The Roads to Reproduction: Comparing Life Course Trajectories in Preindustrial Eurasia

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Introduction

Marriage is a particularly interesting topic from a Eurasian perspective because for over two centuries scholars have viewed it as a key element in the East-West divide (Malthus 1803; Hajnal 1965; Lee and Wang 1999; Engelen and Wolf 2005). For Malthus, the East was dominated by the positive check, with mortality crises and infanticide caused by an excessive demographic pressure rooted in a culture of universal and early access to marriage of females, while the West regulated the access to marriage and consequently lowered fertility. For him, this pattern reflected a moral inferiority of the Eastern populations, an incapacity to control sexual appetites, especially in comparison with the Christian West (Lee et al. 2004, 3; Lee and Wang 1999, chapter 2). Fifty years ago, Hajnal (1953, 1965) demonstrated the prevalence of the preventive check among European populations, and the originality of the so-called European marriage pattern of late access to marriage and frequent permanent celibacy. Plenty of studies have actually proved the differences between Asia and Europe in the systems of family formation, from the pioneering Hajnal thesis of an East-West divide between St. Petersburg and Trieste (Hajnal, 1965, 1983) to the most recent work by Engelen and Wolf on marriage and family in Eurasia (2005; see also Thornton 2005). Interesting individual-level data on households and family formation systems are also present in Bengtsson, Campbell and Lee's volume (2004) on mortality in Eurasia.

Differences in marriage patterns and family formation systems have then been frequently assumed to be an essential meta-geographic dimension dividing East from West. However, recent research has shown that such comparisons always have been done from a Western perspective, assuming a Western definition of marriage, which is hardly universal (Servais and Arrault 2000). However, in Western societies marriage was usually viewed as an event, while in Asian populations it was rather seen as a process. Asian families started to plan the marriage of their younger members already from childhood, while in Europe the whole process was shorter and more individualized. Thus, comparing marriage is far more challenging than comparing births and deaths, because the role of marriage differs between family systems, and, thus, it has different meanings and different implications in different contexts. If we only stay with the communities studied in this chapter, we can already say that in Northwest Europe, and among day laborers in rural Italy, marriage marked the passage to adulthood and autonomy, while in the Asian context, and, to some extent, also for Italian sharecroppers, it was only a step towards adulthood defined by the constraints of family production and reproduction. What is more, in Europe marriage was a religious event, while in Asia it was a civil one, if not a simple contract. Finally, even within a given society, gender and socioeconomic status might imply substantial differences in marriage patterns. These different connotations of marriage pose some conceptual and interpretative problems in comparative analysis concerning very different contexts.

We consequently propose an alternative approach. All societies have formal and socially accepted events sanctioning transitions from one stage of life to another. According to different social systems and periods, these turning-points could constitute "sharply demarcated, highly routinized, and carefully coordinated" paths (Modell, Furstenberg, Hershberg, 1976), or more autonomous and less hardly predictable routes. Among such turning points, marriage has always represented one of the most important transitions in the individual life course, both in past and in contemporary societies (Hareven

and Masaoka, 1988). Indeed, we believe that a correct approach to comparative studies on marriage and its role across different societies and populations should begin from the fact that in almost every society marriage represents the socially accepted access to reproduction, guaranteeing biological survival and continuity to families and populations. In this respect, marriage should be seen as a transition point on the "road to reproduction" and analyzed in relation to other turning points in the life course, i.e. leaving home, family formation, household headship, inheritance transmission (Shanahan, 2000). Thus, if comparing marriage can be misleading due to the different meanings of marriage in different societies, investigating access to reproduction can be more meaningful in conceptual terms and more coherent for comparative purposes.

This is exactly what this chapter does: analyzing and comparing the paths to reproduction of some Eurasian communities. By shifting the focus from marriage to access to reproduction, we might challenge the classic geographic differentiations of theoretical models of family formation system such as the ones by Hajnal (1965, 1983) and Reher (1998). In fact, systems featuring early first marriage do not necessarily imply early access to reproduction, as shown by the long intervals between marriage and first birth (e.g. Lee and Wang 1999; Tsuya and Kurosu 1999; Tsuya et al 2010).

However, looking more completely at the sequence of transition points in the access to reproduction is not only a contribution to demographic and family history, but also considers the relations between "Demography, Ideology, and Politics" (Lee and Wang Feng 1999, chapter 9). Alan Macfarlane (1978, l986, 1987) saw in the English family and demographic systems the cradle of individualism and the capitalist culture. Emmanuel Todd (1985) developed a vision of individualism as an ideology that valorizes the moral autonomy against the social totality. He contrasted the family systems according to a double dichotomy of equality versus inequality, authority versus cooperation, and saw in such characteristics the roots of contemporary political systems, democratic vs. autocratic, individualistic vs. collectivist. Almost in the same time, Jack Goody (1983) located the roots of Western individualism in Christian marriage, imposed by the church as a union between two souls implying the mutual consent of two individuals. The church has assumed the collective control of families on marriage, but differently from China, where the extended family household rather than the individual or the individual couple, was the basic decision-making unit (Lee and Wang 1999, 125). That is why we assume that China, and more generally Asian societies, were characterized by a more structured and rigidly defined path towards reproduction, in which the family group had a central role.

However, we must keep in mind that even the more traditional views about the East-West divide are now challenged. The idea of a clear distinction between a collective East and an individualistic West is a simplification. What is more, in *The East in the West*, Jack Goody (1999) vehemently claimed that his 1983 research presented in *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* could not be used to justify such a distinction. Finally, a competing vision of the Christian marriage has been proposed by George Duby (1993, 1996). For him, the major point was not the consent but the moral management of sexuality. While initially the single and widowed were superior to the married for whom the life was necessarily marked by sex, sin and lust, between the tenth and the twelfth centuries the church converted marriage into a sacrament, with the intention to place sexuality within an exclusive sanctified frame (Servais and Arrault 2000, 27). In this view, the role of institutions, especially ecclesiastic ones, was decisive in maintaining the European marriage pattern and the policy of sexuality among the youth, with the consequence that individual autonomy in sexuality, here intended as the capacity of individuals not to take "externally supplied norms and morality for granted" (Lesthaeghe 1995), will become a common characteristic only in the first, if not the second, demographic transition.

In this chapter, the classic scheme of collective versus individual societies applied to the East-West dichotomy will be challenged in the light of the multiplicity of trajectories towards reproduction specific to each community studied. Not only the number of possible life courses, but also the presence or absence of one ordered path will allow us to discuss the role of family ties, household context and social and institutional regulations in shaping the access to reproduction as well as the conclusion of a formal union.

Samples and variable definitions

In the first part of the chapter, we analyze the timing of the various transition points on the road to reproduction. Thus, for each community age at first leaving home, age at first marriage and age at first legitimate birth are investigated along with the proportions of the population never experiencing such events. Due to the different nature of the sources used for the different communities (see Chapter 2) the definitions of those transitions and the respective populations at risk varies somewhat across communities.

First leaving home is here defined as the first departure -- temporary or permanent --from the parental household of those individuals under continuous observation from the age of 10. First marriage concerns all the marriages of dwellers living in our sample populations for whom we observed the transition from never-married to married before age 45. In the European cases we include all the people whose wedding was celebrated either in the local parish or in the home parish of the bride. This was done in order to solve the problem associated with the custom of European populations to marry in the bride's parish when the marriage was between spouses living in different communities[1]. Finally, mean ages at first birth are based only on legitimate births. In this respect, only couples under continuous observation from first marriage to first birth were considered for the computation of mean age at first birth.

In the sections of the paper where we discuss mean ages, transitions are treated as independent turning points, each of which based on a different population sample, and not as sequential events. In other words, there is no complete overlap between the three risk populations of potential leavers, spouses and parents. For example, while mean age at first marriage is based on all marriages involving dwellers of our populations regardless of the place where they settled down after marriage, mean ages at first birth concerns only those couples who established themselves in the studied communities.

As for proportions never-married and never having had a first birth, we need to observe individuals up to 45 years of age, which means that these calculations are based on a different sample from those concerning the timing of transitions. Naturally, this might create selection bias in contexts where migration was frequent, such as in Scania, or where high gender differentials of marriage emigration were present, such in Ou, because only people forming a family in the place of origin are included.

In addition to studying transitions separately, we also analyze the actual sequences from leaving home to reproduction of all individuals who experienced a first birth and were observed in their parental home. Again, this could create some selection bias among children leaving home earlier and migrating out of the home parish compared to those leaving home later, or never, and thus were more likely to follow trajectories not involving leaving home. In the section about trajectories, data for the Chinese populations are not available due to the triennial periodic update of the Chinese registers, which does not allow us to reconstruct the precise and detailed sequence of the turning points for the populations of Liaodong and Shuangcheng.[2]

Analyses by socioeconomic status is carried out by using three categories – higher, medium, and low socioeconomic status – for all the communities investigated. We use this simple subdivision to have a common ground when analyzing and discussing the results of the different populations. In general terms, this categorization represents a socioeconomic hierarchy within each population, which normally reflects a relative gradient in living standards. However, the basis for the classification depends on the quality of sources and on the nature of the information available in each setting. In some contexts, in fact, data could refer to either the household head or every single household member, and they could include information

[1] In Scania many couples also married in the groom's home parish, and thus all transitions from being single to married are included, regardless of where the wedding was celebrated.

[2] Japanese registers, although not presenting the same recording structure of the Chinese ones, do not provide information on the precise dates of events. This is the reason why in table 6 only European populations are considered and analyzed.

on professions and occupations (such as in Belgium), landholding size (Japan),[3] or family tax (Italy). Thus, there are some difficulties in attaching any hypothesis on reproduction to those categories since they refer to different economic and social aspects of families and individuals. For example, the higher socioeconomic status category is formed by farmers with land above subsistence level in Sweden, by white collars in Belgium, and by the bourgeoisie but also by some sharecroppers (landless farmers) in Italy. In this respect, the lower socioeconomic status group is probably the most homogeneous category across populations, since it normally includes the poorest strata of the farm population, usually landless.

For Shuangcheng and Liaoning, socioeconomic status was categorized according to institutional affiliation and individual occupation. Low status was defined by a hereditary affiliation with one of the register populations in Liaoning or Shuangcheng on which the state imposed special restrictions or obligations. Medium status was defined to include everyone in the remaining regular populations who did not hold a salaried official position. High status was defined to include individuals in the regular positions who held salaried official positions.

Notwithstanding these differences, we used parental socioeconomic status at age 10 for leaving home, household or individual socioeconomic status at marriage and household or husband's status for first birth.[4] The analysis of socioeconomic differentials in the patterns of transition to reproduction has its drawback in the low numbers that some SES groups may have in some populations. In table 7, SES categories with less than 40 observations are italicized.

Marriage and living arrangements in the studied populations

Despite its social structure, Scania had a very coherent family system that indeed appears as a kind of ideal-type with 90 percent of the domestic groups being nuclear. Like in East Belgium, southern Swedish peasants had a late and neolocal marriage, which necessarily implies that marriage was the decisive step in the formation of a new household. However, Ardennais and Hervians usually kept their residence in the parental home until marriage while Scanians left home in adolescence or early adulthood, moving from farm to farm in order to accumulate social and monetary capital (Alter and Oris 1999; Dribe 2000; Dribe and Lundh 2005a; Neven 2003).

In Casalguidi, the Tuscan village, more than half of the domestic groups belonged to the simple-family type but more than one third, involving half the total population, were complex. These differences were closely associated with the occupation of the household head. Wealthier sharecroppers tended to live in complex domestic groups whose size and composition were controlled by landowners. A household was sometimes formed neolocally, especially among day-laborers, sometimes by fission or fusion of existent households, but most often by transmission of headship from an elderly father to a son.

The Japanese villages of Shimomoriya and Niita in the Ou region were similar in this regard, with an even more distinctive pattern. No less than 36 percent of the households in Ou were stem-families. However, the Italian and the Japanese settings differed in two important ways. First, age at marriage was late in the former, early in the latter. Second, the presence of servants was not a real issue in Tuscany since sharecroppers found the necessary labor force within their own complex households or, alternatively, they hired low-status peasants as day-laborers. In Ou however, a domesticity existed, with the peculiarity that servants were commonly married, not single as was the case in Europe.[5] In Ou, where population was declining, it was vital to assure labor force and optimum size to the household. Marriage

[3] Landholding size here refers to the expected yield of land held by each household, not the physical size of farm land owned by each household. It is considered the best available indicator for a socioeconomic status of household among peasants.
[4] It should be noted that individual status at marriage or first birth might not reflect final socioeconomic status attainment, because of intragenerational social mobility. For example, in populations with life-cycle service this kind of mobility is inherent in the system and a natural part of the life courses on individuals.
[5] A large regional variation within Japan should be noted here. According to studies, single men and women went for service before marriage, thereby delaying the timing of their marriage in villages in central Japan; while in Northeastern villages, the majority of people who left for service migration consisted of married men and women (Hayami 1992; Nagata 1998).

was considered a safety valve for population losses or economic adjustment within the family group (Nagata 1998; Kurosu, Tsuya and Hamano 1999). Another important characteristic of the Japanese stem family system was that marriage was either virilocal (wives married into husbands' parental households) or uxorilocal (husbands married into wives' parental household). Different marriage strategies (when and whom to marry) characterized the two types of living arrangement after marriage.

In China, both in Liaodong and Shuangcheng, the family system was similar to the one of the Tuscan sharecroppers. Indeed, married sons stayed in their parental household while daughters were distributed around when they married. The prevalence of complex-family households was much higher because married sons and even cousins often remained together in the household even after the deaths of senior members. Thus in Liaodong, 62 percent of the domestic units belonged to this type and almost 38 percent of the household members were kin, but non-stem, while this proportion only reached 10 percent in Ou in Japan and 5 percent in Northern Italy (Lee, Bengtsson, Campbell 2004, 100). In Shuangcheng, a slightly smaller proportion of households were complex, 52 percent. Marriage was also universal for females, but whatever the gender, it was never important for household formation, an almost irrelevant concept in our Chinese communities (Lee, Bengtsson, Campbell 2004, 97). A Chinese household was a sustainable organization, with a vertical hierarchical organization and a usual transmission of the headship from the dead father to the elder son. Fusion of existing households was extremely rare. Households divided, but usually only on the death of senior members, and even when they divided, the resulting households were often complex, consisting of sets of married brothers. Such sense of stability was reinforced by the absence of servants or of any form of life cycle service, which were definitely unnecessary in domestic units formed by five adult members on average (Lee, Bengtsson, Campbell 2004, 99).

Transitions to reproduction

Table 1 displays mean ages at first leaving home, first marriage and first birth, computed for the seven communities and for men and women separately. In general, the figures show less variation across communities in age at first birth than for leaving home or first marriage. Populations that seemed quite distant in terms of family formation system were more similar in the timing of first birth. Despite this convergence it is quite clear that the Asian populations started their reproduction earlier than the European ones.

The general picture described above is obviously a consequence of the different meaning attached to marriage in the different populations. In those areas where it marked a transition to adulthood, such as in the European villages, it also represented the access to reproduction, which usually occurred soon after marriage. On the contrary, in those populations where marriage was only a step on the road to adulthood, as in the Asian villages, the association between marriage and reproduction was weaker, especially if compared with the populations in Italy and Belgium.[6]

Table 1 here

However, for leaving home there were large variations also within Europe. In the Belgian communities, but also among women in Casalguidi, it was a common practice to stay home until marriage, while in Scania people generally left home well before marriage to work as servants in another household (see Dribe 2000). Also in Ou men and women left the parental home at very young age, especially females, but for a very different reason. In fact, in Japan the mean age at leaving home was higher than the mean age at first marriage for both males and females. This pattern is probably due to inheriting sons and daughters, who married virilocally or uxorilocally, and frequently remained in the parental home for a while after marriage before leaving home for service.

[6] For the Belgian populations, differences between age at first marriage and age at first birth are really close or even inverted. The reason lies in the different samples used to compute the two indicators. Mean age at first birth was calculated for couples who stayed in the village, who had a mean age at first marriage that was probably lower compared to mobile couples.

Generally speaking, but especially for first marriage and first birth, women experienced life course transitions earlier than men, although they followed similar transitional pattern and their between-population variability was only slightly higher than that of men. The clear-cut divide between the Asian and the European villages is still visible, with the former populations showing lower figures for each of the turning points here considered. This differential was particularly striking for marriage, where the female populations of China and Japan showed a mean age at first marriage of between 15 and 20 years, compared to 25-29 for the European populations. The variability across populations was again least for first births, with mean ages of women ranging from 20 years in Ou to 28 years in the Pays de Herve and Scania.

After having described the timing of single transitions, we now turn to analyze their frequency in terms of proportions never married and never having had a first birth at age 45. Table 2 clearly shows the contrast between the universal marriage pattern in Japan and China and the selective access to marriage in the European countries. However, there were also pronounced differences between the sexes, with the sole exception of the Pays de Herve.

Table 2 here

Between 10 and 24 percent of European men and women never experienced marriage, although the gender balance of never-married differed from population to population. As for females, we go from the high figures of never-married women in Scania and Pays de Herve (over 20 percent) to the low proportions in Casalguidi and the Ardennes (10-14 percent). In Asia, on the other hand, only small fractions of women had never been married by age 45.

Also for men there were lower celibacy rates in Asia than in Europe, although marriage for Asian men was by no means as universal as for Asian women. Indeed, in Liaodong the proportion of never-married men was at the same level as in Scania, around 12 percent. Once again, East and West appear less distant as far as access to reproduction is concerned on account of the already-mentioned weaker tie linking marriage and reproduction in Liaodong, Shuangcheng, and Ou. Most impressive, however, were the very high proportions of men and women who remained excluded from the reproductive process of the population they lived in. Between 12 and 30 percent of men had not yet experienced a first birth at age 45. In this respect, the East-West divide appears less clear-cut, especially for the Chinese populations whose figures are very close, if not higher, than the respective values in the European populations (18-28 percent). Among women, the separation between Asian and European populations is much more marked and the overall pattern more varied, with proportions of childless women going from 5 percent in Shuangcheng to over 30 percent in the Pays de Herve.

Studies of childlessness for both contemporary and historical populations have showed that only about 3-5 percent of all the couples suffer from permanent sterility, and that this proportion increases with age (Toulemon, 1995; see also Knodel and Wilson 1981; Morgan 1991). Proportions of childless ever-married women in the range between 5 and 20 percent are normal, increasing at higher mean age at first marriage (Rowland, 2007). In this respect, the implied levels of childlessness within marriage in our populations seem reasonable, perhaps with the exception of the Ardennes (3.5 percent) and, more strikingly, of the Chinese population of Shuangcheng (1.0 percent), although this latter figure is almost certainly an underestimate. Generally speaking, the Asian populations of Liaodong and Ou present figures of childlessness in marriage that are higher than the European ones. This could be due to the strong selectivity of the European marriage pattern, which is in contrast with the universal and non-selective marriage pattern in Asia. In Europe, the high frequency of prenuptial sexual relations (see table 6 below) might have been part of a trial and error process, used to discard those individuals not able to conceive (Alter 1988).

From transitions to trajectories

In this section we move from transitions to trajectories, looking at how leaving home, first marriage and first birth were ordered. Our ambition is to identify the existence of one or more characteristic paths to reproduction in the different communities. We define a spectrum of different possible trajectories from living in the parental home to experiencing a first birth. In Table 3 (and Table 7) we use the abbreviations lh for leaving home, fm for first marriage and fb for first birth. A minus (-) means a succession of events, while a slash (/) between two events implies simultaneity. Thus, lh-fm-fb means that the individual is first leaving the parental home, thereafter marrying for the first time, and finally becoming a parent for the first time. In cases where exact dates are not available, we can only see whether or not the transitions happened within the same year, for instance in the case of Ou and, to some extent, also of Casalguidi and Scania. Because our research is inscribed in a global project on marriage in Eurasia, we decided to only look at the trajectories that ended in a first legitimate birth, i.e. in a recognized and socially legitimized access to reproduction.[7] Moreover, the sample here are individuals first observed in their parental home and for whom we also observe a first birth. Thus proportions can differ between the tables below and the ones used above to describe transition means and proportions.

Table 3 here

Our analysis of the different populations has highlighted four different patterns of transitions to reproduction which were basically based on the different types of household formations systems: a nuclear model with life-cycle servants, a nuclear model without life-cycle servants, a stem family model with both virilocal and uxorilocal living arrangements after marriage, and finally a joint family model with only virilocal arrangement.

In Scania, about 60 percent of men and a bit more than 50 percent of women had their first legitimate birth after having left home and married. This serves to indicate the predominance of the life-cycle servant system in Scania, where a majority of young people left home before marriage to work as servants in another household. However, due to the possible selection bias in the sample, these figures probably underestimate the true proportions of people following the common trajectories lh-fm-fb. Thus, in Scania the proportion of people leaving home before marriage could be actually higher (see Dribe 2000). About 13 percent of men and 27 percent of women left home and married in the same year to form a new household independent from parents' family, while 21 percent of men and 13 percent of women did not leave the parental home before marriage, but took over headship upon marriage, usually while making a retirement agreement with the parents or parents-in-law to take over the farm (see Dribe and Lundh 2005b).

In the East Belgian rural communities there were also two main trajectories and several minor pathways. The most common path to reproduction for men (32-35 percent) was to stay in the native household until marriage and then continue to live there without leaving until having a first birth (fm-fb). For women, the picture is similar with about 30 percent never leaving home before first marriage and first birth. In those rural areas, those children stayed to take over the farm. In Pays de Herve, it was just a transfer of the renting contract from the parents to the new couple (Neven 2003) while in the Ardennes where most of the (poor) land belonged to the peasants, more complicated bargaining was needed within the sibling group to deal with the egalitarian inheritance system (Servais xyxy).

Alternatively, people often left home upon marriage, settled down elsewhere and then had a first birth (about 20 percent of the males in the Pays de Herve, 33 percent in the Ardennes). And again the female pattern is very similar with about 20 percent (Pays de Herve)-35 percent (the Ardennes) left home upon marriage and then had a first birth.

Two minor pathways, more frequent in the Pays de Herve, can be also mentioned. Between 11 and 18 percent of men followed the path fm-fb-lh, i.e. experiencing the birth of a child in the parental household, while 7-14 percent followed fm-lh-fb. They both reflected the difficulties many young couples had to find housing and a land to rent, so that they could not settle and establish an independent

[7] Children born out-of-wedlock but who were later legitimized by a marriage are also included, which implies that only truly illegitimate children, not later legitimized are excluded.

household just after the marriage (Neven 2003). The neolocal rule, which is an essential characteristic of the nuclear family system, was not immediately respected and a stem family phase was part of the road to legitimate reproduction for 53 percent of the males and 49 percent of the females in the Ardennes, and respectively 65 and 61 percent in the Pays de Herve. However, although the life expectancy was high and rising in these communities (Oris et al. 2005), the cohabitation with the parents was only temporary. The Walloon sentence, "marriage needs household", was ultimately respected.

Another alternative path was a sort of controlled revolt against the social rule that entailed the birth of the first child before marriage, namely an illegitimate first birth. However, family and society were both strong enough to force those “deviant” young people to come back onto the “right road”, that is to get married. The access to a legitimate reproduction took this unconventional form for about 7-9 percent of men and 12-15 percent of women.

All the paths described above can be seen as expressions of a nuclear family system without extensive family life-cycle service. Less than 7 percent of the males and 5 percent of the females left the parental household as a first transition.

In Casalguidi in Tuscany and Ou in northeast Japan, the roads to a standard access to reproduction show both similarities and differences, positioning the Italian population in an in-between position between Asia and Northern Europe. While in Scania and Belgium the differences between men and women were rather limited, here the patterns were clearly gendered. Among men, the virilocal complex-family model – fm-fb – was dominant in Casalguidi (57 percent). This virilocal model (fm-fb) was also dominant in Ou (43 percent). Other Japanese men also followed this model until they left to form their own household as a branch household (fm-fb-lh, 13 percent). In both cases, an alternative was lh-fm-fb (and the similar path lh/fm-fb) and concerned about 30 percent of those who fathered a first legitimated child. In the Japanese case, lh/fm-fb consisted of men who left home and married into their wives’ parental households (i.e. uxorilocal marriage).

While concerning only a minority of men in Casalguidi and in Ou, the simultaneity of marriage and leaving home followed by a birth was by far the most dominant pattern among Italian women (66 percent). Again, this was the most frequent pattern also in Ou although it gathered far fewer women (37 percent). In those cases women circulated while men stayed, and the other trajectories observed in both Casalguidi and Ou (lh-fm-fb, 13 percent) or only in Ou (fm-lh-fb, 9 percent) confirm this general rule. In addition, almost one woman in four stayed at home in the Japanese villages (fm-fb) and another 13 percent left only after their first birth (fm-fb-lh). These cases consisted of women who married uxorilocally.

Despite the fact that we lack trajectories for the Chinese populations it seems clear that transition sequences were very homogeneous, largely following traditional norms according to which sons remained in their natal household as long as one of their parents were alive, and daughters all left their parents' households when they married and moved into their husband's household (Lee and Campbell 1997). While some individuals left their household of birth through the division of an existing household, this typically occurred after the death of senior family members, not as a well-defined stage at a specific point in the life cycle of individuals, and the process isn't directly comparable to 'leaving home' as considered in this chapter (Campbell and Lee 1999). Moreover, household division was a collective process in which the families that had made up a large, multiple-family household separated and formed their own households. While some individuals were annotated in the registers as leaving the region without permission, such departures were rare and tended to occur for idiosyncratic reasons (Campbell and Lee 2001).[8]

[8] Not all of China was so homogeneous in terms of sequences. Other regions of China had more diverse patterns. In Taiwan, for example, some men left their natal household on marriage and moved into their wife's household (Wolf and Huang 1983) just like the cases of uxorilocal marriages in Ou.

The results above provide only limited support to the idea that Asian societies had more structured and ordered trajectories. On the one hand, we had the opportunity to include only one Japanese population, on the other hand, only two European populations, Scania and Casalguidi, show trajectories followed by more than half of the population, both among males and females.

Socioeconomic differences in pathways to reproduction

Disaggregating by socioeconomic status addresses the question of internal variability of family systems, obvious in the so-called Mediterranean system (Reher 1998), but possibly also elsewhere. Table 4 displays the mean ages at transitions in the different populations. Looking first at leaving home it is clear that the higher the social status, the later people – both men and women – left the parental home, which could be connected to the higher demand for domestic labor in the more well-off households (see Dribe 2000 for an analysis of Scania).

Table 4 here

For first marriage the picture was quite different, with considerable differences between the Asian and European communities, at least for men. In the Belgian and Italian populations men and women from higher socioeconomic groups married later than people from a low-status background. The picture is also similar for women in the Asian populations, while for men it was the other way around, with high-status men marrying earlier than low-status people. In Scania, the socioeconomic differences in age at first marriage were quite small, but if anything it seems as if high status people married earlier than lower status people, which deviates from the pattern in the other European populations.

The socioeconomic pattern of early transitions in the lower social classes was less clear for first births. In this case, the Italian and Belgian communities followed the pattern above described for first marriage with the exception of high status women in the Ardennes population.[9] In Scania women from wealthier backgrounds had an earlier access to reproduction than the poorest ones, and the same was true for both men and women in the Asian populations, although the socioeconomic differences in some cases were rather small.

Taken together it seems quite clear that the timing of life course transitions varied a great deal by socioeconomic status within each of the different populations. However, it is more difficult to find a unifying pattern, least alone a common explanation for these differences. Generally speaking higher socioeconomic status seems to have been connected to later transition to reproduction in Europe (at least in Belgium and Italy), but to earlier start of reproduction in Asia.

Having looked at the timing of the transitions to adulthood, we now turn to the proportions never married and childless (table 5). Looking first at marriage, the emerging picture is quite fragmented. In all cases but Casalguidi, permanent celibacy among men was higher in lower socioeconomic groups, but this was not the case for women. In the Asian communities the proportion never married among men in the lowest social group was almost 24 percent in Ou, 18 percent in Shuangcheng and 11 percent in Liaodong. These figures are similar to, or even higher than, the ones observed in the European populations. Thus, among males, a clear hierarchy was present in Scania, Ou, Liaodong, and Shuangcheng, where the lowest social status had the highest probability to still be unmarried at age 45. For women the pattern was quite different. In the Belgian populations higher socioeconomic status meant higher celibacy rates for women, and not lower as it was the case for males. In the Asian populations of Liaodong and Ou universal marriage among women meant that socioeconomic differences were negligible, while in Shuangcheng, like in the Belgian populations, higher socioeconomic status meant higher celibacy rates.

Table 5 here

[9] It is important to note that in these analyses mean ages at transition have been calculated on different population samples. This explains why in the Ardennes females show a mean age at first birth that is lower than the mean age at first marriage.

Thus, in East Belgium, both in Ardennes and the Pays de Herve, men in the lower status group were clearly disadvantaged, showing the highest proportions never married, while women from the lower classes were least likely to stay single. The explanation is that right in-between Ardennes and the Pays de Herve was the city of Verviers which recruited a lot of female domestics and was the heart of a textile agglomeration which also attracted young rural women. Consequently, in the Ardennes and Pays de Herve the sex ratio on the matrimonial market was at the disadvantage of males, especially among the lower SES status. In Casalguidi the high status group had the highest rates of final celibacy for both men and women. The anomaly of the Italian case is due to a presence of sharecroppers that was higher in "High SES" category than in the "Low SES" one. In fact, this peculiar group of farmers was somehow pressed by landowners to keep a steady balance between farm size and household labor force; a constraint that led the household head to discourage marriages of adult members without allowing them to leave the family group (references Matteo).

As far as access to a legitimate reproduction was concerned, the pattern was quite similar but not exactly the same. If we look at the proportions childless at age 45, the pattern observed is strongly affected by socioeconomic status. The richer you were, the larger your chances to become a father. The divide between wealthy and poor was really profound in Scania and in the Asian populations, while less pronounced but still clear in the Belgian populations. Only in Casalguidi we see just the opposite, as a consequence of differential celibacy by socioeconomic status, the risk of never having a child was higher in the high status group, compared to the middle and low status groups.

For females, the picture was more complicated. In the Chinese populations and in Scania the pattern was similar to that of men, where higher socioeconomic status meant lower chances of being childless at age 45. However, in Ou, Casalguidi, and East Belgium the probability of not having had a first birth was much higher in the middle and higher status groups. Especially in the Belgian and Italian cases, the very high proportion of women who did not participate in the reproductive process is remarkable, and points to a high degree of reproductive control among the better situated in these populations.

Generally speaking, the broader differences in the timing of life course transitions between Europe and Asia identified previously, remain also when disaggregating by socioeconomic status. Men and women married earlier in the East than in the West, and while men showed quite high celibacy rates in both East and West, women married universally in the East, but not in the West. These patterns fit well with the well-known generalizations of marriage patterns in Europe and Asia in preindustrial times. However, when disaggregating by socioeconomic status it seems clear that there are considerable similarities between Europe and Asia in the sense that socioeconomic status mattered a great deal for transitions to reproduction in all populations. The exact way that socioeconomic status affected transitions, differed greatly within both Europe and Asia, to a large extent due to context specificities concerning the meaning of belonging to different socioeconomic groups. Thus, it is impossible to find a simple relationship between socioeconomic status and transitions to reproduction valid across all populations, or even across populations within Europe and Asia respectively. The results presented also makes it quite clear that there were important interactions between gender and socioeconomic status in the populations studied, showing the highly different contexts facing men and women of the same socioeconomic status in different parts of Eurasia.

For the European populations where we have exact dates of birth and marriage, we also have the opportunity to look deeper into the transitions to reproduction by studying the timing of conceptions in relation to first marriage and first birth. Table 6 shows the proportions of births and conceptions (birth minus eight months) that took place before marriage. First of all, it is quite clear that it was uncommon to have a first birth before marriage in Scania and Casalguidi (2-3 percent) and also that there were no large differences between socioeconomic groups in this regard, while in the Belgian communities about 15 percent of first births took place before marriage. Looking at conception instead, it is equally clear that pre-nuptial pregnancies were very common in all communities, despite the rather low frequencies of out-of wedlock childbirths. In between 20 and 40 percent of first marriages the woman was pregnant at the

wedding. In Scania, this occurred more frequently in the low-status group, while socioeconomic differences were rather small in Casalguidi and East Belgium. This serves as a good illustration of the widespread institution of prenuptial courtship in Europe, whose natural outcome was bridal pregnancies (e.g. Knodel 1988, Breschi et al., in press; Kälvemark 1977).

Table 6 here

Finally, we turn to the trajectories disaggregated by socioeconomic status (Table 7). Clearly access to resources and household demand for labor affected the trajectories to reproduction just as might be expected. In Scania the institution of life cycle service concerned all social groups even though being a servant was more prevalent among lower status groups, who demanded less labor and thus could not offer their children much in terms of employment at home. Thus, this path represented the road to reproduction followed by the large majority of men and women belonging not only to the poorest strata of the population but also to the medium-status category. On the other hand, although only a minority of the wealthiest socioeconomic group followed the path lh-fm-fb (47.9 percent among men and 39.1 percent among women), it still represented the most common trajectory, which shows that life cycle service was not something that only affected the landless groups (see also Dribe 2000).

Table 7 here

In the Belgian communities, the small number of observations does not allow us to draw robust conclusions on high status group although it emerges a clear indication of a more ordered path to reproduction with respect to lower status groups. About 75 percent of men and 90-100 percent of women belonging to the most well-off group had, in fact, the custom to stay home until marriage. The lower social group, although still characterized by the trajectory above described, presents also an alternative path to reproduction. It involves about 11-19 percent of men and 9-12 percent of women, and it entails leaving home only after first marriage and first birth have occurred in the parental home, representing a sort of “launching pad” (Skinner, 1997) adopted to help the new couple to gather enough resources to settle on its own (Derosas, 2003).

Similarly, even in Casalguidi the higher-status group shows the most ordered and structured pattern of paths to reproduction, especially among men. The trajectory fm-fb accounts, in fact, for almost 62 percent, showing a decreasing importance going from the wealthiest to the poorest category. Vice versa, the more you are poor, the more you follow a neolocal rule of family formation (lh-fm-fb or lh/fm-fb), behavior that it is obviously associated, as already mentioned, to the poor agricultural category of day laborers. As for women, the differences by SES are far narrower, with around 65-70 percent of females leaving home on marriage.

Finally, in Ou socioeconomic status mattered a great deal for which transition that was most important. For high-status men, remaining in the parental home until marriage (and first birth), clearly the case of virilocal marriage of inheriting sons, represented the most common path to reproduction (52 percent). Among the poorest men, only a minority (19 percent) followed this trajectory, while a large amount of men (49 percent) left home before marriage, and then had a baby (lh-fm-fb). Also among women this latter trajectory was more widespread in the low-SES group (42 percent) than in the high one (5 percent). The high and middle-status groups also show a greater variability in the trajectories than the low-status group, where only two paths (lh-fm-fb and lh/fm-fb) accounted for 84 percent. In the region where service tended to occur after marriage, the most frequent pattern for women was to leave their parental home and marry (virilocal marriage) at the same time (lh/fm-fb). Leaving home for service before marriage was an option mainly for women in the low status if at all. Women in the higher statuses were able to stay on and marry in the parental household (uxorilocal marriage as in fm-fb, fm-fb-lh).

In the northeast Chinese populations, the homogeneity and small variability in the paths to reproduction do not allow to appreciate any socioeconomic differentials in the transition to adulthood.

Concluding discussion

Quantitative studies of life-course transitions have mainly studied different events separately, analyzing the impact of various determinants on the timing of, for example, leaving home, marriage and first birth. This chapter highlights the importance of looking at life-course transitions as sequences of events. Our analysis concerns the transition to reproduction in seven different Eurasian communities mainly covering the nineteenth century. The chapter has clearly demonstrated the well-known differences between Europe and Asia in ages at first marriage and proportions never marrying. Especially women in the Asian populations had early and universal marriage. For men the picture was similar on a general level, but the degree of universality in marriage was not as pronounced as for women, and this was even more so in the Chinese populations than in the Japanese.

These large differences in the age at which a family was established by marriage did, however, not translate into differences of the same magnitude in the start of reproduction. While the maximum difference in mean ages at marriage between the studied populations was 12 years for men and 14 years for women, the corresponding maximum difference in age at first birth was about 8 years for both men and women. Looking instead at the difference between the European population closest to the Asians in terms of ages at first marriage and first birth, the differences for first marriage was about 9 years for men and 10 for women, while the corresponding differences for age at first birth was 5 and 6. Thus, even though Asian families started reproduction several years earlier than European families, the differences were considerably less for ages at first birth than for first marriage. In other words, we see considerably more similarities in family formation when looking at the start of childbearing than when we only look at marriage. This also reflects the different meanings of marriage in Europe and Asia. While marriage in all the European populations was clearly linked to the start of the reproductive career, this was much less so in Asia, where marriage was more of an agreement concerning future reproduction than access to immediate reproduction. In the European case, the close link between the timing of marriage and reproduction is also apparent from the high frequency of bridal pregnancies in all the studied populations, ranging from 20 to 40 percent of all first births.

The stronger role played by collective institutions in forming demographic behavior in Asia than in Europe might lead us to expect a more ordered life course in Asia from the parental home to marriage and first birth. However, this is only partly confirmed by our analysis of the trajectories to first birth. In fact, while Chinese populations fit quite well our theoretical hypothesis, the Japanese ones present a larger spectrum of possible trajectories, even larger than that of some European populations such as Scania and Casalguidi. For example, in Scania 59 percent of the men and 52 percent of the women followed the “standard leaving home–getting married–having a birth” trajectory. Also Casalguidi in Italy had a standard pathway followed by a majority of the population. For men it was living at home until first birth, a virilocal form of living arrangement after marriage, while for women it was leaving home upon marriage and join her husband (in his parental home or elsewhere) and then have a first birth. In neither the Belgian nor the Japanese communities, however, do we find a trajectory common to a majority of the population.

Many Chinese communities were characterized by a joint-household formation system based on virilocal living arrangement after marriage, early age at first marriage for men and women, and very low proportions of never-married women (Lee and Campbell, 1997). Also traditional Japan viewed the family and not the individual as “the legal unit of society” (Saito, 2000), but the most common form of family formation was the stem-family system rather than the joint-family system as in China. Although still characterized by early and universal access to marriage for both sexes, in the Japanese stem-family system the inheriting son was likely to bring his wife into his parental household, while non-inheriting sons often had to leave upon marriage (Kurosu, 1996; Cornell, 1987; Saito, 1998). In these contexts, the paths to reproduction were therefore strongly differentiated by gender, with men often staying in the parental house after marriage and women typically leaving home upon marriage.

The family formation system distinctive of many European countries was based on couples that typically married late and formed a brand new family independent from their parents’ households,

although parents could be included as lodgers in areas where the institution of peasant retirement was common like in Scania (e.g. Mitterauer and Sieder 1982). This pattern was in line with an individualistic rather than familistic vision of society, in which life-cycle servanthood often was a preliminary, but essential, phase. In this process, however, it occurred usually that a large number of people did not succeed in marrying, and were thereby excluded from the reproductive process (Laslett, 1983). This Northwestern European model presented, however, geographical specificities. For example, while Scania in southern Sweden fits the ideal-type described by Hajnal and Laslett to a high degree (see Dribe 2000, Dribe and Lundh 2005a; 2005b; Lundh 1995), East Belgian pre-transitional rural societies exhibited all the essential characteristics but two: the life-cycle service was not systematic, by far, and a short stem-family phase was frequent.

Moreover, the pattern described above was present all over Europe, but varied in important respects according to the socioeconomic status of the household. One of the most intriguing cases is rural Italy, where two completely different ordered paths co-existed even within the same community. One of them was typical of day laborers, landless agricultural workers whose family formation system recalled to some extent that of Northwestern European countries characterized by neolocalism, late age at first marriage and high proportions of never-married. Sharecroppers followed a completely different path to reproduction, whose peculiarities were so important that some authors coined the term “Mediterranean pattern” to differentiate it from the rest of Europe (Laslett, 1983; Viazzo, 2003; Kertzer and Brettell, 1987). They lived in complex households on account of a patrilocal form of living arrangement after marriage, but, unlike the Asian case, both men and women married late, even later than day laborers. In addition, very high levels of permanent celibacy were the norm in sharecropping communities. This pattern also had reproductive purposes, in the sense that it was pursued to guarantee the future work force of the sharecropping household, which was one of the key factors in renewing sharecropping contracts and to avoid downward social mobility.

Socioeconomic status had a profound impact on transitions to reproduction in all populations studied. Often there was also a clear interaction between gender and socioeconomic status. Even though there were considerable differences in the way socioeconomic status affected pathways to reproduction between the European and Asian populations, there were also many similarities. Moreover, there were considerable differences within Europe as well as within Asia. The profound socioeconomic differences in the pathways to reproduction clearly show that the ordering of life course transitions were not only a matter of culture or tradition, but that economic constraints and incentives also played an important role.

It seems quite clear that lower socioeconomic status was connected to earlier, and more frequent, home leaving in all contexts studied. This can be connected to low status household not being production units to a high degree and thus not demanding much labor, which led their children to leave home earlier, and to a higher extent, to go into service or in other ways find employment in other households. In Europe higher socioeconomic status was connected to later marriage, while the opposite occurred among men in Asian populations. As for Asian women, the situation is more complicated, since higher status females married earlier but had their first birth later than low-status women. In Europe this pattern fits well with the economic-demographic model, in which access to marriage depended on finding an economic niche, either employment or land, and also the availability of housing to set up an independent household, as there was a tight connection between marriage and household formation in Europe, not present in Asia. In Asia on the other hand higher socioeconomic status meant a recruitment power and resources of household and therefore was associated with earlier marriage and reproduction among males. This scenario also goes for females (inheriting daughters) who married uxorilocally in Japan but not those who married virilocally. The patterns of two types of marriage might have been confounding in the general picture, and thus, the pattern of Japanese females was not as clear as that of men. Female marriage and socioeconomic status was inversely associated in China because of the practice of female hypergamy. Females in higher status suffered shrinking pool of potential grooms. Once they married, however, females in higher socioeconomic status were able to reproduce earlier in both Japan and China.

To conclude, this chapter has shown that even though marriage is a vital step on the road to reproduction, the relationship between the two processes differed considerably both between the different populations, and according to socioeconomic status within populations. Partly we have demonstrated the validity of well-known generalizations concerning differences in marriage patterns between the East and the West. These differences were less strong for reproduction than for marriage, and when disaggregating patterns by socioeconomic status and gender, it also becomes even more evident that there were many similarities in these processes, in addition to the obvious, and often documented, differences between the East and the West.

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Table 1. Mean ages and standard deviations at different transitions

	MEN									WOMEN								
	First leaving home			First Marriage			First legitimate birth			First leaving home			First Marriage			First legitimate birth		
	Mean	s.d	N	Mean	s.d	N	Mean	s.d	N	Mean	s.d	N	Mean	s.d	N	Mean	s.d	N
Scania	17.8	3.8	2265	28.0	5.0	807	31.0	6.0	666	18.1	4.2	2219	25.6	5.0	1128	27.8	5.9	754
Ardennes	29.0	6.2	1573	30.3	5.7	1533	30.8	5.2	1071	27.0	6.4	1476	27.1	5.8	1776	27.2	5.2	1213
Herve	29.1	6.6	1361	31.1	6.2	1244	31.5	5.5	684	28.0	6.9	1316	29.1	6.1	1426	28.2	5.4	692
Casalguidi	23.5	8.3	536	27.6	6.2	597	28.4	5.3	487	24.0	6.2	832	24.8	5.7	756	25.3	4.5	448
Ou	19.5	8.2	444	18.6	5.4	748	23.9	5.0	557	15.3	5.2	611	14.7	3.3	708	19.7	4.2	322
Liaodong	NA	NA	NA	20.4	7.8	49082	26.5	7.5	19046	NA	NA	NA	18.5	4.3	9490	25.2	6.0	26229
Shuangcheng	NA	NA	NA	21.6	7.3	18391	23.1	5.3	4739	NA	NA	NA	20	3.6	8502	24.7	5.4	11961

Table 2. Proportions never-married and never having had a first birth

	MEN				WOMEN			
	First Marriage		First legitimate birth		First Marriage		First legitimate birth	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Scania	12.8	384	22.1	384	20.5	414	26.3	414
Ardennes	18.2	1485	24.0	1485	14.0	1444	17.5	1444
Herve	24.2	1345	30.6	1345	24.3	1394	30.4	1394
Casalguidi	17.1	558	19.5	549	10.3	521	15.5	502
Ou	4.6	347	12.4	347	1.0	193	11.4	193
Liaodong	12.3	25131	28.1	9744	0.3	5435	9.7	5256
Shuangcheng	10.4	7776	18.1	3563	3.1	3571	4.8	2951

Note: In Ardennes, Herve, and Scania the All group also includes a number of individuals where SES is unknown

Table 3. Distribution of all possible trajectories (%) from living in the parental home to experiencing a first legitimate birth

	MEN					WOMEN				
Trajectoies	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou
lh-fm-fb	59.4	5.9	5.3	15.2	20.3	51.6	4.2	3.2	12.7	12.7
lh-fb-fm	0.4	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.0
fm-lh-fb	0.0	6.8	14.4	1.2	7.9	0.0	7.5	17.0	0.8	8.7
fm-fb-lh	0.0	11.2	17.8	3.1	13.3	0.0	11.3	15.2	7.1	13.0
fb-fm-lh	0.0	1.3	2.4	6.8	0.0	0.0	2.0	6.0	0.0	0.0
fb-lh-fm	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.0
lh/fm-fb	12.9	33.1	19.9	15.5	10.1	26.7	34.2	20.5	65.6	37.3
fb-lh/fm	0.2	2.6	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.2	3.8	2.2	1.1	0.0
fm-fb	21.0	34.7	32.5	57.0	42.9	13.1	30.2	28.7	12.2	24.2
fb-fm	0.4	3.1	5.2	0.6	0.0	1.2	5.4	6.1	0.0	0.0
Other	5.7	0.2	0.3	0.0	5.6	6.8	0.2	0.1	0.0	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	505	959	618	323	557	574	1096	683	378	322

Table 4. Mean ages at different transitions by SES.

	MEN						WOMEN					
	HIGHER SES		MEDIUM SES		LOWER SES		HIGHER SES		MEDIUM SES		LOWER SES	
First leaving home	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
Scania	20.7	382	17.2	684	17.2	1199	20.9	353	17.7	672	25.6	924
Ardennes	31.0	53	30.5	732	27.4	783	28.2	8	28.0	511	26.5	573
Herve	30.4	77	30.8	815	26.0	475	30.5	15	29.9	567	26.4	731
Casalguidi	25.6	91	24.4	276	20.9	169	24.1	151	24.3	398	23.5	283
Ou	20.2	73	19.8	326	17.0	45	16.7	132	15.2	440	12.1	39
Liaodong	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Shuangcheng	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
First marriage	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
Scania	27.9	52	28.1	114	28.0	641	24.8	78	25.7	126	25.6	924
Ardennes	32.4	5	30.8	485	29.0	1027	30.0	43	28.1	581	26.5	573
Herve	31.7	52	31.1	637	28.9	261	30.8	21	29.7	621	27.6	596
Casalguidi	29.1	122	27.3	306	27.1	135	25.7	140	24.5	350	24.6	227
Ou	18.0	166	18.8	531	18.8	51	15.0	156	14.6	511	14.2	41
Liaodong	19.3	3440	20.4	43040	20.6	2602	19.2	1852	18.3	7014	17.7	624
Shuangcheng	20.4	1145	21.1	1824	21.7	15432	21.1	659	20.6	1237	19.7	6603
First birth	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
Scania	30.3	75	30.5	107	30.4	202	26.6	69	28.3	104	27.9	241
Ardennes	32.7	25	31.3	479	29.7	373	25.2	3	28.1	165	27.1	788
Herve	33.3	33	31.1	380	30.2	125	30.5	11	29.0	239	27.6	327
Casalguidi	29.9	111	28.8	249	27.6	108	26.1	74	25.0	210	24.7	131
Ou	23.0	122	24.1	398	24.6	37	19.3	76	19.9	227	19.9	19
Liaodong	24.4	1714	26.7	16499	26.6	831	23.8	1874	25.2	22960	26.1	1497
Shuangcheng	22.6	409	22.1	571	23.4	3759	23.8	595	23	1128	24.8	10201

Table 5. Proportions never-married and never having had a first birth by SES.

	MEN						WOMEN					
	HIGHER SES		MEDIUM SES		LOWER SES		HIGHER SES		MEDIUM SES		LOWER SES	
First marriage	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Scania	5.3	75	10.3	107	16.8	202	18.8	69	7.6	104	19.9	241
Ardennes	19.5	113	14.1	966	27.6	406	31.8	22	20.4	114	10.2	1200
Herve	24.8	125	22.2	1000	33.2	220	45.7	46	38.1	430	16.8	918
Casalguidi	33.3	116	13.2	304	12.3	138	18.5	81	7.6	265	10.8	175
Ou	1.4	70	3.9	256	23.8	21	0.0	40	1.4	143	0.0	10
Liaodong	7.7	22840	12.3	265654	18.1	19109	0.9	7662	0.2	20259	0.0	1369
Shuangcheng	2.6	20463	12.3	22633	10.9	202024	8.1	1335	5.9	414	1.9	1335

First Birth

	MEN						WOMEN					
	HIGHER SES		MEDIUM SES		LOWER SES		HIGHER SES		MEDIUM SES		LOWER SES	
First marriage	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Scania	6.7	75	21.5	1000	28.2	220	18.8	69	26.9	104	28.2	241
Ardennes	24.8	113	20.3	966	32.8	406	45.5	22	50.0	114	14.3	1200
Herve	28.0	125	29.0	1000	39.5	220	43.5	46	43.3	430	23.7	918
Casalguidi	36.0	116	16.7	304	13.2	138	26.3	81	12.3	265	15.8	175
Ou	5.7	70	11.7	256	42.9	21	10.0	40	12.6	143	0.0	10
Liaodong	9.7	278	28.5	8901	29.9	565	3.2	156	9.8	4771	10.9	329
Shuangcheng	5.2	211	10.0	261	19.7	3091	1.4	147	3.7	243	5.2	2561

Table 6. Timing of conceptions and first birth in relation to first marriage for women by SES in the European communities.

	Proportions (%) first birth before first marriage					Proportions (%) first conception before first marriage				
	Lower	Middle	HIgher	All	N	Lower	Middle	HIgher	All	N
Scania	3.2	0.7	2.6	1.9	731	42.1	30.1	31.7	33.4	731
Ardennes	11.7	16.9	NA	12.6	1105	39.1	37.2	NA	38.7	1105
Herve	15.4	14.6	15.4	15.3	687	39.0	34.9	36.4	37.2	686
Casalguidi	3.4	2.5	1.1	2.7	487	18.9	22.3	16.3	20.2	485

Note: In Ardennes, Herve, and Scania the All group also includes a number of individuals where SES is unknown.
In Casalguidi, for some marriages only the year of marriage is known. Thus, we can determine the order between birth and marriage but not between conception and marriage.
Data not available for Liaodong, Shuangcheng, and Ou.

Table 7. Distribution of all possible trajectories (%) from living in the parental home to experiencing a first legitimate birth by SES.

HIGHER SES	MEN					WOMEN				
Trajectoies	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou
lh-fm-fb	47.9	*10.7*	*5.3*	8.5	15.6	39.1	*0.0*	*0.0*	18.4	5.3
lh-fb-fm	0.5	*0.0*	*0.0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	*0.0*	*0.0*	0.0	0.0
fm-lh-fb	0.0	*7.1*	*7.9*	0.0	6.6	0.0	*0.0*	*23.1*	1.5	7.9
fm-fb-lh	0.0	*3.6*	*7.9*	4.2	9.8	0.0	*0.0*	*0.0*	1.5	15.8
fb-fm-lh	0.0	*3.6*	*0.0*	10.6	0.0	0.0	*0.0*	*7.7*	4.6	0.0
fb-lh-fm	0.0	*0.0*	*0.0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	*0.0*	*0.0*	0.0	0.0
lh/fm-fb	19.6	*17.9*	*13.2*	12.8	12.3	36.6	*66.7*	*15.4*	64.8	44.7
fb-lh/fm	0.0	*0.0*	*2.6*	0.0	0.0	0.4	*0.0*	*0.0*	0.0	0.0
fm-fb	26.3	*50.0*	*55.3*	61.8	52.5	16.5	*33.3*	*46.2*	9.2	25.0
fb-fm	0.5	*7.1*	*7.9*	2.1	0.0	1.7	*0.0*	*7.7*	0.0	0.0
Other	5.3	*0.0*	*0.0*	0.0	3.3	5.8	*0.0*	*0.0*	0.0	1.3
Total	100.0	*100.0*	*100.0*	100.0	100.0	100.0	*100.0*	*100.0*	100.0	100.0
N	209	*28*	*38*	56	122	243	*3*	*13*	65	76

Table 7. continued

MIDDLE SES	MEN					WOMEN				
Trajectoies	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou
lh-fm-fb	68.4	7.1	6.7	16.5	19.1	61.6	8.0	3.6	11.9	12.8
lh-fb-fm	0.5	4.7	0.5	2.1	0..0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
fm-lh-fb	0.0	7.7	16.0	1.0	8.0	0.0	9.5	18.9	0.8	9.7
fm-fb-lh	0.0	11.5	18.8	5.2	14.1	0.0	19.9	20.0	2.5	12.8
fb-fm-lh	0.0	1.0	1.9	6.1	0.0	0.0	3.0	5.4	5.0	0.0
fb-lh-fm	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.7	0.0	0.0
lh/fm-fb	6.7	39.1	21.4	16.5	10.1	22.4	24.9	14.6	70.6	34.4
fb-lh/fm	0.0	1.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.5	2.1	2.5	0.0
fm-fb	18.1	27.2	28.1	51.6	42.2	9.1	19.9	28.2	6.7	25.1
fb-fm	0.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	0.0	0.4	6.0	6.4	0.0	0.0
Other	6.2	0.4	0.5	0.0	6.5	6.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	5.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	193	504	420	97	398	232	201	280	119	227

Table 7. continue

LOWER SES	MEN					WOMEN				
Trajectoies	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou	Scania	Ardennes	Herve	Casalguidi	Ou
lh-fm-fb	73.6	4.3	2.0	31.4	*48.6*	64.0	3.4	3.1	13.0	*42.1*
lh-fb-fm	0.0	0.5	0.7	0.0	*0.0*	2.3	0.5	0.5	1.7	*0.0*
fm-lh-fb	0.0	5.7	12.2	1.4	*10.8*	0.0	7.1	15.6	0.9	*0.0*
fm-fb-lh	0.0	11.4	19.0	0.0	*16.2*	0.0	9.4	12.5	0.9	*5.3*
fb-fm-lh	0.0	14	4.8	2.7	*0.0*	0.0	1.8	6.5	5.2	*0.0*
fb-lh-fm	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	*0.0*	0.0	0.7	0.5	0.0	*0.0*
lh/fm-fb	12.1	27.3	19.0	22.0	*2.7*	12.4	36.4	25.2	69.6	*42.1*
fb-lh/fm	1.1	4.0	2.7	1.4	*0.0*	0.0	3.3	2.1	0.9	*0.0*
fm-fb	6.6	41.8	34.0	41.1	*18.9*	9.0	32.2	28.1	7.8	*10.5*
fb-fm	1.1	3.1	5.4	0.0	*0.0*	2.3	5.3	5.7	0.0	*0.0*
Other	5.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	*2.7*	10.1	0.0	0.3	0.0	*0.0*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	*100.0*	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	*100.0*
N	91	421	147	73	*37*	89	885	385	115	*19*

Note: In Italic, SES groups and populations with a very low number of observed individuals.