

2.4. Demographic Transition and Familial Transformation

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(Re-transcription)

Day 1, Monday, July 19

*Presentation of Trainers and Participants
(cf. list of participants at the end of this chapter)*

2.4.1. Notions of Transition in Demography

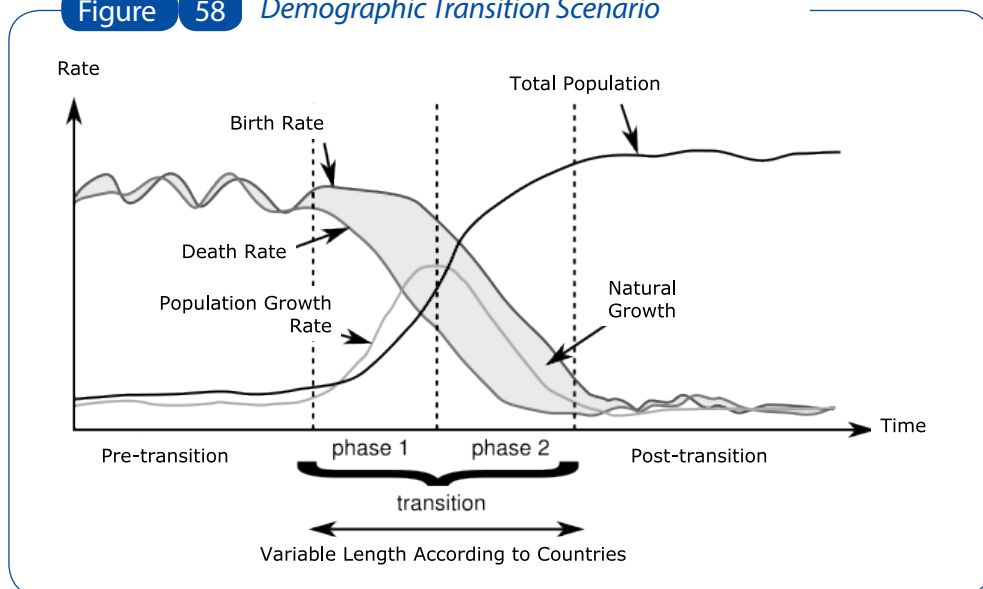
[Philippe Antoine]

My presentation will address the theory of demographic transition based on illustrations from different continents and Southeast Asia. The classic scenario of demographic transition is the following:

The four stages of demographic transition:

- stage 1: birth and death rates are both high, and demographic growth is almost nil;
- stage 2: death rate (in particular infant mortality) starts to decrease, thanks to development and improving health conditions. At the same time, the birth rate remains high, which causes very strong demographic growth (typically 3% per year);
- stage 3: as the country develops (rise in education and standard of living) the birth rate begins to decrease;
- stage 4: with a low birth and death rate, the population stabilizes (growth rate is never zero, but we estimate that an annual increase of 0.4% corresponds to a stable population).

Figure 58 *Demographic Transition Scenario*



Source: http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transition_démographique.

When the birth and death rates are high, we refer to “traditional societies” and when death and birth rates are low, we use the term “modern society”. In principle, the fall in mortality rates happens before that of birth rates. During a period of time which can vary in length, the gap is maintained between the birth rate and the mortality rate: the difference corresponds to the growth of the population. In this period of transition, population growth is particularly strong; this recalls the great scares of the 1960s and the questions of demographic overpopulation.

Most countries follow this scenario, but they are at different phases of transition. What is very different between the regions is the length of this phase. For example, some western countries started the transition in the XVIIth or XVIIIth century and ended it at the beginning of the XXth century, while other countries can go through the same evolution

in thirty years. We try to explain changes in behavior of an entire population; factors that explain that at a given time, a population can experience health problems, high birth and death rates, and that some individuals have a certain level of education, more resources and demographic behavior that belongs to this level of transition. It is also necessary to refer to factors that no one has thought of in the post-transition scenario. I am thinking about some Eastern European countries where the decrease in fertility was so great that the population decreased.

In order for a population to remain stable and reproduce itself, each woman must give birth to her replacement: there is a fifty percent chance that she will have a girl, so in order for each woman to have a girl, each woman must have two children.

[Martine Segalen]

Can you define the terms: birth rate, fertility rate?

[Philippe Antoine]

The birth rate is the average number of births in a population in the year n. For example a high rate is 40 to 50‰; this means 40 to 50 children for one thousand inhabitants of a country.

The fertility rate only concerns women of child bearing age, between 15 and 49 years. We calculate this rate for what is commonly called the hypothetical cohort: we divide the number of births between 15 and 19 years by the number of women from 15 to 19 (per year); same thing for the next age group, 20-24 years, and so on. We add up all the rates from 15-19 years to 45-49 years, in order to reach a fertility rate for all women between 15 and 49 years old.

The birth rate is a value in one thousand, while the fertility rate is related to the Synthetic Fertility Index (SFI) which is expressed as a number of children.

[Bernard Formoso]

It may be useful to calculate the fertility rate on the scale of a village or a commune, just to compare it to the national fertility rate as it is presented by the census.

Rosakon Siriyuktanont

Women under the age of 15 and women over 49 years can have children.

[Philippe Antoine]

Correct, but in fact, demography works on average behavior; exceptions are not taken

into account. Also, in most countries, if we add a fertility rate for the group between 12 and 14 years old, the trend would not be affected.

[Bernard Formoso]

Would the fertility rate be lower for the 45-49 year age group?

[Philippe Antoine]

For some countries, indeed, we see the results from 12 years or over 55 years old. There are extremes, but this remains insignificant in terms of the demographic importance of these extreme ages in terms of fertility.

Lê Hoàng Anh Thư

You spoke about birth rate and fertility rate: which is the most significant for studying the demographic transition?

[Philippe Antoine]

In this case we use the birth rate. The transition is also the difference between the birth rate and the death rate; this concerns the entire population. The difference between the two has a demographic impact. But when we speak about fertility in and of itself, we prefer to use the SFI, the number of children per woman. We can visualize two children per woman, but we have a hard time visualizing a rate of 50‰.

Lê Hoàng Anh Thư

Is there a formula for converting a fertility rate to a birth rate?

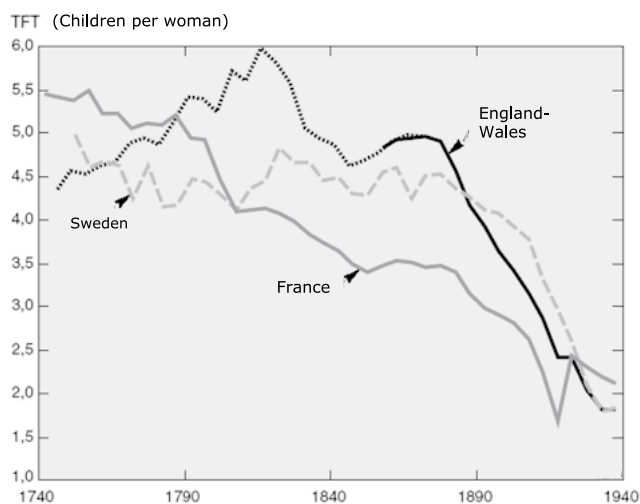
[Philippe Antoine]

The birth rate applies to the whole population. When we calculate the birth rate, the numerator is the number of births,

the denominator is the total population. We include the entire very young population (if the country has a young structure) in the denominator, while it plays no role in fertility. For a very young population, we will have a relatively low birth rate because there will be many people in the denominator that do not contribute to fertility.

I would like to bring your attention to fertility. The transition in terms of fertility is presented as a shift from “natural” fertility to “controlled or directed” fertility. On the planetary scale, some regions are particularly affected by a very high fertility: West, Central and East Africa. Western countries have a low fertility rate. Between these two extremes, the decrease in fertility has started – Latin America, Asia.

Figure 59 *The Transition of Fertility in Industrialized Countries*
Evolution of total fertility rate in England&Wales,
in France and in Sweden (1740-1940)

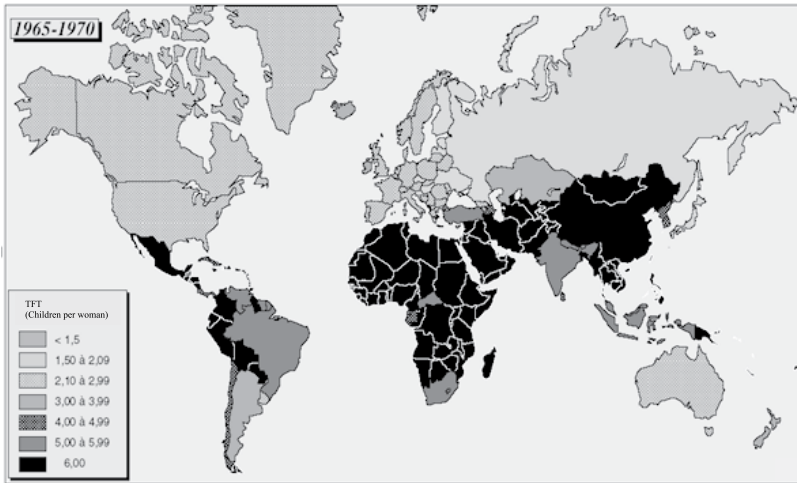


Source: Ined 2004.

This graph is interesting because it shows that the decrease in the fertility rate takes place over a very long period in most western countries. In France, fertility decreased

steadily, while this decrease took place much later, more in conformity with the scenario of the demographic transition, in England and in Sweden.

Figure 60 *The Diffusion of the Transition in Countries in the South*
Total fertility rate by country in 1965-1970



Source: Chesnais (2003).

On other continents, the evolution is different depending on the country: the timescale is much shorter (*e.g.* Chile). But overall, from the moment that fertility starts to decrease, as in Mexico – almost seven children per woman in the 1970s – we move to a little more than 2 children per woman (2005).

On the African continent, the situation is very different: some countries have not started any transition, the most well-known being Niger where there is still a very high fertility rate, around eight children per woman. The Ivory Coast started its decrease in fertility in the 1980s. Algeria is an interesting case, because it made the question of population an important ideological issue in the 1970s. I remind you that at the end of the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s, western countries were worried about the “demographic boom”; an American author

spoke about the “population bomb”. Algeria led an entire school of thought that was against family planning programs; the best way to reduce fertility was development and not contraception. At the same time, Tunisia, a country with the same Muslim traditions, engaged in a very aggressive family planning policy program. Tunisia is one of the first countries in Africa to have a very active contraception program and legalized abortion. It is interesting to note that these two neighboring countries came into the 2000s with comparable fertility levels – a little more than two children per woman using different population policies.

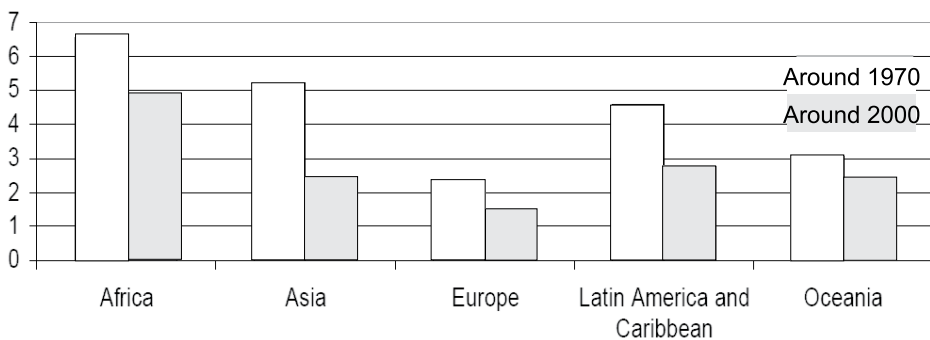
Many family planning programs were developed in Niger, especially through a South/South cooperation between Tunisia and Niger. This transfer of policies did not succeed. The political discourse in Niger is

not compatible with the expectations of a population that is still attached to a high birth rate. This is partly due to the fact that Niger is an essentially desert country, the climate conditions are harsh and individuals are trying to maintain an abundant labor force.

The situation in Iran is particularly interesting: even if, in the West, we think that women are worse off since the Mollahs' revolution, the

fertility transition is one of the most rapid that we have seen historically. There has been a shift from seven children per woman to two children in the space of twenty years. Important family planning programs were proposed and the population aspires to smaller families.

Figure 61 Evolution of the SFI by Continent between 1970 and 2000



Source: United Nations, *World fertility patterns, 2004*.

The comparison of the SFI by continent shows that on average, the Asian continent has had the most significant decrease.

According to the demographer Ansley Coale, there are three conditions for fertility transition: couples must have become aware of their capacity to plan and control their fertility and intervention on fertility must be considered socially and morally acceptable; restriction of fertility must be advantageous; effective contraception must be available.

High fertility, however, follows a certain rationale. A high mortality rate, in particular of infants and children, requires a high fertility in order to keep one or two children. Also, all labor-intensive production modes require high fertility. Finally, the relatively traditional societies maintain the hope that their children will take care of them when they are older – costs of children and intergenerational transfers.

In the classic transition scenario, when the infant and child mortality rates decrease, the fertility decreases. The development

of education for men and women, the evolution of women's rights, the level of economic development, the evolution of family ideals, the possibility of access to health and family planning programs are all explanatory factors.

Kom Udom

How is the decrease in child mortality one of the factors of the decrease in fertility?

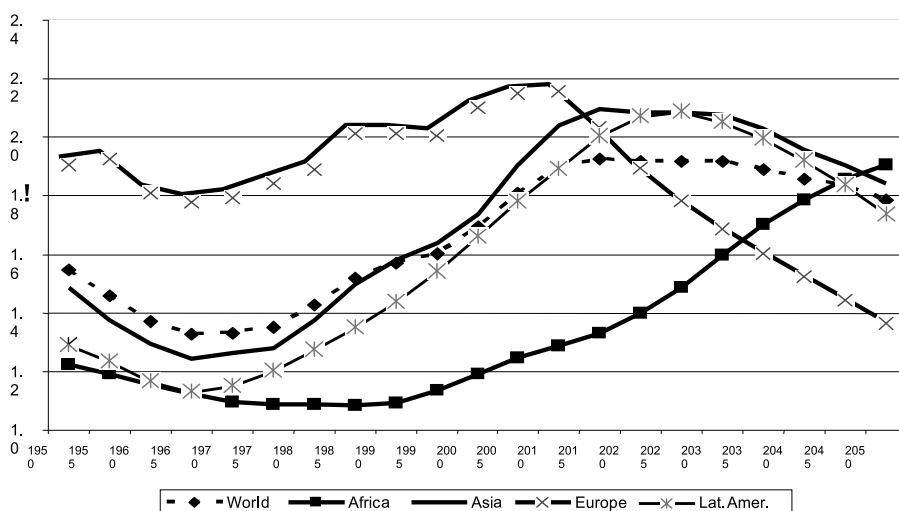
[Philippe Antoine]

We start from the hypothesis that when child mortality is very high, the strategy of the parents is procreation. But when health conditions improve, infant mortality

decreases sharply, and people no longer feel the need to have as many children since their children are surviving.

Demography is the study of population in time; our field swings back and forth between dynamic and static aspects. Let's take the example of the age pyramid, snapshot of a demographic situation at a given time. From the bottom of the pyramid, we have newcomers, *i.e.* births; from the top, disappearances due to deaths. I emphasize from the start that I will not touch on international migrations in my presentation. In order to illustrate the age pyramid, men, women, ages from birth (0 yrs), I will show the

Figure 62 *Insert Demographic Dividend*
Population between 15-65 years / dependent population



Source: Author.

ages of 15 years, and of 65 years, and at the top of the pyramid around 100 years.

Through entrances and exits of the population (births and deaths), this pyramid changes its appearance from one year to the next. The graph that I am showing refers to the

effects of these modifications to the pyramid. This graph shows the relationship between the population of 15-65 years old and the dependent population, by hypothesizing that the population from 15-65 years is productive as opposed to dependents (children under the age of 15 and people older than 65). A ratio of 2 means 2 active people for 1 dependent. If this ratio falls to 1.4, we will have 1.4 active for 1 dependent. We are talking about the demographic dividend. In 2010, Europe entered the end of its demographic dividend while on the Asian continent it will be at its optimum from 2010 to 2030 – starting in 2030 the population will age, putting more responsibility on the active. In Europe, because of the double effect of a rapid decrease in fertility and the lengthening of life expectancy due to progress in health care, the responsibility for inactive and old people will weigh more and more heavily.

The African continent will enter into a demographic dividend phase in 2050. You can see here the link between demographic dividend and the current economic boom – even if other factors are taken into account. This also highlights the importance of the debates that we hear in Europe on the question of retirement – however, demographic predictions had already been made after World War II; starting in the 1950s, the demographic evolution that would affect Europe was apparent. Demographic trends entail long periods of time and often, political time is much shorter than demographic time.

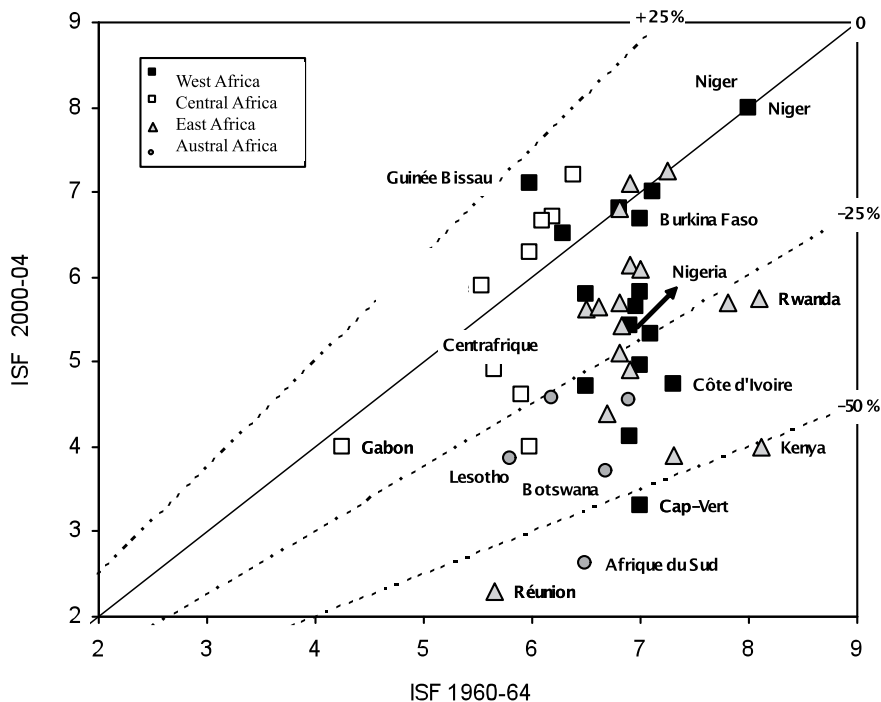
[Martine Segalen]

I would like to ask a question about the gulf between long demographic time and short political time. Without making excuses for the politicians, haven't demographers sometimes made erroneous predictions? It is understandable then that there is a certain reticence in acting quickly – all the while recognizing that there are all sorts of other reasons for delaying decisions. The demographers once spoke of the "P Bomb", but it never came. Demography, despite everything, is not an exact science.

[Philippe Antoine]

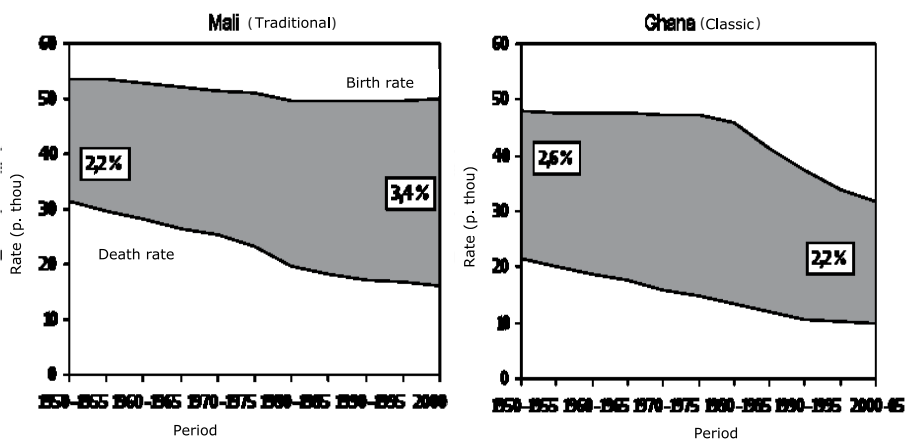
In the game of demographic perspectives, there are generally high, medium and low scenarios. An estimation of a few thousandths of a percent in operation over fifty years can indeed lead to important variations. Undeniably, in many countries, the decline in fertility was quicker than predicted. Major changes of direction can occur, for example a new virus that would cause a sharp increase in mortality. It is also difficult to imagine how low the fertility will descend in some countries, and it is always possible that there can be an increase in fertility in other countries. It is the probable scenarios which can be alarming for policy makers, especially on the question of future demographic ageing, which was announced as early as the 1950s and is happening now. The more we make predictions on a large scale, on the scale of a continent, the lower the probability of error. In the field of urbanization and international migration, the predictions are particularly variable. For example, Mexico City

Figure 63 Evolution of the Synthetic Fertility Index in Africa between 1960-64 and 2000-04



Source: Ined 2004.

Figure 64 Two Typical Models of Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa



Source: Ined 2004.

was presented as the largest city in the world for a long time, but this was never the case.

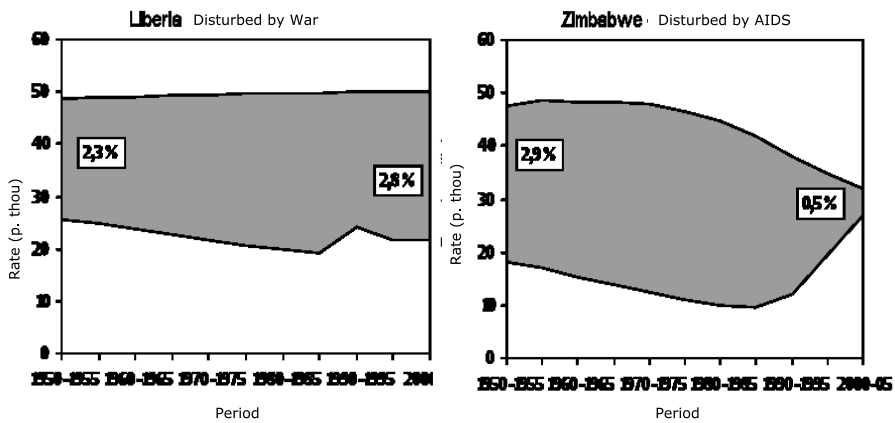
Before getting around to the Asian continent, I will illustrate the transition in a few African countries.

In Mali, the birth rate has practically remained the same from the 1960s to 2005; the death

rate started to decrease at the very beginning of the demographic transition. Ghana, a slightly more developed country, has had an economic boom for the last ten years: fertility started decreasing in the 1980s, the death rate started a constant decline in the 1950s.

In a case like Mali, the gap between birth and death rates – population growth rate – is

Figure 65 Two “Disturbed” Models of Transition



Source: Ined 2004.

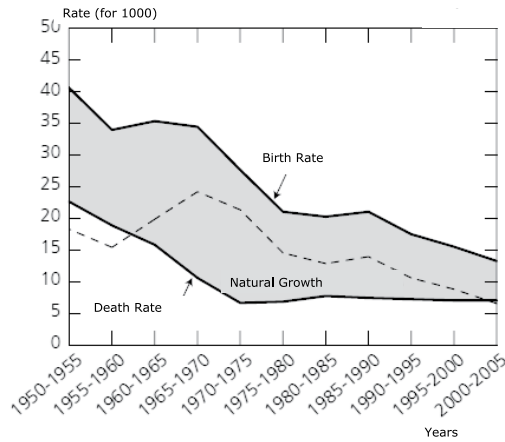
significant (3.4% in 2005) per year; in Ghana, it went from 2.6% in 1950 to 3% around 1975 and then decreased (2.2% in 2005). More unpredictable scenarios are possible.

Two such examples are the rise in the mortality rate in Liberia, which suffered a war in the 1990s, or Zimbabwe, the counter-example of transition. The prevalence of AIDS in this country is particularly high, so in the middle of the 1980s the rise in the mortality rate was very dramatic; the decline in births was also due to

the fact that child-bearing aged women were especially affected by AIDS. Here is a scenario, to get back to Martine’s question, that was not effectively included in the demographic predictions; growth could perhaps become negative since the authorities were late in putting anti-AIDS programs into place.

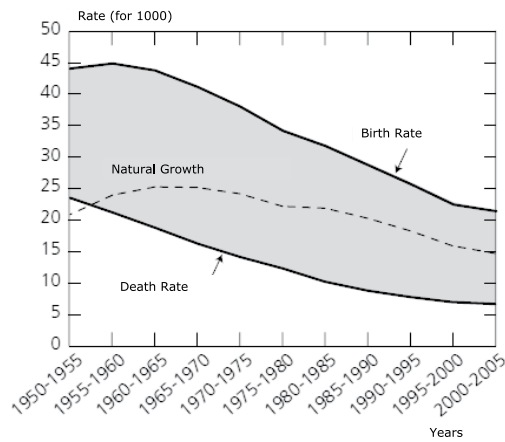
Looking at the Asian continent, especially East and Southeast Asia, and since I’m not a specialist in the region, I would like to show the slides and let you comment on them.

Figure 66 *Transition Scenario in East Asia*



Source: Ined 2009.

Figure 67 *Transition Scenario in Southeast Asia*



Source: Ined 2009.

Rosakon Siriyuktanont

I can give the example of Thailand. For the last twenty years, birth control was considered to be a strategy in the fight against poverty. This is the reason for a decrease in births. Often, the notions of “traditional” and “modern” are in opposition to one another; does this make sense in demography?

[Philippe Antoine]

This brings us back to the first graph I presented. The pre-transition scenario is “traditional”, so Mali would be, for example, in the beginning of the transition phase. It is the “classic” transition scenario.

[Martine Segalen]

Isn't the traditional/classic scenario Euro-centric since demographic science was developed first in Europe and this continent was the first to experience these changes? Maybe in 50 years, we will realize that the European scenario was a particular scenario and the terms “classic,” “traditional” and “modern” will be obsolete.

[Bernard Formoso]

I wonder if this classic/modern opposition is not a very positivist vision. We would put in opposition to each other a situation marked by poverty and high birth and death rates, and a situation marked by a certain interpretation of progress that would closely link the decline in death and birth rates with economic growth.

For Thailand, the death rate increased slightly, beginning in the years 1985-1990 in this particular case. It was at this time that the AIDS epidemic played a role in the death rate. Beforehand, this rate had been declining steadily, to a lesser degree than the birth rate; beginning in 1986, it started to rise.

Moreover, the demographic transition in Thailand progressed in 1960-65, then had a tendency to slow down after 1995: the 1960s saw the beginning of very sharp economic growth. There is a correlation here between economic growth and the birth rate. However, 1995-2000 was marked by the financial crisis, and the birth rate tended to stabilize.

Rosakon Siriyuktanont

The first two causes of death remain above all cancer and accidents, not AIDS.

[Bernard Formoso]

This is true, but cancer and accidents (road accidents for example) already existed before 1986, AIDS just added to the tally.

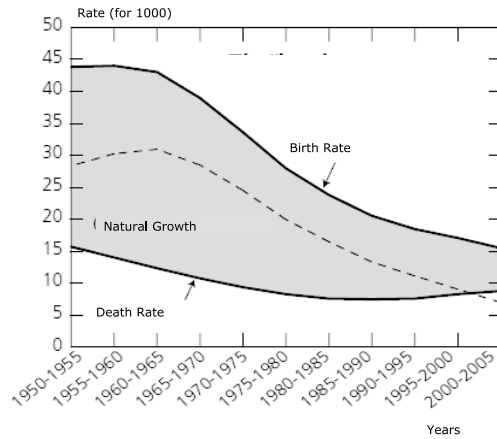
Supaluck Taechapongstorn

I would like to add that family planning was introduced in 1974; from this time condom distribution programs for families were offered.

[Philippe Antoine]

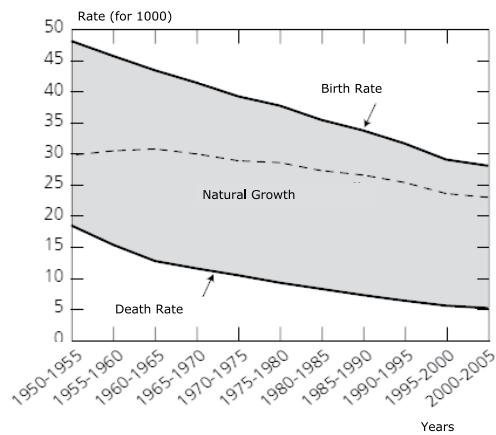
The data concerning the situation of transition in Asia were extracted from a text by Magali Barbieri and Isabelle Attané (*cf.* reading).

Figure 68 *Transition Scenario in Thailand*



Source: Ined 2009.

Figure 69 *Transition Scenario in the Philippines*

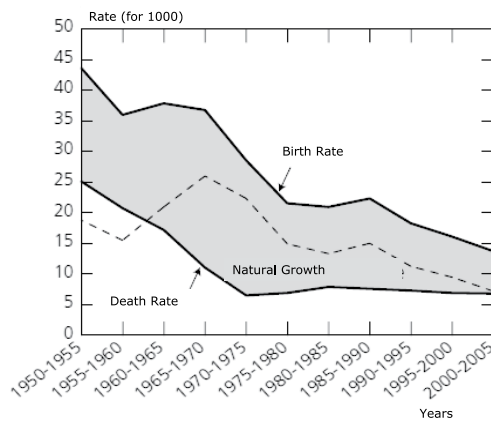


Source: Ined 2009.

These countries are in different phases of transition: in Thailand we see that the transition is coming to an end and natural growth has sharply declined to 0.7% in 2005. The Philippines is in the intermediate

transition phase; there are no longer many impacts on natural growth because death and birth rates are decreasing at approximately the same rate. This country had a particularly high fertility rate in the '50s and '60s.

Figure 70 *Transition Scenario in China*

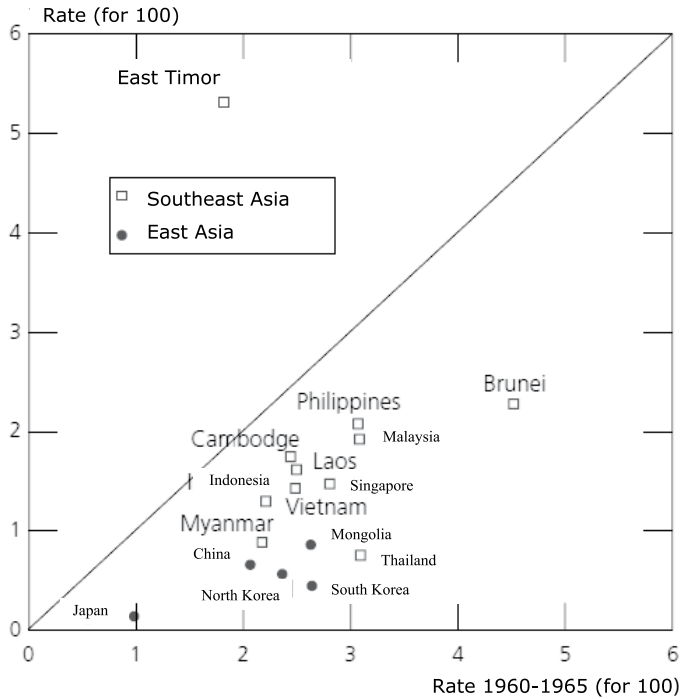


Source: Ined 2009.

China has a managed birth rate with strong political control, but there are some variations in the application of the policy. However, it is necessary to keep in mind that these scenarios are sometimes set out using a lot of real data (Thailand) and sometimes from estimates (China). For the latter country, you

can imagine that because there are political constraints to have only one child per woman (even if the statistics do not show this, there is actually more than one child per woman), we can imagine, if this policy were reversed, an increase in the birth rate.

Figure 71 Evolution of Average Annual Population Growth Rates from 1960-65 to 2000-2005 in Southeast Asia and East Asia

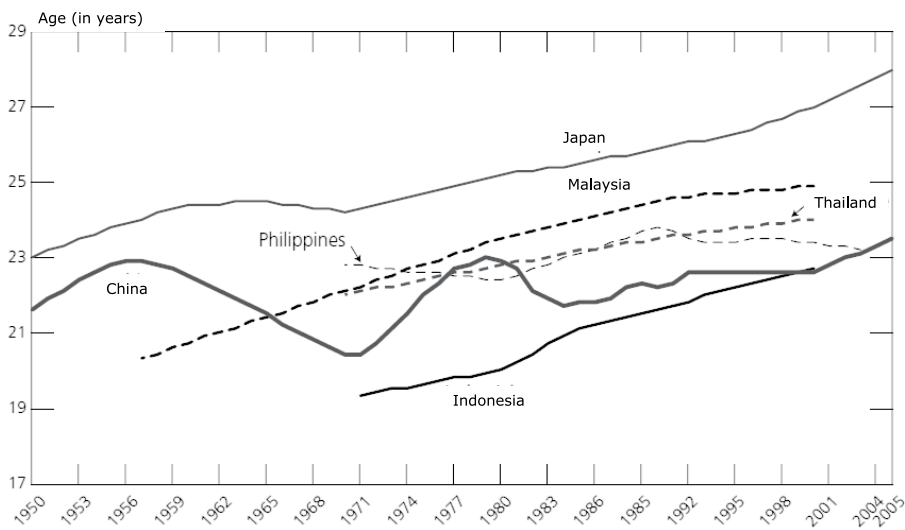


Source: Ined 2009.

From the 1960s to 2000, practically all countries recorded a decline in growth rates, in particular in Japan – growth of 1% per year in the 1960s and almost zero after 2000. In Việt Nam, we have gone from nearly 2.2 to 1.4%.

There is an entire debate on the role of marriage in the decline in fertility. In societies where formalized marriage is very important, there is still a link between the delay in getting married and the decline of the fertility rate.

Figure 72 Evolution of Age for First Marriages in Southeast Asia and East Asia



Source: Ined 2009.

The higher the age of marriage, the lower the fertility rate when there are very few births out of wedlock. It is not the only explanatory factor, but it contributes to the decrease in fertility rates. In most countries marriage ages are rising, which is something we see in some African countries and much less in Asia and the other continents. In general, we attribute this to an improved status for women, increased schooling for girls, and more generally a shift from arranged marriages to choosing one's own spouse.

Supaluck Taechapongstorn

What is the explanation for the Chinese trajectory?

[Bernard Formoso]

I believe that it is necessary to put these considerable variations into perspective with the policies that were put into place in China during those years. Returning to the countryside, or periods of repression during the cultural revolution in the 1960s should be taken into account.

[Martine Segalen]

It seems to me that the analysis merits a link with the rate of nuptiality, meaning the number of marriages for 1000 inhabitants. If we marry younger, this implies encouragement to marry, and we should see if the nuptiality rate rises at this time. For example, for Europe, and France in particular, the correlations are strong between the rise

in the number of marriages and the fall of the marrying age after the two world wars: there are “catching up” periods after not having had the time to get married.

[Philippe Antoine]

The decrease in fertility rates can also be explained by the prevalence of contraception. Countries with high fertility rates would have a low contraceptive prevalence – meaning the use of modern contraceptive techniques and on the contrary the countries with a high contraceptive prevalence would have a low fertility rate.

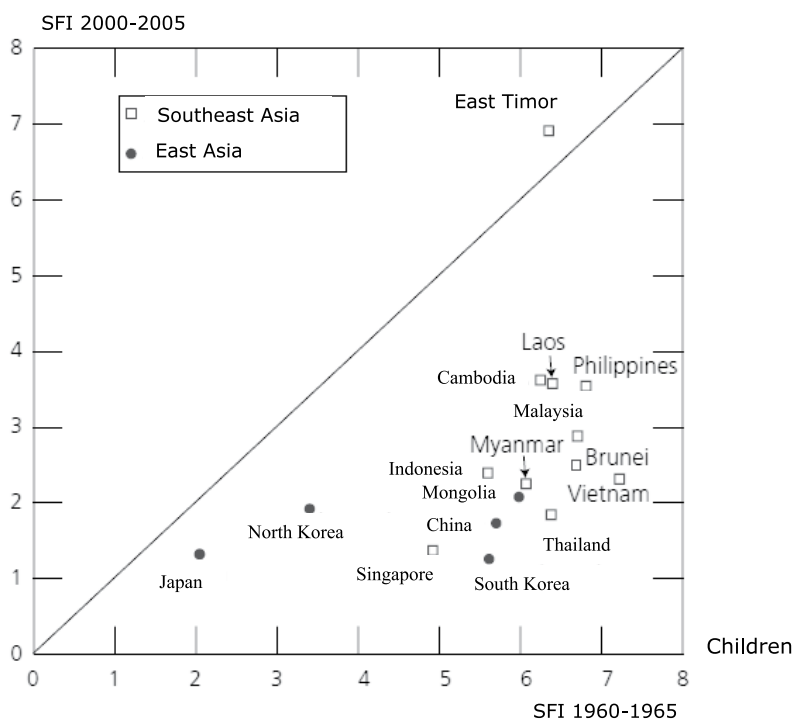
[Martine Segalen]

Is abortion included in the modern contraceptive methods?

[Philippe Antoine]

They are contraceptive methods linked to the pill and the condom. Ordinarily, abortion is counted differently.

Figure 73 Evolution of the Synthetic Fertility Index between 1960-65 and 2000-05 in Southeast Asia and East Asia

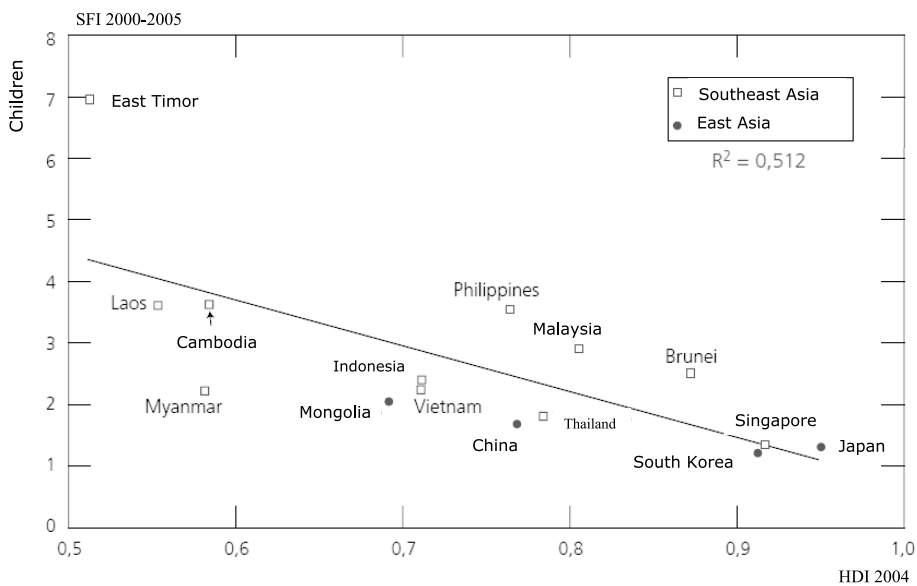


Source: Ined 2009.

The correlation is significant. There are exceptions, as in Việt Nam where the contraceptive prevalence is relatively high, and the SFI is still two children per woman;

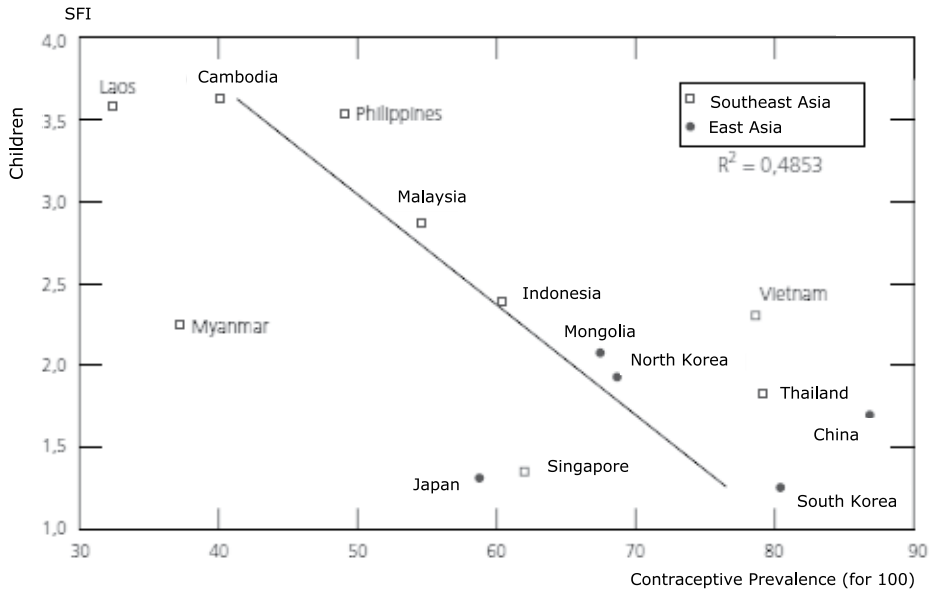
in South Korea, which has approximately the same contraceptive prevalence, the fertility rate is much lower.

Figure 74 Relationship Between the Fertility Rate and the Human Development Index (HDI) in Southeast Asia and East Asia



Source: Ined 2009.

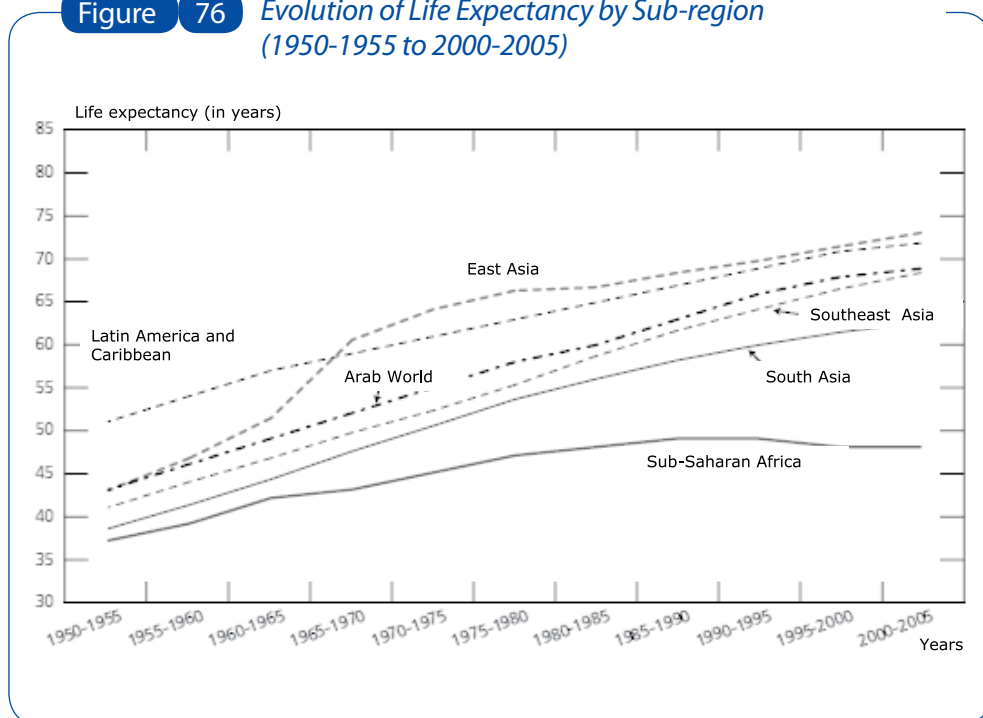
Figure 75 Synthetic Fertility Index and Contraceptive Prevalence in Southeast Asia and East Asia



Source: Ined 2009.

In almost all continents, there is a clear decline in mortality, no longer in terms of death rate, but in terms of life expectancy. It is a progress very widely shared by all regions of the world, with the notorious exception of Africa.

Figure 76 Evolution of Life Expectancy by Sub-region (1950-1955 to 2000-2005)

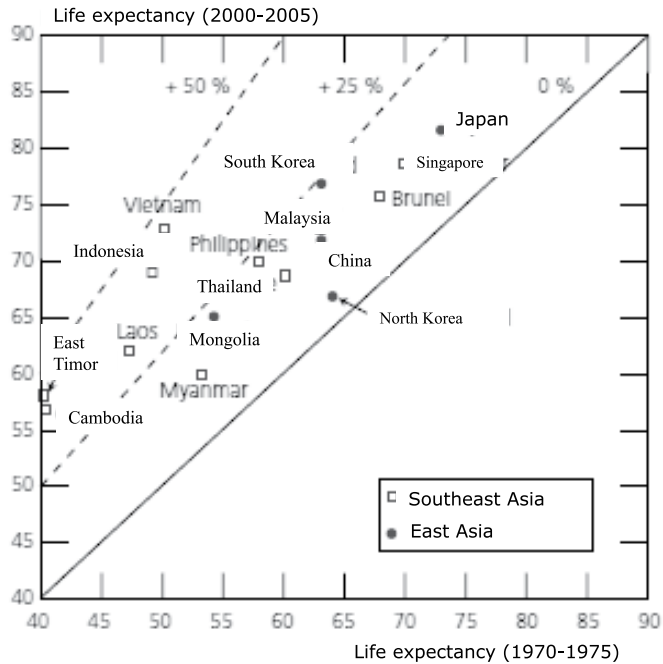


Source: Ined 2009.

The indicator considered is “life expectancy”, meaning the average number of years a person lives. This life expectancy at birth is an average. It is very low in Africa because people die very often during the first year of life. For a life expectancy of 45 years, approximately one out of five dies before the age of five.

Likewise, if we look at the evolution of life expectancy over the whole region, there are countries that have made spectacular progress, in particular Việt Nam with an improvement of nearly 50%, going from 47 to 73 years life expectancy between 1970 and 2000.

Figure 77 Evolution of Life Expectancy between 1970-1975 and 2000-2005 by Country in Southeast Asia and East Asia

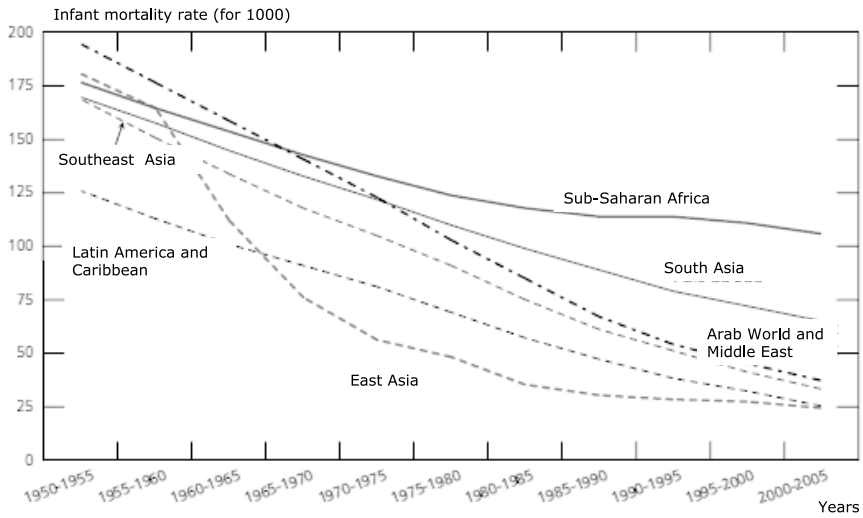


Source: Ined 2009.

For all the points that would be on the continuous diagonal line, there is no difference in life expectancy between the 1970s and 2000s; those who are near the intermediate dotted line have a 25% gain in life expectancy, and for those near the top

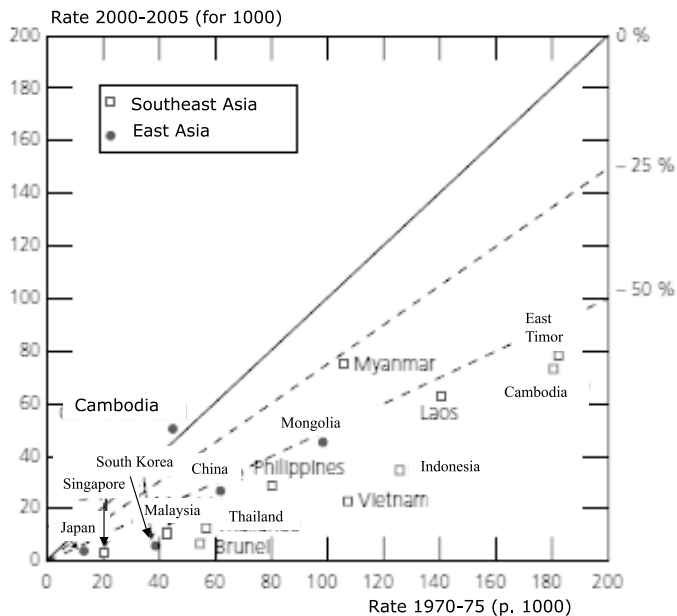
line on the left the improvement is 50%. This life expectancy depends on the conditions in the country at a given time; countries like Việt Nam or Cambodia have experienced events that have caused a great number of deaths (wars) followed by increased progress.

Figure 78 Evolution of Infant Mortality Rate by Sub-region (1950-1955 to 2000-2005)



Source: Ined 2009.

Figure 79 Evolution of Infant Mortality Rate Between 1970-1975 and 2000-2005 by Country



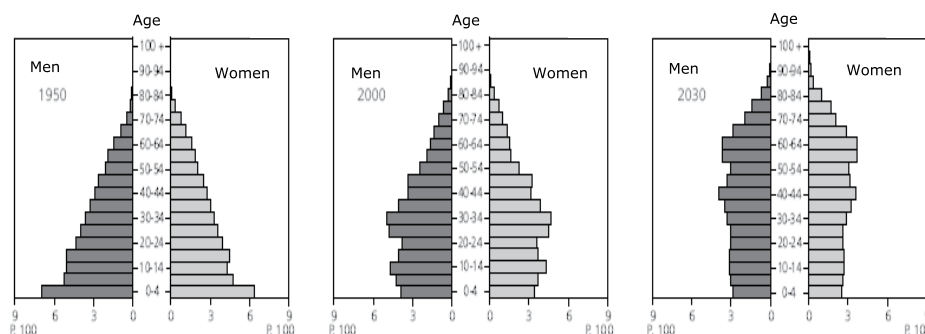
Source: Ined 2009.

Another indicator of mortality is infant mortality. East and Southeast Asia have also seen considerable progress. Infant mortality affects children between 0 and 1 year old. Above all it depends on the conditions of pre-natal healthcare, delivery and pediatric care for children in the first year of life. It is very sensitive to the health conditions of the

country and the existence or not of health infrastructures. In these domains, progress has been considerable. Many countries have reduced infant mortality by half.

To illustrate demographic ageing, let's take the Chinese example.

Figure 80 Evolution of Population Structure by Age in China: Population Ageing



Source: Ined 2009.

In the 1950s, the population is relatively young, with a fairly large pyramid base. In 2000, the effect of the decline in the fertility rate sharply reduced the base of the pyramid. We reach a rate of fewer than two children per woman. Starting in 2030, the number of elderly will sharply increase.

With more than 30% of the world population, East and Southeast Asia account for a considerable amount of the demographic evolution of the planet. The slowing of worldwide demographic growth is in large part due to the demographic transition in this region. During the second half of

the XXth century, there was a considerable acceleration of demographic growth, which led to extraordinary transformations in all aspects of society. Despite the slowing of growth observed in the mid-1970s and the rapid deceleration which followed (with an average annual rate inferior to 1%), the rise in population will continue. The fertility rate, which was still close to 6 children per woman around 1950, is inferior to the generation replacement thresholds and significantly less than in other developing regions, that is to say 1.9 children per woman in 2005, compared to an average of 3.2 in the rest of

the Asian continent, 2.5 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 3.1 in North Africa and 5.5 in sub-Saharan Africa.

At the beginning of the XXIst century a new demographic challenge has arisen: the ageing population. While around 2000, one person out of ten was more than 60 years old, it will be one out of six in 2020 and one out of four in 2040. This evolution, which is quasi-inevitable considering the very low level of fertility already reached and the continued decline of mortality among the elderly, will require a considerable adaptation of the social and institutional structures in the countries of the region.

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During the week, Philippe Antoine led two other sessions on the biographical analysis of nuptiality – presentations on July 20 and 22. With the agreement of the lecturer, the transcription of these has not been included in the present work; the fifth annual Tam Đảo Summer School Week will offer the workshop "Biographies: from Quantitative Study to Analysis". This practical training on biographical studies through surveys and their analysis will be held during the summer of 2011 by Philippe Antoine, Donatien Beguy and Andonirina Rakotonarivo; it will be the subject of a separate publication. In addition, we inform our readers that the themes developed below are taken from texts transmitted by Martine Segalen and Bernard Formoso.

2.4.2. Demographic Transition. Local Variables and Cultural Factors: Thai and Vietnamese Examples, by Bernard Formoso

"Demographic Transition" is a general process. It has been observed in most countries in the world at different eras, with different scales, durations and methods. Interpretations of the phenomenon most often settle on causes that are also general. It is associated firstly with modernity and especially with the very vague notion of development. Thus, according to the definition given by INED, demographic transition "designates the shift from a traditional demographic regime where fertility and mortality rates are high and nearly balanced, to a modern regime where fertility and mortality

rates are low, and also balanced.”^[18] The factors of progress put forward to justify the transition are always the same. They include rural exodus, improvement of sanitary conditions of an increasingly urban population, rising education levels which indirectly affects birth rates through an increasing use of contraception, raising of the age at marriage, and loosening of familial structures because of the progress of individualism, or even the rise in professional activity among women: the more they work, the fewer babies they have. These trends are identified using a statistical instrument and are usually analyzed in terms of macro-economic and macro-sociological correlations.

These “one-size-fits-all” explanations are not wrong, but are nonetheless frustrating from an epistemological point of view. They certainly express phenomena of which the convergent effects correlate to show the transition process in general terms, but because of this overall viewpoint, they are incapable of getting past the stage of possible correlations to that of cause and effect. Indeed, as Roy Ellen rightly points out, the solution to the methodological problem of moving from simple correlation to causality depends on the scale chosen, because this determines the number of variables that can be involved. On the scale of a country, where most of the research on demographic transition is pitched, the number of variables involved is so large that the revelation of direct causality is impossible. From a methodological point of view, we must remember that the more we break up social, economic or other factors into variables, and the more these variables

are limited by the choice of a relatively small sociological scale, the more we have a chance of seizing the nature of the factors that inform social practice. The smaller the scale, the greater the tendency for demographers to make errors in their predictions and it is obviously at this level that the contribution of ethnologists working on the qualitative aspects can be the most useful.

The second problem presented by the macro-sociological approach to demographic transition is that it is often reduced to an explicative diagram that is univocal and materialistic. The reasoning behind this approach holds that all national societies would follow the same global process of economic development and demographic adjustment characterized by modernization, give or take a few nuances which depend less on the nature than on the amplitude of the factors in play. This minimizes the importance of cultural parameters. In reality, and some demographers admit this (Charbit, 1980 and Chesnais, 1986), it is necessary to step away from some of the demographic and economic aggregates ordinarily used as interpretive keys, and rehabilitate the crucial role that socio-cultural factors play in the field, using monographic studies. Only these will allow a detailed understanding of the observed evolutions.

The purpose of this session is not to question the general interpretation of the phenomena of demographic transition, but to add nuance to it. This will involve showing the value of simultaneously taking into consideration local situations and cultural factors, through two

[18] Citation from the site <http://www.ined.fr/fr/lexique/bdd/mot/transition+d%C3%A9mographique/motid/9/>.

case studies. The first study is on two villages in northeastern Thailand where I worked in the mid 1980s; the second was carried out by the Canadian demographer, Danièle Bélanger, in association with researchers Thi Hai Oanh Khuat, Liu Jianye, Le Thanh Thuy and Viet Thanh Pham at the beginning of the 2000s. This study deals with high male birth ratios which remain visible today in Việt Nam, as in other East Asian countries of Confucian culture marked with a powerful patrilinear ideology.

Demographic Transition in Two Villages in Northeastern Thailand

The Northeast region is second only to the Central Plains region in Thailand for rice production. This region, the largest of the country (1/3 of the territory) is marked by unfavorable topographical and soil conditions. It is in fact dominated by ancient, lateral, and high alluvial terraces which cannot be irrigated using gravity. Problems caused by the deficiency of natural resources are exacerbated by the second highest population density in the country, and by a rate of urbanization and level of industrialization which are the lowest in Thailand. The Northeast, truth be told, is the rural heart of the kingdom. It contains more than 40% of the country's agricultural lands, but also the majority of smaller farms (less than 5 ha), worked directly by their owners. In short, the region is the bastion of the poor small peasantry of the country. As such, it is home to large battalions of protestors called "Red Shirts" who were involved, not long ago, in a show of force with the Thai government when they demanded elections and the return of the ex-Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, who led policies that were advantageous

to them but who was removed from power in 2006.

These recent events are the latest convulsions of the recurring tensions between the regional population and Bangkok. Starting in the 1960s, in a geopolitical context marked by the second Indochinese war, the government tried to reduce these tensions. With the support of the Americans who had established air bases in the region, it constructed roads to link the region to the rest of the country. Moreover, USAID contributed to the construction of large irrigated perimeters. These efforts and others like them were pursued with the help of financing by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. However, they only serve 10% of the rice growing land. Enormous investments that the government cannot afford would be necessary to increase this percentage significantly.

I linger on the subject of irrigation because one of the two villages that I studied in the 1980s was situated in one of these irrigated perimeters developed by the state. The construction of the Non Wai perimeter, which is irrigated by water from the Ubon Rathana reservoir, was started in 1965, but was not fully operational until 1981 after the rice growing surfaces had been leveled and tertiary irrigation and drainage canals were dug. In the meantime, however, and since the beginning of the 1970s, the inhabitants of the village were able to develop a riverside economy by pumping in water during the dry season from the primary and secondary canals. This water was used to grow fruit and vegetables or to produce two rice harvests a year in the zones adjacent to the canals. New possibilities created by irrigation were one of the principal variables taken

into consideration in the study that I did in 1984-1986 in the context of a multi-disciplinary team which brought together French and Thai researchers (Formoso, 1997). The other main variable was the distance in relation to the urban centers. More precisely, the study compared two rice-producing villages of the Khon Kaen province. The first village, Ban Amphawan, was not only situated inside the irrigated perimeter of Nong Wai, but was also located only 13 km from Khon Kaen city, capital of Khon Kaen province; this was the city chosen in the 1960s to become the principal growth center for the entire northeast. At the time of the study, Khon Kaen had 140,000 inhabitants (400,000 at the end of the 1990s, 500,000 in 2010) and because of its status, had modern and diversified infrastructures especially in the domains of health and education. In the 1980s, the city's power of attraction on rural populations living in the immediate vicinity was already being felt. Thus the proportion of employees in the public and private sectors was twice as high as in Ban Amphawan than in the other village in the study. This second village, named Ban Han, was located in an ecological environment comparable to that of Ban Amphawan. However, it was totally dependent on rain for its rice crops and its inhabitants could only manage one harvest per year as opposed to two in the other locality. Moreover, it was much more isolated than Ban Amphawan, as it was situated 6 km from a small district center with 3,500 inhabitants and more importantly 84 km from Khon Kaen. To conclude this brief presentation, let us add that our team, including geographers, ethnologists, sociologists and historians,

had chosen these two villages because they were already the object of a detailed socio-economic study 15 years before and thus we had a base for not only synchronic, but also diachronic comparison which allowed us to analyze in detail their evolution since the 1960s.

Considering all of these elements, how did the demographic transition operate in these two villages? Let us note first that Thailand's demographic transition took place between 1967 and 1997, over the course of 3 decades. All observers agree that the 1960s is when the economy took off in the country. On the other hand, in 1997, Thailand was the epicenter of a financial crisis that spread to the other countries of the region. In the years that followed the crash, the country stagnated economically. From this time on, the birth rate stabilized. In 1967, the gross birth rate was 39.5%, while from 1997 it remained stable at around 16.5%. The decrease in the death rate was more modest because of the low level of development of the health care system in the country, along with the lack of social protection. The death rate was 10.7% in 1967; it went down to 7.7% in 1997.^[19] To explain this, it is also necessary to mention the local impact of the AIDS pandemic which had a statistical effect starting in 1986 (slight recrudescence of the death rate, because since 1984 approximately one million people have been infected by the virus across the country).

In 1985, the two villages had birth and death rates that were close to the national average. In Ban Amphawan, the birth rate was 17.9%,

[19] Source: <http://perspective.usherbrooke.ca/bilan/servlet/BMTendanceStatPays?langue=fr&codePays=THA&codeTlaine=1&codeStat=SP0YN.TFRT.IN>.

in Ban Han it was 23.9%, and the national average was then 22.3%. The low birth rate recorded that year in Ban Amphawan must be interpreted as a demographic accident because in 1984, the previous year, the birth rate in this village was 24.1%. As for the mortality rate, in 1985 it was 5.4% in Ban Amphawan and 6.4% in the village outside of the perimeter, while the national average was 6.022% for that year. Looking at these figures, we can conclude that the demographic evolution of these two villages was in synch with the overall transition process observed on a country-wide scale. Concerning deviations from the national average, especially in the village inside the irrigated perimeter, it is hard to interpret them other than as micro-local and cyclical variations, for two methodological reasons. The first depends on the size of the populations taken into account. Ban Amphawan only had 773 inhabitants in 1985 and 115 women in the 15-49 year old age bracket, which is the normal child-bearing age bracket; Ban Han had 1137 inhabitants and 181 women at the child-bearing age. The size of these populations is too small to even out the variations in the birth and death rates that inevitably occur on a micro-local scale. These variations are all the more obvious because the time frame for the analysis is narrow. In fact, the birth and death rates are calculated from one year to the next. These methodological considerations bring out the fact that studying birth and death rates is more adapted to large mass statistics than to small sample populations.

On these smaller scales, the fertility rate, which determines the average number of

children women have during their lifetime, is more useful for discerning the trends at work and the demographic incidence of local factors, whether they are economic, sociological or environmental. In the irrigated perimeter village, Ban Amphawan, the birth rate for 1985 was 3.4 children/woman (3.7 if we count children who died at a young age); in the village outside the perimeter, Ban Han, however, it was much closer to the 1985 national average of 2.55 children/woman, at 2.9 children/woman (3.1 if we count children deceased at a young age).

How to interpret this significant difference in birth rate between the two villages? If we follow the predictive reasoning used by the current interpretive scheme for demographic transition, Ban Amphawan, the village closest to a large city and therefore theoretically the most influenced by urban lifestyles, values and consumption models (especially as regards the use of contraceptives), should logically have been closer to the national average or even slightly below it, as was the city of Khon Kaen which, in the 1980 census, already presented a birth rate of 2.3 children/woman.^[20] Whereas we are far from this as the women of Ban Amphawan had an average of 3 to 4 children, as opposed to 2 to 3 nationally and also in Ban Han. In fact, to correctly interpret the difference, we must refer to a local factor: the implementation of the irrigated perimeter.

Other authors have pointed out (Taillard, 1978) that a notable demographic effect of the implementation of this type of infrastructure is the increase in labor that it requires. Whereas

[20] Source: *Population and Housing Census Changwat Khon Kaen*, Bangkok: National Statistical Office, Office of the Prime Minister, 1980.

for a rain-fed rice production system, there is only one harvest per year – that of the rainy season, leading to under-employment during the dry season – in the irrigated zones, the rice growers produce two to three harvests per year and, considering the constraints of irrigating the fields, cannot benefit from the free exchange of services between villagers in order to ensure that the essential tasks like planting and harvesting get done. Hence the

labor problem, which the villagers tried to compensate for in different ways.

Of course, in the case of Ban Amphawan, the perimeter was not entirely operational until 1981, only four years before the study; nevertheless during the 1970s local farmers could already see the new needs for labor through the riverside economy that they developed near the principal irrigation canals.

Table 30 *Birth Rate, Death Rate and Natural Population Growth in Ban Amphawan and Ban Han*

Village	Birth Rate (a)	Death Rate (b)	Natural Growth Rate (a) - (b)
Ban Amphawan	17.9‰	5.4‰	12.5‰
Ban Han	23.9‰	6.4%	17.5‰

Source: Authors' construction.

Table 31 *Fertility Rate of Women 15-50 Years Old in Ban Amphawan and Ban Han*

Village	Number of Mothers	Number of Births	Number of Deaths (-1 yr)	Average Number of Live Children/Mother	Average Number of Children/Mother	% of Children Deceased at a Young Age
Ban Amphawan	115	426	31	3.4	3.7	7.3
Ban Han	181	449	54	2.9	3.1	8.6

Source: Authors' construction.

At that time, they began putting strategies into place to meet new demands for labor. The first strategy was to reduce emigration, seasonal or not, toward urban centers, toward other rural regions in the country or abroad (Middle East, Asian industrial powers). They encouraged young relatives to leave their poor villages which were facing under-employment, join their households and reinforce their labor force. Thus, when we compare the population growth of the two villages over a period of 15 years, we observe that the number of inhabitants in Ban Amphawan rose by 50% from 1969 to 1984, going from 514 to 773 people, while in the same interval, the population of the village outside of the perimeter rose only 22%. The total number of households grew at about the same rate over the 15 year period in the two villages (+55% in Ban Amphawan; +44% in Ban Han), while the decrease of the average size of households that we see in both villages, which is part of a trend that affects the entire Khon Kaen province,^[21] was more prominent in the village situated outside the perimeter. In Ban Han, households went from 6.4 people in 1969 to 5.7 people in 1984, while in Ban Amphawan the decrease was very slight: 6.5 people in 1969 *versus* 6.3 people in 1984 (Formoso, 1997).

Apart from anchoring the local labor force and reinforcing it with relatives from elsewhere, the other supporting strategy which also explains how the size of village households

could evolve was maintaining the fertility rate of Ban Amphawan at a level above the national average. In more prosaic terms, many couples from this village resisted the move toward family planning, even though it was very active in the country,^[22] and felt that it was necessary to continue to have children in order to meet the growing need for labor that would be caused and had already been caused by doubling the rice-growing cycle. Finally, we see from this example the non-negligible affect that local socio-economic factors – in this case the reorganization of the production system – can have on the general demographic transition process.

The Cultural Parameter: The Male Birth Ratio in Việt Nam

After having dealt with social and economic factors which can inform us on the demographic transition process on a micro-local level, I will now look at the possible effects of cultural factors on the overall, national scale. The example that I will first address to illustrate my point is that of the male birth ratio in Việt Nam, as it was studied by Danièle Bélanger, Khuat Thi Hai Oanh, Liu Jianye, Le Thanh Thuy and Pham Viet Thanh (Bélanger *et al.*, 2003). This study is based on the following general observation: the demographic transition is marked in many Asian countries, such as China, India, South Korea Taiwan and Việt Nam, by high masculinity rates among births. In other words, in these countries, there are significantly more boys born than girls.

[21] In comparing the results of the *Population and Housing Census* that the National Statistical Office carried out in 1970 and 1980 in Khon Kaen province, we see in fact that in rural areas the average size of households went from 6.2 to 5.7 people over a 10-year period.

[22] John Knodel, A. Chamrathirong & N. Debavalya, *Thailand's Reproductive Revolution: Rapid Fertility Decline in a Third World Setting*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987. See also the 1991 Survey of Population Change, Bangkok, National Statistical Office, Office of the Prime Minister. According to this report 27% of married couples with wives between 15 and 50 years old resorted to sterilization.

To explain this phenomenon, the demographers cite intermediary causes coming from social practices. These causes would be: 1) a lower number of girls counted at birth (they are not registered because they count for little in the patrilinear ideology of these countries); 2) selective abortion of female fetuses or a lack of care for female children which may go as far as infanticide and which results in a higher mortality rate for young female children. Between these two causes, selective abortion is more prevalent, aided by the development of medical imaging (antenatal ultrasound scans).

These two intermediary causes trace back to a more fundamental cause, which is cultural. Indeed, these Asian societies have patrilinear social structures in common and a powerful ideology of patrification, of which Confucianism offers a particularly dogmatic expression in the countries where it is present (China, Korea, Việt Nam). In this context, having a son is seen as an economic necessity as much as it is a social one (family prestige) as well as religious, in that among societies permeated with Confucian heritage, it is the son's responsibility to mediate spiritual relationships with the ancestors which dictates the harmony and well-being of the family. Therefore, in Confucian culture countries the aim of parenthood was traditionally the quest for one or more sons, and this preoccupation has taken a particular turn in the context of demographic transition and especially in the political context where this transition was reinforced by strict control of births as was the case in China (*cf.* single child policy).

Việt Nam, like other Confucian-culture countries, had one of the most rapid demographic transitions among developing countries (Rele *et al.*, 1993). In addition, as with its Chinese homologue, the Vietnamese government took an authoritarian route. Since the end of the 1980s it has favored a limitation on the number of children to one or two children per couple. This measure is nevertheless unequally implemented from one province to the next, and affects above all civil servants and members of the military who, in case of an infringement, are exposed to punitive fines or community service work (Goodking, 1995). This voluntary action and the effects of the reform movement *đổi mới* meant that in the mid-1990s, the average fertility rate had fallen to 2.6 children per woman and by the end of the decade did not even exceed 2.2 children per woman – a figure very close to the generation replacement threshold (Bélanger *et al.*, *op.cit.*). Despite this low fertility index and forty years of governmental promotion of sexual equality, the preference for boys is still very present in Việt Nam and is seen in various pre- and post-natal strategies.

The study of Bélanger *et al.* highlights these strategies through an analysis of the 1989 and 1999 censuses and especially of their sampling at 1/20th which is statistically representative of the entire national population. It also takes into account the study on the standard of living of the General Statistics Office which provides retrospective family data obtained from a sample of 5,823 married women of child-bearing age.^[23] Finally, it studies the totality of births and abortions occurring in the

[23] General Statistical Office, *Vietnam Living Standards Survey 1997-1998*, Hanoi: Statistical Publishing House, 2000.

principal hospitals of Hà Nội (1999) and Hồ Chí Minh City (1996, 1999 and 2001).

Before going into the detail of the study's results, it is necessary to remember that the ratio of male births is the ratio between living male and female children. The norm for human populations is situated between 104 and 107, with an average of 105, meaning that there are 105 boys born for every 100 girls. According to the study by Bélanger *et al.*, in 1989 the ratio of male births was 107 in Việt Nam, but large disparities existed between the different provinces and regions of the country. Thus, the provinces in the south (Long An, Đồng Tháp, An Giang, Tiền Giang, Bến Tre, Cửu Long, Hậu Giang) had a higher ratio, between 110 and 115 (Bélanger *et al., op. cit.*). In 1999, according to the 1/20th sample data which appears to be the closest to reality, the national male birth ratio was 107.7 with, again, large disparities. Thus, 18 provinces present a ratio superior to 110, with a maximum of 128.5 in Thái Bình. The study also points out that the male ratio for last-born children rises with the age of the mother, changing from 107 when the mother is between 20 and 24 to 110 for mother from 35 to 39 years old (Bélanger *et al., op. cit.*). Data collected in hospitals confirm the phenomenon and show that the male birth ratio rises sharply with the rank of birth. Thus the ranks 3 and 4 (3rd and 4th child) show masculinity rates between 147 and 223. Here we see women who had girls for their first children but employ different strategies to have a boy. Among these strategies is abortion when the ultrasound reveals that

the child is a girl. Abortion has been legal in Việt Nam since 1954 and occurred much more frequently from 1989 with the legalization of private clinics. Another popular strategy is the discreet removal of the intra uterine device to try to have another child, hoping for a boy. The armed forces and civil servants, who are subjected to more pressure than other parents to respect the governmental injunctions on birth control, have more of a tendency to select their child according to the sex from the first or second child. We observe as well that the families, in rural areas of the north especially, who already have two sons do not try to have more children, because they do not want to divide their farm into three smaller parts and they also want to avoid having problems with the authorities.

Conscious of the problem of asymmetrical masculinity and the significant consequences at the demographic level, in January 2003 the authorities voted for legislation that forbids couples from determining the sex of the fetus whatever the means used. The law sets fines and penal measures for those who break the law (Bélanger *et al., op. cit.*).

Finally, this study is interesting because it shows the weight of cultural conditioning on procreation practices. Certainly, the male birth ratio in favor of boys does not affect the course of the process of demographic transition. It adapts to it. Nevertheless, in conjunction with the process, it significantly limits the number of girls available later on the matrimonial market, and can create alarming demographic consequences.

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Day 2, Tuesday, July 20

2.4.3. Transformations of the Feminine Condition in View of Demographic, Cultural and Social Changes, by Martine Segalen

Speaking about the "demographic transition" for an entire population ignores the fact that certain elements of this transition exclusively concern women, as young pubescent girls, pregnant women and mothers. This presentation begins by comparing feminine life calendars from the XVIIIth century to the present day to show what the demographic data reveals, then it will study multiple causes for the profound transformation of the feminine condition – more so than that of men – and consequently of the institution of family in contemporary Europe. Finally, it will emphasize the role of public policies torn between declining fertility rates and generalized ageing of the population throughout Europe, and the rise of the equality between men and women.

In the framework of this presentation, I manipulate different types of data and sources, demographic as well as historical.

The presentation begins by comparing the child-bearing careers of women in two generations, showing the extraordinary change in the feminine condition.

But history does not stop in 1960 and if we look at the generation of women born in 1990, we can compare these figures to those of today: average age of marriage 30 years; at the first birth 30 years; birth rate for France 2.0

Table 32 *Mortality, Nuptiality and Legitimate Fertility of Two Generations of Women: 1750 and 1950 in France*

	Generation 1750	Generation 1950	
		"Maximum Fertility" (a)	Probable History (b)
1. For 100 Living Girls, Proportion of Survivors			
at 15 years old	48%	94%	94%
at 50 years old	30%	90%	90%
2. Average Age of Puberty	16 years old	13 years old	13 years old
3. Average Age of First Marriage	26 years old	23 years old	23 years old
Proportion of Single Women at 50 Years Old	11%	8%	8%
4. Average Age at the Birth of First Child	27 years old	24 years old	25 years old
Average Age at the Birth of Last Child	37 years old	38 years old	30 years old
Average Number of Children			
Per Woman Married at 20 Years Old, Subsistent Union until 50 Years Old	8.7	12.3	2.8
Per Married Woman	5,3	10,1	2.2
Per Living Woman at 15 Years Old	4.2	9.3	2.0
In the Generation	2.0	8.7	1.9
(a) Theoretical fertility in the absence of all birth control (contraception or abortion).			
(b) Estimation does not take into account illegitimate births (+0.15 children per woman), or divorce (effects on fertility difficult to evaluate).			

Source: Henri Leridon, "La Maîtrise de la fécondité: ses motifs et ses moyens" p. 51.

in 2008; significant rise in the age of the last pregnancy to around 42 years old.

These numbers show that behind the concept of demographic transition for an entire population, we have major transformations which concern the feminine condition.

The Feminine Condition in Previous Societies

In peasant societies, women work very hard within a strict distribution of labor and roles; they manage domestic life, the health of men and family and work in the fields, all the while bearing and giving birth to children. The couple is based on inheritance strategies: the notion of the couple does not exist, the workplaces of men and women are

separated; the men are outside, in the fields or in the café, the women stay at home or in their own social spaces which are the kitchen or the washroom. In this society, the roles are separate and hierarchical.

In the city, at the factory, the beginnings of capitalism – and particularly textile capitalism – seriously disorganized family life by putting first the woman, and then the children in the factory. Low salaries for men meant that everyone must work in the factory. In Lille, in 1856, the cotton and linen spinning factories employed 12,939 men and 12,792 women from Monday to Saturday, 5:30 am to 8 pm, 300 days per year. The woman's salary was inferior to the man's, and children earned even less. Children were valued in the factories for their small size; they could slip under the looms to repair broken threads, clean bobbins, and collect cotton scraps (Segalen, 1994).

A maternal proletarianization emerged: fatigued by the working conditions, female workers were accused of having lost their domestic skills. The decline of male status within working class domestic groups did not necessarily lead to a rise in female status. Observers highlight the destructive effects of industrialization on traditional skills:

“Industrialization will produce, by entire groups, a new type of mother, who works outside of the home from 12 to 14 hours per day and comes home exhausted, haggard, exasperated, sometimes incapable of carrying out the most basic motherly and household tasks. What is new, is not that work sets a mother against her children (that was often the case in the countryside), it is the massive, collective and blinding character of the phenomenon. Peasant and farming women sometimes worked just

as much, but each one was conscious of their common fatigue in the privacy of her own home and in front of only a few witnesses, sometimes doctors. Now, factories and poor housing gathered these poor women together in one place, giving their misery a scandalous dimension,” (Knibielher and Fouquet, 1980, p. 245). Traditional female sociability, through which their feminine knowledge was transmitted, was destroyed. This knowledge concerned the household domain, kitchen, laundry, childcare, etc. Even if these practices were sometimes deemed “superstitious” among peasants, they continued to be passed on as wisdom coming from the beginning of time. The situation changed in the city where the contrast between the behavior of the female worker, and learned and middle-class knowledge, was too glaring. Observers are frankly hostile toward the working-class ways of doing things. They are obliged to state that women are de-cultured. At the end of the century, the criticisms accumulate: *“Women workers do not know how to sew, mend, cook a broth, or raise their children. That industrial work, as overpowering as it was, had destroyed the ancient feminine knowledge and the virtues of housekeeping, is not particularly surprising.”*

When she is not working in the factory, a woman looks for another way to earn extra money: for example, in London, a decrease in female labor corresponds to a rise in the number of boarders. In other working-class cities, married women worked in non-industrial sectors: they were washerwomen, they managed cafés, they cleaned houses or took in work at home. We observe a rise in this type of work toward the end of the XIXth century, notably with the sewing machine. Although this mechanism appeared to be the ally of the middle-class woman in her

traditional tasks, “the iron seamstress” was the instrument of external capitalism within the home. For a small salary, tied to her machine, the woman finds herself in her traditional posture and function again, reinforcing the symbolic image of the disciplined woman (today the same image is the stenographer bolted to her typewriter, and in the 1990s to her computer, with word processing). With the development of the clothing industry, many women get enough money out of their machine to pay for the rent of the instrument of their domination and to supplement their husband’s salary. In order to obtain this slim revenue, they must work entire days, sometimes till late at night. This is why at the dawn of the XXth century, we see women returning to the factory, which seems to them to be preferable to the torments of working at home – these women would then flock to the war factories (Perrot, 1978).

Whatever the involvement of the woman in paid work, her principal role is to ensure the survival of the family despite the conditions of extreme poverty which characterized all of industrial Europe in the XIXth century. Obviously, the birth of numerous children added to family responsibilities. Child abandonment rose dramatically with industrialization, which prompted the public authorities to put into place structures for helping what they defined as “found children”, “abandoned children” or “assisted children” – *foundlings* (Fuchs, 2002). Often, their mothers, whether they were single or married, were new to the city, without a network of relatives or neighbors who could help them in their distress. Work and childcare were incompatible, especially for women who were employed as housekeepers or domestic help, a profession which was expanding in

the XIXth century. In Paris, at least one-third of the women who abandoned their children were domestic helpers for whom their work made motherhood impossible; another third were seamstresses, or factory workers (Fuchs, 2002, p. 176).

Until the 1930’s, certain working-class families used the strategy of fertility, producing numerous children who cost money when they were young, but who could then bring a salary home to the family. However, on the whole in French society, we see an overall fall in fertility, birth control being practiced via abortion or coitus interruptus.

It is useful to have this reminder of the historical conditions in which women lived so as to measure the changes that have occurred.

Ideologies about Women and the Family

One should know that the changes in the status of women, of which we will study the causes, have been the subject of debate for several decades. Scientific discussions surrounding the criticisms of the “bourgeois” family and the question of division of labor and roles launched the vast popular movement that in France was called the “movement for the liberation of women” (*mouvement de libération des femmes*) or MLF, a radical movement from the 1970s. The rejection of marriage and the couple was therefore born out of an ideological position.

In the period immediately following the war, the danger to the family took on a new image; an internal danger resulting from neurotic relationships, the suffocation of the family and the destruction of its members by the intolerable pressure inflicted by family restrictions. Women seemed to be very

dominated, dependent on the resources of their husbands, which limited the number of divorces. The influence of Freud and the discoveries of psychoanalysis contributed to the radicalization of anti-family positions. The works of Simone de Beauvoir highlight the failings of traditional middle-class morals and marriage, both contributors to the alienation of the woman, and this is a trend that would strongly influence the criticism of family produced by feminists in the 1970s.

The re-emergence of domestic work as a field of scientific study is due to Marxist critique of the 1970s. It denounces the oppression of women in the context of patriarchal exploitation. The capitalist production mode having led to a gender-based division of labor, the feminists wanted to *“show the activities of women in the family and get recognition for these as work, and exploited work. By presenting housework in terms of production, feminist movements forced us to rethink the functions attributed to the family and the general functioning of the economy”* (Chabaud-Rychter, Fougeyrollas-Schwebel and Sonthonnax, 1985).

Christine Dupont (1970) posed the question of the public character of the family by affirming that domestic work produced value. Certain economists challenged this position, stating that the product of domestic work was of immediate value at the point of use, but was not goods that enter into a network of commercial exchanges. The feminists responded that most of the services provided in the home could be found on the market. The nature of domestic work was therefore part of the public domain, even if national accounting still ignored it, and even classified the contribution of women to the production of goods and services sold on

the market as production for family use. These controversies, in conjunction with the fight for the liberalization of contraception and abortion, occupied public debates in the 1970s and 80s, then subsided only to reappear nowadays as regards the still-debated question of male-female equality.

At the turn of the XXIst century, the work that was started in the 1970s was taken up again: thirty years after it began, gender sociology was reconciled with the family. French-style feminism, inspired by Marx, critical of the condition of women in marriage, re-energized the research: after a period of militant opposition to an institution seen as the incubator of inequality between men and women, feminist sociology, which had done much to decompartmentalize sociology, denounced the inequality between genders, which is often social inequality.

The Causes of the Change in the Status of Women

It is necessary first to point out the medical progress of the end of the XIXth century concerning child delivery and stillbirths. Women no longer needed to deliver ten children in order to have at least two survive. The consumer society favored the improvement of the feminine condition in two ways: it was no longer necessary to sew your own clothes or make your own jam – better to buy them at the market than to make them at home. In addition, the level of education of women rose while the labor market opened up new professions. Finally, the liberalization of morals allowed a greater sexual liberty for girls. New attitudes toward virginity and the sexuality of young women have now been accepted for more than twenty years in our society: for one

generation. These changes in status make women the drivers and promoters of a new social model.

But among the most important causes, we should note the two contraceptive revolutions.

Natural contraception and chemical contraception define very different relationships with society: even if they have the same effect – limiting births – they do not use the same means, and do not have the same motivations.

According to the theses developed by Philippe Ariès, “natural” contraception, which became established at the end of the XVIIIth century in France, is a male contraception, a contraception of the ascetic, where the man controls his sexual impulse and pulls away at the most pleasurable moment.

Previously, people couldn’t even imagine that they could modify the sexual act, an act of nature. This is where the revolutionary idea lies, in this change of the attitude toward the body. Historians see in this an upheaval of consciousness. Ariès states that “*contraceptive practices are unthinkable in ancient societies because they are foreign to their mental universe.*” The attitude toward sexuality was also supported by religious doctrine which considered chastity as the optimal state; marriage was the lesser of two evils, but the sexual act should be reserved for the aim of procreation. Sexuality for sterile purposes was condemned.

However, at the end of the XVIIIth century, in the Catholic country that is France, the practice of *coitus interruptus* reached diverse social classes – middle-class and peasant.

This technique was certainly known in some milieux such as that of prostitution or in the salons of high society; what is new is the speed of the diffusion of the “*funestes secrets*” (fatal secrets). The effects are immediately felt in the fertility rates. From a statistical point of view, this contraception is highly efficient, because it reduces the number of births; at the level of each individual couple it is not as certain: even when “being careful” – a euphemism which refers to the dissociation of pleasure and risk of pregnancy – they have more children than they want. It is this margin of security that distinguishes the modern methods of contraception from the old methods.

The desire to limit one’s descendants is linked to a new attitude toward children, that they must be taken care of and educated: “*It was when the French started to take an interest in children that they began to have fewer of them*”, writes Doctor Jean Sutter to summarize the thoughts of Philippe Ariès (Burguière, 1972, p. 1121).

Since the 1970s, a second contraceptive revolution has taken place with the moral acceptance of modern techniques (notably chemical). On many points, they are the opposite of classic contraceptive techniques. Detractors of these new methods described them in passionate and ideological terms: “contraception of pleasure”, “calculated children” – a discourse which has totally disappeared with their diffusion and acceptance throughout Europe. The voluntary limitation of births corresponds to a new economy of conjugal relationships, centered on the couple. This voluntary choice, manifest in the rapid fall of fertility, precedes the widespread adoption of modern contraception techniques. From 1964-65

we observe a significant decrease in fertility, whereas the widespread use of the pill and the IUD doesn't really take off until 1970. This phenomenon is all the more remarkable in that it has affected other European countries in the same way. Today, children no longer arrive and are accepted, but they are planned, scheduled and desired.

According to a study carried out in 1988, the age at which young people have their first sexual experience dropped considerably between 1960 and 1980. At the end of the 1960s, one third of women were virgins at the time of marriage; in the mid-1980s, this was the case for only one out of ten women. The median age for first sexual relations seems to have stabilized around 18 years old (Toulemon and Léridon, 1991; Bozon, 1993). This liberation of morals was underpinned by the total control of contraception, unthinkable only thirty years ago. The first period of juvenile cohabitation, which demographers analyzed in the mid-1970s as a "trial marriage" period, was in fact sterile. The young cohabitants married when a pregnancy occurred or when the couple wanted to have a baby. It is not the same ten years later, as we see a significant rise in births out of wedlock.

The extension of the period of higher education for women, as well as the rise of the female workforce, also explain the development of this practice; marriage appears contradictory to the aspirations of women for personal autonomy and openness to external opportunities. Entrance into the adult world is unclear today, whereas in the past it was signaled by marriage, which opened the doors to sexuality as well as to independent housing and salaried employment. On one hand, the age of

legal majority is lower at 18 years old (since legislation in 1974), and women's first sexual relations occur at an earlier age, but on the other hand, education is prolonged and young adults enter the workforce later and later. Juvenile cohabitation offers a social buffer for reconciling these contradictory demands. Today, this cohabitation is legitimized by the creation of the PACS (Civil Solidarity Pact) which has been remarkably successful among young couples.

Some observers find that the economic situation since the 1990s, characterized by difficult access to the labor market and unemployment among young people, is also responsible for the development of common law unions, given that marriage is supposed to happen once one has stable employment. While this hypothesis holds true for some couples, we cannot say it is universal. First, economic crises keep young people in their parents' homes. Since the 1980s, 18 to 22 year-olds live at home longer, instead of finding their own independent housing as they had since the 1950s. Second, the economic argument doesn't apply to certain protected categories, such as civil servants – and they have also developed this practice.

The Law and Public Policies

The law has followed the change in morals and made rapid advances toward male-female equality, even if this is still far from being achieved. If we look at the legislative changes that have taken place over the last thirty years, we see an important redefinition of the institution of family as it is defined by the law: the dismantling of the father and of the patriarchal society. Let's not forget that these changes take place within the context of a welfare state, which was more and

more generous during the post-war boom (Segalen, 2010).

Principal Measures in France Concerning the Family in Civil Rights, Public Policies and Social Policies

1939. Family Code

1944. Women allowed to vote (ruling of April 22)

1945. Establishment of the dependents' allowance (set against tax)

1946. Family Branch of Social Security (family benefits, single salary benefits, antenatal benefits, maternity benefits)

1948. Housing benefit

1965. Reform of marital law establishing conjugal equality and solidarity

1967. Neuwirth law on contraception

1970. Law replacing *paternal power* with *joint parental authority*. The notion of the *head of the family* disappears from civil law

1970. Orphan benefits

1972. Childcare benefits

- Law making all filiation (legitimate or illegitimate) equal; proof of biological filiation (genetic paternity test) so filiation becomes a reality that can be proven

1974. Second Neuwirth law establishing subsidy of contraceptives

1975. Veil law on abortion

- Law allowing divorce by mutual consent, as well as via contentious procedures

1976. Single Parent Benefit (*Allocation de parent isolé* - API)

1982. Parental Education Benefit (*Allocation parentale d'éducation* - APE)

1987. Law establishing joint parental authority

1989. Convention on the Rights of the Child voted by UN

1994. Home Childcare Benefits (*Allocation de garde d'enfant à domicile* - AGED)

1999. Law enshrining Civil Solidarity Pact (*Pacte Civil de Solidarité* - PACS), a contract which gives a common law union status to people living together, either same-sex or heterosexual couples. Unmarried cohabitation is recognized by civil law

2000. Children are recognized as people with the same status as adults: establishment of a legal authority, superior and independent, for the defense of children

2001. The legal time limit for having an abortion is raised to twelve weeks

- Discrimination against illegitimate children as regards inheritance is outlawed, and the rights of widowed spouses are reinforced

2002. Establishment of paternity leave: a father receives eleven days of paid leave when his child is born

- Law generalizing the principle of shared parental authority, making alternating residences possible for the child, bringing family mediation into civil law and foreseeing the possibility of a delegation of parental authority to a third party without taking it away from one or the other parent

- Law on access to information about the origins of an adopted person and the creation of a National Council on Access to Origins

- Gouzes law on family names

- Reinforcing of co-parenting (in case of the separation of a couple, married or not, the parents have strictly equal status concerning parental authority)

2004. Substitution and fusion of all previous childcare benefits into a single Young Childcare Benefit (*Prestations d'accueil du jeune enfant* - PAJE)

- Divorce reform, removing the concept of fault in certain cases

2005. A ruling presented to the Council of Ministers leads to the abolition of the civil law terms "natural" and "legitimate" filiation.

A mother – even unmarried – will no longer need to obtain an act of recognition for her child: filiation is established by birth – but an unmarried father will still have to go through this process.

Sources: Commaille, Strobel, Villac, 2002, p. 69-70, Montalembert, 2004.

Among all these measures I have listed, we find some significant inclinations of public policies as regards the family.

Measures affecting the institution of family were first attributed to right-leaning governments, because of their former preoccupation with the birthrate, but this is no longer the case today. For a long time, the French State has been unable to ignore the fall in the birthrate, which has consequences for the ageing of the population.

A long tradition of familialism in France has meant that governments, no matter what their political leaning, take an interest in the demographic future of the country. Nevertheless, since the end of the 1980s, intervention in private life is not necessarily accepted by all political sensibilities. The catchwords among politicians are neutrality and free choice – a decoy, it has been said. The State has noted the transformations of the family, and assimilates the plurality of conjugal models, the process of blended families, women in the professional workplace, and inter-generational relationships in its plans. In this complex and changing landscape, the political discourse claims to try to facilitate the well-being and harmonious balance of individuals.

Contemporary Public Policies are Subject to Tension

Policies on the family and changes in the law are closely linked together around three principles, characteristic of the contemporary institution of the family:

- recognition of the fragility of unions;
- necessary protection of the child in light of precarious filial relationships, by ensuring a link with the father;
- rise of the demand for equality of treatment of men and women in private and professional life.

The law has accompanied these changes, adapting to the instability of unions whether they are institutionalized or not by marriage, and trying to protect single mothers as well as children. In addition, family policies have moved from a pro-birth objective for all families to a social objective for the most needy, to focus on the single parent families created by ruptures of unions: this is what the specialists call “socialization of family policy”.

So-called family policies, like legal measures, have changed considerably since the end of the 1990s, focusing principally on:

- women/mothers in precarious economic situations;
- children, via a call to parents to be responsible. The issue of “parentality”, or capacity to fulfill your obligations as a parent, arises from concerns linked to the issue of insecurity. Some see this as a wish for a “moral re-arming” through mediation for “parenting support” which gently promotes an improvement in parenting skills, without harm to individual liberty;

- and for some years now, the “risk” of the dependence of the elderly, whose demographic weight will increasingly affect society.

These public actions are therefore less and less familialist in the old sense of the word. They do not try to rectify, in the name of national interest, the errors or insufficiency of families. Instead, they are designed to manage the most fragile social groups of society. But in its efforts to reduce public spending, the government is often tempted to delegate the most fragile groups, children and elderly, to local institutions or family solidarity. However, studies show that family solidarity is strong as long as it is supported by public solidarity; weakening the latter would seriously threaten the former.

In sum, young people of both genders reject the idea of a housewife in the home; women consider that economic activity is a means of independence, whereas for young men, women’s salaries increase the household revenue. Underlying attitudes show that young men have more conservative attitudes on the distribution of roles in the home. Even if they believe in the model of the independent woman, and feel solidarity with young women, some men seem reluctant to abandon their present advantages in the distribution of domestic tasks. Politicians insist therefore on the necessity of reconciling family life and professional life; reconciliation is still considered to be feminine because of the lasting nature of the distribution of tasks.

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Day 3, Wednesday, July 21

2.4.4. Evolution and Continuity in the Choice of Spouse: Cross-cultural Study of Vietnamese and Thai Cases, by Bernard Formoso

During the last thirty years, the development of studies on the choice of spouse and marriage conditions in Southeast Asia show that contrary to theories on convergence of family behavior, the linear transition from arranged marriages to marriages for love or from a formal union to an informal union is not operative in this part of the world (Cauquelin, 2000; Nguyễn, 2006; Malhotra, 1991). Certainly, a general process of individuation is taking place sporadically. Conditions in which individuals acquire education and skills that allow them to access economic emancipation earlier than in the family environment are favorable to this process. Mobility for studying and then for work also contributes to this process by

allowing eligible individuals to avoid parental influence and thus better express their own choices. On an ideological level, more space is given to the individual, for his/her well-being, personal fulfillment, feelings of love, while on a political level, women's rights advance, even if in practice they come up against many obstacles and distinct inequality still exists.

The repercussions of these mutations are a younger marrying age, notable delay of parenthood after marriage, increased rejection of marriage in favor of other types of unions, decreased stability of conjugal unions, and growing proportions of people who do not succeed in founding a family, especially women with high levels of education. Thirty years ago, marriage was almost universal in most Asian countries, so much so that the proportion of single adults was very small. Whereas, for the last two decades, we observe a significant change in large Asian cities. In 2000, 17% of women aged 45-49 years old remained single in Bangkok and 13% in Singapore (Jones, 2005).

Given these general trends, we must nevertheless remember that familial adaptations in the face of economic, political and ideological evolution of the modern world vary widely from one cultural and social context to another. Thus when cultural parameters remain constant, the attitude toward marriage varies significantly between rural and urban contexts, high and low education levels, or still yet between rich and poor individuals. Whatever variables are considered, however, adaptations are marked by both continuity and change, the nature and relative importance of which must be examined case by case. During this session, I will illustrate this by putting two examples of partially convergent evolution in perspective,

one relative to the changes in Việt Nam concerning choice of spouse since 1954, and the other concerning mutations starting in 1960 that characterized marriages in certain rural zones in the northeast of Thailand. There are numerous analogies between these two examples: in each case, we have gone from marriages arranged by the family but approved by the future spouses, to the opposite situation where individual initiative takes precedence, but parent approval is still sought. In spite of this reversal, the concern remains to preserve familial cohesion and form long-lasting unions. To this end, in both cases people try to establish compatibility through homogamy and a preference for endogamy, if not within the village then at least from the place of origin. However, the timing of nuptiality has changed little in Việt Nam over the last thirty years, whereas it has changed in the rural zones closest to urban centres in the northeast of Thailand. The Vietnamese case is also instructive in that it shows that the intervention of the State in marriage, although strong in the communist era, has had little effect on the structure of matrimonial choices and its evolution.

Changes and Continuity Regarding Marriage in Việt Nam since 1960

As regards the Vietnamese case, I will use two studies. The first is that of the demographer Danièle Bélanger, carried out on a sample of around one hundred people from the Hà Nội region that were married between 1960 and 1990. This study was published in 1997 in the review *Autrepart* (Bélanger, 1997). The second study, with a more monographic character, was done by the ethnologist Nelly Krowolski

between 1990 and 1995 in the village of Mông Phụ, in the Red River delta around 45 km from Hà Nội (Đường Lâm commune, Hà Tây province).

Danièle Bélanger bases her study on an apparent paradox. This country's urban population is at an advanced stage of demographic transition, because in 1986-1987, the composite fertility index was already 2.2 children per woman as against 4.6 in the countryside, and it has continued to decrease to 1.86 children/woman in 2008 for the country as a whole and to less than one child per woman in urban areas.^[24] However, the calendar of nuptiality has evolved very little; the median age at first marriage has only risen by a half year for women in the 40-45 year age bracket to that of 25-30 years, in the mid-1990s. This quasi-inertia seems all the more surprising to Danièle Bélanger because in other countries of Confucian tradition, demographic transition has gone hand in hand with a marked lowering of the marrying age (Coale *et al.*, 1993; Bélanger, *op.cit.*). As a result, the author studies the familial changes that have accompanied the slight increase in marrying age and the simultaneous decrease in fertility. In order to address this question, she needs cultural reference points that she looks for in the way in which marriages took place and how couples' lives were organized in Việt Nam before 1945.

Before the Second World War, the Vietnamese family was patrilinear and virilocal. Up until 1945, polygamy was legal and essentially served to ensure a male descendant, necessary for ancestor worship (Bélanger, *op.cit.*; Krowolski, 2000). Despite this, the

[24] Source: <http://www.populationdata.net/index2.php?option=pays&pid=228&nom=vietnam>.

Vietnamese woman enjoyed a relatively advantageous status compared to that of her Chinese sister. She had her own assets both from a dowry and from her right to a part of her parents' inheritance. Moreover, she held the purse strings, supervised the children's daily education and was therefore called the "general of the indoors". Even if the couple normally lived near the boy's parents, it was acceptable for a husband to live with his wife when he was an orphan or when the wife's family did not have any male heir and the boy's parents had many sons. In pre-1945 Việt Nam, marriage was agreed upon by the families, although the children to be married were generally consulted before the decision was made. Among the criteria that played a part in the discussions between families was geographic proximity (people favored village endogamy), socio-economic homogamy (it is preferable to marry someone of the same level), and lineage exogamy. At the end of this brief panorama of marriage conditions up until 1945, Danièle Bélanger notes that from the 1920s a process of individuation began, which refers to the fact that more and more young people in Hà Nội, having received a French education, questioned the Confucian family order and claimed more power over their own marriage (Bélanger, *op. cit.*).

This questioning of the traditional order had powerful political support after independence. Indeed, in 1959, the communist government promulgated a law declaring conjugal family to be monogamous and egalitarian. This law condemns polygamy, arranged marriages and underage unions between children (Bélanger, *op. cit.*; Krowolski, 2000). The legal age for marriage is set at 20 years for men and 18 for women. In addition, the law gives a precise definition of illegal

marriages, particularly between parallel and cross cousins over three generations. However, as Nelly Krowolski points out, the civil records as they were then kept could not provide the information needed to enforce this prohibition (Krowolski, 2000). Ideological campaigns were regularly carried out in order to establish marriage as a voluntary union between consenting individuals. The question is, of course, what was the real impact of this policy. All the more so because in 1986 the Vietnamese communist party decided to engage in a transition toward a market economy by privatizing land ownership and liberalizing private commerce. This reform seems to have had effects on the Vietnamese family – effects particularly noticeable in the resurgence of pre-socialist marriage rituals.

In addressing this question, Danièle Bélanger notes first a major change that has intervened between the 1960s and 1990s in the way in which future spouses meet. Although in the transitory phase of the 1960s-1970s, the family continues to play a part in matrimonial choices by introducing young people that they would like to see their children choose from within their social circle, during this period meeting people outside of the family circle becomes more popular and reaches all the social classes. This second option will end up affirming itself as the dominant mode starting in the 1980s, at the same time that the *dôi moi* reforms are launched. However, an element of continuity remains, "*the entry of a potential spouse into his/her spouse's family remains (...) a central step in the process, even if the parents are no longer the initiators*". (Bélanger, *op. cit.*). In other words, even if marriage is now conceived principally as a union between two individuals, the idea that it is also an alliance between two families

endures in the mentality of the younger generation and because of this, the opinion of the parents remains a determining factor. A reversal in the order of initiative is therefore taking place, because now the children start the process. Nevertheless, the agreement of the children is now replaced by that of the parents. Parents are sometimes opposed to the choice made by their children, notably when the principle of homogamy is not respected. In this case, most children do not go against their parents' opinion and those who risk it are mainly boys, notes Danièle Bélanger.

Now that the general trend has been described, it is necessary to add some nuances. First, in the socialist era and especially during the war years, matchmaking takes place in all socio-economic classes. During this period, indeed, many parents worried about not being able to marry their daughter before she was "expired" ("*ế chồng rồi*"), meaning too old and therefore less attractive, all the more so since the loss of males during the war was enormous. Consequently, they put great pressure on their children to decide quickly. Only the young people who left their village in order to work in the city could escape this pressure and choose their spouse freely (Bélanger, *op. cit.*). Another nuance is that the oldest sons are subjected to more family pressure and arranged marriages than the other children, because their parents aim in this way to continue the lineage. The last aspect to highlight is that even when young people take the initiative in the choice of spouse, the meeting often happens through the efforts of a third party, a relative, friend, school mate, or a work mate. This is the preferred method, as it is difficult to imagine entering directly into a relationship with

someone for marriage (Bélanger, *op. cit.*). Also, acting through chosen friends who come above all from one's own social environment means the possible matrimonial choices are adjusted more easily to the principle of homogamy. Danièle Bélanger remarks that the homogamous rule has been internalized by the younger generations to the point that even before having thought about marriage, young people ask about the status and history of the family of a possible spouse by using criteria such as place of origin (question of endogamy), education, age, profession, economic situation and the way in which children should be educated. The idea being that it is necessary to find a partner that is similar to oneself in order to attain a balance between the families, without which the couple could not live harmoniously. This rule of homogamy is more easily perpetuated among young people than it was during the socialist era before *đổi mới*; the communist party appropriated this rule by getting deeply involved in bringing couples with good revolutionary backgrounds together. The party investigated the political past of wedding hopefuls and their families through the local organizations which each citizen of Hà Nội was obliged to join according to his/her place of work. In order to legalize cohabitation, a prerequisite for marriage, every citizen had to produce a document from the party which authorized a marriage with the desired person. This triggered an investigation into ancestry which took into account the moral and political past of the family for three generations. This past was contained in a document, the *lý lịch*, which also determined the studies and chances for professional promotion. Although applied more or less strictly in different places, this procedure created a group of "first-class"

citizens, as opposed to another second-rate group which was composed of politically dubious people. Often, families precluded matrimonial control by the state by choosing spouses who corresponded to traditional criteria as well as those decreed by the authorities. Note that occasionally the party acted as matrimonial agency by proposing spouses to its female members over the age of 30 (Bélanger, *op. cit.*).

Nelly Krowolski's monographic study shows that political control over marriages seems to be less strict in rural areas. Thus, in the commune where she worked, she found some cases of marriage occurring between 1972 and 1990 where one of the spouses was younger than the minimum legal age for marriage set by the law. This study is interesting as well in that it shows that the principle of local endogamy is still largely practiced today and that the familial strategies in this sense are still in operation. Thus in Mông Phụ, nearly 85% of men married between 1972 and 1990 had found their spouse in their native commune (and more than 60% in the same village). For the women, 67% had found their husband in the commune and 43% in the same village (Krowolski, *op. cit.*).

In the ancient configuration, familial homogamy was combined with a statutory heterogamy between the husband and wife. Ideally, it was necessary for the man to have a level of education and revenue higher than that of his spouse in order to ensure the hierarchical and conjugal harmony prescribed by Confucian ethics. Danièle Bélanger observed that after 1986, and the implementation of *đổi mới* reforms, the stability of the future couple no longer depended on this hierarchy, but on the

experience, conclusive or not, of the pre-conjugal relationship. In other words, the feelings of love and their longevity were now the priority, even if the criteria for making a decision to support a relationship were different for men and women. The former emphasized physical criteria where the latter favored criteria concerning social integration. In addition, conjugal destiny is interpreted differently according to whether you consider the point of view of the man or the woman. In the view of the former, the woman should certainly be a government employee during the socialist era, but could also take on the role of mother and housewife in the contemporary capitalist context; while women remained firmly attached to their economic autonomy and wanted to continue to work for the state or open a business (Bélanger, *op. cit.*).

Finally, the observations made in the Hà Nội region reveal three types of family evolution according to Danièle Bélanger (Bélanger, *op. cit.*). First, ruptures. These particularly result from the dynamic between parents and children concerning the choice of spouse. Marriage becomes an individual initiative and no longer familial. However, these ruptures do not end in a dissolution of hierarchical ties between parents and children. These are maintained, as shown by the necessity of obtaining the approval of parents when a spouse has been chosen. "*The principle shifts from an agreement between two families to an agreement between the parents and children*", notes Danièle Bélanger (Bélanger, *op. cit.*). In addition to ruptures and continuities, we also see resurgences. This is the case for engagement and wedding rituals that had been reduced to a minimum during the socialist era and which have come back in all their previous splendor. The resurgence

of the Confucian model of the housewife is also part of this movement of resurgence. From this, one fact is obvious: the choice of spouse in the socialist period is more similar to the traditional model than the egalitarian model put forth by the law of 1959. Besides that, explains Danièle Bélanger, the evolutions noted are not exclusively due to the economic changes of 1980, but are part of a continuum started at the beginning of the 20th century. However, the shift from a socialist type economy to a capitalist type seems to translate into placing renewed value on family ties (Bélanger, *op.cit.*).

Evolution of the Marriage Procedure in Rural Thailand

In order to illustrate the evolution of marriage in the rural areas of contemporary Thailand, I will use a comparative study on this theme that was done for a multi-disciplinary project bringing together French and Thai researchers in the mid-1980s. This project involved two villages in the northeast of the country of which I have already described the contrasting characteristics, but it is necessary to remember that one – Ban Amphawan – is in an irrigated zone and is near the principal urban development center of the Northeast, while the other – Ban Han – is subject to a rain-fed rice culture regime and is further away from both the major axes of communication and a large city (Formoso, 1997).

Generally, the kinship system and the rules linked to marriage are different in Thailand from in Việt Nam. In Thailand, the filiation mode is cognatic and not patrilinear. This means that girls and boys inherit equally from the parents with, however, a larger part of the inheritance reserved for the last of the girls if she takes care of their parents in their

old age and until their death. The residence of the young couple is uxorilocal, according to a rule that still applied to more than 80% of households in the two villages in the mid-1980s. The husband thus lives with his wife's parents for a period that can last anywhere from a few months to several years, or even until the death of the woman's parents in the case of the lastborn daughter; she then inherits her parents' house. Aside from this particular case, as soon as it has the means, a couple builds a house and is economically autonomous by being given part of the land of the wife's parents, and assets from the husband's side as well. As is the case in Việt Nam, some adjustments are made when the husband's side does not have enough men to work the fields. In this case, discussions held between the two families before the wedding could result in a virilocal residence.

Also as in Việt Nam, marriages are traditionally arranged between the families, even if up until the changes in the choice of spouse beginning in the 1960s, children to be married were consulted and could refuse the person presented. It was only with their consent that formal negotiations were begun between the two families, under the supervision of a local notable recognized for being wise and chosen by both parties. Negotiations involved the mode of residence, the marriage payment to be paid by the boy's family and the activity of the future couple.

Before these negotiations, other criteria were taken into account by the parents in the case of arranged marriages. First, in the Thai Buddhist context, it was necessary for the boy to have lived for a period in a monastic order before the marriage. This ordination is a rite of passage from "raw" manhood (*khon dip*) to "cooked" manhood (*khon suk*), meaning

mature and civilized. So if he hadn't yet been ordained, the prospective of an impending marriage would lead the young men to fulfill this duty for at least the duration of a *phansa*, a Buddhist retreat (approximately 3 months). As for girls about to be married, they are expected in return to be fervent Buddhists and accomplished housekeepers, which is proven by their participation in making food offerings to Buddhist monks and the mastery of feminine crafts such as weaving. Another restrictive condition is the relative age of the future newlyweds. The rule among Thai people is that the man must be older, even if it is only a few months older than his spouse. In order to ensure the best of luck for the household, Thais consider that the woman should display all the signs of respect toward her husband – the obedience and submission which are normally expected of a younger person toward her elder. In return, the husband has a duty of benevolent protection of his wife (Formoso, 1990). Third, the marriage must respect the unique Thai rules of exogamy, meaning that the spouses should not be too closely related, especially not first or second cousins. In addition, homogamous marriages were favored as in Việt Nam, with the regulating factor being the amount of matrimonial compensation that the boy's side had to give; this is adjusted according to the socio-economic status of the girl's family. Hypogamous marriages (boy's family wealthier than the girl's) were admitted. In rural environments, a variant of the homogamous principle was a clear preference for alliances between agricultural families, providing dowries of land from both sides and maintaining the size of the farms at a viable level despite the fragmentation of the land resulting from inheritance rules. A clear inclination toward local endogamy

was functionally linked to this propensity to marry among agricultural families, because the lands cultivated would be close to each other. Thus, in the Udon Thani province village that Stanley J. Tambiah studied at the beginning of the 1960s, 73.5% of husbands were from the same village or county, while at the end of the 1960s, in the two Khon Kaen province villages that we studied, 52% (Ban Amphawan) and 64.5% (Ban Han) respectively of husbands were from the same village or county (Tambiah, 1970; Formoso, 1997).

The 1960s, which correspond to the beginning of the economic growth in Thailand, also saw the start of significant changes in the choice of spouse in the cities as well as in the country. In the context of a process of individuation comparable to the one observed in Việt Nam, young Thais take more and more initiatives to find a spouse that they like, then they try to persuade their parents that the choice they made was the right one. If the latter do not approve, the wedding does not take place. If, on the other hand, they do agree, the discussions between the families to decide on the mode of residence and matrimonial payment amount are carried out with the help of an intermediary, as in the past. As we can see, consensus between parents and children is still very important. Because of this, the reversal of the parent-child relationship concerning the choice of spouse operates without changing the criteria for choosing a spouse. In rural areas, the boy must still be ordained in advance, even if retreats in the monastery have a tendency to be shortened to the absolute minimum, sometimes only a few weeks. Also, the rule stating that the man should be older than the woman is still widely applied. Thus, in 1984 only 7.4% of couples in Ban Amphawan and 7.6% in Ban Han broke

this rule (Formoso, 1997). We should point out that older wives still act as if they are younger than their husbands, meaning they use terms to address their husbands that designate him as older and adopt attitudes of deference that characterize relationships with an elder.

Another continuity; local endogamy remains dominant in the two villages in 1984, as 58.7% of the men in Ban Amphawan and 48% in Ban Han married women from their village or county (Formoso, 1997). Although in the village outside of the irrigation perimeter the proportion of local marriages has decreased between 1969 and 1984, dropping from 64.5% to 48%, this kind of evolution, observed elsewhere in Thailand at different times, is difficult to interpret. As Jeremy Kemp remarks, it reveals more about situational than structural changes (Kemp, 1982). The fact is that in the mid-1980s, marriages between agricultural families remained the norm in both villages. Only two married men or women out of 500 were originally from the city at the time of the study in Ban Han, and 14 out of 286 in Ban Amphawan. And it must be pointed out that in the latter village, the 14 people concerned were first-generation city dwellers whose parents, originally from rural areas, had migrated to the city to work in unskilled jobs. We also observe that the households in both villages where one spouse was working in the private or public sector, continued to manage a farm to supplement their salary.

In fact, other than the new priority given to individual choice of spouse, the only noticeable change in these two rural villages is the decrease in the age of nuptiality. It is also the principal point of divergence with the evolution of the matrimonial process in Việt Nam. In the 1980s, the women of the two villages of northeast Thailand married

between 15 and 30 years old, with most of them between 20 and 25 years old, while the men married between 20 and 40 years old with the 25-30 year age bracket being preponderant. Significantly, 6 to 8 men out of 10 in the 20-25 year age bracket were still single in the mid-1980s in these villages, while 5 to 6 men out of 10 in this same bracket were already married in the 1960s. Similarly, more than half of the women aged 20 to 25 years old were married in 1984 as opposed to 6 to 8 out of 10 in the 1960s (Formoso, 1997). Another observation is that it's in the village closest to the city that the decrease in the marrying age is the most significant. Such an accentuation of the phenomenon, perceptible among men and women, is principally due to the peri-urban position of the irrigated village. Conditioned, particularly through schooling at the colleges of Khon Kaen, by a city mentality which values individual liberty, outings and entertainment; moreover attracted by the city and the job opportunities that it offers, the youth of Ban Amphawan have a tendency to put off marriage as urbanites do. The *Population and Housing Census Changwat Khon Kaen 1980* reveals also that 71.6% of men and 49.9% of women in the 25-30 year old age bracket living in Khon Kaen were single at the end of the 1970s. In the mid-1980s, Ban Amphawan was very close to these percentages, with 81% single men and 45.5% single women in this age bracket (Formoso, 1997).

Finally, from the methodological point of view, the two examples cited in the context of this session reveal that it is dangerous to interpret the matrimonial evolution in a linear fashion, in reference to one-size-fits-all models without any nuance. Contrary to the image that we generally have, "arranged

marriage” in Việt Nam as in Thailand never took on the form of a choice made by the parents and imposed arbitrarily and unilaterally on the children. Thus, the transition from the family’s choice for the individual to a choice suggested by the individual to the family is accompanied by a remarkable continuity concerning the social and cultural criteria for the choice of spouse. Moreover, in Thailand as in Việt Nam, individuation in the choice of spouse was not accompanied by a loosening of inter-generational ties. These have kept most of their power to structure social relationships. Finally, the Vietnamese case, in the resurgences that it reveals, proves that the linear evolution model for familial behavior is far from universal. At the end of the day, these two case studies remind us – if it was necessary – of the importance that demographic analysis must place on particular local characteristics.

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Day 4, Thursday July 22

2.4.5. Socio-demographic Studies on the Choice of Spouse and the Social Transformation of Contemporary Marriage, or, how we have moved, in France, from a family founded on marriage to a family founded on the child, by Martine Segalen

Four themes will be addressed in this presentation: studies concerning the choice of a spouse; changes from so-called traditional marriage to present-day “non-marriage”; new rituals that accompany the new marriage; the family without marriage, the child’s role in founding the family.

The Choice of the Spouse and the Choice of the Companion

In the 1960s, sociology turned toward the new matrimonial model which had been allowed to expand by the expansion of the salaried working class. Young people, entering rapidly into a very active labor market, no longer needed to wait for the real or symbolic death of their father in order to establish a home of their own. This “liberty” was frightening at the time; wouldn’t it lead to disorder for the reproduction of society?

The study of the *Choice of the Spouse* is the major work of family sociology of this period, and we must recognize it as a model in the field. In it, Alain Girard (1964, 1974) shed light on the formidable weight of objective regularities, which the common understanding took no account of – namely the importance of homogamy.

Theoretically, anyone can marry anyone. However, the choice of spouse is not entirely

unrestricted. Social groups continue to reproduce from within themselves. Several American studies and a large national study in France give results that agree with this. Marriages unite spouses with the same geographic origins for the most part, despite the mobility that characterizes industrialization. In France, the national study conducted by Alain Girard in 1958, *Le Choix du conjoint* (The Choice of the Spouse), comes to the same conclusion: “*The majority of marriages, seven out of ten, are between people with the same origins: in two out of ten households, the two spouses are born in the same town, three out of ten in the same canton (county), more than five out of ten in the same arrondissement (region)*” (p. 188).

Many post-war American authors had highlighted the social factors of attraction: race, ethnic group, religion, education, social class, having the same values. Alain Girard’s wide-ranging study measured these phenomena in French society in great detail.

“*The frequency of social homogamy is twice as strong as if the marriages took place independently of social origins of the partners [...]. It is dominant among farmers, workers; in the service industry, on the contrary, the social origins of spouses are much more varied, social mixing occurs above all in the lower middle classes*” (p. 75-76).

With comparable social origins, it is not surprising that the majority of spouses had identical levels of education (66%). Even more remarkable is religious homogamy: in 92% of couples, the spouses belong to the same religion, or are both without religion. The frequency of socio-professional homogamy after 1960 did not decrease at all for marriages occurring between 1960 and

1969. Alain Girard observes, in the preface of the second edition of *Choix du conjoint*, that it even seems to be higher for marriages occurring after 1960.

Each social environment has its own places, institutions and practices that allow young people to meet, get to know each other and choose a partner, thus the importance of studying meeting places and the formation of couples.

In analyzing the fundamental role of the ball in the formation of unions, Alain Girard shows that under this label, we find the “country ball”, where farmers and workers meet, the university balls, surprise parties and bourgeois rallies, etc. Each social category has its own type of dancing party. Thus, when people explain that they met “randomly”, this is most often due to a social process that puts them in a position to meet people from the same social group. It is remarkable to note the concordance between these facts and the opinion survey which suggests agreement on a collective norm:

“Despite a liberalism in principle which has developed in the collective conscience, a very deep feeling remains, which agrees with and sanctions the de facto situation. The structures and forms of social life bring individuals from the same social group together. In the end, it is among people of the same group that we have more luck and it is acceptable to choose your spouse, and the choice diminishes little by little, if you must meet someone in your entourage that ‘matches’” (Alain Girard, p. 198).

Alain Girard summarized this situation with a popular proverb: “one doesn’t pair a jay with a magpie”.

Another study updated Alain Girard’s study by focusing not only on the choice of spouse but also on that of the “companion”, in an open sociological perspective which takes into account new behavior marked by a relative distaste for marriage (Michel Bozon and François Héran, 1987, 1988). The regression of geographic homogamy is significant because of growing residential mobility. It is the more stable social groups (and those that are relatively remote) such as farmers and workers that marry most often in the place where they were born and work. Executives (very mobile social groups) are more exogamous. But geographic exogamy doesn’t threaten social homogamy, marriage with peers, which continues to characterize contemporary unions.

The study by Bozon and Héran confirms the significance of social homogamy, a social practice which can seem extraordinary because of (i) great socio-economic changes in France since the 1950s (social and geographic mobility, tertiarization of society, rapid disappearance of farmers and more recently workers) (ii) new attitudes that have appeared regarding marriage since the 1970s.

The French continue overwhelmingly to choose their spouse or their companion (concubine, live-in partner...), from within their own social group. Moreover, it is in the upper level socio-professional groups and in the farming communities that we observe, as in the XIXth century, the most distinctive homogamous behavior; employees, the most heterogeneous group, appear more mobile in their matrimonial choices.

How to explain the dominance of social homogamy in a society where cohabitation is developing, and in which social relationships are marked by informality and the development of a leisure society? By using the questions from Alain Girard's study on the places to meet a spouse, Michel Bozon and François Héran focus on meeting places and styles. Comparing the results of their studies with those of Alain Girard, they see that the neighborhood, work, balls and visits to the homes of individuals now account for only one-third of marriages instead of the two-thirds they represented in the 1970s. Instances of socializing with the neighbors declined while those of meeting people among one's peer group increased (evenings among friends, associations, "clubbing", which takes the place of the classic "balls"). Social control no longer happens through the parents, but through the sociological circumstances surrounding the places for socializing, which are very coded socially. Outings with a "gang" of university students, "nightclubs" for young workers or employees. The chances of mixing socially, despite the rise of the "middle classes", remain lower than ever.

Individual choice based on private criteria has taken the place of the patient parental strategies of the olden days. Even so, powerful social mechanisms continue to make unions (marriage or cohabitation) a place for replicating social diversity.

A new study is in progress which now introduces the role of social networks on the Internet, in order to see if new modes of relationships change homogamous factors.

Competition Between Marriage and Common Law Union

The 1980s and the birth of a new love

The new status of women, drivers and promoters of a new social model, disrupted the model described by Alain Girard. In the first conference in Tam Đảo, we described these characteristics: women's work, sexual autonomy provided by effective contraception. This liberalization is seen notably in the new attitudes toward virginity for young girls and the sexuality of young people, which have now been accepted for over thirty years in our society: the space of one generation.

Marriage is placed far away or not on the horizon at all for a couple, but on the contrary, all couples form at a young age. In the 1980s, a new idea appeared: after marriage founded on love, *i.e.* love which leads to marriage (*cf.* American post-war films: we fall in love, then we marry), comes the idea that the demands of love have become incompatible with marriage, (Commaille, 1982; Roussel, 1983). This new love has two characteristics: it is absolute and destined to be ephemeral. The refusal to marry is a refusal to submit the couple's relationship to other forces than feelings. Love is essentially a private matter, into which an intervention by the State seems unbearable. The expectations weighing on a couple are multiple: affective, sexual, material. They leave no room for compromise, which explains the number of divorces as well as the number of common law union break-ups. The 1960s notion of the united couple with plans for the long term was replaced by the notion of a temporary choice. Marriage would appear more and more to be a simple formality, a "social commodity"; trial marriage

would seem to be a reasonable practice and common law unions would be seen as a good thing: the breaking of marriage ties, or of those of concubinage would be envisioned at the beginning of the union as the best way to preserve the love and autonomy of the spouses.

An evaluation of the state of marriage at the beginning of the XXIst century lends a certain nuance to these hypotheses developed twenty years ago. Marriage is no longer a founding institution for couples, but this does not mean that it is refused. If it survives, of course at much lower levels than during its glory days (between 270,000 and 300,000 per year), it nevertheless takes on new meaning with the lowering of the average age of the first marriage (in 2003, 30.6 years for men and 28.5 for women). Marriage no longer constitutes the founding act for families, but forming a couple remains an objective for young people. And nothing, sociologically, distinguishes those who are married from those who are not. From now on, sociology is more interested in what happens within the couple than in its morphology. It tries to understand the mysterious alchemy of the couple which leads to its demise or makes it last.

Common law union does not “de-institutionalize” the family and the PACS

Concubinage, cohabitation, common law union, trial marriage? The rise in the number of unmarried couples surprised observers with its suddenness and its scale. In 1960, 300,000 couples were counted; 1,500,000 in 1990, 2,400,000 in 1999, 2,680,000 in 2002 and 3,000,000 in 2010, *i.e.* a multiplication by a factor of ten in fifty years.

The Civil Solidarity Pact (PACS), in effect since November 15 1999, gives a legal status to unions, including certain rights, and registers them with the court. Partners commit to “*helping each other mutually and materially*”; they benefit from advantages, such as fiscal (joint declaration), inheritance (abatement on inheritance) and social (tenancy rights, rights to the social security benefits of the partner). They are relatively easy to dissolve and do not require a judge as intermediary.

Since its creation, the number of PACS has increased dramatically. In 1999, 6,139 were finalized. In 2006, 77,362, and in 2008, 144,000 of which 94% were heterosexual couples. The number of marriages, 267,000 celebrated in 2008, should therefore be read in the light of the sharp rise in the number of PACS and legislative evolution which has a tendency to make the two contracts similar; marriage has become easier to dissolve while the protections offered by the PACS now approach those offered by marriage (since 2005, the government has also opted for extending the rights of PACS partners, notably in the public domain: the PACS is mentioned in birth certificates where it now implies an “*obligation for assistance*”).

Initially created to address the problems of homosexual couples, the PACS deviated from its function, offering a couple a sort of “*light*” marriage, with fiscal protection and the guarantee of an easy separation. It is an intermediary case. Somewhere between concubinage and marriage, it is nevertheless closer to a common law union than marriage because, at the birth of a child (or before), the mother’s partner must make a declaration: as in common law union, filiation is divided. PACS partners do not receive a *livret de famille* (family record book), which contains

the civil law articles that are read during a marriage ceremony. In 2008, 13% of PACS were dissolved.

We should draw a parallel between the new divorce law of 2005 which authorizes a divorce without any motive, bringing it closer to a PACS which authorizes an easy separation without going before a judge.

Some couples consider the PACS as a purely private and administrative act; others, on the contrary, surround it with rituals which simulate a marriage (Rault, 2009). Since 2009, the “Wedding Exhibition” has become the “Wedding and PACS Exhibition”.

For New Marriages, New Rituals

Among choices available to couples, marriage is still among the most popular because of its social and symbolic aspects and the publicity given to the event, but for how long? Although marriage continues, new rituals demonstrate the changes to it.

In the year 2000, the 300,000 marriage milestone was reached and the media did not hesitate to declare that “*the marriage craze is back*”, but everything is relative. After the historic low of 1994, with 254,000 marriages, a comeback was reported, which above all showed a delay in marriage, spouses being increasingly older. A sociologist specialized in marriage rituals shows how these reveal social changes (Segalen, 2003).

Marriages today celebrate something else besides a change in status, since the grooms are 30 years old and the brides 28 years old. Matrimonial rites cannot have the same meaning as they did when the spouses obtained their status as adults from the marriage itself. Born of the will of young

protagonists that have already acquired the new status which was before only accessible through marriage – residence, sexuality, procreation – these nuptials are the expression of a compromise between the couple and the familial constellation. Ritualistic inventions, emergence of new social actors, development of the festive dimension which makes a wedding more and more like a show that must “succeed”; these are the salient features of marriage at the turn of the XXIst century. The couple prepares months or one year in advance for a party that is supposed to reflect their image, where friends participate with musical creations or acts. Everything joins in this inventiveness, so much so that weddings become an important economic sector, epitomized by wedding trade exhibitions which offer all sorts of packages, including turn-key weddings. New sequences have been invented over the last twenty years: the *vin d’honneur* (reception immediately following the wedding ceremony), which assembles a maximum number of guests, the bachelorette party – a new step which celebrates the passage from female amorous vagabonding to conjugal fidelity –, photography, recording the party (the memory of which must be conserved) on video and nowadays on DVD. The cost of a wedding is very high, so much so that young couples may want to opt for a small wedding if their economic priorities are elsewhere. Often, the difficulty in planning a wedding worries some couples and deters them from getting married.

In fact, in contrast to the 1960s, the marrying couple organizes their own party, choosing the relatives and friends that they would like to invite, because in many cases they are the ones who are financing it. Marriage unites

adults, often parents, that have freely chosen to publicize their union. Engaged couples have elaborate discussions on their choices for the ceremony and often invoke “tradition” as a way to place their union in the context of long-term social normality.

New Familial Models

In France and in Scandinavia, more than 50% of children are born out of wedlock. Thirty years ago, this only represented 6% of the total number of births. What was once contrary to social norms has today become normal, along with significant development of de facto unions.

In 2009, in more than 65% of households, the mother is active and, either alone or with her husband/partner, decided on the timing and number of children she wanted to have.

Now, couples plan and have children 10 years later than their own parents did up until the 1970s. On average, the mother is 29 years old, sometimes much older. Longer life expectancy, improvement of pre-natal care, the development of blended families mean that women over 40 do not hesitate to become mothers or have another child. In addition, the medical profession is perplexed when the “scheduled” child is not forthcoming. The child should come when it is wanted and not take too long in doing so; and this impatience leads to an increase in the demand for Medically Assisted Procreation (MAP) techniques.

Whereas up until the middle of the XXth century, children had a productive value, today they have only an affective value for the family. Children of the Nation, children of parental desire, today they believe or are led to believe that they are their own masters,

subject to the law but at the same time objects manipulated by a consumer society. In the space of one century, they have become unrecognizable and so have their parents.

Desire for a child, right to a child

The new child is that of the new couple for which the mode of formation has radically changed in the space of thirty years. Up until the 1970s, so-called juvenile cohabitation ended up in marriage, which produced a child. The model is not at all the same today. Two young people meet and are rapidly involved in sexual relations which may lead to them living together (if they are old enough and have the means to establish independent housing) without clear plans other than to test the quality and nature of their relationship. Among young people, who doesn’t have a “boyfriend” or “girlfriend”, a term which has in fact lost its original meaning? According to the *Robert Dictionary* definition, friendship is indeed “*a reciprocal feeling of affection or sympathy which is not founded on blood relations nor on sexual attraction*”. However, today it is the term used, and the notion of friendship is found in the term *copain* (masculin friend)/*copine* (feminine friend) which implies a certain familiarity, contrary to “friendship” which associates affection and distance. If the amorous relation continues, and is inscribed in a larger family and social context, boyfriend or girlfriend becomes “companion”, term which will be used, for example by the grandparents for indicating the father of the child of their own child (Segalen, 2010).

At the establishment of the couple, plans for children do not exist. It is meant to first see how the interpersonal relations will develop, to see if each one gets what he/she wants

out of it. Perhaps, some months or some years later, the desire for a child will be the sign of an affective and professional stabilization of the couple, or thought of as a stabilizer of the relationship. Marriage follows, or not. It's optional.

Before having a child, couples need to "live their life", while they are "young"; they must "build" their relationship, ensure that it is sufficiently gratifying and at the same time, that their partner will be the dream mother or father for his or her child. Everything that was gained through the marriage contract – which meant you never had to ask yourself these questions again – is examined, subject to choice, source for hesitation and uncertainty in an informal relationship.

Before chemical contraception, couples tried their best to limit births. Since its arrival, the desire for a child has taken on another form, that of a voluntary act: contraception is stopped, the couple decides to try to give life. They first examine the socio-economic parameters related to the birth of a child, which are obviously not at all similar to previous economic calculations. But questions remain. Is it the right time in the career of one or the other, is the housing sufficient for having a child according to contemporary requirements, meaning a room for everyone? The couple works at "creating the conditions" for having a baby before they start trying to make a baby, if the material requirements for having a child, which are considerable today, seem to be met. Obviously, the economic factor is not the only one considered in this major decision. A certain ambivalence exists: the use of contraception has become so natural, taken for granted, that couples do not always have the impression that they are following a strategy. The reality of the planned,

scheduled child, opposes the perception that they have of what reproduction should be, a natural and disinterested act (Régnier-Loilier, 2007).

According to psychoanalysts, "*the decision to have a child*" is created by the subconscious; the desire for a child largely escapes the rational wishes of the progenitors. So the subconscious can explain forgotten contraception, or timely conceptions so that births will happen at a symbolic date in the history of the family, or in order to "*fill a void*" after the death of one of its members. The desire for a child corresponds to irrational hopes (even if material considerations count): to be part of the normality and conformity of the group, to aspire to filiation, which does not necessarily link to the continuation of the lineage. The newborn helps the other, the progenitor, gain access to adulthood. Bearer of the desires of its parents, what the psychoanalysts call the "*narcissistic contract*", the child should fulfill the hopes of its parents in exchange for their care and love.

Contrary to Simone de Beauvoir and the feminist movements of the 1970s, it is understood today that maternity is one of the central components of feminine identity. In rural societies of the past, sterility – always attributed to the woman – was a great misfortune. Today we pity a woman who does not have children and we are yet more surprised if she affirms (and dares to do so) that it is voluntary and a well thought out decision. All the more credit to her as society is "baby-phile", at least in its discourse and its representations. The French model includes encouragement to have a baby: "*The woman who wants to, but cannot procreate considers herself to be left on the bench by society, whether she places herself at a distance from*

the group or the group excludes her. The women themselves, their family and their group consider sterility to be a curse." Pregnancy is fashionable.

You need only to observe the radical change in the wardrobe of future mothers. Until the 1960s, all sorts of sacks attempted, without success, to hide what was still called *le doux secret* (the sweet secret), a bulge that women did not wish to exhibit. Somber colors and baggy clothing did not motivate women to go out, which was a way to protect them from the dangers supposedly awaiting future mothers. Today, they wrap their bellies with colorful scarves which emphasize the roundness; they wear two-piece bathing suits, proudly display their rotundity, following the lead of celebrities. In fact, psychoanalysts worry about the "fetishization" of pregnancy, the celebration of a sort of "maternal erotic" of which the first sign was the photo taken by Annie Leibovitz in 1991 of Demi Moore, seven months pregnant and wearing only a diamond ring, on the cover of the American magazine *Vanity Fair*. Even if the photo makes a ringing declaration of pride and the beauty of a pregnant woman's body, this "baby attitude" is not without danger when the real child arrives, with its night-time crying and colic, for good. In fact, there are psychiatric wards today, dedicated to treating the "baby blues", often young women who are filled with anxiety about their newborns, as well as specialists who try to understand a newborn's excessive crying.

Since the development of ultrasound, in the 1970s, the child arrives well before the birth. Initially designed as a medical technique for detecting abnormalities of the embryo and of the fetus, the ultrasound has become one of the principal rites of passage in contemporary

society. We don't get married anymore, but we present the photograph of the embryo to future grandparents, thus announcing their impending change of place in the generation, while socializing the relationship of the couple.

With the development of this technique, including three-dimensional imagery, the maternal belly no longer holds any secrets. Psychoanalysts speak about the worrisome strangeness of the "current transparency of pregnancy". From the third month of pregnancy, we know all the activities, as well as the gender, of this new "modern hero". At the same time real and a fantasy, often named when the baby bump is barely visible, the fetus is present in the life of the couple, to the point of believing that the birth is only an unimportant formality, and no longer the life-and-death event that it used to be – and still is in many societies in the world. The beginning of life is moved backwards in time.

When the draft Neuwirth law was being debated in 1967, some deputies developed particularly interesting arguments to defeat it. Jean Coumaros, a Greek doctor (UDR, Moselle) exclaimed: "Have the husbands considered that from now on it is the woman that will hold the absolute power to have or not to have children, by taking a pill, even without their consent? Men will lose their sense of pride in their fertile virility and women will become mere objects of sterile pleasure." Jean Coumaros was not wrong: because of "the pill" women were allowed sexual pleasure, like men, and it took away an essential part of the foundation of their domination. It is a major social and symbolic innovation, finally casting a doubt on the universal principle of the "biological differences between the sexes"

which was based on man's control of woman's power of procreation.

Western men had – whether they liked it or not – accepted the dismantling of their statutory position and status. Their role had been fundamentally transformed. For their part, women gave up none of their maternity, all the while encroaching on masculine territory by entering the labor force. The irreversible phenomenon of feminine labor renders the new maternity and paternity more conscious and responsible, which is seen in the delay of the age at first birth which characterizes our time. In the end, it takes two to make a child, and the mother as well as the future father, need to feel ready. It is at the level of the couple that negotiations take place. The fact of “making”, in the sense of “manufacturing” the child leads new fathers to involve themselves very closely in the pregnancy of their wife. With “the pill”, the all-powerful progenitor gives way to a joint action, but one about which the final decision depends on the woman.

Although women are thus the masters of procreation, men – happily – are not less present. Even if their place has changed, their commitment is in the end more mature and thought-out than it was before when they alone held the power of life. Whether it is a pregnancy without medical intervention or one that resorted to Medically Assisted Procreation (MAP), both partners want to reassure themselves of their procreative power. Men are just as concerned as women by the conception of the child, making with her the decision to stop contraception.

To summarize, we can say that new fathers have to find their place, they are subjected

to the need to be a man and at the same time to share the tasks of the mother equally. They also have difficulty in being the authority figure that they were before, when the relations between parents and children are governed by democracy.

To conclude, we can say that marriage is all the less useful now that concubinage and the PACS offer status and protection without further interference of the state in private life. Unlike the child born to a married couple, for whom filiation is automatically established at birth, for a child born out of wedlock, filiation is the result of a voluntary act. In marriage, the mother commits, in effect, to a principle of fidelity, from which flows the automaticity of paternity: it is in fact justification for marriage: *pater ist quem nuptiae demonstrant*. Inversely, for concubines, there is no public commitment to fidelity and so no automatic presumption of paternity: this is why the father and mother had to declare their parental status separately, up until not long ago. The declaration of paternity for the civil records can be done with the registration of birth, or by a separate act before or after the birth (a 2005 ruling did away with the mother's obligation to establish this act; only the unmarried father will now be required to carry out this procedure – an important though seemingly benign, procedure without ritual – which is regrettable). This gesture, which can seem banal, is in fact loaded with a significant symbolism. It gives paternity to the child and enters it into a familial continuity; it makes him or her a citizen with rights and duties which are linked to this status. For unmarried couples, the institutionalization of their family starts with the child's registration in the civil records.

It is by this act that the child enters its lineage, and the importance of the intergenerational link must be highlighted again, as it compensates for the fragility of the conjugal link. The role of grandparents in contemporary Europe is very important (Attias-Donfut and Segalen, 1998).

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Day 5, Friday, July 23

2.4.6. Matrimonial Strategies in the Rural Environment. Another Source for the Study of Familial Change: the Population Census, by Martine Segalen

This presentation discusses the diverse matrimonial forms analyzed in rural societies, and in its second part, looks at the use of another source for analyzing change: counting or taking a census of the population – useful documents for the history of family sociology. For this I will use the field work carried out between 1974 and 1984 in Brittany, in a region called the Bigouden country where the village Saint-Jean Trolimon is found (Segalen, 1985). During the entire XIXth century there were approximately 1,500 inhabitants there, and during my field work, I witnessed the brutal transformation of this agricultural town. In 1970, there were 150 farms; today there are only two. Today it is a residential city whose inhabitants work in the city of Quimper, 18 kms away; there are also many second homes.

Inheritance Strategies and Matrimonial Strategies

This line of study is part of a wide anthropological comparison of societies throughout the world. Jack Goody (2000) notably developed a comparison between Eurasian and African societies.

There is a fundamental difference between non-European societies (but not yet all of them) and rural European societies. In the

former, a lineage collectively appropriates the rights to a space and then develops that space; moreover, the territory is occupied by human groups that are rarely stationary, or full of people. In the old peasantries of Europe, since the XIVth century, demographic pressure kept populations on territories with more or less stable boundaries, which were gradually saturated. Even if the collective property of specific lands (forests, mountain pastures, communal grazing land) is a fact, most of the land that is cultivated, or used for raising livestock is appropriated individually and developed in the restricted realm of the domestic group. While in non-European societies, the reproduction of society is a collective issue – it is the group that must fight (physically, through war if necessary) against another group in order to protect its hunting, gathering or agricultural spaces –, in European societies, the crucial question is that of the reproduction of the individual domestic groups, owners or occupants of well-delineated assets.

Given that domestic groups and farming are solidly linked together, kinship is doubly present at the heart of the village system: it regulates the rights of access to land (and others that follow, within the village community), and the methods of devolution of these assets.

African and Eurasian societies have distinctive modes of devolution of assets. For the former, which are unilinear, the processes of transmission are associated with gender: men inherit from men, women inherit from women. In Europe and in Asia, women inherit from men and vice versa, which can cause the dissemination of property outside of the unilinear filiation group; Jack Goody (1976) called this ensemble "*divergent devolution*".

Although the similarities of inheritance and kinship theories between non-European and peasant societies seems illuminating, there are, nevertheless, limitations to that comparison. European specificity should be considered. Besides the individual appropriation of an asset (as opposed to the collective property of a clan or lineage), it is the great diversity of modes of devolution which characterizes societies and invites attempts at systematization. Thus, we observe that concerning inheritance, there are egalitarian societies and others that are inegalitarian, and it is by studying the transformation of domestic groups over long periods of time that we can understand the internal logic of these systems.

The inegalitarian systems forbid the division of inheritance and it is transmitted from one generation to the next through one child, generally the eldest. The youngest children either stay on as workers in the house or emigrate. For example, we know of younger Basque children who left to make their fortune in Australia or the United States; others joined the army or the clergy.

This heritage is incarnated in the house and a type of characteristic domestic group which includes the parents who are the owners, their oldest son and his wife and children, and possibly other children who remain on the farm as single adults. We call this configuration "stem-family" or "house system". We can find this system in the south of France, northern Spain and Italy, but also in Austria or Germany. In France, in Occitan, we speak of the "oustal" or the "oustau", house which bears a name and is owner of the fields and collective pastures, and owns certain political rights such as a spot in the cemetery.

In this system, from a matrimonial point of view, it is preferable for the heir of the House A to be married to the youngest child in House B, while the heir of House B marries the youngest child in House A: it is therefore a double brother-sister, sister-brother marriage; a dowry is estimated before a notary for each house. In reality, the money never leaves the houses. This system functioned up until the beginning of the XXth century; then the women abandoned the houses and the heirs, preferring to marry a salaried employee in the city where they would have an easier domestic life.

The opposite of this system is the egalitarian model generally present among peasants who are merely farmers and not land owners, and who give an equal part of their assets to each of their children, generally in the form of money. The family model from Brittany incarnates this equality in its pure form. Unlike the domestic groups in the house system, which are rooted in a single place from one generation to the next through the ownership of the land, the peasants in Brittany are generally not owners of their farms, and because of this tend to move several times over the course of their lives, whether evicted by landlords or required to leave in order to find a farm that is big enough to feed their families, which remain large throughout the XIXth century because of the high fertility rate. The residential groups have hardly any symbolic attachment to a place and circulate within micro-regions which constitute culturally homogenous areas. The rules for devolution of assets coincide easily with civil law (unlike the previous system). It is an egalitarian rule that is implemented between all of the children, boys and girls. This should seemingly lead to

the decline of the viability of farms, but in a region dominated by tenancy, egalitarian rule only affects the moveable goods. When the peasants become landowners, they will try to reconcile the two apparently contradictory principles: the necessity to maintain an economically viable farm and the concern for not slighting any of the children.

In practice, the father designates an heir who is not the eldest, but often the youngest, who is responsible for supporting his parents in their old age, obliging the brothers and sisters to sell their inherited part of the land to the heir so that he can reconstitute the farm. Egalitarian peasantry often requires their members to look for non-agricultural resources, or to modify their production system.

I personally carried out a long ethno-historical study to follow the evolution of society in Saint-Jean Trolimon, and besides the field surveys, I worked on the censuses, the civil records data and the acts witnessed by solicitors in order to follow the mode of devolution of assets and the continuity of domestic group, in a deeply egalitarian system.

Concerning marriage, one can observe a marked endogamy within the five towns which make up the southern Bigouden country and the application of the principle of interlinking alliances which is made up of spouses being related on two sides, without being directly related to the same ancestor: they marry a blood relative of an ally or an ally of a blood relative.

This form was extremely frequent thanks to the existence of very large families. Among these relatives, and especially at weddings, circulated all the information on the tenancies

that would be available as well as the young people who were of an age to be married. We notice that wedding rituals included very large bridal parties, sometimes with twenty or so couples, and it was often at a wedding that new unions formed which “interlinked” the couples.

The Census: A Source for the Study of Familial Transformation

In Saint-Jean Trolimon, as I stated above, I used this source in order to follow the evolution of domestic groups, by coupling this information with those of the civil records.

French demographic historians have worked extensively with parish records which were made obligatory by the Villers-Cotterêts ruling of 1539 signed by François I. From these we can establish the fertility, nuptiality, and mortality rates. The English have long had another source (which also exists in France) which is the population census carried out for various reasons: fiscal, military, taxes. The censuses from past centuries are erratic, but they give us a snapshot of the structure and size of households at a certain moment in time. What is interesting is to be able to access census information at regular intervals over a long period of time, to follow the changes in size and composition which occurred within the households.

Before speaking of the use that I made of it in my field of study, I want to point out that these documents were the source of important theoretical debates concerning the evolution of the family. The sociology of the family in the 1950s saw the “modernity” of the family in the industrialization process which, according to the thesis of T. Parsons, created the nuclear family. However, English historians showed, with the support of the

census of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries, that the family had been nuclear for a long time already and they reversed the argument, which threatens Parsons’ great thesis.

Sociologists also thought that in preindustrial societies, the dominant form of the domestic group was the extended family with three generations. However, this is not the case. Research on the structure of domestic groups, under the influence of Peter Laslett and of the *Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure (1972)* has shown that in a vast part of Europe, domestic groups had the identical configuration as those in 1950 and 1960. Industrialization did not “nuclearize” the family because the family had already been nuclear for a long time. Some authors have even put forth the opposite idea, that is to say that it was the existence of a nuclear family that favored the emergence of industrialization. Thus, in the 1970s, demographic historians seized the issue of the census and began studying the size and the structure of domestic groups. From this work emerged the Laslett typology:

- domestic groups “without family structure” which we cannot define as anything other than old friends that share the same household. This category is most often made up of lone individuals;
- “simple” domestic groups which correspond to a household, a contemporary family unit: these are composed of either the father, mother and children, or a widow or widower with children, excluding all other relatives;
- “extended” domestic groups which, in addition to the members of a simple family unit, are composed of ascending, descending or collateral relatives, meaning the father or the mother of the head of the

household, of a grandson, or granddaughter of the head of the household or of his wife, a brother, sister, nephew or grand-nephew. The extension is the addition of a more or less close relative to a central conjugal core, a type of satellite relative;

- "multiple" domestic groups where several related households live together, thus the name "poly-nuclear". Within this category, we introduce a complementary distinction according to who leads the domestic group. If it is the elderly parent couple at the head, the married children couple submits to this authority; this corresponds to the "stem-family" described in regards to the "house system". If there are only households of married brothers and sisters, this is a "frèreche".

To each of these domestic groups may or may not be added household employees, servants, companions, non-related people. One of the criteria of classification is based on who leads the domestic group, which introduces distinctions that are sometimes more formal than real.

- The Case of Saint-Jean Trolimon

Therefore, even as non-landowners, there is the transmission of property on one hand, and on the other hand the familial transmission, transmission of the lease and not the property. (Following the census every five years.)

Young households go through a phase of cohabitation with their parents until they find a tenancy for themselves, and it is often the youngest or second-to-youngest child that inherits the lease when the last of the two parents dies. Marriage and individual homemaking do not coincide for this child.

I proposed the study of a farm over several generations by following the size and form of the household and by following the inter-generational transmissions. One of the tables shows that the farm always needs a fixed number of workers, so that when the children are young, the domestic group includes valets and servants, who disappear when the children are old enough to work on the farm. This study also shows the limitations of the Laslett typology, because according to the census, the form of the domestic group changes; even if the principle is a simple household, because of demographic pressure we see the domestic group taking on extended or complex forms.

The theoretical interest in the study of inheritance systems is finally to show how people think of themselves in a family and what are the family relationships, rivalries or alliances (between the oldest and youngest).

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2.4.7. Filiation and Migration, the Case of the Minangkabau in Sumatra (Indonesia), by Bernard Formoso

What is the dialectical relationship between filiation and migratory practices? Why can a certain filiation method influence or favor large scale migratory movements? How can this filiation method be modified in return by these movements in conjunction with other factors? These are the questions that will be addressed in this session through the particularly well documented example of the Minangkabau. Since I have not done field work myself with the Minangkabau, I will base my discussion on the works of the following ethnologists: Patrick Edward Josselin de Jong (Dutch), Tsuyoshi Kato (Japanese) and Richard J. Chadwick (Australian) (Josselin de Jong, 1980; Kato, 1982; Chadwick, 1991). From a methodological point of view, these three studies are complementary. The oldest is P.E. Josselin de Jong's study, initially presented as a doctoral thesis in 1951. It is exclusively based on second hand documentary sources dating back to the Dutch colonial period. Although dated, this study is useful as it offers precious historical insight to the sociopolitical organization of

the Minangkabau and, when cross-checked with more recent works, it provides keys to the comprehension of the contemporary evolution of this social organization. Also, it analyzes how the Minangkabau social structure was transposed into the migratory context through the example of Negeri Sembilan, a state within the Federation of Malaysia where the Minangkabau migrated en masse between the 16th and 17th centuries. Tsuyoshi Kato's study relies on extensive first-hand data collected from 1972 to 1973 in Minangkabau country as well as in the city of Pekan Baru, an important production center for palm oil in central Sumatra, which is in fact a primary destination for emigrants from this society. Kato's ethnology directly addresses the relationship between filiation methods and migratory phenomena. As such, it will be our principal source of information. Finally, Richard Chadwick carried out his research between 1974 and 1986, in the Koto Anu community, in the heart of *darek*, the historical territory of this population. His ethnology certainly presents a more monographic quality than that of Tsuyoshi Kato, but it is also more detailed concerning the emigrants' strategies.

Before getting into the heart of the subject, it must be pointed out that choosing the Minangkabau in order to illustrate the link between filiation and migration is justified on two levels. First, because the social organization of the Indonesian people is characterized by a strong structural tension between two apparently contradictory ideologies, the nature of which was very well analyzed by P.E. Josselin de Jong (Josselin de Jong, *op. cit.*), but which the Minangkabau were able to reconcile on both the institutional and judicial levels. On one hand,

they form the most important matrilineal society in the world. In this society, social identity, inheritance and ritual responsibilities are passed down the maternal line. On the other hand, their social structure integrates patrilineal principles in certain areas (traces of social categories founded on patrilineality, inheritance of some goods from the father to the son). Moreover, the Minangkabau have followed Islam since the 16th century, which has judicial and ideological regimes strongly influenced by patrilineality. As a result, the combination of matrilineal *adat* (common law) and *charria*, Koranic law, has raised many questions among certain Islamic specialists who thought that this was in principle impossible, and who wrongly thought that the progress of radical Islam in Sumatra would damage the Minangkabau system of matrilineal filiation.

The second reason for choosing this society as an example is that it presents an exceptional rate of emigration. Indeed, out of a population of eight million people estimated in 2010, more than half live outside of the western Sumatra province that is the home of the original Minangkabau people. Nearly 550,000 Minang live in the Indonesian archipelago Riau, in the Strait of Malacca on the Malaysian border; 540,000 live in the Malaysian state, Negeri Sembilan, and approximately three million are in various cities in Indonesia and Malaysia, where they make up influential trading communities. At the beginning of the 1970s, 400,000 Minangkabau lived in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, alone; this represents 10% of the population of the city according to an estimation by T. Kato (Kato, *op. cit.*). Their migratory capacity is legendary in Indonesia. There is a local joke that when the first American astronaut, Neil Armstrong,

landed on the moon in 1969, he found a Minangkabau restaurant already established. Shortly, we will see that according to Kato and then Chadwick, this high rate of migration is an important factor in favor of the matrilineal filiation system's adaptability (Kato, *op. cit.*).

History tells us that migration is a very ancient process for the Minangkabau and that it is one of the most determining practices of their social dynamic. The Minang representational system is edifying in this respect. We are dealing with a society that sees itself in perpetual expansion from the beginning of time. According to legend, the Minangkabau came from the volcano Merapi and when the volcano erupted, they were spread over the neighboring hillsides and valleys (Chadwick, *op.cit.*). This original homeland, called *darek* ("highland above the water"), is composed of three central districts, the *luhaknantigo*, which form the social matrix and the epicenter of the traditional governing system because of their structural complementarities (Josselin de Jong, *op. cit.*). Although this region is among the most fertile in the Indonesian archipelago, it was the source for many waves of emigration because of its overpopulation, its location in a mountain enclave and expansive agricultural practices. This migration was amplified by the matrilineal social structure. This migratory movement was toward the *rantau*, which may mean river bank, river course, or foreign countries depending on the context (Kato, *op. cit.*). In the Minangkabau language, the equivalent of "to emigrate" is *merantau*, which can literally be translated by "leave your native land in order to, depending on the situation, go toward a river bank, follow the course of the river, or go to a foreign country". Historically, the oldest migrations consisted of opening up new lands for agriculture in the immediate vicinity

of the three *luha*, by village segmentation. Three *rantau* were thus created, each one as the spatial extension of a *luhak*. Gradually, by using the same method of colonizing frontier regions by village segmentation, the Minangkabau pursued their expansion until they reached the western coast of Sumatra in the 19th century. This type of migration, operating from one proximity to the next in order to gain agricultural land, is called *rantau pasisir* ("migration towards the hillside"). Early on (around the 15th or 16th century and until today, with a noticeable increase after 1930) the Minangkabau added another type of migration called *rantau hilir* ("downstream migration"), this time toward the eastern coast of Sumatra and the Strait of Malacca's commercial zone. This type of migration does not occur in order to clear new land for agriculture, but in order to participate in commerce (historically gold and coffee, then rubber, palm oil and tobacco), crafts and, more recently, employment in the public or private sectors. It consists mainly of men, single or married, who are motivated by opportunities for work elsewhere as well as personal ambition. It is directed toward small or large cities located at small or medium distances from Minangkabau country. This migration has a circular quality. Even if a man is married, his wife and children stay in the village and he maintains regular contact with them. He visits them once or twice per year for major holidays. The geographic mobility is therefore temporary, because once a man has accumulated sufficient savings, he comes back to the village to live.

Finally, a third type of migration, which developed in the 1950s and grew to dominance in the 1970s, is called *merantau cino* ("Chinese style migration"). It is a far

reaching migration, turned towards the cities of Malaysia or other Indonesian islands. It leads to the migration of single men, nuclear family units, or more rarely, extended families. A man will sometimes return in order to marry and then bring his wife to his migratory destination. The occupations pursued are hardly different from those that already characterize circular movements (commerce, crafts, private or public sector employment). However, the emigrants maintain looser, more episodic ties with their homeland. Some end up coming back to the village, but the majority emigrate permanently (Kato, *op. cit.*).

Now that the general framework has been established, we can provide some indication of the migratory structure at a local level through the example of the village of Koto Anu, studied by Richard Chadwick. In this village, more than half of the 5,000 inhabitants lived in the *rantau* in 1975 and the population that stayed behind was predominantly feminine and elderly. Among the emigrants, 8% lived in the *rantau dakek*, meaning in western Sumatra, principally in the provincial capital, Padang; 77% lived in the *rantau hilir*, meaning in other Sumatran villages; finally 15% had emigrated *rantau cino*, to other large cities of the Indonesian archipelago, including Jakarta (5%) (Chadwick, *op. cit.*). Richard Chadwick notes that the dispersal of emigrants is very wide. Women are not totally excluded from the process, but when they do emigrate as single women, they always follow an older, married sister. Often, the sister who follows has a marriage arranged for her with a young Minang in the migratory destination. Consequently, the author notes a close tie between the place of residence of the sisters in the *rantau*. For single boys, migration is less directly affected by the presence of close

family members. Nevertheless, the plan to migrate from their village very often results from an employment opportunity that they heard about from a larger network of emigrant relatives. Because of this, they tend to join networks made up of members of the same lineage already established in the *rantau*, even if, depending on the opportunities, they go on to move a second or third time. From these remarks, R. Chadwick makes three conclusions: 1) men from a matrilineal group are more dispersed in the *rantau* than women; 2) family networks that are reconstituted in migratory destinations have a strong matrilineal character; 3) in the end, the fundamental principles of village social organization, especially the centralization of the social life around a core group of women, tends to be reproduced in the *rantau* (Chadwick, *op. cit.*).

The Minangkabau Social Structure

Before looking at the relationship between matrilineal filiation and migration, I will briefly describe the structure of Minangkabau society. First, Minangkabau country is composed of approximately 500 *nagari*, or village communities, which are largely endogamous and traditionally enjoy great political autonomy. The population of each *nagari* is divided into several matrilineal clans, the *suku* ("quarter"), which are strictly exogamous. Each clan is then divided into sub-clans, the *payuang* ("umbrellas") under which each person is led by an elected chief, the *penghulu*. The members of a sub-clan consider themselves to be closely related, even if most of them are not capable of giving the exact nature of their genealogical ties (Kato, *op. cit.*; Chadwick, *op. cit.*). The sub-clan includes several lineages, which are themselves composed of lineage segments,

the *sabuah paruik* ("one in the same matrix"). This, however, is the most important grouping in the eyes of the Minangkabau, first because it is clearly delineated. Indeed, the nature of kinship ties is crucial in establishing land usage rights; secondly because this group directly influences an individual's social status and the way in which his/her life is led. The members of a lineage segment are traditionally co-residents of one or several long "customary houses" (*rumah adat*). These are headed by a chief, the *mamak rumah* ("eldest of the house"). This chief divides among the members of the *sabuah paruik* the arable land which, with the livestock, ceremonial objects and customary titles make up the patrimony of the group. He protects this property, called *harta pusaka*; he also ensures that customary rights are respected, settles disputes and blesses marriages. Finally, the *sabuah paruik* includes several *samandai*. Each *samandai* is a minimum unit made up of a mother and her children.

According to the Minangkabau *adat*, the father mostly remains outside of his spouse's *samandai*. Although he visits his wife in the evening, he still belongs to his mother's customary house, which he occupies during the day. He has minimal obligations for raising and educating his own children. He is only obligated to offer some gifts for their circumcision and marriage. However, tradition dictates that he provide material support to his sisters' *samandai*, that he work their land and that he acts as *mamak*, maternal uncle, in the education of his *kemanakan*, his uterine nephews (Kato, *op. cit.*). As is the rule in most matrilineal societies, the Minangkabau maternal uncle plays the role of social father.

Through hard work, a man in this society can acquire prestige and even great wealth.

Nevertheless, this personal gain is largely subordinated to the superior interest of the matrilineal filiation group. In this respect, the way in which arable land is acquired and passed on is telling. There are four recognized ways of acquiring a plot of land: (i) by temporary attribution of a plot from the lineage segment's property, (ii) by the "iron hoe", meaning by clearing the land, but the land will then be part of the collective property of the next generation, (iii) by the "golden hoe", meaning by purchasing it, but in this case the land comes back to the lineage segment after two generations; (iv) and finally by pre-inheritance donation, (*hibah*) which comes from Muslim law. In the last case a man's children receive a gift of land from him. But his uterine nephews, indirectly penalized by the transaction, must agree to the donation (Josselin de Jong, *op. cit.*; Kato, *op. cit.*; Chadwick, *op. cit.*).

To conclude on the male condition in this society, it should be pointed out that a man doesn't really have his own home. He is a visitor in his spouse's home without really having his own place in the customary house of his lineage group either. Because of this, from the age of 6-7 years old, he stops sleeping in his mother's home and begins sleeping in the mosque's prayer hall with the other young men from the community. T. Kato thus remarks that the world of Minang men is restricted to the mosque, café, village council hall and rice paddy shelter. The author adds that "*all of these seem transitory and shapeless compared to the solidity and security of the customary house*" (Kato, *op. cit.*). As the Minangkabau man is on the periphery of his community, in perpetual transit from one social setting to the next, he is logically predisposed to be mobile and inclined

to migration. However, the Minangkabau matrilineal system does not submit men alone to a centrifugal dynamic. As Richard Chadwick has shown (Chadwick, *op. cit.*), it can also push women to migrate, if they belong to poor *sabuah paruik* and are victims of an unequal division of rare resources.

Relationship Between Social Structure and Migration

We have just seen that the matrilineal organization of the Minangkabau, by placing men on the periphery of the social system, has greatly contributed to the exceptionally large migratory dynamic observed in this society. Another contributing factor, according to T. Kato, is the expansive agriculture practiced by the Minangkabau since ancient times. Although the agro-ecological conditions of West Sumatra were very favorable to intense agriculture, unlike the Balinese or the Javanese, the Minangkabau preferred geographic expansion as a response to demographic pressure and the risk of destabilization that pressure held for their the social structure. By doing this, explains the author, mobility and migration were fundamental for the survival and vitality of the matrilineal system itself (Kato, *op. cit.*).

According to T. Kato, migrations to the *rantau hilir*, the east coast of Sumatra, did not modify the matrilineal structures at first since the duty of the *mamak* to assist his uterine nephews, *kemanakan*, remained an obligation in this particular migratory context for many centuries. The uncle continued to help his nephews with their education, daily life, emigration plans or marriage (Kato, *op. cit.*). Nevertheless, starting in the 19th century, the strong development of monetary exchanges and individualism along with the growth

of a local market economy with which the Minangkabau traders were directly involved, had significant effects on the ancient communitarian logic and long-standing *mamak/kemanakan* relationships. In this context, *harta pencarian*, individual property, took on a growing importance, while the responsibility for supporting children shifted from the maternal uncle towards the father. More and more fathers referred to the traditional *hibah* clause in order to pass on most of the property they had personally earned to their own children. According to Kato, one possible reason for this shift is that an uncle would have more heirs than a father and this significantly complicates the transfer of a diverse and rare inheritance made up of land, moveable goods and money. The society's legal system made inheritance laws more flexible in 1951 in order to facilitate the succession of property from a father to his children (Kato, *op. cit.*). The decline of the customary house and the increased use of individual houses also contributed to the shifting of balance in favor of the biological father. Since the 1950s, different ethnologists working in Minangkabau country have observed a growing trend of matrilineal core families or couples forming independent households (Josselin de Jong, *op. cit.*; Kato, *op. cit.*; Chadwick, *op. cit.*). According to a partial census carried out by T. Kato in the 1970s, the *rumah adat* accounted for only 9 to 13% of the villages' houses and those that remained were often abandoned for houses occupied by extended families or young couples at the beginning of the cycle (Kato, *op. cit.*). The extended families were not only organized around a core group of women, but also increasingly integrated the husbands who chose to live permanently with their spouses. Gradually, notes Richard Chadwick

(Chadwick, *op. cit.*), the *semenda bertandang* ("visiting husband") became the *semenda menetap* ("husband who stays in his wife's *samandai*") and then the *semenda bebas* ("free husband") who builds a house for his wife and children with the money he brings back from the *rantau*. In these conditions, it is logical that conjugal relationships grew stronger, even more so since divorce and polygamy, which were very frequent until then, came under virulent attack by Muslim reformers in the 1960s. As the couple became more central to the family unit, fathers widely replaced maternal uncles in supporting their children's educational and material needs (Josselin de Jong, *op. cit.*; Kato, *op. cit.*).

These different mutations reveal the nature of the dialectical relationship between the social organization of the Minangkabau and the migratory phenomenon. On one hand, as we have seen, matrilineal filiation in conjunction with expansive agricultural practices led to a very high level of migration in this society; in return, migration motivated by non-agricultural activities amplified and accelerated the effects on local traditions that the monetization of the economy and the increase in individualistic values would normally have. Another factor that has contributed to this amplification is the gradual depletion of available frontier land. Beginning in the 19th century, the Minangkabau were confronted with a lack of land in the *rantau pasisir*. This pressure grew and resulted in less and less agricultural revenue. Thus a process of agricultural decentralization began and gradually grew (Chadwick, *op. cit.*). A growing number of Minangkabau turned away from working the fields and opted for *hilir* and *cino* type emigration. Consequently, revenue from emigration dominated in the second half of

the 20th century, which strengthened the position of emigrants, principally the men, and allowed them to modify the *adat* and social customs to their advantage, moving them from the margins to the center of the family unit.

Should we deduce from all of these changes that the Minangkabau matrilineal system is disappearing? Certain Dutch authors from the colonial era predicted this and imagined that it was inevitable (Schrieke, 1955; Maretin, 1961). However, T. Kato shows that this is not the case. It must first be noted that the method of matrilineal filiation is still the rule and that the reference to membership in a (maternal) clan is always a fundamental element of individual identity. Furthermore, the *harta pusaka*, ancestral property, remains divided between members of a lineage segment and preserves the cooperative character of the matrilineage as before. Even if the expansion of individual property has significantly complicated inheritance methods, this individual property is always dissolved into the collective holdings of a lineage segment after one or two generations, except in the case of *hibab* gifts to children which are still less common. Of course the age of dual residences for men which led them to alternate constantly between their wives' houses and their mothers' is practically finished, but it has been replaced by uxorilocality. Finally, fathers now play a preponderant role in their children's education, but the maternal uncle determines the social status for the children by attributing a customary title and a share of the ancestral property (Kato, *op. cit.*). Therefore, in the end, the social appearance of the Minangkabau has changed, whereas the society's kinship rules, legal structure and status systems have not really evolved.

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