Prologue

Pim Kooij and Richard Paping

In 1998, the volume *Where the twain meet. Dutch and Russian regional demographic development in a comparative perspective* was published.[1] It contained the first results of the joint Dutch-Russian project 'Integral History at the regional level', which was financially supported by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO. In the epilogue to this volume, Vitaly Afiani told something about how the project started. The aim of the project was to investigate regional development based on methodology and computer models developed by research groups at the universities of Groningen and Utrecht.[2] Cohort analysis – tracking cohorts of people born in the same year – is an important aspect of this research. By constructing cohorts with intervals of 20 years – 1810, 1830, 1850, 1870 – the demographic behaviour of successive generations can be measured. A second research method was the structure analysis – the construction of complete surveys of the population – of individual towns and villages for the same benchmark years as the cohort analysis. For the Netherlands they are based on the Population Registers, for Russia mainly on the Revisor's books and some censuses.

Where did east and west meet? Of course, this happened at the annual conferences which were organised alternately in the Netherlands and Russia.[3] But there are also clear similarities when we take a look at the initial results. Cohort analysis indicated that there was clear convergence. In some Russian regions the age at first marriage, which was initially very low, started to rise. In Dutch regions the opposite happened. In two selected villages in the Yaroslavl area, the women in the 1810 cohort married at the age of 20.6. In the 1870 cohort the age at marriage had risen to 22.9. The rise for the men was even higher, from 21.0 to 25.6.[4] In seven selected villages in the Groningen clay area, the age of first marriage for women in the 1810 cohort was 26.9, and in the 1870 cohort 25.3, while the age for men fell from 28.9

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[1] P. Kooij (ed.), *Where the twain meet. Dutch and Russian regional demographic development in a comparative perspective 1800-1917* (Groningen/Wageningen 1998).
[2] P. Kooij, 'Introduction. The Integral History project', in Kooij (ed.), *Where the twain meet*, 1-7.
[3] These took place in Moscow 12-20 September 1997, Groningen 20-27 June 1998, St Petersburg 3-10 May 1999, Wageningen and Groningen 21-27 November 2000, and St Petersburg 23-28 October 2001.
[4] Calculated from tables 2 and 3 in S. Golubeva, 'Age and patterns of marriage of Russian farmers in the Upper-Volga region', in Kooij (ed.), *Where the twain meet*, 169-174.

to 26.4.[5] There was also convergence in the composition of the families and households in both countries. In 1850, 59% of the families in the Groningen village of Hoogkerk were already nuclear. A much smaller percentage was expected in Russia, but in the Yaroslavl villages, however, nuclear families were also in the majority (53%).[6]

The results mentioned above were preliminary, based on only a few cohort analyses. Moreover, some Russian sources proved to be very unreliable. In the nineteenth century, unlike in the Netherlands, Russia had no civil population registration. Registration was done by the church, but unfortunately not every birth (or baptism), marriage, or burial was written down.[7] In the second stage of our joint research, which started in 1997, we therefore tried to strengthen our conclusions by additional research. Moreover, new sources and methods were used to answer the same questions. New regions were studied to check whether the same patterns could be discovered there. And, very importantly, efforts were made to extend the scope of our joint research from just demography to other societal domains. This new book contains examples of all these aspects.

Chapter 1, by Irina Shustrova and Elena Sinitsyna, contains cohort analyses for two parishes in the Yaroslavl region, paying special attention to the causes of death and the age at which people died. Some cohorts could be followed nearly completely, others contain many people whose destinies are unknown. The previous conclusions concerning the rise in the age at first marriage in the second half of the nineteenth century in the Yaroslavl region were confirmed by these two new cohort analyses.

Chapter 2 contains an analysis of the database which was created for one of the two Dutch regions involved: the North Brabant sand area. Gerard Trienekens of the University of Utrecht, who was the project leader for that area, analyses the results of structure analysis and cohort analysis for ten villages and for the city of Den Bosch. He investigates the information on the sizes and kinds of households related to the social and occupational structure and the family life cycle, also at the level of individual municipalities. It was again confirmed that the nuclear family was already dominant in the first half of the nineteenth century; extended families lost even more ground in the second half of the nineteenth century.

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[5] P. Kooij, 'Dutch and Russian regions compared. Some results of cohort analysis', in Kooij (ed.), *Where the twain meet*, 223-228, Table 2.

[6] Kooij, 'Dutch and Russian regions compared', Table 6. This outcome was based on structure analysis (see below).

[7] Y. Mizis and V. Orlova, 'Sources and methodology for cohort analysis. The case of Malye Pupki, Tambov region', in Kooij (ed.), Where the twain meet, 125-130; A. Danilov and N. Obnorskaja, 'Sources for research on demographic behaviour in the Yaroslavl region in the nineteenth century', in Kooij (ed.), Where the twain meet, 131-134.

In our first book, the cohort analysis in the Tambov area was limited to only one village, Malye Pupki. In chapter 3 of this book, by Marina Akolzina and others, four villages are added. Moreover, this chapter contains demographic data referring to the whole population from other sources, such as the birth rate, the marriage rate, the death rate and the age at marriage. In general the age at marriage shows a slight fall, which is not completely in accordance with the results of cohort analysis, suggesting more stability. The differences, however, are not very large. The cohort analysis makes clear that some occupational groups – especially factory workers – did show a rise in the age at marriage during the second half of the nineteenth century. Tambov peasants – in contrast with the Yaroslavl rural population – continued to marry very young.

This chapter shows that some demographic questions can be solved by cohort analysis, but that other questions need other methodology and information on a wider range of persons. To fix the age of marriage for a municipality, for instance, the best source is the register of marriages. However, in order to analyse how the age of marriage was related to social status, occupational status, and the specific situation of a family, this information has to be linked on a personal level, which is possible in cohort analysis. The next three chapters clearly show the advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches.

In chapter 4, Irina Cherniakova from Petrozavodsk tests Hajnal's thesis on marriage behaviour against the Eastern and Western European marriage patterns. She has chosen to study the Karelians, who are new in our project. They live on the border between east and west in the Olonets region near Finland, but there are also some Karelian villages in Tver' region in the interior of Russia. To fix the marriage pattern in the different villages, the percentage of married and unmarried males and females as well as the difference in ages between husbands and wives are investigated using structure analysis. In Central Russia, the marriage patterns of Karelians remained traditional with very young brides and grooms, while in White Sea Karelian villages a more modern western-like marriage pattern developed as early as around the end of the eighteenth century, with higher ages at marriages and a rising number of celibates.

In chapter 5, Serguei Kachtchenko and Svetlana Smirnova – from the new participating research group from St Petersburg – investigate the reliability of the data on the average age at marriage presented in our joint publications. They state correctly that results obtained with cohort analysis are only representative for the individual cohorts, and that in order to obtain more general observations other material is needed, for instance that used in chapter 4 for Russia. They conclude from using marriage registers that the age at

marriage in the Olonets region remained quite stable during the nineteenth century, with at first a slight fall and then a small rise.

In chapter 6, Geurt Collenteur and Richard Paping use large data sets originating from cohort analysis and family reconstruction to fix reliable ages at first marriage for several social groups in the Groningen clay area in comparison with some other Dutch regions and also with Russian figures. Since the research method and the results are compared with all relevant observations within the project, a synthesis on this topic has been reached. In the Tambov region and in parts of the Yaroslavl region the low age at marriage was explained by general traditional factors. On the other hand, in the Netherlands the age at marriage depended mainly on individual economic and social factors, leaving room for a wide spread in marriage ages of both males and females, resulting on average in late marriages. The Olonets region and some parts of the Yaroslavl region took a middle position according to the spread in marriage ages, with somewhat higher ages at marriage than elsewhere in Russia and slightly more room for taking individual decisions.

In chapter 7, Geurt Collenteur makes a very interesting turn from the macro to the micro level, and back. He compares the main demographic variables of the province of Groningen – the death rate and the birth rate – with these variables in other parts of the Netherlands in the second half of the nineteenth century. From this can be derived that the Groningen region was leading the demographic transition in the Netherlands. Next, he tries to fix which locational, occupational, or cultural factors could be responsible for this pattern. A cluster analysis in which the Groningen clay area is compared with the Groningen peat area, with the help of a model in which the number and kind of variables is constantly changing, is put forward as the way towards a solution. As well as several typical clay municipalities and peat municipalities with their own demographic regime, there were also many municipalities with less specific demographic characteristics.

Thus chapter 7 firmly relates demographic factors to other societal variables. This sets the tone for the rest of the book. In chapter 8, Pim Kooij presents a matrix model in which the demographic domain is related to the economic, politic, and cultural domains. In this approach the essence of integral history at a regional level becomes very clear because all factors prove to be firmly interrelated.

In chapter 9, by Vladimir Dyatchkov and Valery Kanitschev, the same analysis is performed in a very thorough way for Tambov. Ecology is added as a variable in this model, while extra attention is paid to society and the effects of war.[8] The authors also concentrate on demographic aspects while

[8] In the Dutch model, society is considered as the background and frame for the model, while all characteristics are formulated in a social dimension.

taking into account the differences between rural and urban developments, suggesting that in the countryside in the nineteenth century, age at marriage was very close to the biological minimum.

In the last part of the book, some of the societal aspects mentioned in the chapters 8 and 9 are elaborated, partly to draw attention to them as aspects worth studying, and partly as examples of demographic elements placed in a societal context. Chapter 10, by Maarten Duijvendak, concentrates on elites in North Brabant and Groningen. In this context he gives a specific extension to the reconstruction of social structures, which was also a theme in the first book.[9] Social network analysis is used to discover the nodes and lines in the elite network. In both regions in the course of the nineteenth century, personal networks changed from monocentric into more polycentric ones.

Chapter 11 by Valery Kanitschev and others brings us back to the family, but now this demographic category is placed in the context of social structure. This chapter makes it clear that the observations on nuclear and extended families reported at the beginning of this prologue need some specification. At the end of the nineteenth century, urban families were mainly nuclear and were about the same size as those in Western Europe. In the countryside the pattern is less clear. There was also a rise in nuclear families, but the average size of families remained at least two persons larger than in Western Europe.

Piet van Cruijningen combines families and elites in chapter 12, where he focuses on the demographic strategies of the big farmers in the south-western part of the province of Zeeland. In the eighteenth century they married relatively early. There was no problem about endowing all the children with a farm because of the economic prosperity in that period. In the nineteenth century, however, the economic situation had become much more difficult and as a result the children of big farmers married much later.

Family strategies are also the subject of chapter 13, by Richard Paping. In this case, however, another variable takes centre stage: the family life cycle, which is a combination of demographic and economic elements. An analysis of very detailed farm accounts carried out in the Groningen village of Nieuw Scheemda revealed that in the families of farm labourers, when they reached the age that they could earn an income the oldest children were sent elsewhere to do so as live-in servants, because it was difficult to find work the whole year round. At the end of the nineteenth century, when the real wages of married farm labourers rose, they began to keep their children at home. In

[9] See V. Kanitschev, 'The demographic, occupational and social structure of the Tambov and Yaroslavl populations at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century', in Kooij (ed.), Where the twain meet, 87-95; P. Kooij, 'The economic and social structure of the city of Groningen in the nineteenth century', in Kooij (ed.), Where the twain meet, 111-125.

that period waged work for married women became more and more restricted in time because of a decrease in acceptation.

When compared with the first book, some aspects, especially demographic ones, have now become clearer. This has been effectuated by the inclusion of more regions, such as the Olonets region. The incorporation of other societal domains in the analysis, however, has initially raised more questions than could be solved. At any rate, this volume has once again shown that in the nineteenth century, Eastern and Western Europe were not completely different worlds. The major challenge remains to shed more light on the resemblances.