INTRODUCTION

"Who is to take care of the ever increasing number of elderly?" has become one of the most often asked questions to be addressed in studies of aging in Japan. A related question of equal importance is who is to take care of the family grave. Far more than in Western cultures, responsibility for maintenance of the grave in Japan has profoundly and resoundingly consequential cultural, social, and economic implications to the Japanese families. In this study, first historical trends of graves in Japan was analyzed– how the idea of traditional family grave was socially constructed and was transformed reflecting changes in demography, society, culture, and families. Then considering pertinent theories, hypotheses were framed to test how three salient factors, generation, gender, and the place of residence, have affected people's expectations about burial partners in contemporary Japan.

HISTORICAL TRENDS OF GRAVES IN JAPAN

What the Japanese consider to be the "traditional *ie* grave (*senzo daidai no haka*)", the family grave that succeeds through generations, was socially constructed in the Tokugawa (Edo) period (1603 – 1868) when the Tokugawa shogunate ordered the populace to register at a Buddhist temple and to practice ancestor veneration at the temple (Mori, 1993). The main purpose of this order was to suppress Christianity by imposing these regulations (Kawano, 2005; Yasuda, 1992). Christianity places one's relationship to God before all others; hence, it posed a threat to the subjects' loyalty to the feudal lords and the shogunate (Kawano, 2005). The temples began to function as centers for registering and recording information about the people who belonged to them. Eventually, Japanese families started to request that their temples take over the ritual care of the grave.

Three decades after the Meiji Restoration abolished the samurai system, the *ie*, Japanese stem family*,* was legally recognized in the Meiji Civil Code of 1898. Based on Confucian principles, the *ie* was the basic unit of Japanese law at a time when civil and criminal matters concerned the family not just the individual. The *ie* denotes a form of the stem family, but the connotation of this expression is more than simply "three generations living together in the same household." Smith (2000) describes the *ie* as follows: "Unlike the nuclear family, which ends with the births of each generation, the *ie,* once established, is expected to continue through succeeding generations" (p 307). In other words, the *ie* includes both living and deceased family members (Smith, 2000; Knight & Traphagan, 2003; Kawano, 2003). The *ie* concept insists on a patriarchal structure, demanding that a woman obey her husband to support his *ie.* However, when the family has no male heir, a daughter may inherit the family name and maintenance of the ancestral grave. When this daughter is married, her family may adopt her husband who then assumes his adoptive family's name and carries on the name, ancestral line, and maintenance of the family grave. Hence, although the *ie* is a patriarchal system, it is not necessarily patrilineal as long as there is an heir to succeed the *ie*.

The major purpose of restoring the *ie* as a custom during the Meiji era was to provide the legal right of the eldest son to inherit all of the family property by creating a hierarchy within families (Asai & Kameoka, 2005). Under the *ie,* one child, preferably the eldest son, continues to live with the parents after marriage to succeed the ancestral line and take care of the succeeding grave. Consequently, inheritance of the family name and maintenance of the family grave became to symbolize the responsibility of the eldest son and his family to continue his *ie* from the past to the future. A traditional *ie* grave consists of a gravestone inscribed with the family name: beneath the gravestone, there are vessels each containing ashes and bones of the deceased.

Those who carry on the *ie*, the family name, and the grave are mainly responsible for performing memorial rites. These rituals are considered to be the process of gradually fading out the memory of the deceased family members who move in stages from the spirit of the newly deceased, *shiryoo*, to "ancestors-cum-gods", *senzo* (Hamabata, 1990). In a 33-year ritual cycle, the deceased family member joins the collectivity of ancestors, and successors of the *ie* are expected to be responsible for the ritual care of deceased relatives (Kawano, 2003). Hamabata, (1990) explains the importance of these memorial rites as follows:

> Transforming the dead is the work of the living, and it begins with a series of funerary and memorial events, which serve to cleanse the *shiryoo* of the pollution of death. Until members of the household have aided in separating the *shiryoo* from direct involvement with life, it remains a source of danger for the living. ... Until the *shiryoo* is removed from worldly concerns, there is a fear of *tatari* (curses) by the *shiryoo* that may be incurred if he or she is thought to have been maligned in life. Thus, there is a sense in which the dead must be appeased by living members of the household (Hamabata, 1990, p 59).

Hence, these funerary and memorial rites not only strengthen the motivation for continuation of the household, but also prevent calamities to the family offspring which might be brought on by the troubled souls of restive ancestors. In other words, one of the central functions of ancestor worship is to ease the psychological fear people have toward *muenbotoke*, restless ancestors who have no legitimate offspring to take care of them (Morioka, 1986; Spiro, 1986). In addition, these religious rituals have important functions beyond merely connecting deceased and living family

members, but also of bringing relatives who live in various places together (Traphagan, 2004). In mid-August, the Japanese welcome the ancestors' spirits, which return to this world to visit their families. Families often craft animal forms from vegetables on which the ancestors are to ride back home. Relatives visit the eldest son's house and the *ie* grave. They wash the gravestone, burn incense, and make offerings including flowers and drink. While they do so, they talk to their deceased family members as if they were still alive (Kawano, 2003). This event is called *obon,* and it is one of the traditional memorial rites in which Japanese families continue to participate.

Previously, Japanese people had scattered the ashes of their dead in the mountains, rivers, or oceans. The sight of decomposing cadavers had instilled a dread of dead bodies in the Japanese. They regarded them as soulless corpses and it was to hide them from view that they incinerated them and scattered their ashes in the mountains, rivers, or oceans (Yasuda, 1992). In ancient times, some Japanese people with economic and political power raised graves. However, these were individualized graves, not formal graves to be succeeded through generations (Sagishima, 1998; Yasuda, 1992). Hence, many of what Japanese consider "the traditional *ie* grave" was socially constructed during the Tokugawa period and legally recognized during the Meiji period. However, this traditional *ie* grave persistently influences people in contemporary Japan as a traditional custom, even after the patriarchal *ie* system was abolished and Japan experienced a series of rapid social, economic, and political events after the Second World War.

The Allied occupying forces that took over Japan aimed to modernize the country within a short period. They abolished primogeniture and established a new family system based on equal rights of men and women (Asai & Kameoka, 2005). The old legal system was abolished, and, as described in Article 24 of the new constitution drawn up under the Allied occupation, marriage

became "based on mutual consent" rather than on family contract (Martin & Culter, 1983). Japanese society was encouraged to change and to provide equal educational and employment opportunities for men and women. Consequently, the number of female college graduates has increased dramatically (Atoh, Kandiah, & Ivanov 2004). In the 1960s, the senior high school enrollment rate for women significantly increased. It even surpassed the rate for men by one point by the end of the 1960s. By the late 1990s, almost all women advanced to senior high school after completing junior high school. Since the 1990s, there has been a remarkable increase in the advancement of the number of junior colleges and universities, which reached 26 % for universities and 22.9 % for junior colleges (Shirahase, 2000).

Such rapid educational gains by women increased the proportion of women who work outside the home. Thus, women's time became considered much more valuable. Many women started to gain more education, participated in the labor force, and postponed marriage. This trend became the major and direct driving force of further fertility decline in Japan where cohabitation and out-of-wedlock births are still not prevalent. Many women are hesitant to face the continuously cumulative burden of care as they grow older, which directly influences the fertility decline in Japan (Atoh, Kandiah, & Ivanov, 2004; Retherford, Ogawa, & Matsukura, 2001). Japan's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) declined dramatically after its short baby boom (1947-1949). It dropped to a record low 1.29 in 2003 (Figure 1). In addition, the increasing cost of supporting children who must endure a highly competitive educational system in order to enter better universities and find better jobs, leads demanding parents to have fewer children and provide them with a higher quality education (Retherford, Ogawa, & Matsukura, 2001; Retherford, Ogawa, & Sakamoto, 1999). Japan's low fertility has become a current and urgent public agenda and has been intensively discussed by scholars, policymakers, politicians and mass media because such

demographic change has made it more difficult for families to provide care for the ever-increasing elderly.

Such dramatic decline in fertility has started and will continue to produce more "son-less" or "son-in-law-less" families, and the urgency for male heirs may be a preference to which families must adjust with such grim demographic realities and social change (Knight & Traphagan, 2003). The TFR, being below 2.0 not only indicates that some families lack two children to support two parents, but further that some families lack even one child, let alone a son, to succeed the family line and the *ie* grave.

Faced with declining fertility, increasing numbers of people have started to lose successors for their *ie* graves (Kawano, 2003). As more women postpone marriage, it is impossible to deny the scenario that they might remain single and childless (Raymo, 1998). In addition, divorce is also rising in Japan. Based on the census data, Raymo, Iwasawa, and Bumpass (2004) estimate that one-third of marriages in Japan are expected to end in divorce. As Japanese families become more diversified, Japanese people, especially women, have begun to have diverse views towards the grave in Japan. Women are increasingly speaking up about their wishes to be buried with their own parents, or not to be buried with their husband's family. In 1985, Sankei Living Newspaper surveyed housewives in Japan, and 531 out of 720 housewives answered that they did not want to be buried with their husband's parents (Kawano, 2003).

Reflecting such social as well as demographic realities, the Japanese grave has become diversified in contemporary Japan. Some choose "traditional" graves and others are showing interest in various types of "modern" graves. They can be considered modern because it does not require the succession of the ancestral line. Yet, it is not "converging" with modern societies as these graves illustrate the attempt of the Japanese to reinterpret, adapt, and extend the meaning of

the grave in contemporary Japan (Knight & Traphagan, 2003). For example, there are "couple graves", *fuufubaka,* in which only husband and wife are interred, and various types of *shundanbaka,* used by groups of people who are good friends. There are *shudanbaka* of groups of women who have remained single because so many young Japanese men died in the Second World War (Makimura, 1996). Various Japanese companies also have *shudanbaka* for their employees. Some homes for the elderly also have graves for the people who die there and who do not have families. These graves are considered modern in the sense that they deny the succession of the ancestral line, but they deal with the problem of the "disconnected dead" or "homeless souls" *(muenbotoke).* They can assuage their fear of these restless souls by paying and relying upon religious organizations to permanently take care of the *muenbotoke* at a cost of between $900 and $45,500 per person (Kawano, 2003). Such permanent ritual care of the grave provides for those who were previously not welcome, such as divorced women and women who remain single. There have not been any case studies, however, of gay and lesbian couples using these graves.

There are also people who pity and fear such alternatives to the traditional *ie* grave, as they feel that the deceased interred there cannot have connection with members of their family in the afterlife from such a grave. In other words, the *ie* persistently influence Japanese families as a driving force to prevent them from moving towards diversity. As the most important obligation in *ie* is to produce an heir (preferably a male heir), to succeed the ancestral line, family members, both alive and deceased, are often involved in the marriage and reproductive behavior of young people in Japan. For instance, several matchmaking industries have parties and seminars not only for the young but also for their parents. Some of these parents are concerned of losing an heir to succeed their *ie*.

Inoue (1995) discusses a case study of a Japanese woman who lost her husband after one year of marriage. Her father-in-law claimed that his son should be interred in his family's grave. Her parents also encouraged her to give his mortuary tablet to her father-in-law, because she might marry again. If she had been the eldest son, she would not have needed to experience such a painful dilemma (Inoue, 1995). Kawano (2004) considers the case study of a Japanese woman whose brother-in-law, her husband's eldest brother, and his wife became Christians. The Christian couple decided to place a cross on the family gravestone. She and her husband objected to this idea, as they believed that it would convert his ancestors to Christianity. They proposed that the Christian couple purchase a new Christian-style grave. However, the brother-in-law rejected this idea because he did not want to abandon his responsibility as the eldest son, including the succession of the family grave. Hence, although graves are diversifying in Japan reflecting its diversifying families, for both elderly parents and their adult children, succession of the *ie* including the *ie* grave persistently plays an important part in filial care for Japanese families.

Observing the historical trends of Japanese graves, and diversifying (not modernizing or Westernizing) them are good examples of more diverse ways in which Japanese families have responded to rapidly changing social and demographic realities. In other words, understanding historical trends of graves in Japan poses a critical question to sociologists, demographers, and economists who attempt to use modernization theories to explain changes in Japanese families as a response of its rapid demographic, social, and economic transformation moving or converging towards modernization or Westernization.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Modernization has become one of the popular theories to explain the rapid demographic, social, and economic change of Japan since the Second World War (Knight & Traphagan, 2003). Modernization theorists interpret the history of modern Japan as the gradual convergence toward democratic and liberal orders of the West (Garon, 1994). The assumptions of modernization theories are evident in the demographic transition theory which claims that societies will move from traditional states of high fertility and high mortality to modern states of low fertility and low mortality. Modernization theorists claim that, along with demographic transition, traditional societies will economically, socially, and culturally "converge" with Western or modern societies through modernization which is characterized by industrialization, urbanization, secularization, and individualism (Caldwell, 1976; Crenshaw, Christenson, & Oakey, 2000; Knight & Traphagan, 2003). Caldwell (1976) states that Westernization achieved through modern education motivates the importance of sexual relations within marriage, emphasizes the conjugal bond, and promotes the emotional and economic nucleation of the family. He claims that such motivations will eventually change the wealth flow from children to parents. Caldwell (1976) also points out that such change in wealth flow affects living arrangements because this theory leads to the hypothesis that the elderly will be expected to live independently (Spare & Avery, 1993).

Maeda (2004) claims that, in Japan, post-war children and youth are taught that human beings should not sacrifice anything in contrast to pre-war children and youth who were taught to sacrifice their very lives for the nation and the emperor. The present Civil Code orders that children should not make sacrifices for their parents, but should care for their parents within their financial and physical ability (Maeda, 2004). He maintains that such educational reform has

weakened the idea of filial piety. In fact, under aspirations of modernization and postwar democracy, the nuclear family, *(kaku-) kazoku*, became popular for the age group born during and after the baby boom. Between 1972 and 1995, the proportion of extended families comprising three-generation families with at least one or more people aged 65 and above declined from 56 to 33% (Ogawa & Retherford, 1997). In addition, along with the women's movement in the early 1970s, women came to envision marriage as an equal partnership (Ochiai, 1997). Consequently, the proportion of "love" marriages began to outnumber that of arranged marriages, and the proportion of traditional arranged marriages also fell from 63% in 1955 to 7% in 1995 (Retherford, Ogawa, & Matsukura, 2001). The rise of "love" marriages reduced the rigid pressure to marry by a certain age and increased the social acceptance of premarital sex. Based on the National Survey of Family Planning, Retherford, Ogawa, and Matsukura (2001) found that it has become more acceptable for couples to have sex outside of marriage in contemporary Japan. Hence, the idea that marriage is a filial norm to maintain the *ie* has weakened through the modernization achieved through educational reform since the Second World War, and various scholars have supported the modernization theory to explain such behavioral changes and to argue that filial norms have diminished in Japan (Asai & Kemeoka, 2005).

Retherford, Ogawa, and Sakamoto (1990) argue that, as Japan shifted from a peasant agrarian economy to an urban industrial economy along with demographic transition, expectations of old age support from children has steadily declined. In other words, they argue that the Japanese family has become modernized or Westernized while losing that which Japanese people consider traditional. Their study of Japanese women revealed that the proportion of respondents who expect to be dependent on their children declined from 65% to 18% (Retherford, Ogawa, & Sakamoto, 1999). Ogawa and Retherford (1997) claim that this is partly due to changes in the

ability of the elderly to care for themselves, which is achieved through significant improvement in the social security system in Japan between 1965 and 1994. Hence, they support the claim of Caldwell (1976) that emotional and economic nucleation of the family through Westernization or modernization allows the elderly to live independently. Modernization theorists predict that this weakens the norms of filial piety as the nation moves towards an increasingly industrialized and urbanized society.

Knight and Traphagan (2003) criticize such modernization perspective in that the study of contemporary Japan has taken place in the shadow of modernization theory while ignoring much perceived as traditional. They claim that a degree of formal demographic "convergence" does not necessarily lead to a corresponding cultural and social convergence. They argue that, faced with demographic realities, Japanese families have started to struggle, reinterpret, adapt, and extend the meaning of filial care (Knight & Traphagan, 2003). Diversifying Japanese graves is a good reflection of such dynamic changes in families. Although the *ie* tradition lost its control to sustain its socially constructed meaning of filial care of the deceased, Japanese families are not simply converging to the West. Faced with demographic realities and social change, they are reconstructing the meaning of filial care for the deceased. In addition, studying Japanese people's expectations about burial partners enables us to understand who are willing to reconstruct the meaning, which is to move from families sentimentalized as "traditional" to "postmodern" families surrounded by diversity, uncertainty, and instability (Stacey, 1996).

The meaning of filial care was legalized and unified after the Meiji Restoration, and succeeding to and taking care of deceased family members became an important duty for Japanese families. Hence, older generations are expected to be more under the influence of the *ie* norms affected by the Meiji Restoration than younger generations. In other words, as emotional

and economic nucleation of the family diffused through modern education, younger generations are more likely to support diversifying graves than older generations. It is also expected that this difference should be greater for women than for men because educational reform since the Second World War greatly freed women from gender biased *ie* norms. As the majority of caregivers in Japan are women, they are more likely to face struggling, reinterpreting, and adopting the meanings of filial care as they experience the gap between what is expected of them according to traditional norms and what they learned in school. Hence, women are expected to be more tolerant regarding change and diversity in families. Finally, it is expected that this difference is greater for those who live in urban areas than for those who live in rural areas because of stronger social pressure there than in urban areas not to deviate from the norms. Traphagan (2004) claims that rural Japan is often associated with traditional Japan in many ways apart from the urban and modern. For instance, people are more likely to live in multi-generation households in rural area (Traphagan, 2004). Hence, those who live in urban areas are expected to be more tolerant of diversity than those who live in rural areas. Based on these discussions, it is possible to hypothesize that the Japanese grave and the way in which people wished to be buried became diversified while reflecting three salient factors: generation, gender, and the place of residence.

Makimura (1996) claims that the grave is a reflection of current Japanese society and the kind of community Japanese society has today will determine the kind of society Japan has in the next generation. Hence, analyzing how generation, gender, and the place of residence influence people's expectations of the grave in contemporary Japan is important in understanding current and future Japanese families.

METHOD

This paper uses the data from the 2001 Japanese General Social Survey (Tanioka, Iwai, Nitta, & Sato, 2001), which is a stratified, two-stage random sampling, stratified by six regional blocks and population size, in 13 major cities, other cities, and towns and villages. The respondents were 4,500 men and women aged 20-89 years. This data particularly fits the purpose of this study well because it asks a unique question of respondents regarding the type of grave they would consider for their burial. Respondents are asked to select their answer from seven categories: (1) my family grave; (2) my spouse's family grave; (3) a family grave starting from my generation; (4) a grave for only my spouse and myself; (5) a grave for only myself; (6) a grave with a group of people; (7) no grave, wish for my ashes to be scattered over ocean waters or a mountain. The fourth and fifth categories were grouped into one category and labeled "grave with no succession" because these graves deny any succession compared with the first three categories. These graves are taken care by religious organizations. However, the final category was not grouped into "grave with no succession" because the final category represents respondents who not only deny the succession of the grave, but they also do not fear of becoming "disconnected dead" or "homeless souls" *(muenbotoke)*. This recorded categorical variable (1 = my family grave, 2= my spouse's family grave, 3= a family grave starting from my generation, 4= grave with no succession, or 5= no grave, wish for my ashes scattered over ocean or a mountain) becomes a measure of the dependent variable of this study.

Gender, generation, and the place of residence are used as measures of independent variables of this study. Gender is measured as a dichotomous variable. Birth cohort is measured as a categorical variable in two ways. First age groups were measured as interval variable into six generations (1= 20s, 2= 30s, 3= 40s, 4=50s, 5=60s, or 6=70s and above) to examine gradual

differences in expectation of the grave among generations. Second, six generations were divided into two groups (1= below 50, or 2= 50 and above). People who were 50 and older at the time of this survey were born before 1950, and those who were younger than 50 at the time of the survey were born after 1950. The Allied occupying forces took over Japan to reform the education system from 1945 until 1950 (Narumiya, 1986). Hence, dividing the group below and above 50 is appropriate for examination of the cohort and gender difference. Finally, the place of residence is measured as a categorical variable (1= 13 major cities, 2= other cities, or 3= towns and villages).

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the distribution of responses about expectations of the grave by generation. A chi square test showed significant difference in the distribution of responses by generation, $\chi^2 =$ 196.008, df= 20, $p < .001$. Across generations, the majority of people chose either their family grave or their spouse's family grave. However, the proportion of those who did not choose grave with succession was higher for younger generations than for older generations. About 11% of those 70 years and above did not choose graves with succession, whereas this was 20% in their 60s, 25% in their 50s, over 25% in their 40s, 30s, and 20s (Table 1). Hence, although the majority of people chose the grave with succession across all generations, compared with older generations, younger generations are more tolerant of diversified ideas about the grave.

Table 1 also indicates that higher proportion of younger generations chose either "my family grave" or "my spouse's family grave." Table 2 indicates the distribution of the average number of siblings. The chi-square difference was significant, $\chi^2 = 856.201$, df= 15, $p < .001$. More than half of the respondents in their 20s and 30s have only one sibling; and more than half of those in

their 50s, 60s, 70s and above have three siblings and above. Hence, influenced by declining fertility, the probability of succeeding the *ie* grave is becoming higher for the younger generation than for the older generation. This trend is reflected in Table 1, in that the proportion of those who chose either "my family grave" or "my spouse's family grave" was higher for the younger generations than older generations because the older generations are more likely to have older siblings to succeed their family grave. Hence, although younger generations are more tolerant of diversified ideas about the grave, they are more likely to feel the stronger needs to succeed their *ie* grave.

Tables 3 and 4 indicate distribution of responses of the grave by sex and by two groups of age. The proportion of expectations of the grave was significantly different for men, $\chi^2 = 32.839$, df= 4, $p < .001$ (Table 3), and for women, $\chi^2 = 92.352$, df= 4, $p < .001$ (Table 4). For men, over 50 % of those in both age groups chose "my family's grave" (58.7% vs. 51.7%). By contrast, for women, the proportion of those who chose "my spouse's family grave" was about as twice as high in the younger group than the older group (19.1% vs. 40.8%). It is interesting to notice in this gap that, among the older group, the proportion of those who chose "my family's grave" was 51.7% for men and those who chose "my spouse's family grave" was 40.8% for women, and the difference between these percentages was 10.9%. By contrast, among the younger age group, the proportion of those who chose "my family grave" was 58.7% for men, whereas those chose "my spouse's family grave" was 19.1% for women, and the difference between these percentages was almost 40%. Comparing these two tables, it is possible to analyze that liberating women through Western or modern education contributed to the creation of this widening gender gap. In fact, women in younger age group have the most diversity in the distributions compared to other groups (Table 3, Table 4). It is also possible to analyze that, due to declining fertility, younger

women are more likely to feel the stronger needs to succeed "my family's grave" (24.5% vs. 13.5%). In either case, this widening gap could be the cause of tension between a couple as they and their parents grow older.

Finally, Table 5 indicates the distribution of responses about expectations of the grave by rural and urban residents. The chi square analysis demonstrated significant differences, $\chi^2 =$ 78.237, df= 8, $p < .001$. As hypothesized, people are more likely to choose graves with succession in rural areas than in urban areas because people are expected to be more tolerant with diversity in urban areas than in rural areas. As shown in Table 5, 41.3 % of those who live in rural areas chose "my family's grave" whereas 29.9 % in 13 major cities. In addition, 84.7% of those who live in rural areas chose graves with succession, whereas 67.3 % in 13 major cities (Table 5). This indicates that demographic realities influence families differently in rural and urban areas. If there is a tendency for people who succeed the grave to remain in a rural area, it also explains why more rural dwellers chose "my family grave" than those from urban areas.

Overall, all the hypotheses are supported by the data that generation, gender, and the place of residence influence people's expectations of the grave in contemporary Japan. However, all the tables indicate that a majority of people chose either "my family's grave" or "my spouse's family grave". This indicates uniqueness in the Japanese family, that deceased family members are cherished components of families in Japan. Although graves are becoming diverse for the younger generation, for women, and for those who live in urban areas, the Japanese are not free from the demands of the succession of the family line and the filial care of their deceased family members.

CONCLUSION

It is established by Japanese history that the idea of the "traditional" grave was created in the Edo and Meiji eras and that this tradition was supported by gendered education and high fertility. As Japan became demographically modernized after the Second World War, what many Japanese people considered "traditional" became fragile and it appeared that Japan is not only demographically, but also socially and culturally converging with the modern world and to the West. Understanding historical changes in Japanese graves teaches us that Japanese families are not simply moving from "traditional" to "modern." In addition, the analysis of JGSS-2001 data supports the hypotheses that gender, generation, and place of residence are important factors in shaping people's decisions. Although the majority of people choose graves with succession across generations, younger generations are more likely to support diversified graves than are older generations. This difference is greater for women than for men, which indicates that women obtained more choices of where to be buried. This imbalance could create tension as they experience more life transitions including marriage, births, and deaths of family members. In addition, the results indicate that aging in Japan could influence the relationship between the family and the grave differently in rural and urban areas. This could lead to a future study of how women in rural areas may face more conflict than their city dwelling counterparts over the life course because, in their youth, teachers, parents, and relatives encourage them to study diligently at school to learn new ideas. Yet, as they become wives, mothers, and daughters-in-law, they are encouraged to follow the norms of *ie*. In addition, further studies are required to understand how family members struggle, reinterpret, adopt, and make decisions about the grave. Quantitative studies, especially longitudinal studies, are important to achieving an understanding of how

people's expectations toward the grave change over the life course. Does experiencing grief such as the death of a family member or a divorce change these expectations?

As Makimura (1996) stated, the status of the grave reflects current Japanese society. It also reflects the uniqueness of Japanese culture. For example, recently, there are several graves which allow pets to be entombed with their owners. As an increasing number of pets are accepted as members of the family, more people may wish to include pets in their family grave. Reaching an understanding of graves in Japan will lead to comprehension of the uniqueness and diversity of family in the past as well as into the future.

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Figure 1

Total Fertility Rate (TFR), 1925 to 2004
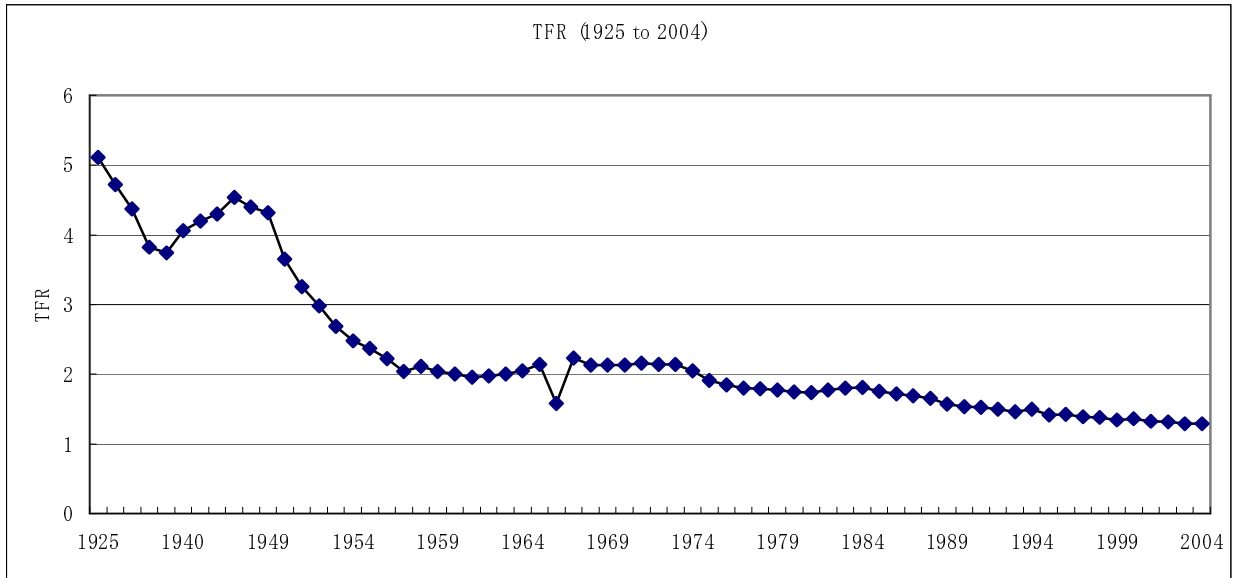
Table 1

Distribution of Responses about Expectations of the Grave by Generation (By Percentage)

Variables	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70+	Total
1. My family's grave	45.4	42.8	35.8	29.9	28.7	33.8	34.9
2. My spouse's family grave	12.0	7.6	12.9	19.1	23.5	33.0	18.8
3. Family Grave starting from my generation	16.1	19.7	24.7	26.0	27.1	21.9	23.2
4. Grave with no succession	9.8	9.7	12.0	9.1	10.6	6.2	9.5
5. Ocean, Mountain	16.7	20.2	14.7	15.9	10.0	5.1	13.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Number of Cases)	(n = 317)	(n = 381)	(n = 450)	(n = 603)	(n= 498)	(n=470)	(n = 2719)

Table 2

Distribution of Average Number of Siblings by Generation (By Percentage)

Variables	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70+	Total
1. No siblings	7.4	9.2	6.2	4.9	5.1	7.4	6.5
2. One Sibling	51.1	51.0	33.1	15.0	6.9	10.5	25.0
3. Two Siblings	35.6	29.5	36.0	23.0	13.2	16.8	24.7
4. Three Siblings and Above	5.9	10.3	24.7	57.1	74.7	65.3	43.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Number of Cases)	(n = 323)	(n = 390)	(n = 453)	(n = 608)	(n= 506)	(n=476)	(n = 2756)

Table 3

Distribution of Responses about Expectations of the Grave by Sex and by Two Groups of Age (By Percentage)

Men

Variables	Men 20 through 49	Men 50 and above	Total
1. My family's grave	58.7	51.7	54.7
2. My spouse's family grave	1.8	4.8	3.5
3. Family Grave starting from my generation	15.4	24.8	20.7
4. Grave with no succession	7.9	8.5	8.2
5. Ocean, Mountain	16.3	10.2	12.8
Total	100	100	100
(Number of Cases)	(n = 547)	(n = 706)	(n = 1253)

Table 4

Distribution of Responses about Expectations of the Grave by Sex and by Two Groups of Age (By Percentage)

Women

Variables	Women	Women	Total
	20 through 49	50 and above	
1. My family's grave	24.5	13.5	18.0
2. My spouse's family grave	19.1	40.8	31.9
3. Family Grave starting from my generation	25.5	25.4	25.4
4. Grave with no succession	13.1	8.9	10.6
5. Ocean, Mountain	17.8	11.3	14.0
Total	100	100	100
(Number of Cases)	(n = 601)	(n = 865)	(n = 1466)

Table 5

Distribution of Responses about Expectations of the Grave by Area of Residence (By Percentage)

Variables	13 Major Cities	Other Cities	towns and villages	Total
1. My family's grave	29.9	33.9	41.3	34.9
2. My spouse's family grave	14.2	17.7	25.0	18.8
3. Family Grave starting from my generation	23.2	25.3	18.4	23.2
4. Grave with no succession	13.0	9.7	6.4	9.5
5. Ocean, Mountain	19.7	13.4	8.9	13.5
Total	100	100	100	100
(Number of Cases)	(n = 492)	(n = 1574)	(n = 653)	(n = 2719)