ANNALES DE DÉMOGRAPHIE HISTORIQUE 2005 n° 1 p.173 à 197

MEASURING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RELIGIONS USING NETWORK DATA. AN EXAMPLE BASED ON NINETEENTH-CENTURY DUTCH MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES[1]

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WHY STUDYING WITNESSES?

In the historiography of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries' fertility and mortality decline, Jewish minorities of Western Europe occupy a special position. Jews appeared to differ from their Christian neighbours by their earlier acceptance and more rapid spread of birth control (see for example Livi-Bacci, 1986; Knodel, 1974, 137-140; Ritterband, 1981). They were, from the beginning of the statistical era, also characterised by much lower levels of infant and child mortality than the rest of the population (Schmelz, 1971; for an excellent overview, see Derosas, 2003). In many countries, Jews seemed to diverge from Gentiles in these respects in much the same way.

To say that Jews underwent the demographic transition earlier and faster is merely to state a fact, to offer an explanation is a much more difficult undertaking. Although still studies appear in which religion is treated as a black box, during the last decade various authors have tried to identify the mechanism through which religion operates (McQuillan, 1999, 2004; Schoonheim, 2005). Anderson (1986) has grouped the hypotheses that have been used to explain the differences in fertility between religions in three groups. To a certain extent, the same distinction between methodical approaches more or less applies to explanations offered for mortality differences. The *characteristics hypothesis* contends that the empirical relation between religion and fertility or mortality is at least partly explained by differences in for example the socio-economic position of religious groups. The *particularised ideology hypothesis* states that fertility and mortality differences between religious groups can be interpreted as indicating the influence of religious directions regarding, for example, the use of contraception or diet. In the *social milieu hypothesis*, the behaviour of a religious group is related to the social context—for example a minority position—in which the group members find themselves. Under this heading, one might include various aspects of the lifestyle that are only indirectly related to religious rules but also the social of the Church (Kertzer, 1995).

Although controlling for differences in socio-economic characteristics of a certain denomination is often possible, particularly in historical research it is difficult to find independent measures representing religious values and norms, and distinctive features of lifestyle and

social organisation of the religious groups. The quantitative evidence that is provided for variables such as cultural openness, sexual practices, attitude toward children etc. is often suggestive or even speculative (Condran and Kramarow, 1991). The exceptional position of the Jews in the demographic transition, though, has partly been explained by more quantifiable variables like differences in the composition, structure and functioning of the networks formed by Jews and the general population.

According to John Knodel (1974), what triggered the early and rapid decline of Jewish fertility in Germany during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, were not changed economic circumstances or more appropriate values, but access to new information. "Perhaps the most important distinctive features of the Jews were the close social and cultural ties between them which resulted in their being a more self-contained, closed cultural entity than Protestants and Catholics and provided a situation in which changing norms regarding family size and family limitation could spread rapidly and relatively independently of the rest of German society" (Knodel, 1974, 140-141). Due to this isolation from the Gentile world and their extended networks they could develop in demographic as well as social and economic ways differently from their Christian environment. Jews were linked across vast of large distances by commercial and marital ties. All other things being equal, members of a Jewish community would be more likely to come across new ideas (held by Jews elsewhere) than would the more settled and isolated Christians.

Watkins and Danzi (1995) also related the differences in the timing of the fertility decline between Jewish and Italian women in the US to differences in the characteristics of their networks. Their study was inspired by the work of Granovetter (1973) and Coser (1991). Watkins and Danzi argue that two kinds of networks can be distinguished. At one extreme are networks composed of people who are similar in terms of economic and social status, ethnicity, and religion. The members of such networks are likely to know each other, and thus to know the same things, with new information entering the networks only occasionally. Because these networks are so homogeneous, they are more likely to support the prevailing social norms than to challenge them. At the other extreme are more socially and culturally heterogeneous networks, whose members may not know each other. These networks are more likely to bring in new information, and to offer members an opportunity to consider a wider range of options for behaviour with less pressure to conform to prevailing community norms. The former networks can be characterised by "strong ties", the latter by "weak ties". Coser (1991) sees weak ties as social capital, resources that generate opportunities. She observed Jewish networks had more weak ties because they were wider, more extensive in range, and more heterogeneous by education, class, occupation, and geographic location.

The differences in the characteristics of the kin networks have been mentioned as a factor responsible for the low mortality of Jews as well. Marks and Hilder (1997) argued that contemporary observers continually remarked how important the closely knit family was

and how crucial their support was for the better health of Jewish infants. The access that immigrants had to informal support from the closely knit family networks that existed amongst them was an important means of social and economic aid in times of crisis, it passed on crucial knowledge on childbearing and also offered support in child care. Several Dutch medical doctors, studying the relatively low infant mortality among Jews in the nineteenth century also referred to the stronger family-orientation of the Jews. Coronel (1864) argued that "family life was buttressed— at least among the mass of the population— by better foundations, that were conducive for the health of body and soul". Stephan (1904) also referred to the "fervent and strong family life among Jews" whereas Pinkhof (1908) argued that the lower mortality among Jews was mainly caused by the lifestyle of the Jews that was characterised among other things by its strong family feelings. Even a Catholic author (Ildefonsus, 1917) argued that the lower infant mortality among the Jews was related to the strong and deep family ties among them.

In most historical studies only scarce and impressionistic evidence has been presented supporting the idea of a wider geographic network of Jews and a stronger orientation on family members. In our opinion, information on familial relationship and geographic origin of marriage witnesses might provide a valuable indicator of both these characteristics.

This is not a new idea. In recent years several authors have used information on witnesses to marriage to analyse the nature of and differences in social networks (Gunnlaugsson and Guttormsson, 2000; Matthijs, 2003; Page Moch, 2003; Grange, 2004). Matthijs for example used information on the number and proportion of family members acting as witnesses to marriage as indicator of the familiarisation of the marriage ceremony. Page Moch made use of information on Breton weddings in Paris to study family solidarity. Matthijs' hypothesis was that mobilising family members as witnesses is an indication of privatisation of family life: the higher the proportion, the stronger the privatisation. It turned out that in Flanders the proportion of witnessing family members increased in the course of the nineteenth century.

Remarkably enough the attention has generally been focussed only on the Jewish exceptionality in stead of studying all kinds of religion and religiosity at the same time. There might be some peculiar aspects of other religious groups that have an effect on the geographic focus and the kin versus non-kin orientation of their networks. Two examples from Dutch historical studies are given here, respectively linking Catholicism to limited geographic horizons and Protestantism to an orientation on the narrow circle of the couple with its children.

Meurkens (1984) studying the demographic changes in the Catholic province of Noord-Brabant, related these to new cultural codes that developed among Dutch Catholics during the second half of the nineteenth century. One of these was a "social contamination complex", making contact with other groups increasingly problematic. Foreign ideas were suppressed and the intellectual horizon was limited to knowledge supplied by the village teacher and to insights supplied by the pastor. For the origin of this development, Meurkens referred to the announcement by the Pope in 1864

of the encyclical Syllabus Errorum which contained a rejection of liberal and socialistic ideology. This rejection was transformed by the clergy into promoting the fear of contamination, prohibiting the reading of wicked books, and advertising publications as being dangerous. As one can expect as a consequence of this, the contacts with people from outside the region diminished.

A second example relates to the relation between Protestantism and the family. In much of the writing about the history of the family, the notion is stressed that Protestantism has played a significant role in the establishment of the modern family through its exaltation of the household above the community and through its strengthening of the bond between husband and wife and between parents and children. Legislation and jurisdiction regarding degrees of kinship within which marriage was prohibited, comments of moralistic authors on relations with relatives, published personal documents etc. all showed that the contacts with the circle of relatives outside the narrow circle of the couple and their children did not constitute obligations of a penetrating nature (Haks, 1982).

What is missing in these studies and in the earlier cited work of Knodel, Marks and Hilder and others and what is new in our study is really comparative evidence on the characteristics of the kin networks of various religious groups.

We want to provide a basis for comparative statements about differences between religious groups by using information on characteristics of witnesses deduced from marriage certificates. By comparing the networks of Jews to those of their Catholic and Protestant neighbours as far as the geographic origin and the kin relation of the witnesses in marriages is concerned we try to find out whether religious groups distinguished themselves from each other on these characteristics.

Although we focus on differences in the geographic origin of witnesses and on the degree in which family members were involved in the marriage ceremonies we will also take into account the social class of the couple. Specific assumptions may be formulated on the importance of the kin network for different social classes.

Two factors are usually mentioned in explaining social class differences in the role of kin: property and the degree of contact with the outside world. Several authors have suggested that given the differences in the importance that inheritance practices had for the various social classes, differences in the role of kin by social class could also be expected. Upper class families were able to transmit to their children economic and cultural capital such as property, formal and informal knowledge, social status etc. This exposed the inheritor to a sense of continuity, to the feeling that one had certain obligations towards the family. The situation of farmers and artisans was more or less comparable with that of the upper class: here too paternal authority and domestic dependence were strong, families still functioned as units of production, there was little separation between work place and family home and the family was a place of learning as well as service (Mitterauer and Sieder, 1982, 134-138). In the lower social classes, the bond between the generations was less important from an economic point of view. At a relatively young age, children from this class entered the labour force, and the character and conditions of labour life could easily lead to an alienation from their

social background and regional origin. The mental and emotional life in adulthood was determined to a lesser degree by the family at large and depended more on the situation in the nuclear family. One would thus expect a lesser involvement with kin in the lowest social class, reflecting the family relationships, typical for this class.

Although the marriage certificates permit the creation of systematic, comparable time series on the network of bride and groom, they also have their limitations. The main problem relates to the fact that not all groups attached the same importance to the civil marriage ceremony. For some groups civil marriage was a socially highly esteemed institution, and by choosing witnesses the couple and its family expressed how highly they valued it. For others, it was not so much the civil marriage that was considered important but the religious ceremony. The Civil Code laid down that the religious ceremony had to take place after the civil marriage. Sometimes quite some time elapsed between both events. In particular in these cases the civil marriage was considered as a formality and consequently the witnesses involved were only chosen because for formal reasons they had to be present. In particular when comparing the characteristics of witnesses over various religious groups that do not attach the same value to the civil marriage this might be a problem. Several authors have pointed to the fact that Catholics in particular did attach much less importance to the civil than to the religious ceremony. We will come back to this issue in the discussion.

The composition of the networks among Jews, Catholics and Protestants will be studied by comparing the characteristics of witnesses in a sample of civil marriage records (1859-1902) from the city of The Hague, Netherlands.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE OF THE HAGUE

The Hague, located in the Western part of the Netherlands, had a rather diversified religious composition and a varied economic structure. During the period 1850-1910, the city became the political and administrative centre of the Netherlands and evolved from a provincial capital and a quiet residence into a modern city. In 1850 the city had about 72,200 inhabitants, a number that increased to 206,000 at the turn of the century. The presence of the Royal Court, the Parliament, foreign diplomats, government bodies, leading civil servants, higher military, and courts of law attracted a great number of domestic servants and artisans, service firms, theatres, and the like. In 1850, around 42% of the labour force was employed in the service sector, mainly in domestic (22%) and public service (11%). 34% of the labour force was employed in industry (construction sector, clothing, and shoe industries). Four to five percent of the labour force worked in the primary sector; within this sector, the fishing industry, located within the municipal boundaries in the rather closed community of Scheveningen, was by far the most important (Stokvis, 1987, 88-132).

Between 1849 and 1879, 60% of the population of The Hague belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church. When in the 1830s and in the 1880s a number of Dutch ministers broke away from the Reformed Church and returned to the stricter orthodoxy of an earlier period—

the *Gereformeerde Kerken*, the Calvinists, resulted from these secessions—it had only a restricted effect on the position of the Dutch Reformed in The Hague. This was due to the fact that in the Dutch Reformed Church in The Hague the orthodox tendency already dominated. After 1867 modernist ministers were rarely appointed, not a single parson left the Reformed Church and relatively few church members joined the Calvinist Church. The anti-papist April movement, which was rather strong in The Hague, had stimulated the revival movement in the Reformed Church from the 1850s on. Religious and profane Protestants organisations, that meant to restore the Reformed Church from within by a strict maintenance of the original teaching, were founded. They tried to strengthen religious life through the formation of community centres, Sunday schools, nurseries for the sick, etc. (Stokvis, 1987, 284-307).

The Calvinists made up less than one percent of the population of The Hague till 1879, but in later years their share increased to four percent (1899) and seven percent (1920). The loss of membership of the Reformed Church, from 60% in 1879 to 56% in 1889 and 41% in 1920 was therefore mainly caused by the growing number of people without religion. They made up less than one percent till 1879 but their share increased to almost three percent in 1899 and to 16 percent in 1920.

In 1859, 31% of the population belonged to the Roman Catholic church and that percentage remained the same till 1909 after which year it slightly decreased to 28 per cent in 1920. To strengthen religious life and to make sure that the Catholic Church would occupy a full-fledged position in Dutch society, the clergy took the initiative to the founding of numerous organisations and the promotion of Catholic devotion. Catholic parishes were founded, each covering a well-defined district. This rigid and hierarchical church organisation gave the priest a direct and strong degree of control over the religious practices of the church members. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Catholics also developed their specific religiously inspired social organisations (primary schools, labour unions, political parties, convents, patronage buildings, clubhouses) in which they became more and more isolated.

The history of the Jews in The Hague dates back to the last quarter of the seventeenth century when rich Sephardic Jews moved from Amsterdam. Ashkenazi Jews settled in the city around the same time. The number of Ashkenazi Jews grew much quicker than that of the Sephardic, mainly as a consequence of the immigration of Jews who had fled Poland and Germany. In 1859, the 4,648 Jews made up four per cent of the total population of The Hague, a percentage which decreased to three in 1889 and more or less remained at that level till 1920 (Stokvis, 1987, 285). The largest part of the Ashkenazim lived together in four neighbouring streets called *De Buurt* (literally: the neighbourhood) and some other streets nearby. In 1855, around 75 per cent of the Ashkenazim lived in that area. In 1899 the number of Ashkenazim had increased to 5,362 (compared to 4,348 in 1859). In the same period the number of Sephardic Jews had decreased from 320 to around 200. In 1920 the total number of Jews had increased to

8,804 of which only 10% lived in the *Buurt* (Van Creveld, 1989, 25;224).

DATA COLLECTION

Our study on the characteristics of the networks of the various religious groups is based on information as mentioned on marriage certificates. Following article 131 of the Civil Code of 1837 marriages had to be celebrated "in presence of four witnesses, being relatives or strangers, of the male sex, and having attained the age of majority, and living within the Kingdom".[2] The age of majority was set at age 23 (on 1st December 1905 that age was lowered to 21 years). Within the Kingdom meant, according to article 5 of the Civil Code, residing within the "empire in Europe". For all witnesses, Christian names and surnames, ages, occupation and place of residence had to be recorded. In case the witnesses were relatives of the couple, by blood or marriage, the degree in which they were related to the couple had to be mentioned (Vaillant, 1893, 340).

A random sample was drawn directly from the (civil) marriage registration. For each year a sample fraction was applied which resulted in an annual number of marriages between 75-80, and a total number of marriages of 3005.[3] Given that Jews made up only a small minority of the total population, some form of over sampling was necessary to include a sufficient number of them in our study. To identify Jewish marriages, at first a list of Jewish surnames was constructed. For that purpose, use was made of four different sources: a list of names of Jewish families, that lived in the Jewish quarter of The Hague during the years 1811-1942 (Van Creveld 1989, 214-222); an index of names of Jews, who married during the period 1811-1852;[4] a list of surnames figuring in the Archives of the Sephardic Jewish community of the Hague;[5] and, finally the register of rabbinical marriages in The Hague relating to the period 1873-1902.[6] The resulting list of surnames was first of all checked against the marriage certificates to determine whether persons with this surname had indeed married in The Hague during the years 1859-1902. If that was the case, the population registers of The Hague were consulted to verify whether bride and/or groom were indeed Jewish.[7] A total number of 961 Jewish couples could be identified in this way, bringing the grand total to 3966.

The population register was used to record the religion of all the couples in the sample. This implies that the same criterion was used to identify members of all religious groups: as the census questionnaires formed the basis for the information on religion in the population register, religious adherence was based on whether or not people themselves claimed membership in one of the religious communities.

The information that was gathered from the marriage certificates includes the year of marriage, the ages, marital status, place of birth and place of residence and the occupation of the bride and groom and the occupation, place of residence and relationship to bride and or groom of the witnesses. In this study information is used on 3,948 marriages out of the total sample of 3,966 couples. Information on religion of the husband, the key variable in our study, was available for 3,729 couples. Missing information mostly involved marriages contracted between women,

living in The Hague and husbands living outside the city, thus not included in the population register of The Hague.[8]

Four religious groups were distinguished: Jews (Sephardic and Ashkenazim: N=907), Catholics (N=929), Dutch Reformed (N=1,695) and the group "Other religions" (N=198).

In order to classify couples by social class, the occupation of the bridegroom, as stated on the marriage certificate, was used. Although occupation is by far the best single indicator for the socio-economic position of an individual in the community, constructing meaningful occupational groupings for past populations from this information alone is a difficult task. Occupational titles sometimes are local expressions which are difficult to interpret and the social significance of any particular designation may vary from area to area or may have changed over time. For several occupational titles it was unknown whether they concerned self-employed or employed individuals. Despite these difficulties, an attempt has been made to group occupations in such a way that they reflect, at least partially, common social and economic circumstances.

The social class to which the bridegroom belonged was coded on the basis of a classification of the class structure of Dutch society around 1850 developed by Giele and Van Oenen (1976). This classification was made on the basis of the views of contemporaries on the hierarchy of their own society as well as on theories of social stratification. Giele and Van Oenen distinguished five classes: Upper class (employers in industry, professionals, high civil servants; higher military); Petty bourgeoisie (shopkeepers, small entrepreneurs and merchants; self-employed artisans); White collar middle class (lower level professionals and lower civil servants; foremen and supervisors of various kinds); Skilled manual workers (craftsmen and skilled labourers in small business and industry; service employees and lower military); Casual and unskilled labourers (casual labourers; unskilled labourers in crafts and industries; agricultural labourers and fishermen). The small number (72) of farmers (in the case of The Hague, almost all market gardeners) was included among the petty bourgeoisie. In case of doubt, an occupation was classified in the lowest applicable social class of the occupational hierarchy.

WITNESSES: SOME GENERALITIES

Table 1 gives an overview of the relations between bride and groom and the witnesses. A large majority of the witnesses (65 percent) did not have any relationship with the bride and/or the groom or at least did not mention such a relationship.[9] Those not being members of the family were friends, neighbours, colleagues and acquaintances of the couple and in many cases they were "professional" witnesses. "Professional" witnesses would wander the streets in the vicinity of the town hall, eager to earn some money by being present during the marriage ceremony and signing—if they were able to do so—the marriage certificate. By selecting all witnesses who were not classified as kin and who acted four or more times as a witness we can get a crude indicator of the frequency with which these witnesses were present at marriage ceremonies. In particular couples from the lower classes made use of "professional" witnesses: at marriage

ceremonies of couples from the group of casual and unskilled labourers, in 55 percent of the cases at least one "professional" witness was present. For skilled manual workers this was 38 percent.[10] Professional witnesses were almost absent in white collar middle class and upper class marriages: only in 20, respectively five percent of the cases a "professional" witness was present. If one takes the number of non-kin witnesses as the basis of the calculation the differences remain very strong. Only two percent of all non-kin witnesses present during the marriage ceremony of a member of the upper class could be considered as "professional" witnesses whereas this percentage was 31 among casual labourers.

The percentages of marriages in which at least one of the witnesses was a "professional" witness differed strongly by religion if one takes marriages with at least one non-kin witness as a starting point: in 50 percent of the cases Jews had at least one "professional" witness, Dutch Reformed ad Catholics in 66 respectively 63 percent of the cases. Calculated as a percentage of all non-kin witnesses, differences between religious groups were not observed.

We found that witnesses who were non-relatives were significantly older than the couple. Almost one quarter of them was more than one generation (25 years or more) older than the groom. It is probable that at least part of these people were mostly friends of the parents of the couple, rather than of the couple itself.

Of those having kin as witness to the marriage ceremony, the majority had a brother as representative of the family (60 percent). Besides brothers, uncles (24 percent) and cousins/nephews (7 percent) were the only groups who were represented in larger numbers. There were no differences between religious groups in their preferences for brothers, uncles and cousins/nephews. It is remarkable that witnesses were almost evenly distributed over the bride's and the groom's side. The total number of witnesses having a known family relationship with either groom or bride was 5521. They might be grouped together in three categories: lateral kin (brothers and brothers in law), vertical kin in the first degree (fathers, sons, stepfathers, sons-in-law) and members of the wider kin network (grandfathers, uncles, nephews etc.). Lateral kin dominated with 63 percent of the family witnesses, whereas 33 percent came from the wider kin network.

The variety in the geographic origin of the witnesses was very limited. Although the total number of 15,792 witnesses came from 258 different municipalities, 10,081 (86 percent) of them lived in The Hague. The two largest cities (The Hague ranked third) Amsterdam (51 km from The Hague as the crow flies) and Rotterdam (21 km from The Hague) were represented with respectively 481 (3.0 percent) and 296 (1.9 percent) of the witnesses. From the smaller villages surrounding The Hague and from the city of Delft which were less than 10 km away from The Hague came 303 witnesses (1.9 percent).

Table 2 displays the percentages of family members among witnesses per period of marriage. For this purpose the study period is divided into four periods. It turns out that during the second half of the nineteenth century the percentage of marriages in which not a single family member was involved as a witness decreased considerably. Indeed the percentage of marriages in which

three out of four witnesses were family members doubled and the percentage of marriages in which two witnesses were family members nearly doubled. Lateral kin almost entirely made up the rise in family members.

Tab. 1 *Relationship between Witnesses and Bride and Groom, The Hague, 1858-1902*

	Related to whom					
Relationship	Bride	Groom	Bride and groom	No relation	Total	In %
Son	11	14	0	0	25	0.2
Son-in-law	0	2	0	0	2	0.0
Step-son	0	1	0	0	1	0.0
Grandfather	73	47	1	0	121	0.8
Father	82	88	0	0	170	1.1
Stepfather	2	2	0	0	4	0.0
Stepfather in-law	1	1	0	0	2	0.0
Brother	1 579	1 733	3	0	3 315	21.0
Step-brother	0	0	2	0	2	0.0
Brother-in-law	83	71	0	0	154	1.0
Cousin/nephew	184	195	6	0	385	2.4
Uncle	768	554	12	0	1 334	8.4
Great-uncle	2	3	0	0	5	0.0
Uncle-in-law	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
No relation given	0	0	0	10 269	10 269	65.0
	2 786	2 713	22	10 269	15 792	100.0
In %	17.6	17.2	0.1	65.0	100.0	

Tab. 2 *Relationship between Witnesses and Bride and Groom, by Period of Marriage, The Hague, 1858-1902*

	Period of marriage				
	1858-69	1870-79	1880-89	1890-02	Total
No kin witnesses	43.7	34.2	28.4	26.1	31.4
One kin member	24.9	28.4	27.0	23.0	25.5
Two kin members	16.2	20.1	23.5	24.0	21.7
Three kin members	8.6	12.0	14.1	19.5	14.5
All witnesses kin	7.5	5.3	7.0	7.5	6.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

RELIGION AND THE FAMILIAL COMPOSITION OF THE NETWORK

Table 3 shows the family composition of the witness group by religion of the groom.[11] The table shows that during the second half of the nineteenth century considerable differences existed between the religious groups with regard to the degree to which family members were involved in the marriage ceremony. Among Jews marriages contracted in the

absence of kin made up a small minority only; in the other religious groups one third of all marriages did not have a single family member present as witness. In particular marriages in which three out of four or even all witnesses were family of bride or groom were much more frequent among Jews. Differences between Catholics and Dutch reformed were only small, Catholics being a little less oriented on their family than Dutch reformed. The rather heterogeneous Other group counted higher numbers of family members than the Dutch reformed and the Catholics. We thus have a first indication that family ties were considered more important by Jews than by other religious groups.

Tab. 3 *Family Relationship between Witnesses and Bride and Groom, by Religion of Groom, The Hague, 1858-1902*

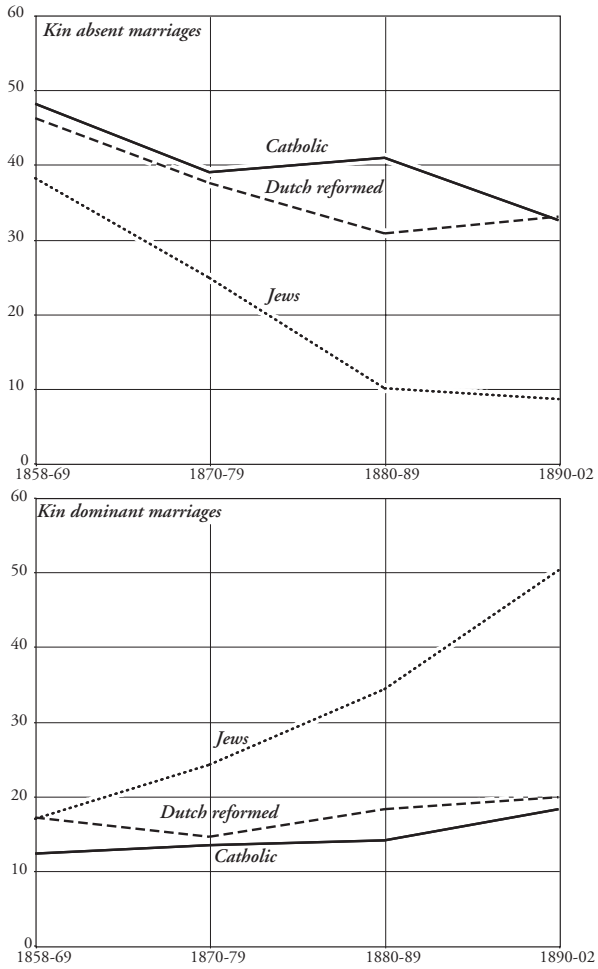
	Religion of groom				
	Jewish	Dutch Reformed	Roman Catholic	Other religion	Total
No kin witnesses	18.6	35.4	38.6	33.3	31.4
One kin member	24.4	25.8	26.2	22.2	25.5
Two kin members	23.3	21.2	20.2	23.7	21.7
Three kin m embers	23.6	11.6	10.2	16.2	14.5
All witnesses kin	10.1	6.0	4.7	4.5	6.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Distinguishing the three most numerous religious groups by period of marriage allows us to study the trends in the importance of family ties. Figures 1a and 1b show the results. From the beginning of the period family ties have been much stronger among the Jews than among any other religious group: this is evident from both the much lower percentage of marriages in which none of the witnesses is a family member as well as from the much higher percentages of marriages in which witnesses belonged almost exclusively to the family network. More remarkable is the enormous change among Jews in these indicators over time: the percentage of "no kin present" marriages decreased from 38.1 to 8.5 percent during the second half of the twentieth century, the percentage of marriages in which family members dominated the ceremony increased from 16.9 to 50.2 percent over the same period. Among Catholics and Dutch Reformed the relative number of marriages in which no kin was present increased much less and the percentage of marriages with three or four family members acting as witness hardly increased at all.

We argued in the introduction that one might expect differences between social groups in the degree to which family members were involved in the ceremony. Table 4 shows that indeed this was the case.

Large differences can be observed between social classes with regard to the degree to which the marriage ceremony was a family affair or not. Marriage ceremonies in which not a single member of the kin network was acting as witness made up the majority of all marriages among the casual and unskilled labourers. Skilled manual labourers came second. The middle class (the petty bourgeoisie and white collar middle class) showed much lower percentages but in the upper

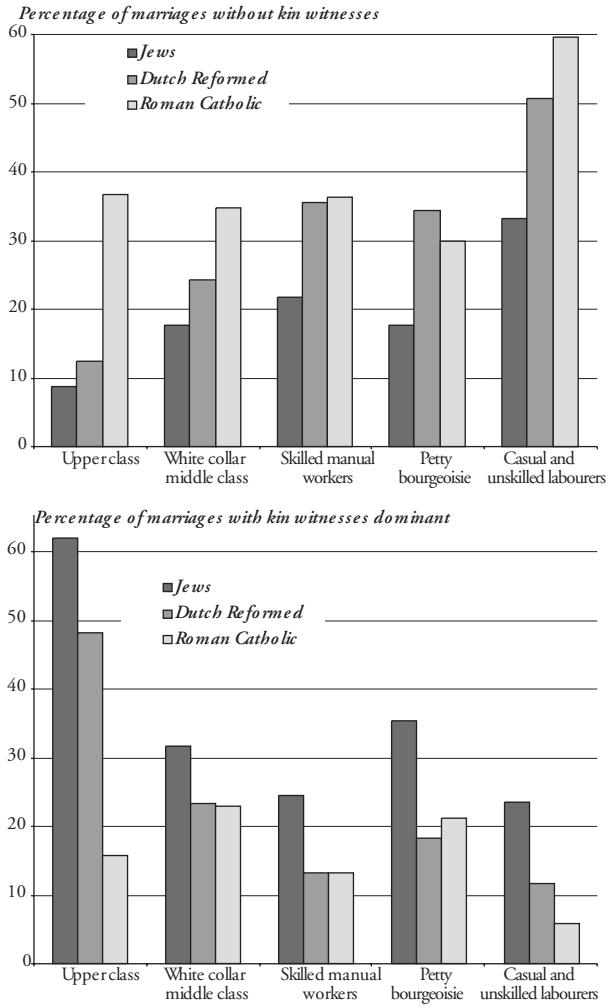
Fig. 1a *Kin Absent Marriages, by Religion and Period of Marriage*
Fig. 1b *Kin Dominant Marriages, by Religion and Period of Marriage*



Tab. 4 *Family Relationship between Witnesses and Bride and Groom, by Social Class of Groom, The Hague, 1858-1902*

	Social class groom						
	Upper class	White collar middle class	Skilled manual workers	Petty bourgeoisie	Casual and unskilled labourers	Without and Total unknown	
No kin witnesses	12.9	26.1	34.1	24.8	52.3	35.6	31.4
One kin member	18.5	24.3	28.9	24.4	23.3	26.3	25.5
Two kin members	23.2	24.1	22.7	23.6	13.5	16.3	21.7
Three kin members	23.6	17.8	10.4	18.8	8.0	13.1	14.5
All witnesses kin	21.9	7.7	3.9	8.3	2.9	8.8	6.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Fig. 2a *Percentage of Marriages without Kin Witnesses, by Religion and Social Class of Groom*
Fig. 2b *Percentage of Marriages with Kin Witnesses Dominant, by Religion and Social Class of Groom*



class marriages without kin members among the witnesses were an exception. The order of rank for marriages with three or four witnesses present was completely in line with this: among the upper class almost half of all marriages fell into this category, among the middle class around one quarter, among the skilled labourers 14 percent and among the unskilled and casual labourers only 11 percent.

Earlier research (Van Poppel, Liefbroer and Schellekens, 2003) has shown that in nineteenth-century The Hague the higher and middle strata—scholars, business leaders, white-collar employees and even skilled workers—were more often Protestant or Jew than Catholic.

Both Catholics and Jews faced exclusion from the higher social classes but this social exclusion was stronger for Catholics than for Jews. Catholics, more than other religious groups, had to content themselves with working-class occupations. The differences in social class composition between religions could, given the relationship that was observed between social class and the composition of the network of witnesses, partly be responsible for the religious differences in the strength of the ties between the married couple and its witnesses. We therefore compared the kin network of Jews, Dutch Reformed, and Catholics taking into account the social class composition of the three major religious groups. In particular for the upper class these figures are sometimes based on small numbers, leading to less unequivocal patterns. Again we distinguished between marriages without kin members, and marriages with three or four witnesses from the family. Figures 2a and 2b give the results.

First of all, in all social classes kin-absent marriages were much less frequent among Jews than among Catholics and Dutch reformed. Among Jews large differences were not observed between social classes exception made for the casual and unskilled labourers in which group even among Jews marriages without witnesses from the kin network made up a sizeable proportion of the total.

Secondly, in almost all social classes it was much more common for Catholics to contract a marriage without any witness that was linked to bride or groom by family ties being present. Among casual and unskilled Catholic workers, this applied to almost 60 percent of all marriages.

Thirdly, a social class gradient was clearly visible among Jews and the Dutch Reformed, much less among Catholics.

Figure 2b forms figure 2a's mirror image. Marriages in which kin members made up the majority of the witnesses formed almost two-thirds of all marriages among Jews from the upper class. The Dutch Reformed in almost all social classes occupied the second position. Among Catholics, marriages in which family members were prominently present during the ceremony as witness were a minority. Among the casual and unskilled labourers less than ten percent fell into this category. In all religious groups, social class of the groom had the same effect on the presence of kin: it was high in the upper class, medium in the middle classes and low in the lower classes.

RELIGION AND THE GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN OF THE WITNESSES

To measure the differences by religion in the spatial distance separating the couple and the members of the network present during the wedding, three different indicators were used: 1) the presence of at least two witnesses coming from distances larger than 20 km; 2) the largest distance between The Hague and the place of residence of any of the four witnesses; 3)the presence of three or four witnesses living in The Hague.

All three indicators show that in the course of time the geographic horizon of couples marrying in The Hague widened. Although in the large majority of marriages, witnesses were living exclusively in The Hague, a growing percentage of all marriages was contracted in the presence of at least one

witness living outside the city. The percentage of marriages with three or four witnesses living in the city decreased slightly over time from 90.8 to 79.1 percent. Whereas in 1858-1869 only a small percentage (4.7 percent) of all marriages had at least two witnesses that lived more than 20 km away from the place of the wedding, this percentage doubled (10.9 percent) till 1890-1902. The largest distance any of the witnesses had to travel to The Hague increased from an average of 8.6, via 13.6 and 17.3 to 24.1 km. If all marriages are ranked according to the largest distance that any of the witnesses had to travel, the distance travelled by the bottom 75 percent of the group shows a remarkable increase over time: whereas in 1858-1869 75 percent of the witnesses had to travel 0 km, in 1870-79 this was already 8.1 km, in 1880-89 18.9 km and in 1890-1902 42.7 km. The percentage of marriages in which none of the four witnesses had to come from outside The Hague decreased from 81.0 to 58.9 percent; the percentage in which at least one of the witnesses had to cross a distance of 21 km increased from 16.1 percent to 32.7 percent.

Tab. 5 *Differences in Geographic Horizon by Religion, Various Indicators*

Religion			
Dutch Reformed	Jewish	Roman Catholic	Other religion
Percentage of marriages in which two or more witnesses are living at more than 20 km from The Hague			
5.0	10.9	3.3	15.2
Percentage of marriages of which at least two witnesses live outside The Hague			
12.3	15.1	10.1	24.7
Average distance to The Hague of witness living farthest away from The Hague			
15.0	18.2	11.9	29.1
Longest distance to The Hague of any of the four witnesses: distance that 75 percent does not have to cross			
8.1	21.2	5.1	51.5

Table 5 summarises the information on the way in which religious groups differ in the geographic origin of witnesses at the marriage ceremony. The table makes clear that there were indeed important differences that almost all pointed in the same direction. If one leaves aside the rather heterogeneous group of "Other religions" Jews were definitely characterised by a network that stretched over a wider area than that of the Dutch Reformed, a group which in its turn had a network that was spread over a wider area than was the case among Catholics. Among Jews more marriages were found where at least two of the witnesses lived outside The Hague, the percentage of marriages in which two or more witnesses lived 20 or more km from The Hague was two times higher than among Dutch Reformed, the average distance that had to be travelled by the witness that lived farthest away from The Hague was longer. 75 percent of the witnesses to Jewish marriages (that is among those of the witnesses that crossed the largest distance) had to travel more than 20 km, among Dutch Reformed this was only 8.1 and among Catholics 5.1 km.

Again, social class might have acted as the factor responsible for these differences as social differences in the

geographic breadth of the network are known to be large. Big differences were indeed observed between social classes in the percentage of marriages that had at least two witnesses that lived more than 20 km away from The Hague. In the upper class 32 percent of all marriages had two or more witnesses present that lived that far from The Hague. For members of the middle class, this was around 10 percent, for marriages contracted by people from the lower class between two and four percent. The average distance that the witness that had to travel most had to cover was 48.2 km for marriages in the upper class, 22.5 km for marriages in the white collar middle class, 18.1 km for members of the petty bourgeoisie, 12.3 km for skilled manual workers and 8.2 km for casual labourers. For marriages by casual labourers and skilled manual workers, the largest distance covered by any of the four witnesses remained below 4 km in 75 percent of the cases. In the middle class these figures were much higher: for the white collar middle class 38.1 km and for the petty bourgeoisie 21.2 km. In contrast to this, the longest distance that people acting as witness to a marriage from a member of the upper class had to cross was in 75 percent of the cases less than 82.3 km. The percentage of all marriages in which at least two witnesses lived outside the city also varied considerably by social class: in more than half of the marriages in the upper class, two or more witnesses came from another town. Among the white collar middle class marriages this was 21.9 percent, among members of the petty bourgeoisie 14.5 percent. Marriages among members of the lower class were of a much more local character: only 7.8 percent of the marriages by skilled manual workers and 6.1 percent of those of casual labourers were attended by at least two witnesses living outside the city.

Controlling for the differences in social class per religion does not however lead to the disappearance of the religious differences.

This can be illustrated by various indicators. The percentage of marriages in which two or more witnesses lived at more than 20 km from The Hague was higher among Jews in each social class (exception made for the Dutch Reformed upper class). The largest differences between religious groups were observed in the lower classes: among Jews belonging to the skilled manual labourers or to the casual and unskilled labourers still between 11 and 13 percent of all marriages were attended by witnesses living more than 20 km from The Hague; among Dutch reformed and Catholics these percentages did not reach values higher than two percent. For the petty bourgeoisie and the white collar middle class as well, much higher percentages were found among Jews. As far as the average distance is concerned of the witness living farthest away from The Hague, differences between religious groups again were strongest among members of the lower social class: the average distance was 16.5 km for Jewish casual labourers and only 6.5 for Dutch Reformed and 6.7 for Catholic casual labourers. For skilled manual workers, averages were 14.1 and 9.1 respectively 10.1 km.

We can therefore conclude that while social class had an effect on the geographic breadth of the network, religion also played an important role: on almost all indicators, Jews in all social

classes had witnesses during the marriage ceremony that came from further away than Dutch Reformed whereas Catholics had a network that might be considered local and more restricted.

CONCLUSION

We observed clear differences between religious groups in the tendency to involve members of the kin network as witnesses to the marriage ceremony. In particular among Jews a strong increase took place in the familial involvement with the marriage ceremony. The stronger involvement of family members was observed in all social classes whereby in particular the religious differences within the lower social classes were remarkable. Religious effects could also be seen in the geographic breadth of the network of witnesses. The network of Jews included people coming from a much wider area than was the case among Dutch Reformed and Catholics. Again, these differences remained when social class of the groom was controlled although there were indeed differences between social classes in the degree to which people from other regions were involved in the marriage ceremony. When time went on the geographic horizon of all religious groups widened whereas at the same time the family ties strengthened.

Of course, the fact that our study focussed on a city limits the generalisability of our results. The structure of social networks in cities might be different from that of the rural area. The city is assumed to press the individual toward individuation resulting in his gradual estrangement from his traditional culture. It is also supposed that in the city people are more likely to come in contact with new notions at variance with traditional religious cultures (Ritterband, 1981).

Although at first sight the question with which we started can be answered positively, one might wonder whether an interpretation of our findings in terms of stronger family-orientation and stronger cosmopolitanism among Jews is the only plausible one. Alternative explanations are possible.

Although for Jews the religious ceremony was also considered very important, we did not find the same indifference or even disdain for the civil marriage. In the nineteenth century it was very common that the religious ceremony for Jewish couples took place several months after they had contracted their civil marriage. The reason could be that money was not yet available to give the ceremony the festive character that was deemed necessary; and the celebration was postponed till the circumstances had improved (Van Poppel, 1992, 12-14). According to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (1972), from the perspective of Halakah, Talmudic literature that deals with law and with the interpretation of the laws on the Torah, no significance is to be attached to a marriage that is not performed according to the Jewish laws. With a civil marriage, however, a man and woman showed their intention of living as husband and wife and were regarded as a couple, making a civil marriage not completely meaningless. The logical consequence would have been to keep the period between a civil and a Jewish marriage as short as possible, planning them at the same day or at successive days, and to bring the people involved in the religious wedding to be witness at the civil marriage.

Whether civil and religious marriage were performed a few days running can not be easily checked—one way would be to compare witnesses on the *Ketubah*, a document that records the (financial) obligations undertaken by a bridegroom towards his bride, with those registered on the civil marriage certificate. Whether civil and religious marriages were entered into in the same *year* can be retrieved by comparing the civil marriage register with the marriages performed at the Jewish community in The Hague (see note 5: this register was maintained between 1873 and 1937). To be sure that the religious wedding was performed in The Hague, only marriages by spouses both living in The Hague were selected. A test for the period 1873-1902 confirmed that almost all The Hague Jews had their civil and religious marriage in the same year: only 2% married in the calendar year before the date of their Jewish marriage.

There are lots of indications that as a consequence of the emancipation Jewish religious practices in The Hague were undermined from the 1890s on (Van Creveld, 1989, 152 and 155, 180, 183, Van Creveld, 1995, 123-124): the number of mixed marriages grew (weddings between a Jew and a non-Jew were outside the realm of Jewish law and custom), an ever increasing proportion of children received no Jewish education whatsoever, and more and more children were not registered as members of the Jewish religious community. We also have evidence for the city of Delft, only five km from The Hague, showing that religious ceremonies for Jews became less and less important during the early decades of the nineteenth century (Van Lunteren-Spanjaard and Wijnberg-Stroz, 1998, 60-65, 78-81). For the majority of the Jews, civil marriage must indeed have been not completely without significance and for some it might even have had a very positive value, acting as a sign of their integration in the gentile word (see for a comparable situation Grange, 2004).

In any case, the observed differences in the involvement of kin might partly be explained by the indicator used, the civil marriage ceremony.

There is room for other interpretations of the differences between religions and of the generally increasing preference within all religions for kin witnesses. One might argue that the greater tendency among Jews to involve family members in the marriage ceremony was not the result of a clear preference but might be related to the fact that they formed a community that was segregated and isolated from the rest of the population. As a consequence, they might not have had a sufficient number of acquaintances, colleagues and friends outside their own group willing to act as witnesses and were obliged to ask family members to act as such. Such an interpretation in terms of low levels of mutual acceptance and understanding between Jews on one hand and Dutch Reformed and Catholics on the other hand would be in line with McLeod's idea that religious conflict was the salient feature of the religious development of European cities in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. "By comparison with the preceding era, nineteenth-century cities were much more religiously heterogeneous: rather than binding the urban community together, religion had become a major source of internal division. By comparison with the later twentieth century, religion or irreligion were far more closely bound up with the identity

of social classes" (McLeod, 1995, 24). McLeod (1995, 23-28) related the increase of religious conflicts to the fact that rival religious groups were increasingly living in close proximity to one another, to a diminished capacity for mutual toleration, to the emergence of new sources of religious divisions and to the increasing social significance of conflicts. The Dutch nineteenth and early twentieth century pattern of *verzuiling* or pillarisation can in general be considered as a perfect illustration of the process described by McLeod. As a consequence of efforts by members of the different religious denominations to achieve economic, political, social and cultural emancipation, Dutch society came to be broken up into different, mutually exclusive, religious groups. Each major community developed its own institutional arrangements (schools, housing corporations, trade unions, etc.) enabling their members to live their lives in accordance with their community's views, and to limit inter-community contacts to a basic minimum (Pennings 1991). Just like other religious groups, Jews also built up their own network. They created a variety of institutions of their own such as youth groups, women's organisations and sports clubs, theatre groups etc. some 70-80 in The Hague alone (Van Creveld, 1995, 186-187). Yet this took place at a much later date than among other groups (in the first decades of the twentieth century) and it did not involve "key" institutions such as a separate educational system, separate political parties and separate trade unions (as was the case among Catholics and Protestants). Jews who only had very loose bonds with the orthodox parts of the community could participate in these activities as well. Socially the Dutch Jews had indeed long remained isolated and even in the twentieth century the participation in the country's political and social life remained proportionately slight and discrimination could still play a role. But whereas Catholics and Orthodox-Protestants as minority groups tried to improve their position by self-imposed isolation among most Jews the opposite took place. The Jewish middle class who had been able to enter the social world as a consequence of the state policy directed towards integration wished for nothing better than to transform the Jewish lower classes into Dutch citizens (Hofmeester, 1996). From the second part of the nineteenth century on Jews started to live much more widely scattered across the city, very often in districts were most of the population were gentiles. In the neighbourhood in which the Jews were concentrated, a large part of the population always had consisted of non-Jews. Already at the close of the eighteenth century the government had identified education as the means by which to realise its vision of social homogenisation. Jewish schools were to ensure that Jews would become Dutch men and women of the Jewish faith. Dutch became the mandatory language in schools and secular education was given priority over religious education (Dodde, 1996). In the first decades of the XIXth century measures were taken to forbid the use of Yiddish in religious and educational settings. After 1845 Dutch Jewry began to master written and spoken Dutch, and new generations were reared in Dutch. Active use of Yiddish had by then almost disappeared and observance of the Jewish religious laws decreased. The Jews realised the importance of the efforts and therefore conformed to the measures taken (Fuks-Mansfeld, 1995). Their assimilation did enable them to play a considerable and

active role in social life in a number of towns at the end of the nineteenth century (Blom and Cahen, 1995). It is highly improbable that they were not able to find people outside their family network to be present at the ceremony (Blom and Cahen, 1995).

The higher proportions of kin witnesses might also be the by-product of some demographic characteristics of the Jewish community of The Hague: their small (and consequently the restricted number of families), their higher fertility (leading to a larger supply of family members) and the strong marriage bonds between families, partly inspired by the Jewish ideas about marriages between kin. Yet fertility differences between religions were limited in the period concerned (Schellekens and van Poppel, 2003) and the size of the community did not really enforce people to contract only family members.

Religious or cultural factors might explain the wider and more open orientation observed among the Jews. A large part of the Jews were merchants, and thus even those Jews who spent their entire lifetime in The Hague had considerable contacts through business with people elsewhere. This at least partly explains the wider networks of the Jews. Yet the limited size of the community could also have played a role in the more frequent use of witnesses from outside The Hague.

Religious or cultural factors are not the only possible explanation of the wider and more open orientation that is observed among the Jews. The fact that among Jews witnesses travelled over longer distances might partly be interpreted as a consequence of their stronger preference for witnesses related to them by kin. If Jewish families were dispersed over a larger number of places than Catholic or Protestant families this preference for kin in itself could have caused a larger proportion of witnesses from places further away from The Hague.

A further complication is that there may be differences between religious groups (and social classes) in the communities of origin of brides and grooms. It is not hard to imagine that when a groom or his family were living in a community situated in the vicinity of The Hague, family members could easily travel to The Hague and attend the marriage ceremony. If on the other hand the groom's or bride's family lived at a greater distance from The Hague attending the ceremony was more difficult and the couple would be more inclined to invite non-kin witnesses living in The Hague. Differences in the places of residence of brides and grooms between the various religious groups hardly existed. Yet there were differences in the places of origin between the three groups. In the period that we study The Hague was characterised by an enormous growth of the population, for a very large part caused by an influx of migrants. Dutch Reformed and Catholics gained much more from these migration flows than Jews: between 1859 and 1899 the number of Dutch Reformed increased by 141 percent, the number of Catholics by 171 percent and the number of Jews only by 66 percent. A comparison of the communities of residence of brides, grooms and their parents over the various religions and of the municipalities of birth of the couple showed that the places of residence of brides and grooms at the time of marriage did not deviate much between the three religious groups. On the other hand, a much larger part of Jewish brides and grooms was born in

The Hague (68 and 71 percent respectively) than was the case among Protestants (57 and 57 percent) and Catholics (55 and 53 percent). Stronger roots in The Hague might also be inferred from the fact that at the date of marriage a much higher percentages of mothers and fathers of Jewish couples resided in The Hague than was the case among the other groups. Of the mothers of Jewish brides and grooms 66, respectively 60 percent lived in The Hague whereas for Dutch Reformed the percentages were 55 and 51 percent and for Catholics 51 and 49 percent. For fathers the same pattern was observed with comparable differences. Did place of birth of groom and bride have an effect on the distance that witnesses were prepared to travel? Remarkably enough, within the group of brides and grooms born in The Hague, the differences between the religious groups remained although they were a little bit smaller than in the total group: the percentage of marriages in which two or more witnesses were living at more than 20 km from The Hague still was much higher among Jews than among Dutch Reformed and Catholics. Migration patterns thus cannot explain the differences in the geographic horizon of the various religions.

Migration might also play a role in the stronger preferences of Jews for kin as witnesses. The strong differences between religions in the places of origin of brides and grooms implied that among Jews a larger proportion of families was living in The Hague for a long period than among Dutch Reformed and Catholics. If long-established families dominated the Jewish community of The Hague it was easier to make an appeal to family members to act as a witness than in less stable communities. The comparison of the places of birth of brides and grooms made above supported the idea that Jewish couples were more firmly rooted in The Hague than Dutch Reformed and Catholic couples. A comparison of the presence of kin witnesses by place of birth of groom and bride showed however that differences in the percentages of kin witnesses did not depend on a short or long period of residence of the family in The Hague. Among Jewish brides and grooms born in The Hague, a much stronger preference for family witnesses was found than among Dutch Reformed or Catholic couples born in The Hague. 35 Percent of Jewish brides and grooms born in The Hague had three or four family witnesses at the marriage ceremony: for Dutch reformed that was only 19 percent, for Catholics 18-20 percent. In 15-17 percent of the cases, Jewish couples born in The Hague contracted their marriage without family witnesses being present: for Dutch Reformed that was 30-32 percent, for Catholics 29-33 percent.

There is another way via which migration might have had an effect on preferences for kin. The fact that a high percentage of the Jews was born in The Hague makes it highly probable that the civil as well as the religious ceremony took place in the same city. Even in cases in which they attached more value to a religious than to a civil ceremony it must not have been inconvenient for them to choose the same witnesses for both ceremonies. The situation for the numerous Catholic migrants might have been different: an unknown number among them might have contracted a civil marriage in The Hague whereas the religious ceremony took place in the community of birth of bride or groom. In this case that might have contented themselves with professional witnesses,

friends or colleagues for the civil ceremony whereas they preferred kin witnesses for their religious wedding. It is only possible to test this hypothesis by studying registers of several Catholic parishes, in The Hague and in the places of birth of brides and grooms.

Our conclusion is that there were indeed strong differences between the various religions in the degree to which they were linked to other people across vast distances and in the degree to which they, during a crucial moment in their life, attached importance to family members. This fact was measured at the individual level or at least at the level of the couple. The information included in the marriage certificate thus offers an excellent opportunity for studies at the micro-level and to test whether both these variables are indeed related to differences in fertility or mortality between religious groups.

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NOTES

1. We are very grateful to Vincent Gourdon for his helpful comments and suggestions during the panel session at the European Social Science History Conference in Berlin, March 2004. The data on which this research is based were partly collected for a research project entitled "Religion and Child Mortality in Holland 1860-1920". Financial assistance from the Wellcome Trust is gratefully acknowledged.

2. From 23rd July 1927 on, women were accepted as witnesses.

3. This sample fraction could be calculated as the annual numbers of marriages were known.

4. Sv. E. Veldhuijzen, Index op het register van besnijdenissen. Unpublished document, Municipal Archive The Hague, 1996.

5. Plaatsingslijst van het archief van de Portugees-Israëlitische gemeente te 's-Gravenhage. Municipal Archive The Hague, Nr. BNR 130.

6. Register houdende aantekening van huwelijken 1873-1937 en echtscheidingen 1927-1937. Municipal Archive The Hague, Archief van de Ned.-Isr. gemeente te 's-Gravenhage, 1694-1944. Inv. Nr. 913k.

7. Continuous population registers, recording the population residing within the municipality, were enforced in the Netherlands from 1849 on. They combine census listings with vital registration in an already linked format for the entire population. Families and individuals can, in principle, thus be followed on a day-by-day basis. Normally every register covers a time span of ten years between the censuses.

8. As the data relate to first and second marriages, a small number of grooms is included two times in the database.

9. In some cases the vital registration officers might not specifically have asked the witnesses what kind of relationship with bride and/or groom they had. This leads to an underestimation of the number of kin acting as witness.

10. Percentages were calculated on the basis of all marriages in which at least one of the witnesses was not related by kin to the groom or bride.

11. Marriages with unknown religion are included in the totals.

SUMMARY

The exceptional position of the Jews in the demographic transition has partly been explained by the specific composition, structure and functioning of their networks, in particular its wider geographic focus and stronger kin-orientation. In our paper we provide a basis for comparative statements about differences between religious groups in the characteristics of their networks by using information on witnesses to marriage ceremonies from a sample of civil marriage records (1859-1902) from the city of The Hague, Netherlands (N=3729). We compare the networks of Jews to those of Catholics and Protestants, taking also into account the social class of the couple. We observed a much stronger familial involvement with the marriage ceremony among Jews, a phenomenon that was observed in all social classes. Religious differences could also be seen in the geographic breadth of the network of witnesses. The network of Jews included people coming from a much wider area than was the case among Dutch Reformed and Catholics. Again, these differences remained when social class of the groom was controlled.We tried to find out whether these results might indeed be interpreted as indications of a stronger family-orientation and stronger cosmopolitanism among Jews or whether alternative explanations are called for. We discuss the implications of differences between religious groups in the meaning of the civil marriage ceremony, the effects of the segregation and isolation of the Jewish community, the limited size of the Jewish community of The Hague and the differences between religious groups in the communities of origin of brides and grooms. Our conclusion is that there remained strong differences between the various religions in the degree to which they were linked to other people across vast distances and in the degree to which they, during a crucial moment in their life, attached importance to family members.

RÉSUMÉ

La place particulière des Juifs dans la transition démographique a été partiellement expliquée par la composition, la structure et le fonctionnement spécifiques de leurs réseaux, notamment leur ample ouverture géographique et une forte centration sur la parenté. Dans cet article, nous posons les bases d'une comparaison des caractéristiques des réseaux de chaque confession religieuse en recourant à l'analyse des témoins de mariage issus d'un échantillon de 3 729 mariages civils célébrés à La Haye (Pays-Bas) entre 1859 et 1902. Les réseaux des juifs sont comparés à ceux des catholiques et des protestants, tout en prenant en compte l'appartenance socio-professionnelle des conjoints. On observe parmi les conjoints juifs une implication plus forte de la famille au sein de la cérémonie de mariage, et ce quelle que soit la classe sociale. Par ailleurs, le réseau des juifs inclut des individus provenant d'un espace plus large que dans le cas des réformés et des catholiques, là encore à niveau social équivalent. Nous tentons de voir si ces résultats sont vraiment en mesure de traduire une plus forte centration familiale ou un cosmopolitisme supérieur parmi les juifs, ou s'il faut convoquer d'autres explications. Sont ainsi examinés les éventuels effets d'une différence religieuse dans le rapport au mariage proprement civil, de la ségrégation et de l'isolement de la communauté juive, de la taille restreinte du milieu juif à La Haye, de différences dans les origines des conjoints en fonction de la confession. Nous concluons cependant à la présence de fortes différences entre les groupes religieux en ce qui concerne le poids des relations à longue distance et l'importance donnée aux membres de la parenté dans un moment aussi crucial de l'existence que le mariage.