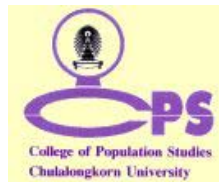


The “Flight from Marriage” in South-East and East Asia

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ANALYSIS



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Abstract

Near-universal marriage characterized most Asian countries in the past. Over the past two decades, however, there has been a dramatic increase in the proportions of women remaining single in their 30s and 40s in many East and South-east Asian countries, especially in their big cities. In 2000, 17 per cent of women aged 45-49 in Bangkok remained single, 13 per cent in Singapore and 10 per cent of Chinese women in Kuala Lumpur. The proportions remaining single were particularly high among tertiary educated women. As educational levels keep rising, this alone will tend to increase the proportion of women remaining single near the end of their reproductive life.

High non-marriage rates are not confined to any one religious or ethnic group. By the same token, the trends are not monolithic throughout the region. Even in the Philippines and Thailand, which are both characterized by relatively high proportions of women non-married in their 30s and 40s, the path by which these high proportions were reached differed. The 2000 Census data do show sharp increases in proportions non-married among women in their 30s in some countries where non-marriage rates were low, notably the Republic of Korea and Indonesia.

This paper describes the trends in delayed marriage and non-marriage in the region, for both men and women. It assesses likely reasons for these trends, discusses community reactions to the trends, and considers some of the likely implications for women's place in family and society, for trends in fertility, and for the family role in aged care. A number of policy issues resulting from the trends in non-marriage are discussed.

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Introduction

In the past, marriage was close to universal in most Asian countries. The proportion of women aged 45-49 remaining unmarried exceeded 2% only in Sri Lanka, Myanmar and the Philippines (Smith, 1980). But this is no longer the case. Over the past two decades some dramatic changes have taken place in Southeast and East Asia: non-marriage for women is becoming much more common, and in many of the big cities, it is even more common than it is in Western countries, notwithstanding the sharp declines in marriage prevalence in Western countries in recent times.

The main reason why observers have been slow to recognize this fact has been that the index of non-marriage normally used (percent of women remaining unmarried near the end of their reproductive period) reflects the high marriage probabilities in the past, since the most active marriage activity for a cohort reaching age 45-49 occurred a quarter century earlier. Such a measure will fail to reflect major changes in non-marriage from older to younger cohorts until those younger cohorts reach ages in their 40s. But it is possible to detect such changes ten or fifteen years earlier, by studying trends in percentages remaining unmarried in their early 30s, a statistic which bears a fairly predictable relationship with the percentage of the same cohort remaining unmarried in their 40s.

This close relationship can be inferred from Coale's discovery that there are precisely defined age patterns of nuptiality (Coale 1971, 1977). Coale did not apply his analysis to the issue in question, because he was interested in determining regularities in nuptiality patterns across populations differing in certain characteristics, including their proportions ultimately marrying, but not in studying how those patterns changed when a given population underwent large changes in the proportion ultimately marrying. But the relationship can easily be studied empirically. For example, in Thailand, the ratio between the proportion single among females aged 45-49 and the proportion single in the same cohort ten years earlier averaged 0.75 in 1970 and 1980. If this ratio continued to hold in future, then the proportion single among women aged 35-39 in 1990 would result in higher proportions single for this cohort 10 years later than had been the case for cohorts reaching age 45-49 in 1980 and 1990. Calculations for the other countries yield similar results.

The paper will deal mainly with non-marriage for women, though the trends in non-marriage for men will also be dealt with more briefly. The focus will be on the two main cultural blocs of East and South-East Asia: the Confucian world of sinic cultures, and the Malay world. In the first, the family tended to be more patriarchal, with women largely restricted to the home. Most Chinese families were extended (joint or stem) at some point in their life cycles (Freedman (ed.), 1970; Wong, 1978; Huang, 1992). In the Malay world, there was more emphasis on the elementary nuclear family, the kinship system was bilateral, and women had greater autonomy (Geertz, 1961; Karim, 1987; Javillonar, 1978; Go, 1992).

The Trends

Until about three decades ago, non-marriage could be considered an aberration in the resolutely family-centred world of South-East and East Asia. Among Malay-Muslim populations of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Southern Thailand, half of any given cohort of women were married before reaching age 18 (Jones, 1994: Chapter 3); the proportion of women remaining never-married in their 40s was less than one per cent, and those few women generally remained unmarried because they were suffering from physical abnormality or mental illness. Among Chinese populations, non-marriage was similarly rare (around one per cent of women aged 40-44 in Taiwan, for example, though higher in the special situations of Hong Kong and Singapore). In Myanmar and the Philippines, non-marriage was more acceptable. Both have a long history of high celibacy rates. In Myanmar, “the unmarried adult is a built-in and important part of the going social order, not an anomaly” (Nash and Nash, 1963: 262). In the Philippines, the key factor is probably the value placed by Catholicism on celibacy and on taking holy orders; note the relatively high non-marriage rates in some other Catholic countries such as Italy, Spain, and (especially) Ireland. But non-marriage rates in the Philippines (7.6 per cent never-married among women aged 40-44 in 1960) were only half those of Italy and Spain.

Tables 1 and 2 present the available information on trends in non-marriage for women in South-East and East Asian countries and large cities over the past four decades. Though the trends and levels differ greatly, the general trend is one of rising rates of non-marriage. The most striking rise up to the 1990s was that for women in their 30s, but only because there had not yet been time for it to work its way fully into the 40s age groups. Between 1970 and 1990, the percentage of women remaining single at age 30-34 rose from 2 per cent to 11 per cent in Taiwan; from 8 per cent to 14 per cent in Thailand; and from 6 per cent to 15 per cent in Peninsular Malaysia. In the Republic of Korea, Indonesia and the Philippines, the rises were much more modest, though in the Philippines the 1990 figure (13 per cent) was amongst the highest in the region.

Age group	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Philippines					
30-34	11.6	8.9	11.9	13.4	14.8
35-39	8.1	6.3	8.0	8.7	9.5
40-44	7.6	6.0	7.0	7.1	7.1
45-49	7.1	5.6	6.7	6.1	6.2
Thailand					
30-34	6.7	8.1	11.8	14.1	16.1
35-39	4.2	5.2	7.3	9.6	11.6
40-44	3.1	3.9	5.3	7.0	9.3
45-49	2.6	3.0	4.1	5.2	8.0
Peninsular Malaysia-Chinese					
30-34	3.8	9.5	13.3	15.8	18.2
35-39	2.7	5.7	7.6	9.1	10.5
40-44	2.6	3.4	5.8	6.4	8.4
45-49	2.5	2.4	4.6	5.7	7.2

Peninsular Malaysia-Malays					
30-34	1.1	3.3	7.9	10.2	9.7
35-39	0.8	1.9	3.8	5.8	6.0
40-44	0.6	1.1	2.2	4.1	4.4
45-49	0.6	0.7	1.7	2.3	3.2
Indonesia					
30-34	n.a.	2.2	3.4	4.5	6.9
35-39	n.a.	1.4	1.9	2.7	3.5
40-44	n.a.	1.2	1.4	2.0	2.4
45-49	n.a.	1.0	1.2	1.5	2.0
Taiwan					
30-34	2.1	6.6	11.4	11.1	
35-39	1.5	7.4	3.9	6.0	9.2*
40-44	1.3	4.6	2.2	3.6	
45-49	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	1.9	4.2*
Japan					
30-34	9.6	7.2	9.1	13.9	26.6
35-39	5.6	5.8	5.5	7.5	13.8
40-44	3.1	5.3	4.4	5.8	8.6
45-49	1.9	4.0	4.4	4.6	6.3
Republic of Korea					
30-34	0.5	1.4	2.7	5.3	10.7
35-39	0.2	0.4	1.0	2.4	4.3
40-44	0.1	0.2	0.5	1.1	2.6
45-49	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.6	1.7
Vietnam					
30-34				11.2	10.9
35-39				8.9	8.7
40-44				6.0	8.3
45-49				3.5	9.9
Myanmar					
45-49		5.9	5.9	9.1	12.1
Cambodia					
30-34	4.2				9.0
35-39	2.9				6.4
40-44	2.2				5.4
45-49					5.0

Source: Census Reports, various countries and years.

*Taiwan: 2000 figures are for 35-44 and 45-54, respectively. Vietnam: figures in the 1990 column are for 1989; figures in the 2000 column are for 1997, from the 1997 Demographic and Health Survey. Myanmar: figures in the 1970 and 1980 columns are for 1973 and 1983 respectively. Figures in the 1990 column are for 1991 and in the 2000 column are for 1997. See Department of Population, 1998, Table 2.4. Cambodian figures in the 1960 column are for 1962, from the 1962 Census. 2000 figures are from the Demographic and Health Survey 2000 (National Institute of Statistics *et al.*, 2001); they are consistent with figures for 1998 from the General Population Census of Cambodia 1998.

Table 1: Trends in Never-Married among Females Aged 30-34 to 45-49, Countries of South-East and East Asia (%)

Age group	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Metro Manila					
30-34	20.9	21.1	18.6	19.5	n.a.
35-39	14.7	14.5	13.0	13.4	n.a.
40-44	11.7	11.6	11.2	10.7	n.a.
45-49	10.3	9.8	10.5	9.0	n.a.
Bangkok					
30-34	11.9	17.3	25.1	29.4	32.8
35-39	7.7	10.5	15.4	20.4	24.4
40-44	5.3	7.5	10.7	15.6	19.9
45-49	4.5	5.7	8.1	11.3	17.4
Jakarta					
30-34	<4.6**	4.2	7.0	8.7	14.3
35-39	2.1**	2.3	3.4	4.7	7.0
40-44	2.1**	2.1	2.5	3.0	3.8
45-49	n.a.	1.6	1.5	2.5	2.6
Singapore (Chinese)					
30-34	4.7	11.1	17.8	22.4	21.9
35-39	4.3	5.8	9.3	15.6	16.2
40-44	5.2	3.8	6.7	12.3	14.1
45-49	6.2	3.3	4.6	7.9	12.6
Singapore (Malays)					
30-34	1.7	3.9	12.7	13.4	Included in Singapore Chinese
35-39	1.1	2.2	5.6	10.1	
40-44	1.4	1.7	2.6	7.3	
45-49	0.9	1.1	1.7	3.8	
Kuala Lumpur (Chinese)					
30-34	n.a.	14.6	17.1	23.3	26.1
35-39	n.a.	8.9	10.2	15.1	15.5
40-44	n.a.	5.5	7.4	10.0	12.4
45-49	n.a.	4.5	6.0	7.3	10.0
Kuala Lumpur (Malays)					
30-34	n.a.	6.9	11.1		16.1
35-39	n.a.	3.7	6.2		9.5
40-44	n.a.	2.1	3.9		7.0
45-49	n.a.	1.7	2.8		5.2
Hong Kong					
30-34	6.0	5.6	11.0	24.8	26.5*
35-39	5.0	3.0	4.5	11.6	14.6*
40-44	5.9	2.9	2.7	7.3	9.0*
45-49	7.4	3.8	2.3	3.9	5.9*
Seoul					
30-34					18.2
35-39					7.2
40-44					3.9
45-49					2.3

* 1996 ** For Jakarta, the 1961 census presents data for 10-year age groups 25-34 and 34-44.
Source: Census reports, various countries and years. * 1996

Table 2: Trends in Never-Married among Females Aged 30-34 to 45-49,
Major Cities of South-East and East Asia (%)

The non-marriage rate at ages 45-49 is significant in showing the proportion of women who complete their potential child-bearing period without ever marrying. Though much lower, this had nevertheless reached 9 per cent in Myanmar, 6 per cent in the Philippines, 5 per cent in Thailand, 4 per cent in Taiwan and 4 per cent in Malaysia by 1990—rates well above those of earlier decades, except for the Philippines and Myanmar. These rates were certain to go higher thereafter, because of the sharp rise in non-marriage among women aged 30-34, and the close relationship already noted between non-marriage rates at age 30-34 and those at ages 40-44 and 45-49 in the same cohort. Early data from the 2000 round of censuses certainly indicate increasing proportions unmarried in their 40s in all countries for which data are available.

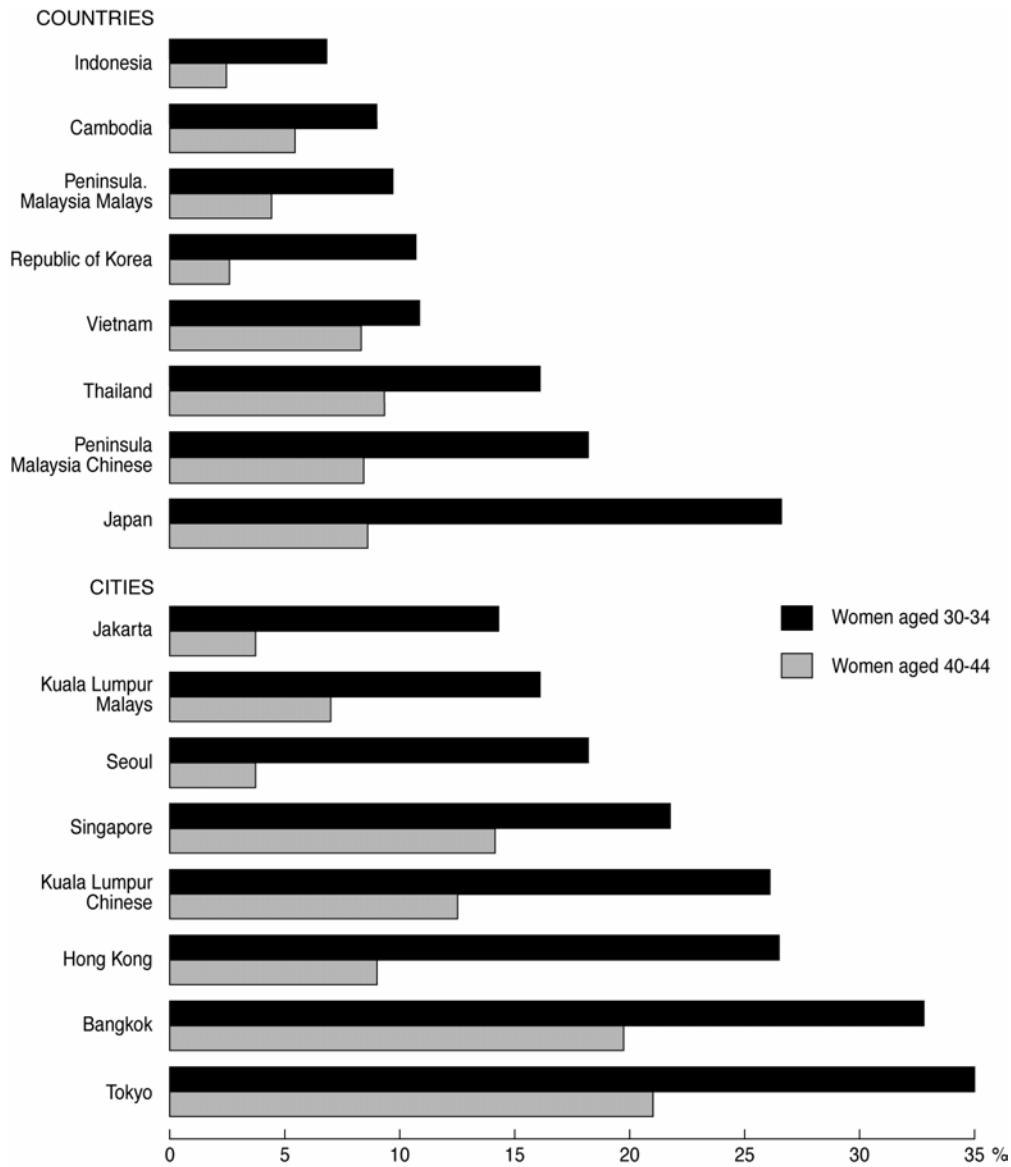
Not surprisingly, these trends were particularly marked in some of the large cities of the region. In 1990, the percent of women aged 45-49 remaining never-married had reached 9 per cent in Manila, 11 per cent in Bangkok, 5 per cent in Singapore and 4 per cent in Hong Kong—a far cry from the claim of the United Nations (1990: 1) that Asia continues to be characterized by nearly universal marriage. But even more striking are the percentages of women remaining single at age 30-34—almost 20 per cent in Manila, 26 per cent in Hong Kong, 29 per cent in Bangkok, 22 per cent in Singapore, and 19 per cent in Taipei¹.

By 2000 the proportion still single at ages 45-49 in Bangkok had leaped to 17 per cent, in Singapore to 13 per cent, among the Chinese population of Kuala Lumpur to 10 per cent, and in Hong Kong to 6 per cent. Such high proportions remaining single at the end of their childbearing period—and the much higher proportions still single in their 30s—have major implications for traditional family life, for fertility, and for the role of women.

Figure 1 shows the gradation in proportions non-married for females aged 30-34 and 40-44 in 2000, for countries of South-East and East Asia (in the upper half of the figure) and for various large cities of the region (in the lower half)². The wide range is the most outstanding feature. In particular, levels of non-marriage in the Republic of Korea and Indonesia, and in their largest cities, Seoul and Jakarta, remained quite low, whereas in Thailand and Japan, and in the major cities of Bangkok, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong, they were very high. In the Republic of Korea and its capital city, Seoul, however, change is evident in the sharply higher proportion non-married at age 30-34 compared with those aged 40-44. The same is true for Jakarta. In Malaysia and Singapore, there was a wide difference between the two main ethnic groups—the Chinese and the Malays—but even the Malays had much higher rates of non-marriage than were found in Indonesia.

The differences in trends in non-marriage in Thailand and the Philippines (and in their main cities, Bangkok and Manila) deserve comment. As shown in Figure 2, although the percentages never-married in 1990 did not differ greatly between the two countries, they had reached this situation through very different routes. In the Philippines, non-marriage had traditionally been relatively high, though it was continuing to rise. In Thailand, non-marriage was not a traditional pattern, and the rise towards the 1990 levels was a very steep one. The non-marriage rates for Bangkok municipality are now so high that it is worth investigating the situation in the outer parts of the Bangkok Metropolitan Region, defined as the five surrounding provinces, to determine whether high rates of non-marriage are confined to the population living in the city proper. Though somewhat lower than in Bangkok, the rates in 1990 were still very high—for example, 22 per cent non-married at age 30-34, compared with 29 per cent in Bangkok proper. Thus throughout the entire Bangkok Metropolitan

Region, whose 1990 population exceeded 8 million (15 per cent of Thailand's population), rates of non-marriage for females are very high indeed.



Source: Data from 2000 round of population censuses.

Figure 1: Countries and Major Cities of East and South-East Asia: Percentages Never-married among Women Aged 30-34 and 40-44, 2000

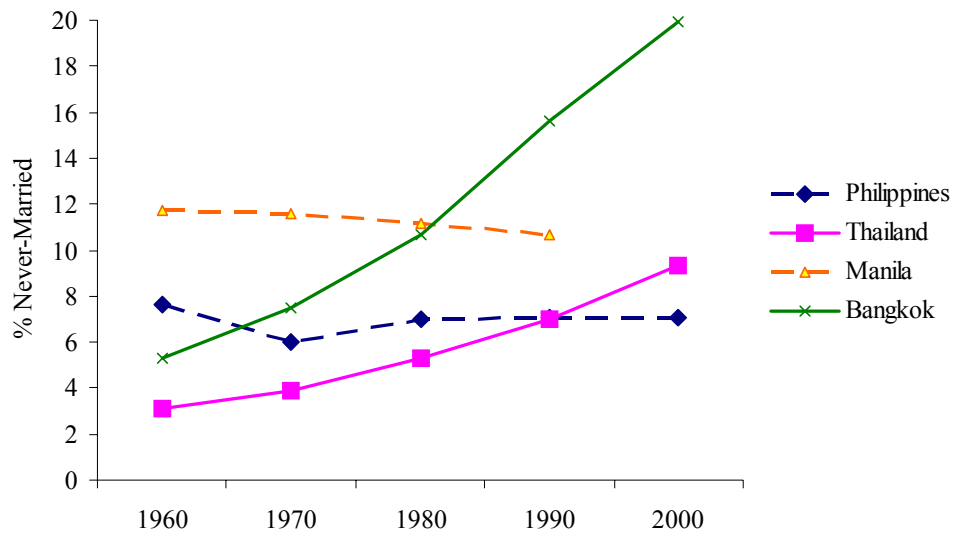


Figure 2: Trends in Percentages of Females Never-married at Ages 40-44, Philippines and Thailand and Their Capital Cities, 1960-1990

A particularly interesting group to consider is the Malay-Muslim population of South-East Asia, which as noted earlier has traditionally had very young and universal marriage for women. In most cases, the percentage never-married at ages 45-49 remained low in 1990, but important changes were already in evidence: over the 1980s the never-married percentage in this age group rose substantially to 9 per cent among Brunei Malays, and doubled among Singapore Malays and Peninsular Malaysia Malays. Brunei had far higher proportions non-married than other Malay-Muslim populations as far back as 1970. For Malay women aged 30-34 in Singapore and Peninsular Malaysia, however, a rise in proportions never-married had been strongly in evidence since 1970, more than doubling over the 1970s in Peninsular Malaysia and more than trebling in Singapore, followed by more modest rises over the 1980s, and a levelling off over the 1990s, in the case of Peninsular Malaysia. By contrast, in Indonesia and among Southern Thai Muslims, the percentages still single at age 30-34 remained very low in 1990 (Jones, 1994: Table3.1). However, as noted above, the percentage of Jakarta women remaining unmarried at ages 30-34 is rising sharply (from 9 per cent in 1990 to 14 per cent in 2000).

The higher rates of non-marriage in the large cities have already been noted. Another relevant variable is the educational level of the women concerned. Though evidence is limited, college educated women have very high levels of non-marriage in a number of studies: for example, in Singapore (Quah 1990, 1998) and the Philippines (Xenos and Gultiano, 1992: 22). There is more evidence for Thailand (Chamratrithirong, 1984; Guest and Tan, 1994), where there is a marked gradation in proportions of women never-marrying by educational level. For example, in 1990 among women aged 40-44, the proportion never-married ranged between 5 per cent for those with none or primary school education and 12 per cent for those with secondary education to 19 per cent for the tertiary educated. The rise in proportions non-married between 1970 and 1990 had an important compositional element - i.e. the increased proportion of women in the educational categories where non-marriage had always been more common—but there was also a steady though unspectacular rise in

the age-standardized proportions never-married in the uneducated and primary educated groups³ (Guest and Tan, 1994: Tables 1.1,1.4).

Further analysis of census data for Thailand and Indonesia (Jones, 1997: 59-60) shows that the importance of education holds when urban-rural residence is controlled for. In Bangkok, there is a clear gradation from quite substantial non-marriage proportions for the primary educated to phenomenally high rates for those with tertiary education. More than one fifth of the tertiary educated were still non-married in their 40s, even as long ago as 1980. Perhaps equally striking is the fact that one in ten women with only primary education remained never married in their early 40s. Non-marriage in the Bangkok metropolis, then, is not a new phenomenon, but was already well established a quarter of a century ago; nor is it restricted to highly educated women. In Jakarta, although the prevalence of non-marriage is much lower than in Bangkok, there are very sharp differences according to educational attainment—much sharper than in Bangkok. It is among those with secondary education, and particularly tertiary education, that non-marriage rates are quite high.

In both Bangkok and Jakarta, there was not much change in non-married proportions in each educational and age group between 1980 and 1990. The rise in the overall rates reflected mainly the increased proportion of women in the better educated categories which have higher non-marriage rates.

Highest qualification attained	30-34		35-39		40-44	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Males						
Below secondary	37.2	41.0	21.0	29.2	12.3	21.1
Secondary	31.4	30.4	15.2	18.3	7.9	13.8
Post secondary	29.2	29.5	13.2	16.0	7.9	9.8
University	31.2	33.1	12.4	17.4	6.1	8.6
Females						
Below secondary	14.9	15.6	10.4	11.1	8.0	9.1
Secondary	23.6	18.4	19.0	14.5	17.6	14.8
Post secondary	30.6	24.4	24.7	21.4	20.9	20.4
University	33.3	32.8	27.3	29.1	24.0	26.7

Source: Singapore 2000, Table3.

Table 3: Proportion Single among Male and Female Singapore Citizens, by Age Group and Highest Educational Qualification Attained, 1990 and 2000 (%)

Recent census data for Singapore show similar patterns (Table 3). Proportions of women non-married in their 30s and 40s are much higher for the post-secondary, and especially university-educated than for those with lower levels of education. The rise over time in proportions non-married is more the result of rising educational levels than of increasing proportions not marrying in the different educational attainment groups. Indeed, the proportion of secondary-educated women still single at any given age actually fell between 1990 and 2000.

What of non-marriage for males? Historically, in Europe, non-marriage for males was quite high in those countries where non-marriage for females was high⁴. In the countries of East and South-East Asia, universal marriage has been the custom for males as well as females, though later age at marriage has typically left a higher proportion of males than of females non-married in their 30s. The sharp rise in non-marriage among females in countries such as Thailand and Hong Kong did not, until

the 1990s, appear to have been mirrored in corresponding rises among males (Xenos and Gultiano, 1992). In Thailand, males certainly shared in the rise up to their early or late 30s, but most eventually married (Guest and Tan, 1994). Between 1980 and 2000, however, the proportion of Thai males remaining single in their 40s doubled. Up to 1990, the Malaysia and Singapore Chinese resembled Thailand and Hong Kong in showing a relatively greater rise in non-marriage for females than for males in their 40s, although (as in Hong Kong) non-marriage had become very prevalent for males in their 30s, and quite high in their 40s (see Table 4). In Korea, Indonesia and the Philippines, the modest increases in non-marriage for males more or less paralleled those for females, from a low base in Korea and Indonesia and a higher base in the Philippines. By contrast, in Japan, and among Peninsular Malaysia's Chinese population, the increase in non-marriage of those aged in their 30s and 40s was much greater among males than among females.

The detailed data by education for Bangkok and Jakarta throw further light on the differences between females and males in patterns of non-marriage (Jones, 1997: 63-4). In the Bangkok metropolitan region, the uniquely high non-marriage rates for educated women (those with secondary and tertiary education) aged in their 40s are highlighted by the much lower rates of non-marriage for males of equivalent age and education. Yet in their 30s, especially at ages 30-34, the differences are much less; it is as though there is a rush into marriage by the remaining unmarried educated males once they reach these ages, whereas this is much less so for educated females. A similar pattern is observable for Jakarta in 1980, though by 1990 the male-female differences had narrowed because it was the non-married proportions for secondary- and tertiary-educated males that showed the greatest rise over the decade.

Singapore shows very much the same patterns of a 'rush into marriage' by educated males once they reach their late 30s and 40s (see Table 3). Intriguingly, in Singapore to an even more marked extent than in Bangkok, there is a clear dichotomy between the kinds of men and women who remain unmarried into their late 30s and 40s: the poorly educated men and the highly educated women. This is consistent with the argument that educated men tend to be happy to marry women younger and less educated than they are, but that educated women typically do not like to 'marry down' by marrying less educated men, and (equally important) less educated men are nervous about marrying a woman better-educated than themselves. Therefore (assuming a moderately high motivation to marry if a suitable partner presents themselves), in a situation of rapidly rising education levels, there is a tendency for well educated women and less educated men to find themselves faced by a shortage of available and suitable mates.

It must be borne in mind that with heavy in-migration, characteristics of the educated groups in all these metropolitan cities may have changed substantially over the course of a decade, and that this would have affected the marriage markets just discussed.

Age group	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Philippines					
30-34	11.4	13.1	14.4	16.9	20.8
35-39	6.1	7.1	8.6	8.8	11.8
40-44	4.1	4.8	6.1	5.9	7.5
45-49	3.2	3.7	4.7	4.5	5.7
Thailand					
30-34	8.8	9.8	10.9	16.4	22.2
35-39	4.5	5.2	5.6	8.3	12.7
40-44	3.0	3.1	3.7	4.7	7.8
45-49	2.3	2.3	2.7	3.2	5.1
Peninsular Malaysia-Chinese					
30-34	16.5	18.9	21.6	31.6	37.2
35-39	10.7	9.8	10.5	16.2	20.8
40-44	8.9	6.5	7.3	9.5	12.9
45-49	10.5	5.5	6.1	6.2	9.0
Peninsular Malaysia-Malays					
30-34	4.8	6.9	10.0	14.2	17.7
35-39	2.9	3.3	4.6	6.3	8.0
40-44	2.4	2.1	3.0	3.5	4.7
45-49	1.9	1.5	2.4	2.2	2.9
Indonesia					
30-34	n.a.	6.1	6.1	9.4	11.8
35-39	n.a.	3.0	2.6	4.6	4.6
40-44	n.a.	2.1	1.6	3.4	2.2
45-49	n.a.	1.8	1.1	2.9	1.5
Taiwan					
30-34	14.7	n.a.	12.5	22.9	
35-39	9.7	n.a.	6.4	15.0	15.9*
40-44	8.1	n.a.	5.1	5.8	
45-49	5.6	n.a.	6.5	4.2	5.9*
Japan					
30-34	9.9	11.7	21.5	32.6	42.9
35-39	3.6	4.7	8.5	19.0	25.7
40-44	2.0	2.8	4.7	11.7	18.4
45-49	1.4	1.9	3.1	6.7	14.6
Republic of Korea					
30-34	4.7	6.4	7.3	13.9	28.1
35-39	0.9	1.2	1.7	3.8	10.6
40-44	0.3	0.4	0.9	1.5	4.9
45-49	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.8	2.4

Source: Census Reports, various countries and years.

*Taiwan: 2000 figures are for 35-44 and 45-54, respectively.

Table 4: Trends in Never-Married among Males Aged 30-34 to 45-49, Countries of South-East and East Asia (%)

Reactions to the Rise in Non-Marriage

It is widely recognized in the region that the rise in female non-marriage represents a major break with the past, and that it poses challenges to traditional culture, to relationships within the family, to the aim of raising fertility in low-fertility societies, and to aspects of social policy. One of the more interesting debates occurred in Peninsular Malaysia in 1991, following the revelation that there were 60,000 Malay women aged 30-34 (10 per cent of the age group) who had not yet married. In the spate of newspaper articles and letters to the editor, the overwhelming view was that the failure of women to marry by these ages was a serious problem. Many assumed that the non-marriage was non-volitional, caused by a lack of potential partners or a lack of opportunity to meet potential partners in settings favouring the development of close attachments. These reactions reflect traditional Malay culture's difficulty in entertaining the idea of delayed marriage or non-marriage as a life option. Many articles and letters stressed that Islam requires its followers to marry and raise a family, and that Malay culture is based on family life.

The concern about non-marriage resulted in efforts to assist women to marry. Matchmaking bureaus were set up under various Islamic auspices, and religious officials were asked to comment on the propriety of women proposing marriage to men. The head of one Islamic marriage bureau commented that many of those who make use of the bureau could not find suitable partners. They had been busy studying and then working and did not have much time to socialize. For some, their religious convictions discourage them from going out on a date with members of the opposite sex. Many parents, who traditionally would have served as matchmakers, have discarded this practice, thinking that their offspring would want to find their own marriage partners (Simon, 1991).

Two important points were missed by most commentators. First, given the strong preference among Malay men to marry a wife younger and less educated than themselves (because education is not seen to make a woman a good wife), and among Malay women not to "marry down", the rapid rise in the number of young women with secondary and tertiary education may well have led to a marriage squeeze. This was particularly likely in the cities, where the pool of educated young women was augmented by migration, leading to a localized shortage of potential spouses⁵. Secondly, not all women unmarried at this age lacked suitors; many of them chose to live alone because they gave priority to their career⁶.

If the fact that 10 per cent of Malay women aged 30-34 in Peninsular Malaysia remained unmarried was a cause of shock to more traditionalist Muslims, the shock should have been even greater in Singapore. Here, as early as 1990, almost a quarter of university-educated Malay women aged 35-44 were still single, and by 2000 this proportion actually exceeded a quarter (Singapore, 2000: Table 4).

It was not only in Islamic societies in the region that an awareness was growing that delays in marriage and, ultimately, increasing non-marriage were linked to the demise of the arranged marriage system. In Taiwan, for example, fully two thirds of the marriages of the women born in the early 1930s were totally arranged by the parents, but this had declined to just over one tenth of the marriages of the women born during the early 1960s. This was related to rising age at marriage and rising proportions non-married into their 30s and 40s. Between 1980 and 1990 the percentage of women aged 35-39 who had ever married decreased from 96.1 to 92.5

per cent. Continuation of 1989 age-specific marriage rates would lead to a doubling of the 1990 percentage single at ages 45-49, and this effect could be reinforced by a further decline in marriage rates (Thornton and Lin, 1994: 222). Even if marriage remains almost universal, the continued upward shift in age at marriage means that substantial fractions of Taiwanese men and women will remain single during a large part of their early life course (Thornton and Lin, 1994:211).

Why the Almost Universal Increase in Non-Marriage?

It is frequently argued that permanent non-marriage emerges in association with a late marriage pattern, because late marriage and non-marriage result from the same underlying changes (Watkins, 1984; Dixon, 1978; Smith, 1983). If this is the case, then the factors usually invoked to explain delayed marriage can equally well be used to explain increasing non-marriage. Four examples might be cited. First, where the economic feasibility of marriage is high, both the prevalence and timing of marriage will be affected. Secondly, where marriage is highly desirable—in part because of the absence of attractive social or economic alternatives, particularly for females—it will not only be earlier for females, but also more prevalent. Thirdly, shortage of potential partners over an extended period will not only raise age at marriage but also reduce prevalence. Fourthly, wherever marriage decisions are controlled by parents, marriage will be more prevalent.

East and Southeast Asia have experienced extraordinarily high rates of economic growth over the past three decades. Development of human resources, of which expansion of education has been a key element, has contributed to this strong economic performance (Ogawa, Jones and Williamson (eds), 1993; Mason (ed.), 2001). Since non-marriage has long been more prevalent in urban areas and among the more highly educated, part of the increase in non-marriage over recent decades was a purely compositional effect of the rise in the proportion of urban and educated populations.

From a behavioural, rather than a purely statistical perspective, the main issue is whether the tendency to greatly delay and ultimately avoid marriage is parallel for both males and females, or whether instead it derives more from imperatives operating mainly on either males or females, thus leaving the other group stranded, as it were, through lack of potential and willing marriage partners. This issue cannot be resolved definitively with available sources of information, although it would be surprising if there were not a certain symmetry of reasons for both sexes to delay or avoid marriage, particularly those reasons having to do with pressures of urban living, the increasing prevalence of notions of individualism and growing acceptability of non-marital relationships.

For male city dwellers (an increasing proportion of all males in this rapidly urbanizing region), a single life style does not necessarily pose the problems that it once did. For one thing, its increasing prevalence has already removed its aberrant image, which was anyway never as great a problem for males as for females. For another, the practicalities of living can be met by continuing to live with family or if not, by utilizing street vendors, fast food outlets, and labour saving devices. Commercial sex services are readily available, and intimate relationships not legitimized by marriage increasingly tolerated.

But although there could be many reasons for urban males to increasingly avoid marriage, females have arguably been subject to the sharpest change in motivation to delay or avoid marriage. The revolution in female education and certain trends in the economy have opened up employment opportunities for women in growth areas of the economy including manufacturing sub-sectors such as electronics and textiles, clerical occupations, professions such as teaching and nursing, and some service occupations.

As a result, labour force participation rates for women have risen steadily (Jones, 1984, Chapter 1; Tsay, 1994, Table 1; Horton, 1996). An increasing proportion of women are no longer forced to rely on men financially. And although there is a risk of romanticising work which is frequently tedious, repetitive and more poorly paid than for men doing the same tasks, there is no doubt that many women value not only the financial independence which work brings, but also the workplace contacts which even menial work opens up.

The objective change in women's situation in the workforce has no doubt contributed to the ongoing reassessment of women's place in the family, society and the economy. One element of this change is a desire by women for greater equality in marital relations, which can cause them to raise their expectations in their search for a marriage partner. This can lead to delayed marriage and even to non-marriage if a suitable partner cannot be found (Oppenheimer, 1988).

Parents benefited as well from their daughters' new-found capacity to earn an income. In explaining why parents so quickly abandoned the system of arranged marriages at young ages, in the widely divergent cultural settings of Chinese in Hong Kong, Javanese, and Malays in Peninsular Malaysia, the benefit parents received from the contributions from their earning daughters has been cited as a reason for their growing reluctance to see their daughters marry (and therefore owe their prime responsibility to someone else) at too early an age (Salaff, 1976; Jones, 1994: 146-149).

The much higher rates of non-marriage for educated women reflect the opportunities opened by education. In addition to income-earning opportunities, which free women from their financial reliance on men, in many cases these include opportunities to enter a career that is fulfilling and provides a real alternative to the traditional route to self-fulfillment through marriage and raising a family. For most women, of course, a career and a family are not seen as either/or choices, but rather as roles that can be combined, albeit with some difficulty. As mentioned earlier, though, completion of secondary or higher education by women, as well as giving them career options that may compete with marriage, places them in a category which may well be subject to a real shortage of potential appropriate marriage partners.

The breakdown of traditional arranged marriage systems has been more complete for educated than for less educated women. Parents tended to feel that they could not require educated daughters to acquiesce in an arranged marriage (on rural Malaysia, see Strange, 1981, 104; 231), and such educated daughters were often too busy pursuing a career to engage in the social life that could be expected to place them in close contact with potential partners. In Singapore, it has been seriously argued that the single-minded concentration on their studies and subsequently on building a career has led to the emergence of a generation of educated young people who lack the social skills necessary for interacting with the opposite sex, let alone for courtship and marriage. Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew said in 1983 that Singapore may be doomed by a shrinking talent pool because too many educated women remained single and childless. This led to the rather extraordinary perception that the government needs to become a matchmaker for educated men and women. In 1984 a Social Development Unit was established within the Ministry of Finance, the primary objective of which was to bring together single university graduates by organising tea dances, barbecues, bowling clinics, weekend holiday trips to resorts, computer workshops, and cruises (locally dubbed "love boat cruises") (Cheung, 1988). The degree of success of this effort is difficult to assess⁷.

Another element in some explanations of the decreasing popularity of marriage among high school and college educated women is that traditional marriage had little to commend it from a woman's point of view. In Japan, the stereotype is of the salaryman who leaves early for the office, returning toward midnight from an evening of business-related carousing, expecting his home-bound wife to deal with all the household chores and raise the children in the high-pressure world of 'examination hell', while giving little to her in terms of real intimacy. This stereotype may have contained enough truth to help explain the reluctance of many young, educated Japanese women to give up the relative freedom of their life as working singles (Tsuya and Choe, 1991; Tsuya, 1994). Large proportions of single women "live with their parents, contribute little to household expenses while earning good salaries, and are able to enjoy a relatively carefree and comfortable life style" (Retherford, Ogawa and Matsukura, 2001: 98).

Although it is only in recent years that the proportion of Japanese women agreeing that "women had better marry because women's happiness lies in marriage" has fallen off really sharply⁸ and the proportion expressing discontent with the traditional husband-wife division of labour has increased, Tsuya (1994: 116) argues that the findings of a 1988 survey "indicate that Japanese women are more ambivalent than men about the primacy of marriage, but also more disenchanted with the institution of marriage". The precipitous drop in marriage rates among young Japanese women over the 1980s, in juxtaposition with the survey findings on attitudinal changes, suggests that "women were avoiding marriage because they preferred a period of independence before assuming the onerous status of the Japanese wife and mother" (Tsuya and Mason, 1995: 156)—or possibly were seeking to avoid entering that onerous state at all. Survey data for 1994 show that young Japanese women view the institution of marriage much more negatively than do men (Tsuya, 2000). If the flight from marriage in Japan in the 1980s was dramatic, in the 1990s—from the data presented in Tables 1 and 4—it reached astonishing proportions. Particularly extraordinary is the leap to double-digit rates of never-marriage for males in their late 40s.

Japanese cultural patterns are unique in some respects, but certain factors affecting the desirability of marriage from a woman's point of view are replicated elsewhere in the region. Thus, educated Chinese or Thai women may be growing less tolerant of the lack of intimacy in their marriages and the accepted male patterns of keeping mistresses or visiting the brothels and massage parlours⁹, and they may be using their economic independence to postpone or avoid marriage. The desirability of marriage from a woman's point of view is certainly not enhanced by the cultural expectations in the region that women will continue to do most of the housework and childrearing, even if they work full time (ESCAP 1999), and the lack of government policies to facilitate women's combination of childrearing and full-time work¹⁰.

Jakarta provides an interesting case study of marriage arrangements in a state of flux. Indonesian society continues to give very high priority to marrying and having children, and an unmarried woman is seen as 'incomplete'. Nevertheless, the behaviour of many women is "drifting away from officially recognized social norms" (Hull, 2002: 11). In Jakarta, the proportion of time that reproductive-age women spend not being married is rising—from less than a third to almost a half of their potentially reproductive life. Because the prevalence of widowhood and divorce at these ages has fallen sharply, almost all of this non-married time is now being spent in a never-married state (Hull, 2002: Table 4). Educational levels are rising, as are work opportunities for females. Traditional parental arrangement of marriage has largely

broken down, but an open defiance of parental wishes is difficult for many young people. An additional complication is the multi-ethnic, multi-religious composition of the Jakarta population. Pressures to marry young still exist, and certainly to marry eventually, but many young women are resisting them. Better-educated women are more fussy, and do not always succeed in finding what they consider to be a suitable husband. Economically many of them do not need a husband, but in terms of social pressure, life is much more comfortable if they have one. Social groups meeting in expensive hotels exist to serve as a kind of ‘singles meeting place’ for the wealthier segments of society. High school educated women are perhaps less choosy, but even here there are many obstacles to marriage.

From the author’s limited fieldwork in middle-income areas on the outskirts of Jakarta, many cases were found of women who delayed marriage into their 30s or even beyond despite having a steady relationship with a man. The main categories of reasons seemed to be:

- Economic pressures—the uncertainty of income for both partners in a relationship.
- The partners had different religions, and for this reason or others the parents of one or both disapproved of the relationship.
- The male partner in the relationship was already married, with children, and the woman accepted his desire not to break that marriage.

It might be argued that partners who did not marry because of parental pressure were not very ‘emancipated’ in their attitudes. This perhaps underestimates the degree of pressure parents are able to apply. In the case of one couple, both aged in their late 20s, the man’s mother regularly threatened to commit suicide if they married.

Some Implications of the Increase in Non-Marriage

There is a great deal we do not know about the living patterns of never-married men and women in their 30s and 40s. Most basically, we do not know the extent to which non-marriage may be offset by marriage-like living together arrangements. In Western countries, declining incidence of marriage has been largely but not completely offset by such *de facto* relationships (Bracher and Santow, 1989). This appears to be much less the case in East and South-East Asia, but there is very little hard evidence. We do know that in Thailand, in 1990 73% of never-married women aged 40-44 lived in a household headed by a relative (presumably normally a parent). The proportion who headed their own household (14%) was rather small. Those living alone (8 per cent) were even fewer, though this proportion had doubled from 4% 20 years earlier.

Many issues of life style, norms of appropriate female behaviour and role modelling have emerged. Unlike the situation three or four decades ago, young women completing their education these days see all around them examples of women who are defying traditional views of women's roles: they are in the work force, earning money, leading independent lives, remaining single at ages far beyond traditional norms. Their own parents no longer expect to play much of a role, if any, in selection of their marriage partner, or indeed in pushing them towards marriage when they reach what parents consider to be an appropriate age. They also see around them examples of singles life styles, of women living together with a male partner without marrying, and of working women who accept the role of mistress or minor wife of a married man. Just how frequent such cases are, however, is unclear.

The extension of adolescence through delayed marriage has now become a major preoccupation of parents, community leaders and government policy makers throughout South-East and East Asia. Extended adolescence brought with it the issues of dating, premarital sexual relations, unwanted pregnancies, abortions, STDs and AIDS and appropriate policies to deal with all of these (Xenos, 1990). There is ample evidence that premarital sexual relations are on the increase (Rindfuss and Morgan, 1983; Sly, Wu and Rahman, 1994). Governments in the region have had great difficulty coming to terms with changing mores and sexual behaviour of adolescents, and unmarried adolescents in turn have great difficulty in obtaining contraceptive advice and services.

But the evidence presented in this paper is that the issue of contraception for the unmarried is not just an issue about adolescents, but it also concerns increasing numbers of women and men in their 20s, 30s and 40s. Indeed, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that what is being discussed in this paper is a period well beyond that of extended adolescence—a period of mature adulthood, extending even to the end of the reproductive period. In many East and South-East Asian countries, those going through this mature unmarried period in the past decade or two have been pioneers. They have had to grapple with issues of life style without much guidance from role models, in a context of uncertainty about whether they will ultimately marry or not. As the community comes to terms with increased non-marriage, future cohorts will have more "case history" to guide them.

In relation to traditional views about women's roles and gender relationships, the pattern of career-building and non-marriage followed by a growing minority of women in the region (and particularly prevalent among the better-educated) is posing

a number of heartaches for traditionalists. In traditional society throughout East and South-East Asia, women's growing financial independence and autonomy in other areas of life has posed major issues of self-image for many men. Job openings in many of the rapidly changing economies of the region seem to be favouring women, so that in some regions at least, men feel that they are being left with the dead end jobs. This is hard to take for brothers, male village acquaintances who have also made the move to the city, and fathers who rely on contributions from working daughters to make ends meet, because traditional views on women's roles die hard (Jones, 1994: 146-149). Yet whatever life style these increasingly independent young women have chosen to adopt, on the whole they remain responsible daughters, contributing to family income whether or not they continue to live at home. It is widely recognized throughout the region that daughters are much more reliable contributors to family finances than are sons (Jones, 1994: 146-149; Ong, 1987; Pramualratana, 1990: 170-180; Singhanetra-Renard and Prabhudhanitisarn, 1992; Phongpaichit, 1982, 1993; Trager, 1984; Lauby and Stark, 1988).

Another major impact of increasing non-marriage has been on fertility levels. It is significant that fertility has fallen to very low levels (well below replacement level) in the big cities of the region, particularly Bangkok, Singapore, Taipei, Kuala Lumpur (Chinese and Indian population) and Hong Kong, where (except in Taipei) non-marriage rates are the highest¹¹. Studies which have disaggregated fertility declines into their component factors have identified falling proportions ever married at any given age as having played a considerable part in the fertility declines in the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and Peninsular Malaysia between 1960 and 1970, and in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia between 1970 and 1980, although only in Malaysia did the contribution of the marriage component in any way rival that of the marital fertility component (Caldwell, McDonald and Ruzicka, 1980; Hirschman and Guest, 1990).

With the increasing prevalence of non-marriage in so many parts of Asia over the 1980s, the contribution of this factor to fertility decline is almost certainly increasing. This is the case in Japan, for example, where standard demographic decomposition of changes in the total fertility rate indicates that in the 1975-90 period (in sharp contrast to the period which preceded it), the overall fertility decline was due solely to decreases in the proportion of women currently married (Tsuya and Mason, 1995: 147). Given the pressures contributing to low marital fertility in big cities of the region, the increasing non-marriage rates seem certain to ensure that fertility will remain well below replacement level, and eventually metropolitan populations will only be maintained through in-migration.

Finally, in the context of ageing populations in the region, do the trends in non-marriage have any implications for the future patterns of care for the elderly? As women are normally the caregivers, the answer will depend, among other things, on living arrangements of never-marrying women. If they remain at home with parents, they will be potentially available for caring activities, at least in their non-working hours. But those who live independently, particularly if they pursue a career, may be less able, or less disposed, to make themselves available for the care of ageing parents. Though the specifics of living arrangements will be highly relevant, the key issue in care for the aged is probably the degree of involvement of women in the paid labour force, whether they are married or not. Greater involvement in the labour force reduces availability of time and energy for caring activities; as non-married women have the highest labour force participation rates, this is likely to be a particular issue for them. But whether changes in attitudes towards women's role as caregivers will

also accompany the trend towards high levels of permanent non-marriage, and if so, how this will affect patterns of care for the elderly, remains to be seen.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

Leete has described the trends among the overseas Chinese populations of South-East Asia as a "major flight from marriage" (Leete, 1993:4). The description can be generalized beyond this particular population group, to include populations such as the Thai, the Burmese, and even the Malays of Brunei, Singapore and Malaysia. Significantly, high non-marriage rates are not confined to particular religious groups; they can be found in populations of the region that are predominantly Buddhist, Catholic, and Muslim. Recent trends appear to foreshadow permanent non-marriage rates of 15 per cent or more among some of these populations, at least in the cities, where an increasing proportion of the population lives. Such rates would not be unique in historical terms. For example, in Scotland during the late nineteenth century some 20 per cent of women aged 45-49 remained never married, in Belgium and Switzerland during the first decade of the present century, about 18 per cent were never married, and in Ireland in the late 1930s almost 30 per cent of such women remained never married (Anderson and Morse, 1993; United Nations, 1990, Tables 1 and 2). But after World War II, there was a major recovery in marriage in Europe, and rates of non-marriage declined sharply. The difference between the flight from marriage in parts of Asia and the European situation in the first decades of the twentieth century is that in Asia, it occurred at a time of economic prosperity, whereas in Europe the popularity of marriage traditionally increased at such times (Leete, 1996: 151).

Marriage still remains near-universal in some large populations of East and South-East Asia, including Indonesia and China, despite all the pressures toward later marriage in China¹². Continuing low levels of non-marriage in Korea are a puzzle, given its spectacular economic growth and high levels of education, which appear to have been related to increasing levels of non-marriage in other countries of the region. The 2000 data, however, do appear to show a belated upsurge in non-marriage in the cohort of Koreans passing through their early 30s. Although it would be premature to imply that the "flight from marriage" is sweeping the entire region, even in countries such as Indonesia, levels of never-marriage are increasing and are distinctly higher in cities and among the better-educated, the groups whose share of the total population is rapidly increasing. Continuing increase in levels of non-marriage can be expected on these grounds alone.

At the other end of the scale, rates of non-marriage in some of the large cities of the region are among the highest in the world, and are almost certain to rise further as a result of compositional changes in the population. The intriguing question is whether these high rates of non-marriage will be long-term (even permanent), and if so, whether they will be modified in practice by increasing rates of consensual partnering. The evidence to hand does not provide a definitive answer to either of these questions. What does appear to be clear is that increasing numbers of women in the region are questioning whether the kinds of marriages to which they can aspire really have much to offer them, and are staying away from marriage in droves.

Policies relating to households in the region need to take into account the great range of household types and living arrangements. The stereotypical household—a happy family of two parents and a few children, perhaps with a grandparent and a cousin as well, represents a declining proportion of all households. The average number of members per household is declining, largely as a result of falling birth

rates. There are also single parent households resulting from divorce, separation or death of the spouse, single person households, and group households whose members have no family relationship. We do not know enough about the prevalence of different household types, the reasons for changing mix of household types, or the implications for child rearing, care of the elderly, and inter-generational relations.

Given that an increasing proportion of people in their 20s, 30s and 40s are remaining unmarried, it is crucial to have more information about their life styles, sexual activity, opinions about marriage and aspirations more generally. What institutional changes and changes in values are promoting delayed marriage and non-marriage? If it is desirable to modify the trends, what policy options are available? Japan is relatively rich in survey data bearing on arrangement of marriage, premarital sex, and attitudes towards marriage and family formation (see sources used by Retherford, Ogawa and Matsukura, 2001). Some survey data are also available for Singapore (Quah, 1998). A recent report for the Philippines has increased understanding of these issues, at least for adolescents (Raymundo, Xenos and Domingo (eds), 1999). But most countries in the region have relatively little such information on a national basis. More research of this kind is urgently needed as a basis for assessing the situation and formulating policy options.

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Notes

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- ¹ It is tempting to analyze cohort trends in this table, but this requires great caution, because in the context of high rates of migration, the group of women aged, say, 40-44 in 1990 includes a great number who, when aged 30-34 in 1980, were not living in the city; and conversely, many who were included in the 30-34 age group in 1980 have since moved elsewhere.
 - ² Although it is a country, Singapore is included in the "city" section of this figure, and in Table 2 rather than Table 1, because it is a city state.
 - ³ There has actually been a *decrease* over time in proportions never-married among the more highly educated group, particularly for women aged 40-44. This is not easy to interpret. It could mean changes over time in actual marriage prospects, but it could also have to do with the smallness of this group in earlier years, and its more homogeneous social background compared with the expanded group of better-educated women in recent years.
 - ⁴ In the early 1900s, the percentage never-married among men aged 45-49 was over 10 per cent in the U.K., Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States. It was even higher in Australia, where migration flows had led to unbalanced sex ratios in the late 1800s, the time these men could have been expected to marry (United Nations, 1990, Table 1; Borrie, 1994: 168).
 - ⁵ The concept of 'marriage squeeze' is sometimes debunked on the grounds that it tends to exaggerate the rigidity of preferences for age differences between spouses (Ni Bhrolchain, 2001). However, it becomes a more potent concept when interpreted to apply to readily available mates of 'appropriate' ethnic group and educational level, particularly in situations where sub-groups of the population are heavily represented in migration to cities and (e.g. in the case of the Philippines) in overseas labour migration.
 - ⁶ This point was made by the head of the Women's Advisory Group on the Integration of Women in Development, Datuk Hajah Zakiah Hanum (Jones, 1994: 152).
 - ⁷ A spokeswoman for the Social Development Unit claimed some of the credit for the fact that 1,643 pairs of college graduates had married in 1991, compared with only 704 in 1984 (Canberra Times 9/2/1993). From 1990 to 1996, an average of 91 marriages a year took place between SDU members as a result of SDU activities, rising to an average of 352 a year between 1997 and 2002. (Unpublished information supplied by Social Development Unit). Assessment of whether these figures represent 'success' or 'failure' would require more knowledge about membership of the SDU, and of the size of the pool of unmarried graduates in Singapore.
 - ⁸ This proportion, based on a series of national opinion surveys, declined from 40 per cent in 1972 to 32 per cent in 1979, 28 per cent in 1987 and 14 per cent in 1990 (Tsuya and Choe, 1991, Table 15).
 - ⁹ For a discussion of attitudes towards male sexual behaviour in Thailand, see Havanon et al., 1993; VanLandingham *et al.*, 1995. Two studies in Thailand, one in Bangkok and the other in rural areas, indicate that women are less satisfied with their marriages than men, and are more likely to have thought of divorce (Edwards *et al.*, 1992; Limanonda, 1991).
 - ¹⁰ For a discussion of this issue in relation to Western populations, see McDonald, 2000.
 - ¹¹ In some of these cities, TFR is very low indeed: 1.2 in Bangkok, according to analysis based on the 2000 Population Census, and 1.4 in Singapore in 2001. Manila is an exception. Although fertility there is well below the level in the rest of the Philippines, the TFR at 2.5 remains above replacement level (Costello and Casterline, 2002: 4).
 - ¹² Although the mean age at first marriage was pushed up in China by the late marriage campaign in the late 1970s and early 1980s, it declined somewhat when the campaign was relaxed, though it remained well above the level of the 1960s and early 1970s. But almost all women continued to be married by age 30 (Wang and Tuma, 1993; Lee and Wong, 1999: Table 5.2).