

Marriage patterns in historical perspective: What can we learn from three centuries of marriages in Quebec?

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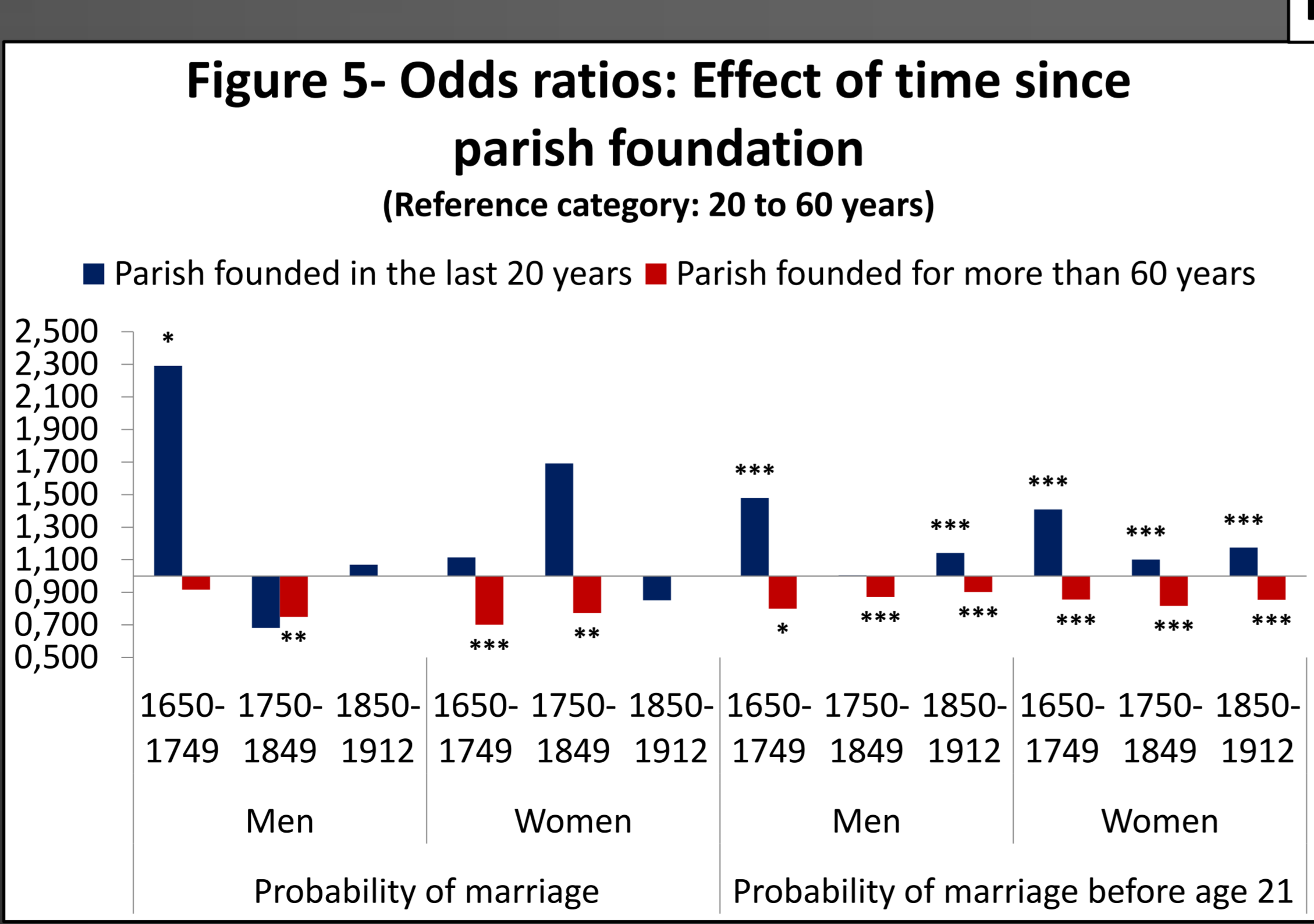
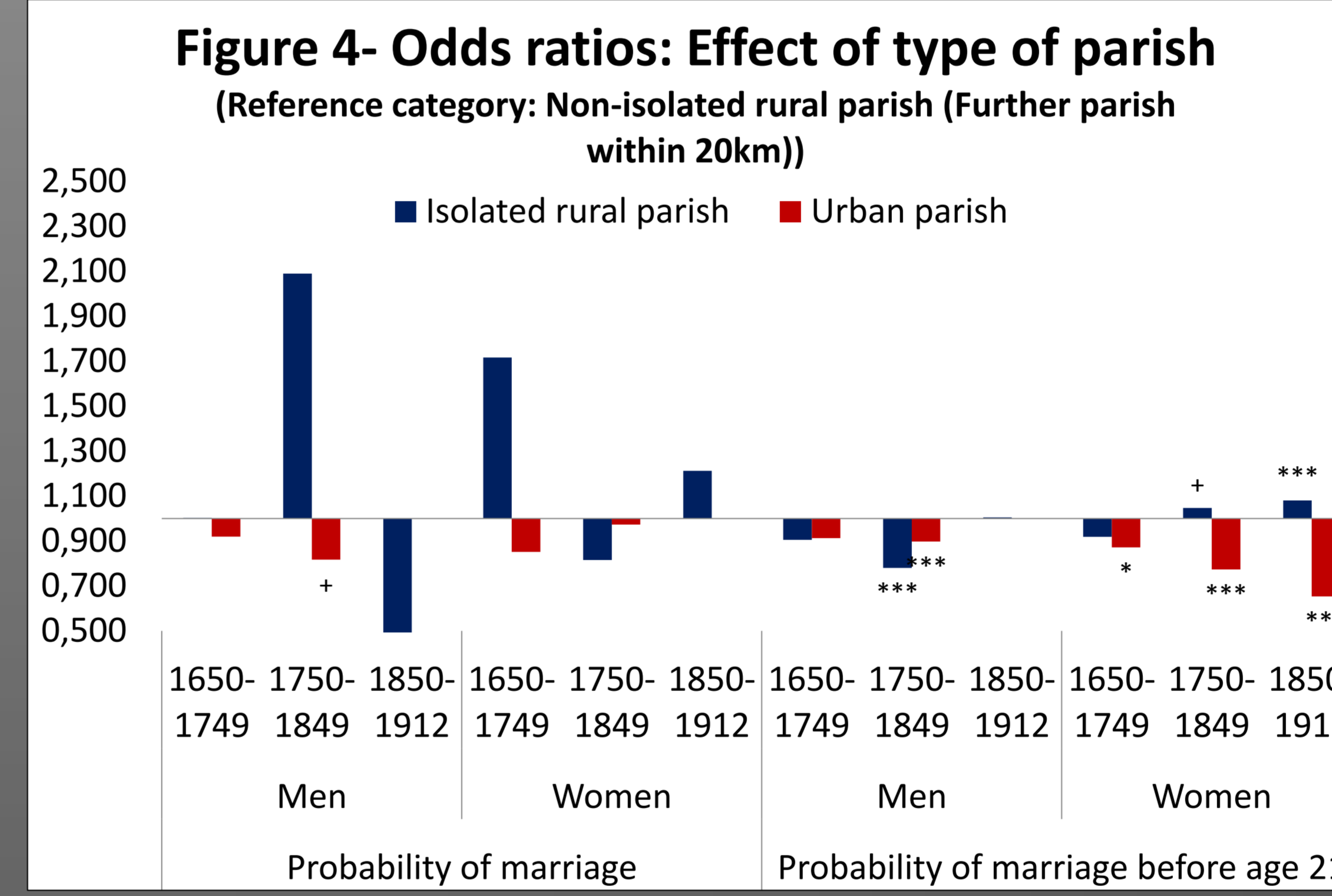
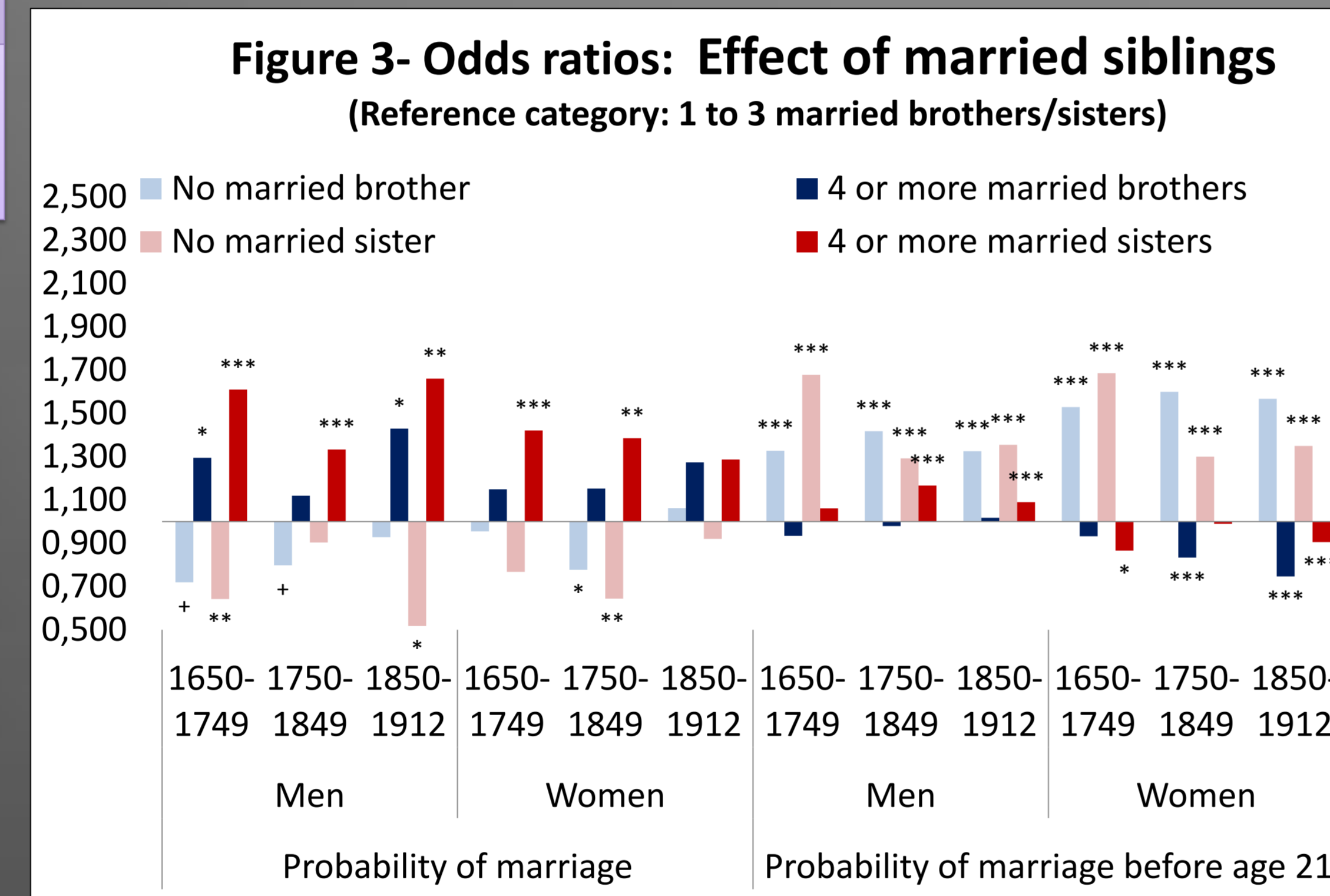
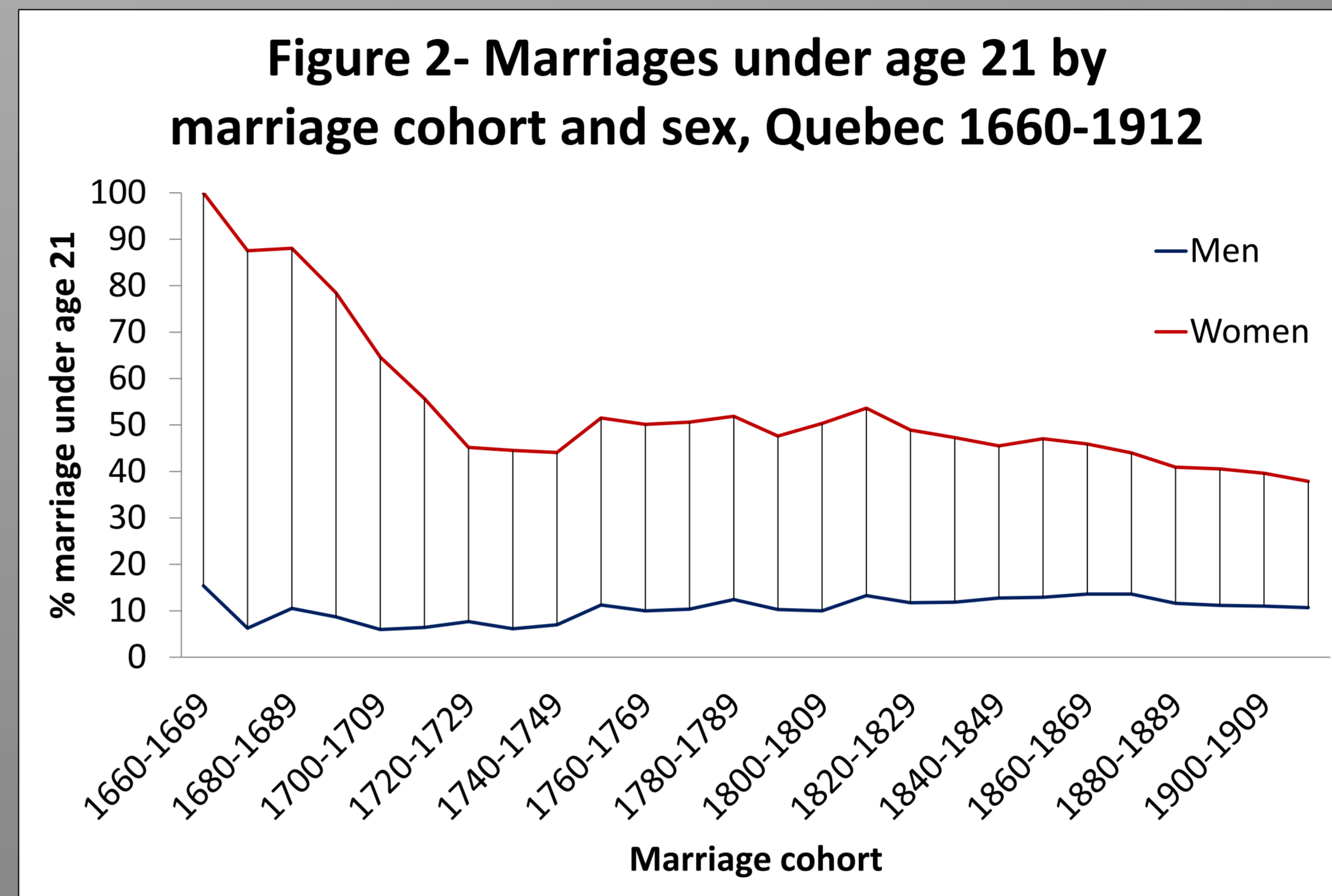
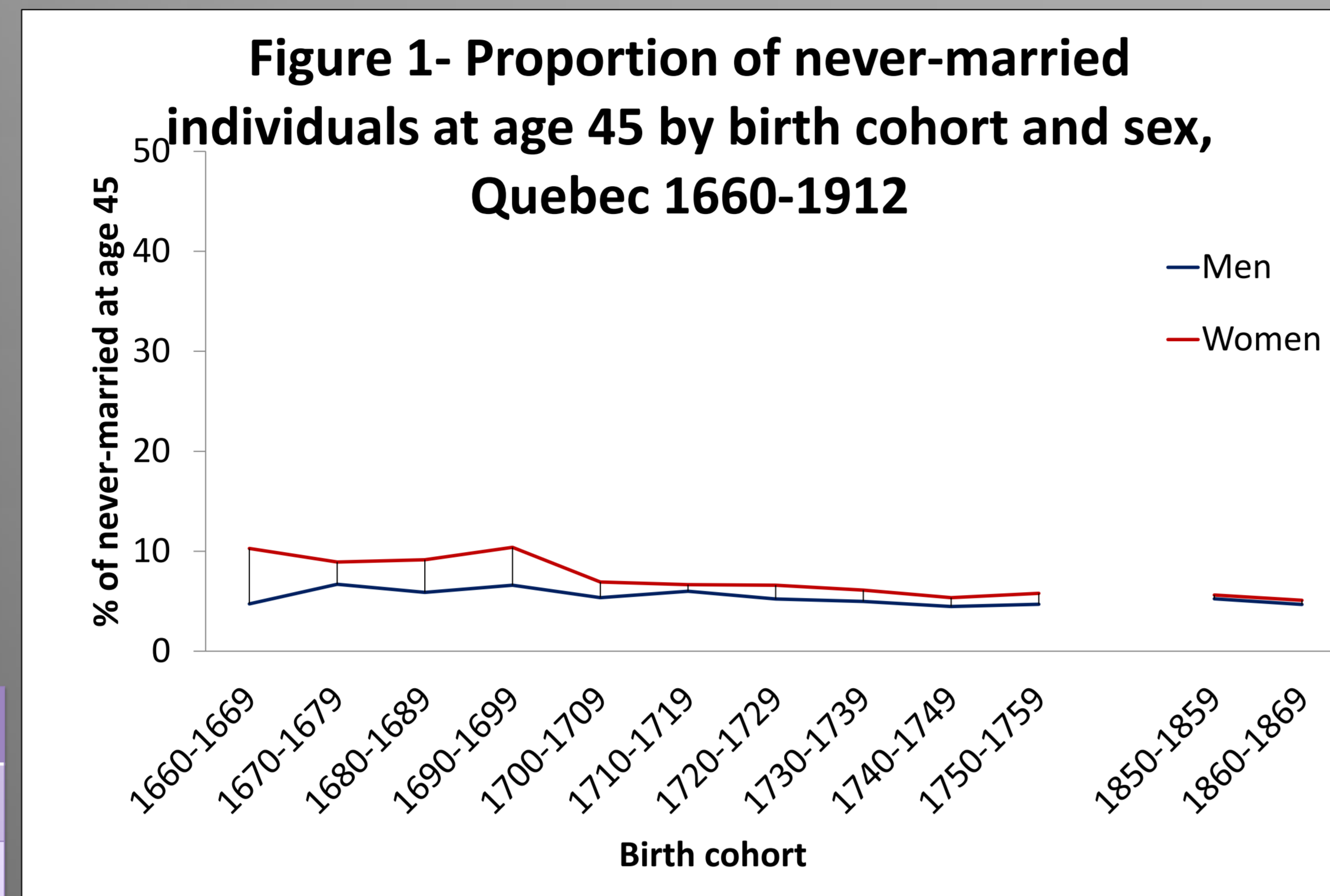
17th Century

18th Century

19th Century

20th Century

Results



Main results

- Through time, consistently fewer women married under age 21. Also the proportion of men marrying under age 21 always remained lower than women's (Figure 2).
- Having many married siblings was associated with a higher probability of marrying, but with a lower probability of marrying before age 21 (Figure 3).
- Conversely, having no married sibling was associated with a lower probability of marrying, but with a higher probability of marrying before age 21 (Figure 3).
- For women, living in an urban parish was associated with a lower risk of marrying before age 21. The likelihood of doing so also decreased through the 19th century (Figure 4).
- With few exceptions, younger parishes were associated with a higher risk of marrying before age 21 and also of marrying to a lesser extent. Conversely, parishes founded more than 60 years before were associated with a lower risk of marrying and of marrying before age 21. This applied to men and women without major distinctions (Figures 5 & 6).

Conclusions

- As expected from the European marriage pattern, the proportion of never-married individuals was low and age at first marriages early, especially for women.
- The social environment of a family impacts both the probability and the timing of marriage.
- The urbanisation delayed marriage for women in the 19th century. A bigger marriage market like the one found in cities did not facilitate marriages.
- We suppose that the high availability of land found in younger parishes influenced the probability and the timing of marriages. This assumption has often been put forward to explain early marriages in North America. Likewise, delayed marriages were found in older parishes in which it may be harder to establish sons.

References

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Introduction

Do I want to marry? When should I marry? Who should I marry?

The answers can be influenced by three levels of consideration:

- Preferences of individuals
- Social pressure
- Marriage market

Hajnal Hypothesis; Eurasia project

Preindustrial Europe	Preindustrial Asia
High age at first marriage	Early age at first marriage
High % of never-married individuals	Universal marriage
Neolocal tradition (Formation of a new household after marriage)	Complex household system

What about preindustrial North America?

- Earlier age at first marriage & lower proportion of never-married individuals than in Europe BUT same neolocal tradition.
- Could the parents and siblings influence the probability and timing of marriages in a context of large families?
- Could higher availability of land resources have facilitated marriage and therefore influenced its probability and timing?

Data

(1) *Le Registre de la population du Québec ancien* (Université de Montréal) Linked baptisms, burials and marriages from the Catholic parish registers in the province of Quebec from the early New-France settlements to 1799.

(2) *Le projet BALSAC* (Université du Québec à Chicoutimi)

(2.1) Linked marriage certificates from civil registration in the province of Quebec from 1800 to 1912*.

(2.2) Linked birth, death and marriage certificates from civil registration in the region of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean from 1842 to 1912*.

* Le projet BALSAC in its full version covers up to the year 1971.

Methods

(1) **Descriptive analysis:** trends over time

(2)- **Logistic regression**

(2.1) Probability of marriage (Data 1 & 2.2)

(2.2) Probability of marriage before age 21 (Data 1 & 2.1)

(3) **Survival analysis** (Kaplan-Meier survival estimates)

Timing of first marriage (Data 1 & 2.2)

(4) **Multilevel analysis:** Work in progress...

*All logistic regressions also control for: year, parents' presence, region, marriages in the parish and father's occupation (only Balsac).
 *** p<0.001 ** p<0.01 * p<0.05 + p<0.1