
Germany	51.8	42.6	Germany	59.0	47.9
Bangladesh	43.1	4.0	Bangladesh	51.1	2.5
Sri Lanka	40.9	35.5	Sri Lanka	49.7	34.4
Indonesia	36.7	53.0	Indonesia	43.8	54.6
India	34.1	9.1	Malaysia	41.2	68.0
Malaysia	29.2	61.9	India	31.6	6.3
Korea	25.4	24.9	Myanmar	29.3	41.8
China	21.8	46.0	Korea	28.2	31.4
Philippines	20.0	91.3	Thailand	25.4	89.1
Myanmar	13.5	28.7	Philippines	24.2	92.3
Thailand	12.9	82.0	China	21.5	51.1
Peru	6.8	12.5	Peru	11.7	14.4
Vietnam	5.8	8.2	Brazil	4.9	11.7
Brazil	4.5	13.8	Vietnam	4.8	16.6

Sources: Calculated from *the 1995 Census Report, Vol. 9*, and *the 2000 Census Report, Vol. 8*.
Note: Calculated based on countries with over 3,000 foreign residents surveyed in the census.

contrast by gender for Pakistani residents who have Japanese spouses. What are the social factors behind many Pakistani male residents marrying Japanese despite the fact that Pakistan is a society where endogamy, or marriage to paternal cousins is encouraged, and marriage arranged by the would-be spouses' parents is considered normal?

In general, there are numerous social factors that combine to form motivations for cross-border marriages, including: 'imbalances in male and female populations'; 'physical and social proximity'; 'attraction of other races and cultures'; 'weakening of endogamy in Japanese society'; and 'globalization of reproduction' (Takeshita 2000). In this study, I will examine the two factors most characteristic of marriage between Pakistani men and Japanese women: 'the gender imbalance of Pakistani population in Japan' and 'acquisition of residence visas'.

Firstly, the gender imbalance of the Pakistani population in Japan could be pointed out. According to the census in 2000, there were only 530 Pakistani female residents for their 4,136 male compatriot residents (Statistics Bureau, Ministry of General Affairs 2000). The majority, 2,081 men and 96 women, were in their 30s, the number of men con-

stituting 21.7 times that of women in this age bracket. This was followed by those in their 20s with 1,702 men and 103 women, the number of men constituting 16.5 times that of women.

The reason why the majority of Pakistani men were in their 30s was because many of them came to Japan alone in their 20s during Japan's 'bubble economy' period from the end of the 1980s till the early 1990s. It is extremely difficult for Pakistani women to leave their home country alone due to a female segregation custom. The fact that 93.4 percent of Pakistani female residents have Pakistani spouses tells us that most of them came to Japan with their spouses.

The emergence of the tendency for Pakistani male residents to look for Japanese spouses could be attributed to the impossibility of inviting Pakistani spouses from home if engaged in illegal labor, as well as to the gender imbalance of the Pakistani population in Japan. The increase in number of Pakistani men seeking Japanese women as spouses has come about in part as a result of an increase in opportunities for these men to come in contact with Japanese women while living alone in Japan.

Secondly, acquisition of residence visas could be another factor. Pakistanis were allowed to enter Japan for up to three months without a visa if they were there for sightseeing purposes, due to a visa waver agreement concluded between Japan and Pakistan in 1960. Because of this agreement, many Pakistani men came to Japan under the pretext of sightseeing and became illegal laborers who worked at factories and construction sites without work visas. The number of Pakistanis newly coming to Japan increased until the Japanese government suspended the agreement in 1989.

The economy of developing countries relies heavily on developed countries and directly affects the behavioral patterns of its nationals, as the waves of globalization engulf the region, making national borders less prominent. When the world economy is systematized into a single market economy, the single system forms a core and periphery, and the subordination of the periphery to the core becomes all the more prominent (Sakuma 2006). Due to a big gap in economic development between Japan and Pakistan, as well as the fact that Japan was enjoying a robust economy in the second half of the 1980s and Pakistan was suffering high unemployment, a large number of Pakistanis came to Japan looking for work. On the other hand, Japanese employers in construction sites and factories were suffering a severe labor shortage and therefore could not help but employ illegal workers from developing countries.

Although after peaking at 19,106 in 1988 the number of Pakistanis newly coming to Japan dramatically decreased due to the suspension of the visa waver agreement, the illegal entry of Pakistanis into Japan on false passports did not cease afterwards. However, the immigration law

was revised in 1989 to punish employers hiring illegal laborers, and was further revised in 1999 to punish illegal laborers. Also, the Japanese immigration department strengthened its control over illegal laborers. In addition to these measures, the stagnation of the Japanese economy since the beginning of the 1990s led to an increase in the number of Pakistani illegal laborers returning home.

On the other hand, Pakistanis who remained in Japan continued to work illegally and showed a tendency to stay longer starting from the latter half of the 1990s. It was also this period that saw a sudden increase in the number of marriages to Japanese women. Illegal laborers are deported when caught by the immigration department, and the only way for them to obtain residential status while in Japan is to obtain a special permission for legal residence. They are granted a spouse visa when they marry a Japanese, unless the marriage is considered false. This visa does not have any restrictions on labor in Japan.

Considering the reality in Japan where the entry of foreigners for the purpose of unskilled labor is prohibited[2], the status of no restrictions on labor looks attractive to illegal laborers. Therefore, access to permanent residence is pursued through the route of cross-border marriage. As Table 10.2 shows, the existence of the access to permanent residence through the route of cross-border marriage can be seen in the low percentage of marriage to Japanese in both genders among Brazilians and Peruvians, including many of Japanese descent, and among Vietnamese, including many Indochina refugees, all of whom have a residential status that does not prohibit them from working in Japan and enables them to invite their families from home.

10.3 Pakistani men after marriage: the road to self-employment

The Pakistani men who were granted official permission to reside in Japan through their marriage to Japanese women advanced rapidly beyond their status as factory and construction site laborers to self-employment. According to the census, while the percentage of Pakistani male employees decreased from 90.2 percent in 1995 to 74.2 percent in 2000, the percentage of self-employed increased from 2.3 percent to 5.8 percent and the share of managers[3] rose from 7.5 percent to 20.0 percent; a further increase can be predicted.

Why do they advance towards self-employment? Many Pakistani husbands say that Islam encourages trade. Looking at their actual lives, self-employment exists as a means to attain a higher social and economic position. Light (1979) proposed an 'exclusion hypothesis' as one of the reasons why migrants and minority groups developed self-employment in the US. They are excluded from the labor market due to insufficient

language ability and social discrimination, and consequently pursue self-employment for making a living. This brings about a concentration of self-employment in particular ethnic groups (Ito 1994). In my survey conducted through interviews (Takeshita 2004), in addition to exclusion from the labor market, another factor contributing to entrepreneurship was self-realization. There were many Pakistanis for whom entrepreneurship was their dream before and after coming to Japan. However, because the interviews were conducted after they started entrepreneurship, even if exclusion from the labor market was a major factor at first, this factor might have shifted to self-realization as time passed.

In order to examine Pakistanis in occupational categories, I conducted comparisons between construction and manufacturing industries on the one hand and wholesaling, retailing and restaurants on the other, which constitute the top two occupational groups among Pakistanis. There was little difference over time in the percentage of employees in the construction and manufacturing industries, with 98.9 percent in 1995 and 98.1 percent in 2000. However, while the percentage of employees in wholesaling, retailing and restaurants decreased from 52.8 percent to 35.0 percent, the percentage of self-employed increased from 33.6 percent to 47.6 percent and that of managers rose from 12.7 percent to 15.2 percent in the same category of industry. Most in this group were retailers of used vehicles (54.3 percent), followed by *halāl* food[4] retailers (14.8 percent), those in trading (8.6 percent), restaurants (7.2 percent) and carpet retailers (3.9 percent) (Sakurai 2003).

The presence of 'the gift scheme system' in Pakistan in the past could explain why so many Pakistanis are engaged in retailing used vehicles. 'The gift scheme system' allowed Pakistanis working abroad to bring a car into Pakistan at a low duty rate once every six months and sell it (Fukamachi 1991). The Pakistanis who made use of this system from the 1980s to the early 1990s were able to sell a car at home for three times the price it would yield in Japan (Fukamachi 1990). The success of the self-employed Pakistanis who had acquired knowledge of exporting used cars aided by 'the gift scheme system' led to the rapid emergence of Pakistanis engaged in this business. Nowadays, the importation of vehicles from Japan on a commercial basis is not allowed in Pakistan. Used vehicle exporters purchase used vehicles through used car auctions held in various parts of Japan or from other Pakistanis who resell used vehicles within Japan, and they export them to the UAE, Russia, South America and so forth.

10.4 Muslim families in Japan and their educational problems

The children of the families comprising Pakistani fathers and Japanese mothers living in Japan are now entering school age, and educational problems among the second-generation have come to light.

When a Japanese woman marries a non-Japanese Muslim, it is presumed that she will convert to Islam. In Islamic law, Muslim women are forbidden from marrying a man from another religion, but Muslim men are allowed to marry a woman who is of another 'people of the book' (Christian or Jewish). Approaches to marriage differ from one country to the next, however; in some countries the marriage is not considered valid unless it is conducted in accordance with Islamic law, while in other countries other styles of marriage ceremony are considered acceptable. Even in the latter case, when marrying a Muslim, it is considered preferable for the non-Muslim spouse to convert to Islam.

However, issues regarding the Muslim education of the children will differ depending on the parents' devotion to their religion. There are a number of different cases; for example, 1) parents whose children do not receive any particular Islamic education; 2) parents who undertake their religious obligations to the extent that they are able; or 3) parents who comply strictly with Islamic obligations regarding education. One example of case 1) is a Pakistani man (40s; used vehicle exporter; Japanese wife; three sons, aged ten, seven, and four years), who says, 'It's difficult to carry on an Islamic lifestyle in Japan; so as long as we live in Japan, they can live as Japanese. Our children are growing up just as any other Japanese child would.' This father has no expectations that his children will consider themselves Muslim. In this type of case, bilingual education and bicultural education, which is often seen in families of cross-border marriages, rarely become an issue.

In cases 2) and 3), particularly 3), a number of problems arise when attempting to communicate Islamic values to children in Japan; for example, the influence of the media and non-Muslim friends; the problem of the separation of Church and State; and the issue of school lunches and clothing. In Japan, one cannot hope to achieve the Islamic education that is provided tacitly by the community in an Islamic environment. In some cases, there are even concerns about the cultural gap that arises between parents and children – and particularly between the father and children – as a result of raising the children in a secular society (Takeshita 2007).

When a Muslim child lives in a non-Muslim environment, at the age of four to five years, that child begins to think about questions like 'Why am I the only Muslim in my preschool?' or 'Why am only I not allowed to eat the school lunch?', and begins to ask the mother a variety of questions.[5]

A mother (in her 30s) of a five-year-old boy said:

> Recently, our son has been asking a lot of questions, like why some people are Muslims and others not, or why he is the only one in his preschool who can't eat pork. He also asks if he will be allowed to eat pork when he 'becomes Japanese' (according to the mother, this means 'when he is no longer Muslim'). It's really difficult to answer these questions. Of course, I don't want to say bad things about non-Muslims. In fact, his grandparents are non-Muslims, and they eat pork.

The children, though young, have experienced conflicts between Japanese society including non-Muslim friends and maternal kin, and Muslim society.

Islam has numerous restrictions with regard to food, the most commonly known restriction being that Muslims are forbidden to eat pork. Beef and chicken also present a problem, however, depending on how the animals are slaughtered. According to the Koran, meat can only be eaten if the animal is killed 'in the name of Allah' with a single cut to the carotid artery. School lunch uses meat that is prohibited by Islam, processed food made from meat, and animal fat. For this reason, some families have their children bring lunch boxes from home every day; others only on days when pork or processed pork is used; and still others when any meat is used. Many mothers obtain lunch menus from the school or preschool in advance, and prepare lunches similar to those provided by the schools.

However, some children do not want to go to preschool, saying that they don't want to be the only ones eating a boxed lunch from home when all the other children are eating the lunch provided by the preschool. Regarding such situations, one wife said, 'Right now, he's still young, so I can pacify him and get him to take the lunch box to preschool, but when he gets older, I'll have to think of some other way to deal with it.' Another parent, however, said, 'At home, we eat *halāl* food, but at preschool, we're worried about our child being isolated or bullied, so we let him eat the lunches provided by the preschool, the same as the other children.'

According to the Children and Families Bureau, the former Ministry of Health and Welfare (1999), in the development of human relationships, when children reach the age of four, they become aware of the concept of 'foreigners' (people of cultures different from their own), and at the age of five, they begin to develop an interest in such 'foreigners'. Therefore, children are able to recognize cultures different from their own at around age four. One problem that is typical of this recognition is the school lunch at pre-school mentioned above. It could be

considered the first stage in the child's experience of the gap between Japanese society and Muslim society.

The second stage is when the child enters elementary school. Education for assimilation, a characteristic of the Japanese school culture, hinders the multicultural education of children of ethnic minorities, as a mother in her 30s (son: seven years; daughter: five years) explains, 'Japanese schools have an atmosphere where it is better to be like everyone else, eating the same lunch and wearing clothing similar to other children's. My children can't receive special treatment at elementary school like they did in preschool.' We are seeing increasing diversification of values among children of Japanese nationality with one parent who is not Japanese. Multicultural education is not limited to foreign children who have recently arrived in Japan.

Menarche for girls and voice breaking for boys could be considered the third stage. It is at this time that the child is obligated to participate in prayer, Ramadan, and other religious services, and when gender-based norms are imposed; for example, the Islamic religious custom requires the separation of men and women, and requires a woman to wear a veil. Japanese junior high schools consider it against school regulations for girls to wear a veil, because students are required to wear a school uniform at both public and private schools. One boy, who is the only Muslim at his elementary school, says that he finds it difficult to continue the practice of praying after he decided to do it during break time in his fifth year because his classmates, interested in the practice, surround him and tease him. Many second-generation Muslims living in Japan have not yet reached this third stage, but there is no question that this issue will grow in proportion as these children grow older.

There are some classes teaching the Koran and Arabic for Muslim children in the evenings on weekdays or weekends in more than thirty mosques in Japan. However, it is difficult for the Muslim children, who are subjected to the problems of school lunches and clothing and spend most of the day at Japanese schools where it is hard to carry on praying, to form an identity as Muslim from the social, cultural and systematic perspectives. Therefore, when a first child reaches school age, there is an increase in the number of cases of transnational families where the Japanese wife and children have relocated to an Islamic country while the non-Japanese father remains in Japan to work.

Numerous Muslim families in Japan would like to see full-time Islamic schools established in Japan.[6] There are concerns that the establishment of full-time Islamic schools would be problematic, in terms of a separation of Muslims from non-Muslims, but this would present the option of transmitting Islamic values to children in Japan. Since the latter half of the 1990s, there have been efforts based mainly in Tokyo to establish Islamic schools for Muslim children in Japan, but this has not

yet been achieved. It has been said that financing for these schools is one of the major obstacles.

10.5 Research methodology

10.5.1 Survey outline

The present survey was conducted through interviews during August and September 2005, targeting 23 Japanese wives living in Sharjah and their Pakistani husbands who are used vehicle exporters in Japan, with offices in Sharjah and Dubai.[7] Two husbands were also operating Pakistani food restaurants in Japan as well.

Jebel Ali port, a free port in Dubai, is the best-known port in the UAE, and is the location of bases for many multinational corporations. Used vehicles imported from Japan are sold within the UAE, or are re-exported to Asia, the Middle East, Africa and so forth. Sharjah, located about twenty minutes by car from Dubai, is home to many used vehicle importers and exporters; it is a base for relay trade like Dubai.

Sharjah was selected as the location for this survey for three main reasons: 1) Sharjah has been named as the most popular place for wives and children relocating to Islamic countries; 2) since 2000, an increasing number of Japanese wives with husbands operating used vehicle export businesses in Japan have relocated to Sharjah with children; and 3) it is possible to verify not only the relationship between the wife/child relocation and kinship networks, but also the relationship with the husbands' business networks.

10.5.2 Attributes of survey subjects

The largest number of husbands were aged 30-39 and 40-49, with 11 cases in each age group (47.8 percent each). The largest number of wives were aged 30-39, with 12 cases (54.5 percent), followed by 40-49, with 7 cases (31.8 percent). The total number of children in the study was 58, with an average age of 8.8 years. Regarding the educational history of the husbands, there were 10 university graduates (45.5 percent) and 5 cases each of graduates of junior college and high school (22.7 percent each). Regarding the educational history of the wives, the most common was high school graduates, with 11 cases (47.8 percent), followed by junior college, with 5 cases (21.7 percent), and university/vocational school, with 3 cases each (13.0 percent each). The duration of the marriages was 12.4 years, and the average length of residence in Sharjah was 3.8 years.

10.6 Background of relocation to Sharjah

The husbands of all the subjects in this survey broached the issue of relocation by saying that they wanted to raise their children in an Islamic country, as they found it difficult for their children to identify themselves as Muslims in Japan. The Japanese wives were told this by their husbands on conception in the earliest cases. Many of the cases considered relocating to Pakistan in the early days, and there were a few who considered relocating to Sharjah from the beginning. However, most of the wives disagreed with their husbands' idea at first. A wife (30s; daughter: six years; son: three years) explained:

> My husband told me to relocate to Pakistan with our children. 'My friends' Japanese wives and their children have relocated to Pakistan and so why not us?' When he said that, I told him that he had to either come with us or think of a way for us to be together. The thing is, he has a job in Japan, but it is almost impossible for him to get a job in Pakistan.

Another wife (20s; two daughters, aged seven and six years) said:

> My husband and I encountered difficulties in providing our daughters with an Islamic environment in Japan. He told me that we should send our daughters to Pakistan where their relatives would take good care of them. But I just couldn't imagine living apart from them, and I felt as if my body were torn apart. I wanted to be with them. But as I didn't want to live with my in-laws in Pakistan, I decided to relocate to Sharjah with my daughters.

In about one-third of the cases in this study, the wife said, 'I wanted to come to Sharjah rather than go to Pakistan'. Among the reasons noted were: 'Sharjah is safer than Pakistan'; 'I'm free to go out on my own'; and 'I don't have to live with my husband's kin'. It appears, then, that the wives feel some resistance to relocating to Pakistan. Although initially many of the husbands wanted to raise their children in Pakistan, their wives disagreed with the idea of relocating to Pakistan, and so eventually relocation to Sharjah came about as a compromise.

It is quite difficult for Japanese mothers and their children to live in a nuclear family in Pakistan, as the extended family is the local tradition there, and there are also problems of safety as well as the custom of gender segregation to consider. When a mother and her children relocate to Pakistan, relocation means that they have to live in an extended family together with the in-laws, such as parents of her husband, his

single and married siblings and their spouses and children. While living with the husband's kin brings various forms of support, several wives who returned to Japan after relocating to Pakistan noted 'negative support' from the husband's kin; for example, the kin's refusal to respect Japanese customs and culture when it comes to child-raising, even when permitted by Islam, or excessive interference from the husband's kin. This is because Islamic culture integrates national and regional traditions and customs, and there is a prominent tendency to recognize those traditions and customs as an integral part of Islamic culture. Women are expected to bear the major burden of childcare, but at the same time, they receive considerable intervention from the husband's kin with regard to approaches to raising children because of their position as a foreigner and as a woman (Takenoshita 2003). These women therefore experience conflicts in Pakistan as a result of being a complex minority with the dual factors of gender and ethnicity. However, these conflicts can be alleviated, as long as the mother and her children live in a nuclear family in Sharjah. Social capital that will be discussed in the following is indispensable for mothers and their children who relocate to Sharjah.

10.7 Relocation and social capital

Social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures (Portes 1998). Maintaining continued relationships in social networks is a necessary condition for obtaining social capital (Kajita et al. 2005). In this section, I will examine social capital generated by the husband's kinship network and business network, as well as the network of Japanese Muslim women formed after relocating to Sharjah.

10.7.1 Kinship network and business network

The husbands in this study had started up used vehicle export businesses in Japan, and had their brothers living in Pakistan relocate to Sharjah and operate offices in Sharjah or Dubai, which acted as bases for their business of importing used vehicles from Japan. The husbands' kinship networks can be seen not only as an extension of kinships in Pakistani society, where these ties are very strong, but also as life and business strategies based on those relationships. The husbands have developed life strategies that enable them to provide work for their brothers living in Pakistan, which has a high unemployment rate. Also, they have developed business strategies which allow them to leave the

importation of used vehicles from Japan to their brothers, whom they trust.

The husbands' kinship networks play a prominent role in all aspects of life for their wives and children relocating to Sharjah, such as the provision of housing and information necessary for daily life, and also reduce both the costs and risks involved in relocation. Furthermore, by entrusting his wife and children to a brother, the husband is able to remain in Japan with peace of mind.

One of the wives in this study (30s; living in Sharjah for one month; son: five years; daughter: four years) said that she lived in Pakistan with her children, but that they returned to Japan after five months because they couldn't adapt to the lifestyle there. They relocated to Sharjah 18 months later, however, because the husband expressed a strong desire 'to have the children raised in an Islamic environment'. In this case as well, the relocation was facilitated by a transnational network: the husband had an office in Dubai as well, and the husband's brother lived in Sharjah.

Though there are many cases in which the mothers and their children live with the husbands' kin before getting used to life in Sharjah, after a few months there, for instance when they have become able to drive around freely on their own, the cases of renting apartments increase. In some cases, the brothers of the husbands had themselves left wives and children in Pakistan, and in other cases brought them to live in Sharjah. The wives have a variety of reasons for living separately from their husbands' kin, such as 'I can't relax at home when living with my husband's brothers because of issues like clothing', 'our customs are different' and 'I wanted to do things on my own as much as I could'. While some mothers and their children keep in touch with their husbands' kin even after shifting to an apartment, such as inviting each other to meals, there are others that stay away from them.

Looking at the legal aspects of the wife and children's relocation to Sharjah, if the husband has obtained a working visa and a residence visa[8] in the UAE, then the wife and children can also obtain residence visas, and stay in the country legally. The husbands visit Sharjah an average of once every three months, for a period ranging from one week to several months. If the husband does not enter the UAE for more than six months, the working visa and residence visa become invalid. This means the husbands have to travel between UAE and Japan at least once every six months.

10.7.2 Network of Japanese Muslim women

In Sharjah, there is a support network composed of about 30 Japanese Muslim women. Though it is not a formal organization, it has ex-

panded as women call out and say hello when they see Japanese women in places like shopping centers in Sharjah. Homogeneous networks give individuals a feeling of security and belonging, and assist the individual in maintaining a sense of identity.

Many of the Muslim women's networks in Japan are formed with the mosques in each area as the core. Using those networks, they exchange information on Islamic education for their children, and hold classes on the Koran and Arabic, thus functioning as a place for the formation and maintenance of their identity as Muslims.

However, it is a different story in Sharjah where the Muslim women's network functions as a place where both the mother and child can maintain their Japanese identity as a part of a complex self-definition. In other words, the networks in both Japan and Sharjah complement what is lacking in the respective environments. Also, the Muslim women's network in Sharjah functions as a source of mutual support – for example in terms of exchanging information on schools for children and medical facilities, offering advice on children's education, and providing assistance when problems arise – and this ties into a sense of empowerment. Because the wives' kin do not live nearby, these Japanese Muslim women use practical and mental support obtained through this network to assist one another in making up for this deficit in their daily lives.

In the case of the children as well, and particularly when the period of residence in Sharjah is short, gathering with other children in the park or in private homes and playing while speaking in Japanese provides a safety valve for the stress that even young children experience and functions as a venue for maintaining their Japanese as a conversational language. Also, older individuals in the same environment act as role models for younger individuals.

10.8 Educational strategies

Educational strategy is a term used in the context of Bourdieu and Passeron's theory of cultural reproduction (Bourdieu & Passeron 1991). Educational strategy is one of the reproductive strategies of each social group and is a concept broad enough to include not only intentional but also unintentional attitudes and behaviors (Shimizu 1999). In this section I discuss the educational strategies of the families in which the mothers and children have relocated to Sharjah from the perspectives of the formation of Muslim identity and of English education as a language capital.

10.8.1 Formation of Muslim identity

The first priority in the educational strategies of the children for the families in this study is the formation of Muslim identity. As it is said that children form their identity as a member of a community through interpreting and expanding what the community connotes (Minoura 1997), the role played by the Muslim community is significant for the formation of Muslim identity among children.

A father (40s; two sons, aged 18 and 15 years; daughter, 17 years) said: 'My children would not have been conscious of their Muslim origin if they had grown up in Japan. Forming a Muslim mindset in Japan is difficult. I was not confident that I could raise my children as Muslims in Japan.'

Another father (30s; three sons, aged ten, eight and six years; daughter: three years) said: 'My children can study the Koran even in Japan, but I wanted to raise my children in an environment where they can hear *adhān*[9] wherever they are. I wanted my children to experience life in an Islamic country.'

In Sharjah, children can learn an Islamic way of life naturally, while living daily life based on the Koran in a Muslim community even if they are not conscious of being Muslim.

School also plays an important role as a community. As public schools in Sharjah are limited to children with UAE citizenship, all of the children covered in this study were attending international schools and receiving education in English. There are many international schools in Sharjah: Lebanese, British, American, and Pakistani international schools. Most of these schools are Islamic, and children are segregated by gender from about the age of nine. Most of the children covered in this study go to a Lebanese or British international school, both of which are prestigious in Sharjah. When parents expect their children to have an identity as Pakistani Muslims, they send them to the Pakistani international school. The Koran and Arabic are required subjects, and the children receive an Islamic education at any of the international schools. The education at Islamic schools plays an important role in leading them to identify themselves as Muslim.

10.8.2 English education as language capital

The official language of the UAE is Arabic, but English is also widely used, so as part of their educational strategies, the parents place an emphasis on having the children acquire English as language capital, with the expectation that this will help the children to attain a higher social position in the future. Language capital (Bourdieu & Passeron 1991), later symbolized by the concept of cultural capital, is defined as the abil-

ity to skillfully manipulate language and to have an interest in legitimate art, not at the level of individuals in society, but rather from the perspective of advantages and disadvantages of social groups or entire social classes (Miyajima 1994).

As I mentioned above, all the children in this study receive English education at Islamic international schools. Their parents put an emphasis on English education, as shown in cases where they chose a British international school over a Pakistani one to avoid acquiring a Pakistani accent. As Urdu, the official language in Pakistan, is an elective subject at international schools, the children can learn their father's native tongue. The families in this survey are education-oriented, employing private tutors for their children, making their boys practice karate, and girls learn piano and ballet in many cases. Their perspective of educating their children as a long-term investment is based on financial affordability.

By relocating to Sharjah, the parents are able to fulfill their initial goal of raising their children in an Islamic environment. Because this involves relocation of school age children, however, the problem of language must be faced. At the level of conversational language, there is a tendency for the language used among siblings to shift from Japanese to English after having lived in Sharjah for three to five years, but in all of the families covered in this study, the mother and children communicated in Japanese. At the level of academic language, there is no other way to learn Japanese but to study at home due to the lack of Japanese supplementary schools in Sharjah. Up until the fourth year of residence in Sharjah, about half of the mothers interviewed were teaching their children to read and write Japanese in their homes. Most of the mothers and children in this study return to Japan once a year starting in mid-June, during summer vacation at the Sharjah schools, so that the children could attend elementary school in Japan for a few weeks, attend *juku* (private tutoring) schools, or take other lessons and classes. Japanese language education is undertaken to ensure a means of communication between the mother and children, but also as a means of maintaining the identity of being Japanese, as part of a complex self-definition.

After five years of living in Sharjah, however, all cases of home study in Japanese reading and writing disappear. A number of reasons are given for this: 1) as the children move into the upper grades in school, they are busier with their own schoolwork, and have less time for extra studies. Because the Lebanese and British international schools, which many children in this study attend, demote underachievers mercilessly in their higher grades in elementary school, many parents employ a private home tutor for their children; 2) it is difficult for mother and child to keep the relationship of teacher and student, so home study in Japa-

nese reading and writing becomes limited; and 3) as the stay in Sharjah grows longer, the possibility of returning to Japan becomes less likely. Fewer and fewer families maintain Japanese reading and writing studies at home accordingly, and a change can be noted in the educational strategy that they use to pursue bilingual education upon relocation. As a result, the children find it difficult to maintain their level of Japanese as an academic language that they possessed when leaving Japan, although they maintain their level of Japanese as a conversational language.

The development of proficiency in a primary language can promote the development of second- or even third-language proficiency (Skutnubb-Kangas 1981; Cummins 1981). Therefore, Japanese plays an important role as a primary language when the child acquires English as a bilingual, or yet another language as a trilingual. However, the development of the primary language is hindered by an abrupt encounter with the language of the host country through the relocation before the primary language is sufficiently acquired (Nakajima 2002). Moreover, as it is said that the period required by children to acquire a second language is about five years in case of academic language (Ota 2000), children need a long time before they can study using their second language. When a child cannot supplement its primary language with reading and writing skills before acquiring an academic level in a second language, he or she may not achieve a level typical of a child at that age in either language. This is referred to as the 'temporary semilingual phenomenon'.[10] If the relocation takes place during infancy, then the development of language overall is delayed, and if it takes place at about ten years of age, there is a delay in the development of abstract vocabulary and the ability to think abstractly (Nakajima 2002). Children suffer psychological stress and frustration, albeit temporarily, and become emotionally unstable. The end result is that as the stay in Sharjah grows longer, in an increasing number of cases the parent comes to see it as acceptable when Japanese is learned as a conversational language, and an emphasis is placed on the child's ability of English as an academic language.

10.9 Conclusion

The subjects of this study developed educational strategies through the use of social capital generated by the kinship network and business network that link Japan and Sharjah, as well as by the network of Japanese Muslim women formed after moving to Sharjah. These educational strategies also take the transnational social space into consideration. Among the subjects in this study, there are families that want to live to-

gether in the near future, but have not determined when and where that will be.[11] Muslims operating used vehicle export businesses in Japan do not necessarily have bases only in Japan; in many cases, these businessmen have extensive worldwide networks, with business activities spanning several countries. These businessmen, in their process of forming a family, are more likely to relocate to a country where they can apply social capital better to their educational and life strategies. The parents willingly invest in the children's English education as an unquestionably valuable resource, no matter where the family will live in the future, in terms of assisting the children in attaining a higher social position.

Children acquire the internal conditions appropriate to the society of their host country through relocation. Although it is possible to predict that they will form a Muslim identity, they may end up with the problem of being semilingual if the relocation takes place during their school age. The first priority in the educational strategies of the children for the families in this survey is the formation of a Muslim identity, and the second is their English education. The parents who acquiesce in the loss of Japanese as an academic language are on the increase, as they live longer in Sharjah. More attention should be focused on the possibility that the loss of Japanese as an academic language could trigger chronic semilingualism.

The average age of the 58 children covered in this study was a fairly young 8.8. I intend to conduct a follow-up study to examine how living locations and the form of the family change for these families, and how the children's identities are formed as a result of these changes.

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Notes

1 Sharjah is the third largest of the seven emirates making up the UAE, after Abū Dhabi and Dubai.

2 A visa without any labor restrictions in Japan has been issued up to the third generation of Japanese descent since the amendment of immigration laws in 1990.

3 According to my own recent survey data (Takeshita 2004), in order to get a bank loan, couples comprising Pakistani husbands and Japanese wives are often forced to create their own small companies with the Japanese wife officially serving as a com-

pany president, and the husband as a manager because they are unable to get a bank loan as individuals without a permanent residence visa.

4 Foods which are permitted by Islam.

5 These comments were obtained through ongoing interviews conducted by me since 1999 in Japan.

6 Iran and Indonesia have schools affiliated with their respective embassies in Tokyo, Japan. In part because of their affiliation with the embassies, many of the children at both these schools are from families of embassy employees, or of government officials or company employees on assignment in Japan (Sugimoto 2002).

7 Cf. note 1.

8 Applications are made separately for each emirate. It is also possible to obtain a working visa in Dubai and a residence visa in Sharjah.

9 The recitation which tells the time for prayer five times a day.

10 The term 'semilingual' was first used in a radio program in 1962 by the Swedish linguist N.E. Hansegård, and in 1968 appeared in a text entitled 'Tvåsprakighet eller Halvspråkighet' (Bilingual or Semilingual) (Martin-Jones & Romaine 1986). The concept was later developed by Skutnabb-kangas (1981), after which it gained wide acceptance (Stroud 2004). Nakajima used the term 'temporary semilingual phenomenon' to emphasize the temporary condition experienced by normal children (Nakajima 2002).

11 Of the 23 families covered in this survey, only one intended to reside in Sharjah permanently; 13 families had not yet decided where they would live in the future. Six families planned to return to Japan, and two planned to relocate to Pakistan. One other family planned to relocate to another country.

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