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# Marriage, family labour and the stem family household: traditional Japan in a comparative perspective

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## INTRODUCTION

John Hajnal's classic essay published in 1965 on European marriage patterns contrasted western with eastern Europe in terms of age at marriage and proportion never-married. In a more recent article, 'Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation system', which is indeed a development from his 1965 essay, the life-cycle is taken into explicit consideration by use of the concept of household formation. In addition, he makes some geographical alterations to his previous argument: the 'West' is narrowly defined to cover 'north-west' European countries, whereas the 'East' now extends beyond the eastern European boundaries to Asian countries such as China and India.<sup>1</sup>

To this formulation there can be two kinds of response from scholars specializing in the Far East, especially traditional Japan. One is concerned with the lack of full discussion of a stem family system in Hajnal's article. He suggests that while some versions of this system are 'compatible with the general north-west European household formation rules' and some others are not, '[n]o kind of stem family system can be classified as a joint household system';<sup>2</sup> but unfortunately, no detailed stem family household formation rules are specified, nor is there any discussion of Japan's family system, which has been regarded as a typical example of the stem type.

In Japanese etymology both the household and the house (building) are called *ie*. Yet, as Chie Nakane stresses, 'the *ie* is not simply a contemporary [i.e. currently existing] household as its English counterpart suggests, but

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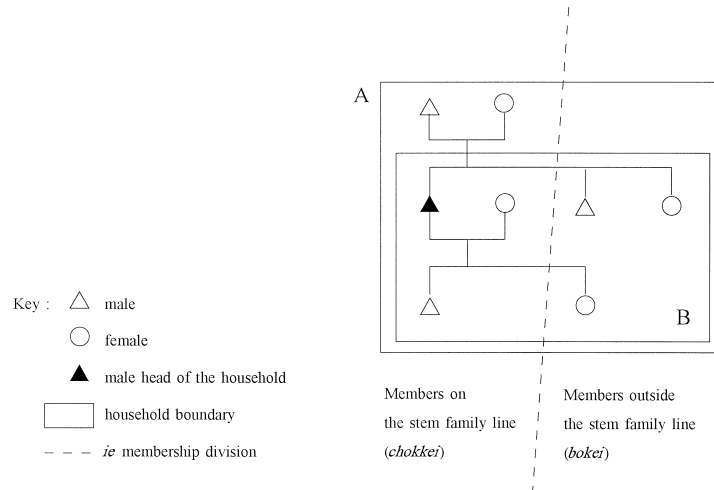


FIGURE 1. Ariga's model of the *ie*. (Source: Adapted from Kizaemon Ariga, *Nihon no kazoku* (Tokyo, 1965), pp. 67-8).

is conceptualized in the time continuum from past to future, including not only the actual residential members but also dead members, with some projection also towards those yet unborn'.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, as is stressed by Yoshikazu Hasegawa and associates in their sociological analysis of Tokugawa villages, the title to rights (*kabu*) in the village community was attached to the *ie*, not to the head of the *ie* as an individual.<sup>4</sup> Crucially important for such a system, therefore, is a rule specifying who are immediate members of the *ie* and who are not. According to the sociologist Kizaemon Ariga, family members are divided into, first, 'persons socially recognized as being related in the family line, *chokkei*, in which successors, their spouses and possible successors are included', and secondly 'members socially recognized as being outside the family line, *bokei*, under which all other family members, including relatives and servants, are grouped'.<sup>5</sup> (See Figure 1.) It should be noted that not just those who have formed a separate household are outside the family line, but also non-heir children are regarded as *bokei* even when they still remain in the household; thus, the son-heir enjoys a 'higher social status' than his non-heir siblings. It should also be noted that the coresidence of the head's parent(s) does not affect this membership division; it runs even in a simple family household. It implies that both households A (stem type) and B (simple type) in Figure 1 can be regarded as successive stages in the same family's life-cycle. This dynamic household structure requires further consideration of the way in which household formation and other family life-cycle events shaped traditional Japanese families. Laurel

Cornell addressed this issue in a recent article, which will be examined in full in Section II below.<sup>6</sup>

The second approach to Hajnal's conceptualization of family systems from a non-European perspective is to draw a parallel from within the East Asian scene. This is exactly what Arthur Wolf and Susan Hanley did in their contribution to a 1985 book entitled *Family and population in East Asian history*. Referring to Hajnal's 1965 essay on marriage patterns, they contend that the contrast in Europe has 'an East Asian parallel', which is that 'China is to Japan as Eastern is to Western Europe', suggesting that the 'Japanese family system was a stem system of the Western European type' with relatively small and simple family size and structure and a comparatively late age at marriage.<sup>7</sup>

Wolf and Hanley are quite right in stressing that the family systems of the two East Asian countries were structurally very different. Their view on the Chinese family and marriage patterns is authoritative, but their comparison between Japan and western Europe is more doubtful. To what extent, one may ask, did traditional Japan's marriage pattern resemble that of north-western Europe? To what extent were households in Tokugawa Japan similar in size and structure to their north-west European counterparts; and how can traditional Japanese household formation rules be articulated in terms of the 'rules' of the north-west European household formation system? These are the questions which have to be answered before we accept the Wolf-Hanley suggestion, which will be examined in the subsequent sections of this article.

On the other hand, there can be a diametrically different view, a view which stresses that traditional Japan should be placed closer to the other pole, that is to the joint type of family formation system. This view is not baseless, for there were in almost every village at least a few families which often adopted a joint form at points in their family history and, given levels of mortality in the past, it might be that the observed simple and stem family households were just unrealized exemplars of the joint household ideal. Although even a cursory look at the evidence shows that this claim is not tenable, an examination of this view will certainly clarify the *workings* of the stem system of household formation and the family life-cycle. To this issue I shall return at the end of Section III.

In short, this article is an attempt not just to enhance our understanding of the traditional family system and its corresponding family life-cycle pattern of one country in the Far East, but also to make a contribution to the question of the general applicability of the Hajnal model, and thereby to our understanding of the European patterns.

## I. THE JAPANESE MARRIAGE PATTERN

Let me begin with a critical examination of the sweeping conclusions of Wolf and Hanley. Their argument is based on a sample of mean age at marriage data for several Tokugawa villages, which, according to the two scholars, indicate that Tokugawa women married relatively late, at a little over 23, and hence that, as far as the marriage pattern is concerned, ‘China is non-European but Japan is European.’ Their conclusion regarding the Japan–Europe comparison is therefore that ‘where Western European families limited their fertility by a combination of late marriage and celibacy, the Japanese accomplished the same end by a combination of late marriage and deliberate birth control’.<sup>8</sup>

Their claim is in fact two-fold: one aspect concerns the marriage pattern, while the other links nuptiality to fertility. Thus, before examining in detail Tokugawa marriage pattern data, it is probably worth having a glance at some figures for nuptiality and fertility levels in later periods in a comparative perspective. Table 1 shows estimates of the Princeton indices of proportion married ( $I_m$ ), marital fertility ( $I_g$ ) and overall fertility ( $I_f$ ) for Japan in 1913.<sup>9</sup>  $I_m$  stood at 0.720 (the figure has been adjusted for age-composition differences),  $I_g$  at 0.572 and  $I_f$  at 0.398. Compared with the figures listed in the same table for European countries, it emerges that Meiji women’s nuptiality was slightly lower than the pre-war Chinese and Korean levels, but not so low as that of the western Europeans; it was comparable to those for European Russia and Central Asia. Yet the level of Meiji marital fertility was substantially lower than the Russian level, and even below that of the majority of the European nations; it was comparable to that of China and Korea. The compound effect of these two measures is that the overall fertility of Japan was lower than that of the Russians and, to a lesser extent, lower than that of other East Asians, but not much different from that of the west. Take for example England, which has been portrayed as a consistently low-fertility country among European populations. According to the Wilson–Woods estimates, the quarter-century average of  $I_g$  fluctuated within the narrow range of 0.633 (in 1726–1750) and 0.67 (in 1851–1875) throughout the period from the mid-sixteenth century to the onset of the modern decline in fertility, that is in the 1870s. The  $I_g$  value for Japan was only 90 per cent of the English lower boundary, which strongly suggests that Japan’s marital fertility in earlier periods was substantially below western European levels. Recent historiography has stressed,<sup>10</sup> as Wolf and Hanley indicate, that such low fertility in the Tokugawa era was achieved largely by family limitation through abortion and infanticide. Moreover, putting various pieces of evidence together, it seems that there must have been a slight but apparent

TABLE 1

*Princeton indices of proportion married ( $I_m$ ), marital fertility ( $I_g$ ) and overall fertility ( $I_f$ ): Japan in comparison with European and Asian countries*

<i>Area and year</i>	<i>Princeton indices</i>		
	$I_m$	$I_g$	$I_f$
(1) Japan, 1913	0.720	0.572	0.398
(2) England			
1726–1750	0.513	0.633	0.333
1851–1875	0.502	0.670	0.359
(3) 19th-century European continent (13 countries)	0.458	0.700	0.347
(4) European Russia, 1897	0.696	0.755	0.540
Central Asia, 1897	0.718	0.742	0.545
(5) China, 1929–1931	0.874	0.510	0.446
Taiwan, 1915	0.785	0.597	0.468
Korea, 1930	0.893	0.562	0.501

*Source and notes:*

(1) Shinichi, Takahasi ‘Meiji-ki Nihon no shushoryoku ni tsuite: honseki jinko to seimeihyo seizanritsu ni yoru suikei’, *Kokumin keizai zasshi* **148** (November 1983), pp. 31, 34, 37. Allowance is made for possible underregistration of births for the period before the first national census of 1920. Takahashi uses various survival ratios to estimate the total number of births. The index of marital fertility reported above is the estimate on the high side for that year.

(2) C. Wilson and R. I. Woods, ‘Fertility in England: a long-term perspective’, *Population Studies* **45** (1991), p. 403.

(3) Average of 13 western European countries on the continent in the nineteenth century. They are: Austria in 1880, Belgium in 1846, Denmark in 1852, Finland in 1880, France in 1831, Germany in 1867, Italy in 1864, Netherlands in 1859, Norway in 1875, Portugal in 1864, Spain in 1887, Sweden in 1880, and Switzerland in 1860. For each country, the earliest date for which the estimates are available is selected. See A. J. Coale and S. C. Watkins eds, *The decline of fertility in Europe: the revised proceedings of a conference on the Princeton European Fertility Project* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 80–152. The standard deviations of each entry are 0.064, 0.065 and 0.038 respectively.

(4) A.J. Coale, B. Anderson and E. Härm, *Human fertility in Russia since the nineteenth century* (Princeton, 1979), pp. 21, 86.

(5) G.W. Barclay, A.J. Coale, M.A. Stoto and T.J. Trussell, ‘A reassessment of the demography of traditional rural China’, *Population Index* **42** (1976), p. 616.

rise in fertility from the second quarter of the nineteenth century onwards. We do not know to what extent a gradual abandonment of infanticide accounted for this rise in fertility. What we do know is that this trend continued up to the early 1910s, and the estimates of the Princeton indices of fertility for Japan are compared with those of European and other Asian countries in Table 1. The fact that the level of Japan’s marital fertility was comparatively low, even in a period in which infanticide was

supposedly less widespread than in former Tokugawa times, suggests therefore that there must have been other structural factors accounting for Tokugawa Japan's low fertility levels.<sup>11</sup>

Table 1 indicates that the proportion married ( $I_m$ ) in Japan was far higher than that of western European countries. It was slightly lower than those of other East Asian countries and was comparable to that of Central Asia in the Russian Empire. Although  $I_m$  is not a perfect measure of the age at first marriage (nor of celibacy), this comparison may suffice to question the claim that Tokugawa families limited their fertility by late marriage, another cornerstone of the Wolf–Hanley argument. Was Tokugawa Japan actually characterized by late marriage in that a systematic tabulation of mean age at first marriage data would lend support to their conclusion? And how should the celibacy factors be fitted into their argument?

When Wolf and Hanley suggested that Japanese women married at slightly over 23 years, they based their judgement on several community studies, a majority of which are from Hanley's own work on four Tokugawa villages.<sup>12</sup> A close look at her work, however, reveals that her figures for mean age at first marriage were calculated by pooling all marriages appearing in the population registers, with apparent remarriages excluded. The averages were derived from populations for whom there is no explicit mention in the source material that they were all first marriages. Each includes some grooms and brides who had married into the community from other villages, an expedient frequently used to enhance the sample size in studies in which a data set was too small. It may well be, therefore, that some cases have been included in which an in-marrying man or woman may actually have been married previously in another village. Indeed, Hanley did make an alternative calculation by excluding women who married at ages over 30, considering the possibility that their marriages may have been in fact second marriages. By excluding women over 30, the mean drops by 1.6 years.<sup>13</sup>

Table 2 looks at the findings from other village studies for which mean figures calculated by excluding those marrying in can be compared with averages of all marriage cases. (The table includes one case, Nomo, for which such a comparison cannot be made. This is because Nomo's mean age at first marriage for females is the highest of all so far known.) The table indicates that the difference between the means in the two columns of the table is not negligible, ranging from 2 to 0.7 years. Undoubtedly, the inclusion of women marrying in from outside has overstated the mean age at first marriage in Tokugawa villages.<sup>14</sup> Secondly, the table shows that there were substantial regional differences, lower in the east and the north-east, and higher in the west and the south-west. It is particularly

TABLE 2  
*Women's age at first marriage in Tokugawa villages*

<i>Location</i>	<i>Age at first marriage</i>	
	<i>All cases including those marrying in from outside</i>	<i>Native-born only</i>
North-east		
(1) Shimomoriya and Niita	16.7	14.7
Central		
(2) Nishijo	22.5	21.0
(3) Six Nobi villages	21.5	19.5
West		
(4) Shibuki	23.4	22.7
(5) Nomo	—	24.9

*Notes:* (1) All ages are adjusted to the Western equivalents by subtracting one year when findings are reported in Japanese *sai*.

(2) In the cases of (1), (2) and (5), 'native-born' women include 'those who first appeared in the population register well before marriage'.

(3) The six Nobi villages in (3) include Nishijo.

(4) For the case of Nomo, see text.

*Source:* (1), (2) and (5): S. Kurosu, N. O. Tsuya and K. Hamano, 'Regional differentials in the patterns of first marriage in the latter half of Tokugawa Japan', *Keio Economic Studies* 36 (1999), Table 2. (3): Akira Hayami, 'Kinsei Nobi-chiho nomin no jinkogakuteki kansatsu: 4600 kumi no kazoku fukugen o tsujite', *Tokugawa Rinseishi Kenkyujo Kenkyu kiyō* (1979), p. 300. (4): Workings by Kiyoshi Hamano.

noteworthy that in the two north-eastern villages the mean was a little lower than 15, and that even in some villages of central Japan it was below age 20. Clearly Hanley's sample was not representative of the situation in Tokugawa Japan. Thirdly, nonetheless, it should not be overlooked that in some areas the mean age at first marriage for females could exceed the 23-year mark. In Shibuki, a village at the western corner of Honshu, the mean was close to that mark while the figure for Nomo, a fishing village in Kyushu, the southern-most island of Japan, stood as high as 24.9.

What conditions drove the mean marriage age closer to the levels in traditional western Europe? Satomi Kurosu, Noriko Tsuya and Kiyoshi Hamano suggest in an article that the mode of production may have shaped the patterns of Nomo women's first marriage 'as fishing was at variance to the agrarian economies in other regions'.<sup>15</sup> Another possibility is that it was a phenomenon associated with a south-western type of family form. In some areas in Kyushu, it is documented that ultimogeniture was practised, combined in most cases with partible inheritance. Yet, little is known about how this succession practice was



linked to women's marriage patterns.<sup>16</sup> While economic and social factors affecting such wide regional differentials in women's age at marriage are a subject for future research, it should be noted here that all mean ages calculated from the village population registers are bound to be somewhat overstated, even if dubious marrying-in cases are excluded. As Hanley herself noted, the consummation of a marriage in the Tokugawa village usually took place 'some months before the date it [i. e. the marriage] was recorded'. Indeed, 'brides married, became pregnant, and then recorded the marriage in that order, rather than becoming pregnant and subsequently marrying, as is apt to happen today'.<sup>17</sup> What we have to realize is that this custom tends to overstate mean age at marriage. As late as 1938, according to a survey conducted in the city of Tokyo, the mean time lag between the wedding ceremony and the civil registration of marriage was well over 11 months for most of the occupational groups, such as craftsmen and shopkeepers, factory workers and labourers.<sup>18</sup> It is likely that the lag may have been even longer for peasant couples in a period when no formal civil registration had been established. In Nomo, the proportion of out-of-wedlock childbearing was very high in the 15–24 age group, but since many of those single mothers did eventually marry,<sup>19</sup> the actual mean age at consummation among such 'marriages' may well have been well below 23.

As for male age at first marriage, a question upon which Wolf and Hanley were silent, it seems that the level in Tokugawa Japan was comparatively high. The mean male figures for corresponding villages is 19.5 in Shimomoriya and Niita, 28.9 in Nishijo, 27.0 in the six Nobi villages and 28.5 in Shibuki (all for the native-born only; no data are available for Nomo). Although the north-eastern level was very low, the simple average of the other three cases is 28.1. According to Hajnal's 1983 essay, the 'north-west European' marriage pattern was characterized by mean ages of 'over 26 for men and over about 23 for women'.<sup>20</sup> It is therefore evident that Japan was generally 'non-European', although if men alone are considered, their mean age at marriage would probably fall on the borderline between the two patterns.

Turning to the question of celibacy, evidence from the Tokugawa period is unfortunately extremely scanty. However, one of the few studies to deal with this subject reached a very interesting conclusion. According to Thomas Smith's in-depth research on Nakahara, 1717–1830, which employs a technique devised by Louis Henry to estimate the probability of celibacy at various ages while controlling for migration and mortality, the probability of Nakahara males remaining single at age 50 was 0.12 with a mean age at first marriage of 27.1 years. With respect to women, Smith notes that '[i]n contrast to males, females born and reared in

Nakahara married early and almost universally', with the probability of celibacy being 0.04 and a mean age at first marriage of 19.9 years.<sup>21</sup> It is a little surprising to see such an imbalance between the proportions of each sex remaining celibate and their respective mean ages at marriage. But as far as the marriage pattern of women is concerned, at least it confirms what we know. As late as 1920 when the first national census was taken, within the age group 45–49, 2.3 per cent of men and 1.9 per cent of women were single (according to one of the tables in Hajnal's 1965 article).<sup>22</sup> In 1879 when a pilot census survey was conducted in the prefecture of Yamanashi, the percentages single aged 45–49 were 3.2 and 1.5 respectively.<sup>23</sup> Celibacy was negligible for both sexes in larger samples. It is therefore not easy to explain why the sex differential in celibacy was so great in the village population of Nakahara. Smith's detailed tabulation of the longitudinal data reveals that if men and women from small-holding families are considered separately, the frequency of male celibacy at age 50 was much greater (0.28 compared with 0.10 and 0.04 for medium- and large-holding families respectively) while their mean age at first marriage works out at 28.2 years (against 26.9 and 26.7 years for the other two landholding groups). For women from small-holding families, the probability of celibacy at age 50 was 0.09 (compared with 0 and 0.06 for the other two groups) with a mean age at first marriage of 22.6 years (against 20.4 and 17.6 years for the other two groups). Moreover, while 33 per cent of men from large-holding families were married by age 25 and 96 per cent by age 50, just 12 per cent of small-holders were married by age 25, and no more than 72 per cent were married by the age of 50. In the case of women, the percentage married by the age of 25 differed widely between large- and small-holder families, 90 and 36 per cent respectively, whereas the difference in this percentage narrowed by the ages of 50, 94 and 91 per cent respectively. For men, the class differential was wider in respect of celibacy than for age at marriage, but the reverse applied to women.<sup>24</sup> It might be, therefore, that the impact on marriageable-age women of economic disadvantage was to delay marriage, whereas poor men might never marry.

However, a recent work by Kiyoshi Hamano, Satomi Kurosu and Shuma Morimoto on Nishijo, one of the neighbouring villages of Nakahara, has revealed a rather different pattern.<sup>25</sup> By using a series of population registers that are far more accurate than the Nakahara ones, the authors demonstrate that the celibacy rate for Nishijo men at age 50 was 10 per cent, a little lower than that for Nakahara men, but the percentage for small-holders was not as high (at 9 per cent) as Smith suggested. Nishijo's celibacy rate for women was higher than that for men, at 13 per cent, and as many as 22 per cent of those from small-holder

households remained unmarried until age 50. A scrutiny of individual cases of those never-married reveals that a majority of them were in service in other villages for a long period, and that there were more females than males in this position. Since no register contains information about the current marital status of a person listed, it is impossible to know whether such a long-term servant had 'married' while he or she was away from the village. Indeed, there were two instances in which an 'unmarried' man (coincidentally both were aged 42), registered a child as his own. It is, therefore, not entirely unlikely that the actual celibacy rates for both Nakahara and Nishijo were somewhat lower than the calculated figures. Such dubious cases concern more small-holders than wealthy landholders. However, what is certain about class differentials is that sons and daughters of small-holders were more likely to be absent from the village for a longer period, and it was individuals such as these whose marital status cannot be determined from the village population registers.

Unfortunately there is no other detailed work to confirm our findings. More research is needed to see how the male and female marriage markets worked in the Tokugawa period. What seems unlikely is that Japanese women might have freely decided not to marry and instead pursued an independent existence during their life course. In this respect, it is not possible to claim that traditional Japan belonged to the European marriage pattern.

## II. THE STEM FAMILY HOUSEHOLD FORMATION SYSTEM

Behind any marriage pattern there is likely to be a specific form of family system. Thus Wolf and Hanley state that 'the Japanese family system was a stem system of the Western European type'.<sup>26</sup> This is a misleading statement since it is now unambiguously clear that the predominant western European system was a simple family type, which was not always compatible with the stem type. Indeed, Hajnal notes in his 1983 article that there were two types of stem system, one being the type that was compatible with the simple family system, and the other one that was not. For example, the so-called stem forms found widely in pre-industrial north-western Europe were cases in which, according to the prevalent custom, 'one of the sons marries and takes over the farm on the retirement of his father'. This pattern was, according to Hajnal, compatible with the general north-west European household formation rules. On the other hand, there was a second type of stem family system in which 'the old household head does not retire when his heir marries. According to Hajnal this type of family falls into *neither* of the two major kinds of system' (*italics added*).<sup>27</sup> The Japanese stem family system belonged to the latter

category, the one not compatible with either of the simple or joint family household formation systems.

When equating the Japanese family system with the western-European one, Wolf and Hanley did not discuss how household formation in Japan was governed by a set of rules and strategies. Their failure to do so was unfortunate since otherwise it would have led them to consider the life-cycle pattern in stem families. There do exist a couple of works, however, that have ventured to formulate how Japan's stem family system worked. Chie Nakane referred to a distinct set of rules governing the succession in the traditional Japanese *ie* system, distinct either from, say, the English simple family or the Indian grand family type. Laurel Cornell has looked more closely, in relation to the Hajnal paradigm, at what might have been the rules of household formation under the Japanese system. Their accounts may be summarized as follows:<sup>28</sup>

(1) Under the *ie* system, one son remains in the parents' household, but others have to leave (what Nakane calls 'one-son succession' rule). The *ie* system's well-defined boundary (as is shown in Figure 1) runs between the son-heir and other siblings, as is suggested in the proverb: 'The sibling is the beginning of the stranger.'<sup>29</sup>

(2) The marriage of the son-heir does not necessarily mean that he assumes the headship and management of the *ie*. The takeover 'can take place at any time between the marriage of the heir and the death of his predecessor',<sup>30</sup> but usually occurs at a given time according to local or familial traditions.

(3) The marriage pattern of the heir and his siblings may diverge: given rule 1, above, it is likely that those who stay in the household tend to marry early and those who leave tend to marry later.

(4) It is only the marriages of the latter group of non-heir sons which depend on economic conditions, in particular both land accessibility and job opportunities, but usually the latter.

Nakane's insight came from her field work in both India and Japan and some documentary evidence for Tokugawa Japan, while Cornell based her argument on her own research on one Tokugawa village in the county of Suwa, Yokouchi, although she cited other data. Generally, therefore, it appears safe at this stage to accept the above statements as accurate. From a cross-cultural perspective, the significance is that both Nakane and Cornell have pointed out that the propositions set out above explain the slightly larger mean household size in Tokugawa Japan than in pre-industrial north-western Europe. Furthermore, the above propositions are consistent with the observations in the previous section of this article that whereas the pattern of female marriage in traditional Japan was in no way European, the mean age at male marriage was 'intermediate' and the

level of male celibacy was not unusual in cases where local economic conditions seem to have been unfavourable.

However, if there is one point that could be debatable in relation to the above four-point hypothesis, it is rule 4. Indeed, by stating that the marriage of non-heir sons was dependent upon job opportunities, the ‘rule’ implies that ‘life-cycle service’ did exist in Tokugawa Japan, and functioned in a similar manner as Hajnal and Laslett suggest in respect of north-west European societies. ‘Hence’, argues Cornell, ‘a pattern of departure from home in adolescence, life-cycle service, and an age at marriage as that in preindustrial northwestern Europe will exist, but among a much smaller proportion of the population.’<sup>31</sup> To try to substantiate her argument, she cites some examples of the incidence of service by women, then sets out two pieces of evidence, both derived from work by Hayami: one is that there was a general tendency for the mean age at female marriage to rise over time during the Tokugawa period,<sup>32</sup> and the other that Hayami, working on one Tokugawa village, Nishijo, did find that the sending of girls from Nishijo into service in other places was associated with delayed marriage.<sup>33</sup> The latter point is elaborated further in a more recent article,<sup>34</sup> in which Cornell demonstrates (by analysing daughter-only families singled out from the Nishijo data set prepared by Hayami) that inheriting daughters married early and with little labour-force experience, whereas non-inheriting daughters had substantial work experience in nearby rural handicraft industries or in the city and samurai households, and thus married late. However, Cornell also notes that the growing involvement of young women in by-employment at home could be another factor accounting for the rise in the age at which women married. She points specifically to the case of Yokouchi, where there was no expansion of outside job opportunities as observed in Nishijo, but probably an increased engagement by women in sericulture as a by-employment at home. Given the paucity of empirical evidence on this topic, it is not easy to assess which was the more important in accounting for the rise in women’s age at marriage in the Tokugawa period, nor is it clear whether non-economic variables might be of equal, or more, importance. What can be said at this stage of investigation is that the Yokouchi case was not exceptional. In fact, much of Japan’s proto-industrialization and related rural development took the form of farm family by-employment.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps it is worth dwelling on the question of the likely effect on marriage and family formation of live-in service and by-employment. The Hajnal–Laslett argument regarding the relationship between the institution of life-cycle service and the age at marriage assumes that leaving home and marriage were two separate events in the life-cycle of the

individual, and that between these two events individuals were independent in the sense that they were no longer under parental control. This was particularly the case for those who joined the households of others as live-in servants. Their decision-making was no longer influenced by household economics. It is precisely this factor that made age at marriage so sensitive to *market* wages in, for example, pre-industrial England. This sensitivity did not originate with varying economic needs of the parental household. Of course, as Richard Wall has shown,<sup>36</sup> the age at which children left the parental home, and hence the probability of their staying on, did vary according to various factors including household considerations, and it is highly likely that the availability of cottage-industry-type by-employment opportunities was instrumental in raising the average age at leaving home. However, as is well reflected in the thesis of European proto-industrialization, a theoretically expected, if not always actually observed, effect of this rural change was to lower the mean age at marriage and to quicken the tempo of family formation. If, therefore, it turns out to be the availability of by-employment at home that for the most part explains the rising trend in women's age at marriage in Japan, then this would undermine the attempt to draw a parallel with the north-west European life-cycle model.

Moreover, the incidence of live-in farm service was on the decrease, as far as those employed on a yearly contract are concerned. In early Tokugawa times there was a small but sizeable number of servant-keeping farmers in every village. Servants in such a wealthy household were sometimes numerous, some of them being hereditary (known as *fudai*), while many others were children sent by the households of debtors to work in order to satisfy the debts of their parents. However, when the nature of service was contractual (as increasingly became the case), the number of such servants declined and their years of service shortened.<sup>37</sup> Indeed the county of Suwa, an area researched intensively by both Hayami and Cornell, witnessed such trends.<sup>38</sup> In cities, the trend was a little more complicated. As I have noted elsewhere,<sup>39</sup> wealthy merchants in the wholesale trades and banking tended to lengthen the years of service of their apprentices and live-in shop clerks to periods sometimes in excess of 20 years. But this practice was limited to a small but privileged section of the urban economy, to male servants only (both apprentices and live-in clerks were considered 'servants') and geographically to an area centred on the mercantile capital of the day, Osaka. Within this circle, live-in service (or on-the-job training) in established merchant houses became 'life-cycle service' and it is likely that the period of prolonged service did raise the average age at first marriage of both elite merchants and, perhaps, that of their brides. But this functional link was confined to

a small circle, a world virtually cut off from other sections of urban society as well as from rural communities. In other cities and urban settlements, live-in apprentices and domestic servants were replaced by those employed on a much shorter-term contract to perform a specific task, so that 'servants' virtually disappeared from the population registers by the end of the Tokugawa period.

Apart from the disappearance of servants, which is not inconsistent with Cornell's argument about the relationships between marriage and economic conditions, another factor should be considered. In discussing these relationships, such 'conditions' should not be restricted to employment opportunities both in the home and in the external labour market. The timing of the out-marriage of daughters – and also the departure of non-heir sons – may well have been controlled by the family's view as to the optimum size and composition of the workforce on the family farm through their own family life-cycle. Indeed, Thomas Smith argues that marriage in Nakahara showed a tendency for peasant families to adjust their size and composition to the requirements of farming.<sup>40</sup> His lucid analysis has established that the chances of a non-heir son leaving the parental home rose from the level of 20 to 30 per thousand to nearly 150 immediately prior to the year of the heir's marriage, and then dropped steeply. The rate of out-marriage by their sisters exhibits a similar pattern, with a notable peak of about 270 per thousand, but one which came a little later than for sons, daughters tending to depart in the period soon after their sister-in-law's in-marriage.<sup>41</sup> Both, according to Smith's interpretation, reflected the family's policy (a 'hold-and-release policy') of keeping the size and composition of the household within a relatively narrow range as required by the size and nature of the family farm, through the regulation of the age at marriage of the children and their age at leaving home.<sup>42</sup> It should be stressed, therefore, that despite some possible similarities with the north-west European pattern in regard to marriages of non-heir sons and, to a lesser extent, the marriages of daughters so far as these events were affected by economic conditions, there must have been a big difference in ways in which such a mechanism worked. The non-inheriting children, both male and female, as well as the heir, in the life-cycle stage between the age of maturity and marriage, were tightly bound to the household under the Japanese system of stem family. In other words, sending children into service, their going out to work on a temporary basis, taking in a by-employment, controlling the timing of marriage of successive children (and even infanticide in an extreme case) – all these were measures the family might employ to adjust the size and structure of the household to meet the demands of family farming as well as to maintain the material well-being of the collectivity, and they

were thereby instrumental in making the peasant family household adaptable. To understand the non-heirs' marriage behaviour it is thus necessary to take into account, in addition to the conditions individuals encountered in the external labour market, how the need to ensure the economic well-being of the parental household influenced the decision-making process, thereby determining who left home for work (be it for temporary work or live-in service) and when, and who stayed on in the household.

### III. A MODEL OF THE STEM FAMILY LIFE-CYCLE

If the *ie* is to be perpetuated by direct descent, then it will undergo cyclical changes over time with respect to household structure and composition. The changes are summarized in Figure 2 as a model life-cycle of the stem family under the Japanese system. This diagram is intended to depict a course of cyclical change in household structure that is theoretically to be expected from the explicit and covert rules of stem family formation discussed above. But, at the same time, the diagram captures perfectly well what was revealed by three empirical studies based on village population registers of the Tokugawa period. One of the three was conducted by a sociologist, Takashi Koyama, who selected 33 families which appeared to be unbroken over the period 1802–1861 in the registers of one village, Yamazaki, in the province of Kai, and examined all the cases in which a household changed in structure. He then calculated, by type of household, the mean age of the head, the mean duration of a particular structure (i.e. years experienced), the mean size of the family workforce, and so forth.<sup>43</sup> The second is a follow-up study by Hiroshi Kito of Yubunezawa, a mountainous village in Shinano Province, for an earlier period, 1730–1795, and the third a more recent work by Futoshi Kinoshita on Yambe, a village in Uzen Province, for 1760–1870.<sup>44</sup> Unfortunately, the classification system used by Koyama differs from that of Kito and Kinoshita, both of whom followed the Hammel–Laslett classificatory scheme. Yet, all three confirm that most of the households examined underwent the life-cycle course shown in Figure 2. Indeed, its four stages accounted for 74 per cent of the total household-years experienced by the sample households in Yamazaki (although, given Koyama's classificatory scheme, it appears that households in stage III include some, if not a substantial, number involving coresident, married collaterals), while in Yubunezawa the percentage was substantially lower (at 59 per cent), although they still constituted a majority (no comparable figures are available for Yambe).<sup>45</sup>

With these three case studies in mind, let me begin, for the sake of convenience, with a simple family household (stage I). In this stage the



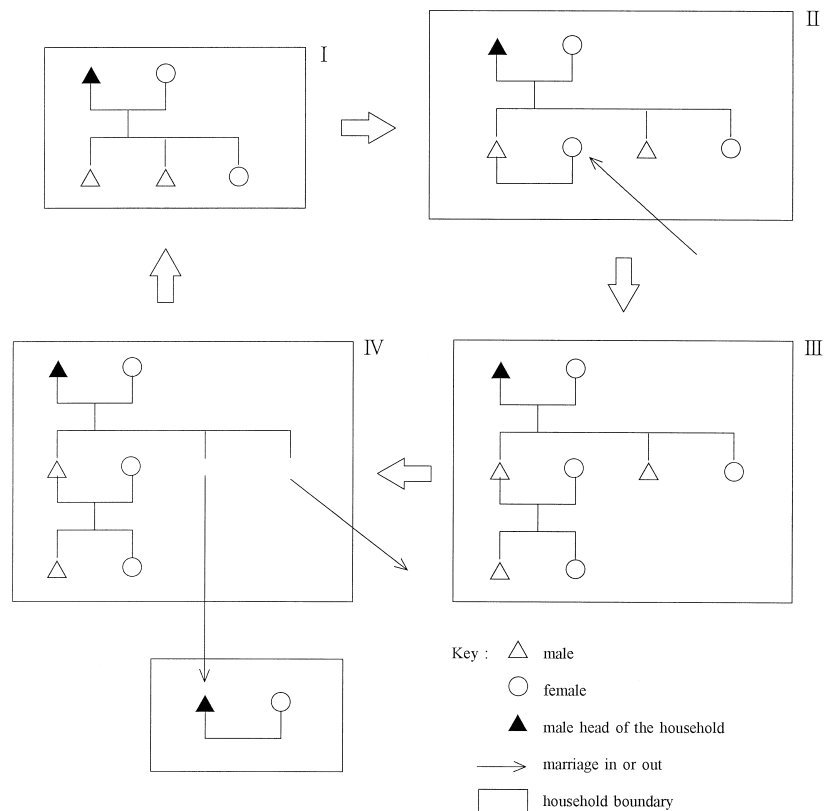


FIGURE 2. Stages of the model family life-cycle.

head of the household would be in his later forties, having at least one child, who would eventually marry (about nine years later). The young couple would continue to reside with the senior couple, making the household structure multiple (stage II). It is during this stage of multiple household, not at the time of the son's marriage, that the headship would be handed down from the father to the son (stage III; this and household A in Figure 1, above, are identical). The timing of this transfer seems to have varied from region to region; it took three years in Yamazaki, while it was nine years in Yubunezawa, working from the time of the heir's marriage. Between the period just before the marriage of the son-heir until sometime after the transfer of headship, there would be a series of departures from the household of the new head's siblings. The brothers would be likely to form branch family households (not always in the same village) and the sisters married into other families, while the parental

household, while remaining multiple, would have lost the collaterals in the younger generation (stage IV). Finally, with the death of the retired former head and his wife, the household life course would recommence.

There are a couple of points to be made. One concerns the proportion of simple family households under the stem system. The diagram in Figure 2 shows clearly that even in this regime of non-simple family households there will always be a substantial number of simple family households. One might expect that, if all stages were of equal duration, the household would spend a period of one-quarter of the whole cycle in the simple family form. However, the actual proportion must have been somewhat higher than that level, since, according to the studies by Koyama and Kito, the mean duration of stage I was longer than those of the other three stages. Moreover, in any village there were always childless simple families who would fail to reproduce themselves (hence they would be excluded from the above studies as 'deviant'), as well as branch families settled in the same village which inevitably took the form of the simple family household (as shown in stage IV of Figure 2 as a separate household). In the case of Yamazaki, for example, 40.5 per cent of all households were of the simple family household variety over the entire period in question.<sup>46</sup>

Secondly, as in the Rowntree model of simple family life-cycle,<sup>47</sup> there is also a critical phase in its stem version, critical in terms of the ratio of consumers to workers in the household. A subsistence crisis may arise in stage IV, should the departure of the head's siblings reduce the size of the family workforce while his children were still too young to contribute to the family budget. Fortunately, Koyama has calculated the average household size and number of workers (defined as all persons aged 15–64) per household by life-cycle stage in the village studied, from which we can work out the consumer–worker ( $c/w$ ) ratios (see Table 3).<sup>48</sup>

The relatively low level of the  $c/w$  ratio and its constancy over the first three stages, one may argue, gave the stem family system an advantage over the simple family system which follows naturally from the coresidence of the son-heir and his bride with his parents. Even so, the stem family household has to pass through a stage in which the size of the family workforce falls sharply relative to the number of consumers. For the other village studied, unfortunately, comparable figures are not available, but Kito does touch upon this issue by constructing a stylized path for the household life-cycle, modelled on a set of hypothesized demographic parameters. Specifically, he argues that 'the 18th year [from the marriage of the heir] marks a low-point when his coresident brother departs ... In the household are, other than the married couple, the eldest son (aged 15), a second child (11), a third (7) and a fourth (3), with the youngest yet to be born.'<sup>49</sup> This, of course, is part of the problem which concerned both

TABLE 3  
*Changing consumer-worker (c/w) ratios over the stages of the stem family life-cycle: 33 families in Yamazaki, Kai Province, 1802–1861*

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Mean household size</i>	<i>No. of workers</i>	<i>c/w ratio</i>
I	3.85	2.71	0.42
II	4.93	3.44	0.43
III	5.90	3.98	0.48
IV	5.54	2.71	1.04

*Note:* Koyama defined ‘workers’ as those aged 15–64 and ‘consumers’ as all the household members. No allowance, therefore, is made here for possible differences in the composition of households, for example, in the relative numbers of men and women and the age distribution of the workforce.

*Source:* Tekashi Koyama, ‘Kazoku keitai no shukiteki henka’, in Seiichi Kitano and Ken Okada eds, *Ie: sono kozo bunseki* (Tokyo, 1959), p. 81.

Seeböhm Rowntree and Alexander Chayanov, and it is interesting to see that their models too predicted that the consumer–worker ratio would increase until the first child reached the age of 15. In the case of Chayanov, since Russian reality had infused his theoretical construction, he tended to assume that more land would be allocated when the size of the household increased.<sup>50</sup> But this did not hold true for Tokugawa Japan, not to mention Victorian England; consequently any rise in the *c/w* ratio would increase the danger of a descent into poverty. Thus, according to Kito, such an observation about the family life-cycle is not consistent with another observation based on data from the same village, that the family extinction rate increased as the size of the family household fell and its structure became simpler.<sup>51</sup> For another village, Kinoshita notes that the extinction rate was six times higher for households on small holdings than for those on large holdings, while a higher frequency of simple family households was found among the small-holders than among those with a large quantity of land.<sup>52</sup> One implication of these findings is that the maintenance of an appropriate supply of family labour and a suitable household composition was vitally important if the stem family farm was not to become extinct.<sup>53</sup>

There is, however, one problem to be resolved before this article can be concluded. It concerns multiple households which did not fit the stem model, but which nonetheless existed, although in small numbers, in the Tokugawa and even in subsequent periods. In almost every village in the Tokugawa era in particular, there were at least a few families which tended to form multiple households with a coresident married collateral (usually a sibling of head/heir). In Yokouchi in Suwa, Shinano Province, for

example, the proportion of such 'joint' households was 26 per cent in 1721 and 13 per cent in 1828.<sup>54</sup> In Yubunzawa in Kiso in the same province, it stood at 24 per cent in 1730 and 16 per cent in 1792.<sup>55</sup> In both cases the percentage decreased over time. Indeed, the conventional wisdom is that in earlier times there had existed a number of grand households with coresident married kin, and that the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries saw the steady decline of such a joint household regime. However, as I have noted elsewhere,<sup>56</sup> there are several reasons for arguing that the pre-Tokugawa family system was not a joint one. But at the same time, such joint households were usually not just exceptions. In the case of those two villages, as a matter of fact, the actual number of households of this type did not change very much over time; what changed was the total number of households in the village as the population grew. This transformation seems to suggest that those were certain families persistently showing a tendency to take a joint form at one point or another in the course of their history. The question is therefore whether they represented a distinct mode of family formation system with its corresponding life-cycle.

Kito seems to suggest that certain families did assume a joint family form during their existence but a close look at the type-to-type transition matrix revealed in his work on Yubunzawa farm households leads me to the opinion that it would be difficult to identify a distinct family life-cycle.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, Kinoshita's analysis of a similar matrix for the village of Yambe, where the number of multiple family households increased over time (although the overall proportion of multiple households was lower than that in Yubunzawa), clearly shows that those families did not experience cycles.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, this does not imply that all the cases of joint form were simply deviations from the stem family life-cycle course. Masao Takagi maintains that in most cases the formation of a grand household was one solution that would enable a family to survive a family crisis caused either by a life-cycle effect or an external disturbance resulting from either famines or epidemics.<sup>59</sup> However, an examination of the evidence provided by Kito and Kinoshita suggests that there might be another reason to explain the occurrence of joint households in the stem system. A vast majority of all the cases with collaterals occurred as deviations from stages II and III, especially from stage III, and the joint form usually came to an end with the establishment of a branch family household by the head's brother and his family supported, probably, by the allocation of a portion of the family land. The creation of such a branch family and partible inheritance were quite common in the early Tokugawa period when land was still abundant, and were compatible with the one-son succession rule of the *ie* system since it was the transmission

of the headship and management of the *ie* that the rule controlled. But as the land–man ratio declined, the tempo of branch family creation slowed, with partible inheritance giving way to impartible. As a consequence, according to a government survey of customary laws conducted by the Ministry of Justice in the course of drafting of the Civil Code in the early Meiji period, partitioning of property was no longer the rule. Rather, it was ‘discouraged’ by various means such as restrictions introduced by some village communities to limit the number of households which could enjoy full rights in the village, including those concerning access to the commons and water resources. Yet, on the other hand, the partition of land was never formally forbidden and at the level of an individual village examples occur of at least one family or two which could at intervals allow some, but not all, children to establish themselves as branch families on parcels of land in the same neighbourhood.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, it might well be that when insufficient economic opportunities outside the sphere of the parental household did not permit the accumulation of funds in order to form a separate household elsewhere, it was wise for a young non-heir couple to postpone the receipt of their meagre portion of the inheritance by working for the parental household as part of a coresident workforce.

We now need to consider whether this form of coresidence violates the principles governing the formation of the stem family. Should the departure of those married brothers be interpreted as a ‘splitting’ (or a ‘fission’) of the household in line with the rules of joint household formation? In particular, we need to discover whether brothers on their departure would have an equal say in respect of the partitioning of family property. The early Meiji survey of customary law referred to above and Kizaemon Ariga’s classic survey of the ‘grand family system’ – farm families of the joint type which, as late as the mid-1930s, still continued to exist in remote, especially northern provinces – are suggestive.<sup>61</sup> According to the former survey, Thomas Smith notes, even in the event of partitioning, ‘nowhere was the usual portion [for the branch family] more than a third or a fourth of the estate; indeed, in some areas it was considerably less’.<sup>62</sup> More significant still is Ariga’s account of the various ‘branching out’ customs of the ‘grand’ family household. In one case where kin were employed as servants, all the branch families which were created consisted of former servants who had to perform labour services (generally called *fueki*) for the main household when required. In another, where non-kin servants existed, they (together with other kin) were also usually, if not always, allowed to establish their own branch households. Their social position in the village hierarchy was obviously much lower than that of the main household; in many instances the former servants became tenants while the kin were given the ownership of the land

allocated. There was a status gap, therefore, between the two groups of the households which were created. But there were some cases in which both were called by the same name; for example, in the hamlet of Ogida in the San-no-he district of the Tohoku both types of branch households were referred to as *kamado*, a term literally meaning a 'hearth', while in Shiramae in the Ku-no-he district of the same region there were cases where consanguine branches were called *nago*, a word strongly suggesting subordinate status.<sup>63</sup> In these cases, the status of the consanguine branch was no higher than that of the former servant. Indeed, a recent study provides us with another example of a joint farm household's 'branching out' policy, where the joint form ended with the establishment of a branch family in the same village by the head's sister and her husband, who became a tenant of his brother-in-law.<sup>64</sup> All this suggests, therefore, that those in the main line (*chokkei*) and their collaterals (*bokkei*) were not on an equal footing. Moreover, a close look at these examples reveals that when a married brother remained in the parental household, it was likely to be just one stage in his life-cycle. In some cases, indeed, there was a customarily set age at which he had to depart, but in many other instances the timing of his departure and the factors accounting for it seem to have varied widely. Admittedly one could argue that even under the regime of joint family there may have been a status difference between the households created by the splitting of the originating joint household and, as Eugene Hammel and Joel Halpern have noted for the *zadruga* in the Balkans, households under such a system experienced cycles.<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, however, little is yet known about how and in what circumstances the splitting of joint households took place and what form of relationship would emerge between those households created by the splitting. While Chie Nakane suggests,<sup>66</sup> based principally on the evidence about the *zadruga* and the Hindus, that what took place under such joint systems was a splitting into several similar groups on a more or less equal footing, it seems clear that all the Japanese examples examined both by Ariga and Smith indicate that the branches were 'offshoots' from the trunk line. The departure of the married brother and his establishment of a branch line in traditional Japan, therefore, ought not be considered a 'fission' of the household.

I am thus inclined to regard this minority group of families as deviating from the stem family household formation pattern, deviating in the sense that a joint form appeared in a family life-cycle stage when there was a time lag between a brother's marriage and his departure from the household. Virtually all of the above examples come from areas which were geographically remote, and where farming was less intensive, in respect of land and labour, and hence the size of the farm was much larger

than in other areas. It seems therefore that the frequencies with which a household would retain a married brother varied with the size of its farm (not necessarily with the amount of land owned, since a substantial proportion of land owned by wealthy farmers tended to be rented out) and with the degree of intensification in productive activity on that family farm. The smaller the farm, and the more intensive its farming, then the less likely it would be that the married brother would stay on in the household.<sup>67</sup>

However, there is also another side to the equation: other households might require a younger brother's presence and/or his labour. One possibility was the opportunity to be adopted into an heirless family. Levels of both fertility and mortality determined the frequency of adoption. Another was live-in service in other villages as well as in towns, but since such opportunities decreased as the eighteenth century progressed, in the latter half of the Tokugawa period other forms of employment came to carry more weight. Wage labour was available in a variety of occupations; one of the major ones was urban employment as day labourers and providers of a variety of services. Other possible occupations were those of a proto-industrial type, that is trades and crafts in rural towns and villages, although, since it was usually domestic jobs for rural women that the expanding textile industries offered, and since craftsman-type proto-industrial work was not common in the Japanese case, the employment available was mainly in trade and transport associated with a specific industrial commodity produced in the particular district.<sup>68</sup> If such employment could be found in the neighbourhood of one's native village, then it may well have induced the brother of the son-heir to leave home earlier and to establish a branch family without receiving any portion of family land. Other employment opportunities were factors which might lower the age at leaving home; indeed, most moves probably took place before marriage since, as the stem family household formation rules imply, non-heirs had to leave their parental household to find a means of making a living before marriage.

Similar considerations may apply in the case of females, if marriage-out from the parental household is substituted for adoption. Another difference between male and female service was that young women who had been sent into service were expected to return home when they had fulfilled their contracts. They would then marry out from their parental household. Of course, in practice not all of them returned home. A substantial number of young women who went to towns and cities, in particular, must have settled there, and it may well be that the rate of such return migration decreased in the long run.<sup>69</sup> Yet it is interesting to note that the Japanese word to describe this kind of out-migration from a

village, *dekasegi*, carries the connotation that they would come home after a certain period of work and service. This was a reflection of the parental power. Finally, as is emphasized by Cornell,<sup>70</sup> proto-industrialization also affected the life course of young women. Yet its effect on women was different, for it was by-employments for women that increased as rural industries developed. Where, for example, domestic work in silk reeling or cotton weaving became available, women tended to stay longer in the parental household, thereby reducing the probability of their becoming a servant (although it is not at all certain that this increased the probability of the bride bringing her bridegroom into the household of her parents). If growth was sufficiently strong to create new job opportunities in commerce and transport within the area in question, it is to be expected, therefore, that the growth in proto-industrial employment would increase the mean age at leaving home of women, whereas it might lower that of men.<sup>71</sup>

The actual possibility of, and the changing tempo in, the occurrence of multiple family households with lateral extensions in a given settlement depended upon a balance of all these factors: factors which often pulled in different directions. It should be clear also that a similar argument is equally applicable to those who had to leave the parental household under the stem family formation rules. For them too, the economy–nuptiality equation and the set of associated variables must have been essentially the same.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

I have attempted to demonstrate in this article that traditional Japan followed neither the simple household system nor the joint household system as delineated by John Hajnal when he set out his model of the two kinds of household formation system and the family life-cycle. Certainly the family system of Japan differed markedly from either that prevailing in pre-industrial north-west European countries, or in traditional Russia or China. It may best be termed a ‘stem’ one. But the Japanese type was not quite the same as the stem family forms in Austria identified by Lutz Berkner, nor the same as similar forms found in other north-central European areas. As Hajnal suggested, those Western stem families were compatible with the north-west European family formation rules, whereas the Japanese stem families were not. The traditional Japanese family system represents a separate, third type.<sup>72</sup> I have also attempted to draw the reader’s attention to possible variants within this Japanese stem system, although full discussion of regional variations within the system is beyond the scope of the present article.<sup>73</sup> Given the present state of our knowledge, however, much of what was said is still tentative and



speculative. At this stage, therefore, it is simply to be hoped that this article will go some way towards a better understanding of the workings of traditional and modern Japan's household formation rules and its family life-cycle, and will serve as a step to go beyond the East–West dichotomy of the Hajnal framework.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 J. Hajnal, 'European marriage patterns in perspective', in D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley eds, *Population in history: essays in historical demography* (London, 1965), pp. 101–43, and 'Two kinds of pre-industrial household formation system', in R. Wall, J. Robin and P. Laslett eds, *Family forms in historic Europe* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 65–104.
- 2 Hajnal, 'Pre-industrial household formation', p. 70. There can be several ways of defining the stem family. See, for example, P. Laslett, 'Introduction', pp. 16–23, in P. Laslett and R. Wall, *Household and family in past time* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 1–89; R. Wall, 'Introduction', in Wall, Robin and Laslett, *Family forms*, pp. 18–28; L. K. Berkner, 'The stem family and the development cycle of the peasant household: an eighteenth-century Austrian example', *American Historical Review* 77 (1972), pp. 398–418; R. Sieder and M. Mitterauer, 'The reconstruction of the family life course: theoretical problems and empirical results', in Wall, Robin and Laslett, *Family forms*, pp. 316–18; and M. Mitterauer and R. Sieder, *The European family: patriarchy to partnership from the middle ages to the present* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 32–4.
- 3 See C. Nakane, *Kinship and economic organization in rural Japan* (LSE Monographs on Social Anthropology, 32; London, 1967), p. 2, and also K. Ariga, 'The family in Japan', *Marriage and Family Living* 16 (1954), p. 362. There is a vast number of Japanese-language works concerning family and the concept of *ie* in traditional times (*ie* is pronounced 'y-é').
- 4 Yoshikazu Hasegawa, Masaru Fujii, Takao Takeuchi and Toshiro Nozaki, *Nihon shakai no kiso kozo: ie, dozoku, sonraku no kenkyu* (Kyoto, 1991), pp. 5, 77–82. They contend that the *ie* as an institution in Tokugawa times (an era prior to the Meiji Restoration of 1868) was conceptually different from the actual household as a coresident domestic group. In fact, such *ie* as units comprising several households did sometimes appear in population registers in early periods of the Tokugawa era.
- 5 Ariga, 'The family in Japan', p. 364.
- 6 L. L. Cornell, 'Hajnal and the household in Asia: a comparativist history of the family in preindustrial Japan', *Journal of Family History* 12 (1987), pp. 143–62.
- 7 A. P. Wolf and S. B. Hanley, 'Introduction', in S. B. Hanley and A. P. Wolf eds, *Family and population in East Asian history* (Stanford, 1985), pp. 3–4.
- 8 Wolf and Hanley, 'Introduction', pp. 5–6.
- 9 In modern Japan, it was not until the 1920s that the trend in birth rates showed a downturn. In the history of the population statistics of Japan, the period between 1872, when the new household registration system started, and 1920, when the first national census was taken, is regarded as a 'dark age', because the numbers of births and deaths

- reported in government statistics are believed to have been seriously understated, so seriously that there are considerable disagreements concerning trends in demographic rates over the entire Meiji period. Opinion is sharply divided concerning the trends in mortality, whereas there is now little dispute about the trend in crude birth rates: recent estimates suggest that fertility was on the increase, however slight, during the Meiji period. For an overview of the evidence, see H. Ohbuchi, 'Demographic transition in the process of Japanese industrialization', in H. Patrick and L. Meissner eds, *Japanese industrialization and its social consequences* (Berkeley, 1976), pp. 329–61; Masato Takase, '1890–1920 nen no wagakuni no jinko dotai to jinko seitai', *Jinkogaku kenkyu* **14** (1991), pp. 21–34; and other works referred to in these articles.
- 10 See, for example, A. Hayami, 'Aspects démographiques d'un village japonais (1671–1871)', *Annales: E.S.C.* (1969), pp. 617–39; S. B. Hanley and K. Yamamura, *Economic and demographic change in preindustrial Japan, 1600–1868* (Princeton, 1977); and T. C. Smith, *Nakahara: family farming and population in a Japanese village, 1717–1830* (Stanford, 1977).
- 11 See O. Saito, 'Infanticide, fertility and "population stagnation": the state of Tokugawa historical demography', *Japan Forum* **4** (1992), pp. 369–81, and Ken'ichi Tomobe, 'Kinsei Nihon noson ni okeru shizen shushshoryoku suikei no kokoromi', *Jinkogaku kenkyu* **14** (1991), pp. 35–47.
- 12 Wolf and Hanley, 'Introduction', p. 5; S. B. Hanley, 'Family and fertility in four Tokugawa villages', in Hanley and Wolf, *Family and population*, p. 216, and Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and demographic change*, p. 247.
- 13 The averages for the four villages are 24.1 and 22.5. See Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and demographic change*.
- 14 S. Ruggles ('Migration, marriage and mortality: correcting sources of bias in English family reconstitutions', *Population Studies* **46** (1992), pp. 507–22) argues that people who have migrated tend to marry late. Since almost all the cases of such late marriages have systematically been excluded from any family reconstitution studies, this implies that any figures of the observed marriage ages ought to be raised in order to reflect the marriage behaviour of migrants. However, given the state of our knowledge about the relationship between migration and marriage, it is difficult to assess whether Ruggles's argument would be applicable to the demography of Tokugawa Japan. It may be that this kind of bias could be found in earlier studies of demography based on an analysis of the *shumon aratame-cho*. On the other hand, it is known that sons of farm families on larger holdings tended to marry young and to take their brides from a wider area, suggesting an opposite relationship between migration and marriage age. Akira Hayami makes another point for a Tokugawa village that it is the effect of *return* migration on marriage age that matters: see Akira Hayami and Nobuko Uchida, 'Kinsei nomin no kodo tsuiseki chosa', in Mataji Umemura, Hiroshi Shimbo, Shunsaku Nishikawa and Akira Hayami eds, *Nihon keizai no hatten: kinsei kara kindai e* (Tokyo, 1976), pp. 67–97.
- 15 S. Kurosu, N. O. Tsuya and K. Hamano, 'Regional differentials in the patterns of first marriage in the latter half of Tokugawa Japan', *Keio Economic Studies* **36** (1999), pp. 13–38.
- 16 For a family pattern prevalent in south-western Japan, see O. Saito, 'Two forms of stem family system in one country? The evidence from Japan's first national census in 1920', in J. Ehmer, T. K. Hareven and R. Wall eds, *Historical family studies* (Newark, Delaware, forthcoming).
- 17 Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and demographic change*, p. 246.
- 18 See Ayanori Okazaki, *Nihon jinko no jisshoteki kenkyu* (Tokyo, 1950), p. 185.

- 19 N. O. Tsuya, 'Patterns of nuptiality and fertility in southwestern Tokugawa Japan: the case of the village of Nomo', in T.-J. Liu ed., *Asian population history* (Oxford, forthcoming).
- 20 Hajnal, 'Pre-industrial household formation', p. 69.
- 21 Smith, *Nakahara*, ch. 6, especially pp. 92–5.
- 22 For proportions single by age and sex, derived from censuses 1920–1955, see I. B. Taeuber, *The population of Japan* (Princeton, 1958), p. 211. See also Hajnal, 'European marriage patterns', p. 104.
- 23 Tokei-in, *Meiji 12-nen Kai-no-kuni genzai ninbetsu shirabe* (Tokyo, 1882).
- 24 Smith, *Nakahara*, pp. 92, 94.
- 25 K. Hamano, S. Kurosu and S. Morimoto, 'Tokugawa Noson ha "kaikon shakai" ka?', EurAsia Project on Population and Family History, Working Paper Series, no. 6 (1998).
- 26 Wolf and Hanley, 'Introduction', p. 4.
- 27 Hajnal, 'Pre-industrial household formation', p. 70.
- 28 Nakane, *Kinship and economic organization*, ch. 1; Chie Nakane, *Kazoku no kozo: shakai jinruigakuteki bunseki* (Tokyo, 1970), pt 1, ch. 3; and C. Nakane, 'An interpretation of the size and structure of the household in Japan over three centuries', in Laslett and Wall eds, *Household and family*, pp. 517–43. Also see Cornell, 'Hajnal and the household in Asia'.
- 29 Quoted in Nakane, *Kinship and economic organization*, p. 7.
- 30 Cornell, 'Hajnal and the household in Asia', p. 153.
- 31 Ibid. p. 154. The concept of life-cycle service is developed by Peter Laslett: see his 'Characteristics of the Western family considered over time', in P. Laslett, *Family life and illicit love in earlier generations: essays in historical sociology* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 12–49.
- 32 Akira Hayami has found that the mean age of women at first marriage in Yokouchi increased by three years over the period 1671–1871: see his *Kinsei noson no rekishi jinkogakuteki kenkyu: Shinshu Suwa chiho no shumon aratamecho bunseki* (Tokyo, 1973), pp. 187–90, and 'Aspects démographiques', p. 628. A similar trend was also discovered for a large sample of villages in central Japan: see Akira Hayami, 'Nobi chiho no rekishi jinkogakuteki kenkyu josetsu', *Tokugawa Rinseishi Kenkyujo Kenkyu Kiyo* (1978), p. 222.
- 33 Hayami and Uchida, 'Kinsei nomin no kodo tsuiseki'; A. Hayami, 'Rural migration and fertility in Tokugawa Japan: the village of Nishijo, 1773–1868', in Hanley and Wolf, *Family and population*, pp. 110–32, and Akira Hayami, *Edo no nomin seikatsu-shi: shumon aratamecho ni miru Nobi no ichi noson* (Tokyo, 1988).
- 34 L. L. Cornell, 'Age at marriage, female labor force participation, and parental interests', *Annales de Démographie Historique* (1989), pp. 223–31.
- 35 O. Saito, 'Population and the peasant family economy in proto-industrial Japan', *Journal of Family History* 8 (1983), pp. 30–54, and T. C. Smith, *Native sources of Japanese industrialization, 1750–1920* (Berkeley, 1988), ch. 3.
- 36 R. Wall, 'The age at leaving home', *Journal of Family History* 3 (1978), pp. 181–202.
- 37 The best account available in English of this trend is still T. C. Smith, *The agrarian origins of modern Japan* (Stanford, 1959), ch. 8.
- 38 Hayami, *Kinsei noson no rekishi jinkogaku*, pp. 53–65; see also A. Hayami and N. Uchida, 'Size of household in a Japanese county throughout the Tokugawa era', in Laslett and Wall eds, *Household and family*, pp. 503–4.
- 39 O. Saito, 'The changing structure of urban employment and its effects on migration in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Japan', in A. van der Woude, J. de Vries and A.

- Hayami eds, *Urbanization in history: a process of dynamic interactions* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 205–19.
- 40 Smith, *Nakahara*, ch. 8, esp. p. 145.
- 41 *Ibid.*, pp. 140–5.
- 42 Thomas Smith is referring here to the collective decisions made by the *ie*, not by the household head as a patriarch. If, therefore, a departing son felt that he was victimized by the *ie*'s 'hold-and-release' policy, then conflict would arise, not necessarily between father and son but often between brothers, in other words, between the *chokkei* and *bokei* of the siblings.
- 43 Takashi Koyama, 'Kazoku keitai no shukiteki henka', in Seiichi Kitano and Ken Okada eds, *Ie: sono kozo bunseki* (Tokyo, 1959), pp. 67–83. Robert Smith employed a modified version of the Koyama scheme to analyse a sample of 40 families in two wards of Tennoji, a satellite town of the city of Osaka, over the period 1757–1858. Nevertheless, his tables show even among such town-dwellers, especially among the class of house-owners, a cyclical shift in family forms which is not inconsistent with the stem family life-cycle model: see R. J. Smith, 'The domestic cycle in selected commoner families in urban Japan: 1757–1858', *Journal of Family History* 3 (1978), pp. 219–35.
- 44 Hiroshi Kito, 'Kinsei noson ni okeru kazoku keitai no shukiteki henka', *Jochi keizai ronshu* 27 (February 1981), pp. 7–22, and Futoshi Kinoshita, 'Tohoku chiho ichi noson ni okeru setai no henshen, 1760–1870', *Minzokugaku kenkyu* 55 (May 1990), pp. 1–20.
- 45 Koyama, 'Kazoku keitai', p. 77; and Kito, 'Kinsei noson', p. 12.
- 46 Koyama, 'Kazoku keitai', p. 72.
- 47 S. B. Rowntree, *Poverty: a study of town life* (London, 1901).
- 48 Koyama, 'Kazoku keitai', p. 81. For an attempt to make use of this *c/w* ratio in order to delineate the Tokugawa peasant family economy, see Ken'ichi Tomobe, 'Kinsei Nihon no shono kazoku keizai to setai raifu-saikuru: Mino-no-kuni Ohno-gun Higashi-Yokoyama-mura', *Shakai keizaishigaku* 54 (1988), pp. 250–70.
- 49 Kito, 'Kinsei noson', p. 21.
- 50 D. Thorner, B. Kerblay and R. E. F. Smith eds, *A. V. Chayanov on the theory of peasant economy* (Homewood, Ill., 1966), ch. 1.
- 51 Kito, 'Kinsei noson', p. 10.
- 52 Kinoshita, 'Tohoku ichi noson', pp. 2, 8.
- 53 See the article by Masao Takagi in this issue of *Continuity and Change*.
- 54 L. L. Cornell, 'Peasant family and inheritance in a Japanese community: 1671–1980: an anthropological analysis of local population registers' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1981), p. 64; see also Hayami and Uchida, 'Size of household', pp. 496–8.
- 55 Kito, 'Kinsei noson', p. 8.
- 56 Osamu Saito, 'Dai-kaikon, jinko shono keizai', in Akira Hayami and Matao Miyamoto eds, *Keizai shakai no seiritsu: 17–18 seiki*, Nihon keizaishi 1 (Tokyo, 1988), pp. 171–215. See also recent works such as Hasegawa et al., *Kiso kozo*, and Mario Oshima, *Kinsei nomin shihai to kazoku, kyodotai* (Tokyo, 1991).
- 57 See Kito, 'Kinsei noson', p. 9.
- 58 Kinoshita, 'Tohoku ichi noson', pp. 11–13.
- 59 See Takagi's contribution in this issue.
- 60 See, for example, Smith, *Agrarian origins*, ch. 4. It should be noted that the change from partible to impartible inheritance had no direct bearing on the ways in which the transmission of the headship was made. Although primogeniture was the main form of succession observed in a number of areas, the early Meiji government survey shows that there were considerable regional variations (Nakane, *Kinship and economic organization*,

- pp. 8–16). Even within one village, according to Hayami's 'The myth of primogeniture and impartible inheritance in Tokugawa Japan' (*Journal of Family History* 8 (1983), pp. 3–29), the custom was 'not at all uniform'.
- 61 Kizaemon Ariga, *Nihon kazoku seido to kosaku seido* (Tokyo, 1943); see also his monograph on one family: *Nanbu Ni-no-he-gun Ishigami-mura ni okeru dai-kazoku seido to nago seido* (Achikku Myuzeamu iho, no. 43; Tokyo, 1939).
- 62 Smith, *Agrarian origins*, p. 40.
- 63 Ariga, *Nihon kazoku seido*, pp. 270–8.
- 64 Ryotaro Nakanishi, 'Meiji makki/Showa shoki ni okeru jisaku-jinushi no nogyo keiei to rodoryoku kosei: Ibaraki-ken Yuki-gun Yachiyo-machi Nakajima-ke o jirei to shite', *Jinmon chiri* 42 (August 1990), pp. 19–43. Many case studies have been published in Japanese on such 'grand' households (but not many of them attempt, as Nakanishi does, to relate their findings about family forms to the issue of the management of the family farm; see note 67, below).
- 65 E. A. Hammel, 'The zadruga as process', in Laslett and Wall eds, *Household and family*, pp. 335–73; and J. M. Halpern, 'Town and countryside in Serbia in the nineteenth century: social and household structure as reflected in the census of 1863', *ibid.*, pp. 401–27.
- 66 Nakane, *Kazoku no kozo*, pt 1, ch. 2, especially pp. 72–3.
- 67 Nakane has found that an effectively organized network involving the main and the branch family households (termed *dozoku* by Japanese sociologists), within which such a joint form of coresidence tended to appear, was found neither (on the one hand) among poor hill villages or economies based on fishing and gathering nor (on the other) among rural communities with intensive agriculture such as 'very old villages where available resources had already been exploited before the Tokugawa period', and consequently where all the households were of roughly equal economic standing, sufficient to maintain themselves without surplus fields and homesteads (see Nakane, *Kinship and economic organization*, p. 120). In fact, it is well known that such *dozoku* organizations were less common in western Japan where there were more 'old' settlements and farming tended to be more 'intensive' than in the eastern regions of Tohoku and Kanto. In this respect, it is interesting to note that a detailed account of the Nakajima family farm in one Kanto Prefecture in 1911, 1922 and 1933, the splitting of whose joint household has already been referred to above, reveals that the intensity of work on that family farm (measured in terms of days worked) was substantially lower than the average indicated in various survey reports such as the one conducted by the Agricultural Association in 1933 (see Nakanishi, 'Jisaku-jinushi').
- 68 In one silk-producing province where proto-industrialization gathered momentum after the opening of Treaty ports in 1859, for example, there were far more female than male workers in manufacturing and mining, whereas more men than women worked in commerce, transport and other service trades. According to a 1879 population survey (Tokei-in, *Meiji 12-nen Kai-no-kuni*), the number of men who were gainfully occupied in mining and manufacturing was only 6,392 while as many as 24,796 women were working in this sector. Even if we add to this the number of the dually occupied who had by-employments in mining and manufacturing, the contrast still holds: 17,368 men as against 46,572 women (of whom 3,095 in the case of men, and 44,257 in that of women, were in textiles). In the service sector, on the other hand, there were 25,555 men in contrast to 3,188 women (both figures including those dually occupied).
- 69 As late as the 1930s, according to Shigeo Nojiri's survey of out-migration from 12 villages, the rate of return migration was 10 per cent (9 per cent of men and 11 per cent of women; see Shigeo Nojiri, *Nomin rison no jissho-teki kenkyu* (Tokyo, 1942; repr. edn

1978), p. 359). For the Tokugawa period Hayami, using the Nishijo data, suggests that 27 per cent of those who were sent into service (*dekasegi*) returned home. This difference in the percentages returned could be interpreted as a result of a long-term change which may have taken place between the two time periods. However, the two figures are not comparable. First, the coverage is different. While in Hayami's work, based on *shumon aratame-cho*, 'out-migration' covers only those who became servants outside the village of Nishijo, Nojiri's data include all the cases where the move was to find a job. Secondly, the percentage returned is also differently defined. In the case of Hayami's longitudinal analysis, it refers to the proportion of those who returned home to the total number of Nishijo-born children who had been sent into service, whereas in the study by Nojiri, based on observations in a fixed period of time, the rate of return migration is calculated as the proportion of return migrants to the sum of out and return migrants over the ten-year observation period. If, therefore, a calculation comparable to that by Nojiri could be made for Nishijo, then the percentage figure would probably be lower than that suggested by Hayami: see Hayami and Uchida, 'Kinsei nomin no kodo tsuiseki', p. 90, and Hayami, 'Rural migration', p. 121.

70 Cornell, 'Age at marriage'. Thomas Smith has also suggested that the growth of rural industry and trade may have affected the economic value of farm women (*Nakahara*, pp. 152–6).

71 See Saito, 'Population and the peasant family economy'.

72 O. Saito, 'Two kinds of stem family system? Traditional Japan and Europe compared', *Continuity and Change* 13 (1998), pp. 167–86.

73 See Saito, 'Two forms'.