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Marriage behaviour in pre-industrial Karelian rural parishes

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Marriage traditions in north-west Russia and Karelia in historiography

It used to be thought that the peculiarities of the demographic behaviour of Russian peasants in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had been thoroughly analysed and adequately explained. This is especially the case for the phenomenon of the large family. Modern society has been experiencing an evident crisis of the family throughout the last century and, as a consequence, thousands of books and articles have been devoted to the traditional family, first in America and later in Europe. In 1972, the leader of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, Peter Laslett, counted twelve thousand separate studies on this subject which had been published between 1900 and 1964.¹

When discussing the viability of the current family model, scholars have also often paid attention to the patriarchal family (*patriarhal'naya sem'ya*), a widespread phenomenon purported to have been the preferred family form in pre-industrial Russia. They usually repeated one of the statements of the well-known nineteenth-century German traveller and political economist August von Haxthausen: 'Nowhere is a large family a greater blessing than among the Russian peasants ...', where a 'large family' represented 'the peasant's greatest wealth'.² This view was accepted as quite reasonable for Russian provinces in the nineteenth century, because 'sons always meant additional shares of land for the head of the family'.³ At the same time, a large family and also the practice of different generations living together 'under a common roof' was seen as a burden in Western Europe. In the opinion of the eminent Russian historian Yury Bessmertnyi, from the Early Modern period, and in some European countries from as early as the Late Middle

¹ P. Laslett, 'Introduction: the history of the family', in: P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds.), *Household and family in past time* (Cambridge 1972) 1-2.

² P. Czap, 'A large family: the peasant's greatest wealth: Serf households in Mishino, Russia, 1814-1858', in: R. Wall, J. Robin and P. Laslett (eds.), *Family forms in historic Europe* (Cambridge 1983) 105-150.

³ Quoted by Peter Czap.

Ages, such a situation had only been relevant for marginal groups in society.⁴ The question of the relationship between individual freedom and social necessity was the principle stimulus of the discussions of the pre-industrial Russian family model.

It must be emphasised here that early ethnographers did not make use of any statistics and, therefore, did not adequately represent the frequency of occurrence of the large family (*bol'shaya sem'ya*) or of the extended family (*rasshirennaya sem'ya*). Until recently these terms were almost exclusively reserved by scholars for families that comprised several generations of related couples with children living together in the same household. As a rule the household was under the uncontested authority of the oldest man, the head of the family (*glava semeistva*), or patriarch. According to contemporary observations made by Maxim Kovalevsky, such a community could include up to 40 or even 50 members in some cases.⁵

Foreign researchers usually compiled data concerning traditional family behaviour in pre-industrial Russia from the travel notes of a few individuals, such as August von Haxthausen and the Frenchman Frederic Le Play. The former visited the central regions of Russia in the 1840s while the latter travelled through the environs of Orenburg in the beginning of the 1850s. The well-known researchers Petr Efimenko and his wife Aleksandra Efimenko also attracted the interest of western investigators of Russian family structure. They researched the Archangel area in northern Russia and the Ukraine in southern Russia during the last decades of the nineteenth century.⁶ It is understandable that all these travellers, who were both researchers and writers, felt truly amazed about the Russian peasant families they described. The best known descriptions of the traditional family in Karelia in pre-industrial times are by Petr Chelishchev and Karl Bergstresser.⁷ These authors inform us about the widespread occurrence of the large family among the Karelians at the end of the eighteenth century. The most interesting information concerning traditional family structures is found in the diary of Vera Kharuzina, who studied in France and Germany and was professor of 'Higher Female Studies' in Moscow. She collected her impressions while travelling with her brother, the anthropologist Nikolai Kharuzin, in the Pudozh area, the south-

⁴ Ю.Л. Бессмертный, *Жизнь и смерть в средние века: Очерки демографической истории Франции* (Moscow 1991) 210.

⁵ М. Kovalevsky, *Modern Russia and Ancient Laws of Russia* (London 1891) 53.

⁶ А.Я. Ефименко, *Исследования народной жизни: Обычное право*. Вып. 1 (Moscow 1884); А.Я. Ефименко, *История украинского народа* (St Petersburg 1906); П.С. Ефименко, *Семья архангельского крестьянина // Судебный журнал* (1873) No. 4; П.С. Ефименко, *Материалы для изучения экономического положения крестьян Харьковской губернии* (Moscow 1884).

⁷ П.И. Челищев, *Путешествие по Северу России в 1791 году отставного секунд-майора П. Челищева* (St Petersburg 1886); К.Ф. Бергстрессер, *Опыт описания Олонецкой губернии* (St Petersburg 1839).

ern part of present-day Karelia, which was settled mainly by Russians, and in that part of White Sea Karelia which was settled by Lapps.⁸ Their material is probably still the most valuable source for anyone who is interested in what the real life of peasants in Karelia and neighbouring areas was like in former times.

Should not the established view of the native peasants' families in the nineteenth century as created by famous travellers, writers, ethnographers and anthropologists be looked at from a different point of view? Is it not likely that all those people who went to rural areas, whether for only a relatively short period or for much longer, all followed the same practical route in search of good food and a well-organised day-to-day life and most likely stayed in households of the more well-to-do families? It is not, therefore, simply by chance that the relationships in those kind of families, which normally had a large number of members, were described as the most typical ones in their books, although they never really claimed that these families were typical of all families in the region. The fact that the households where they stayed were prosperous and accommodated numerous people does not mean that there were no other types of families around. Nevertheless, demographers and historians continue to be fixated on the accounts provided by these nineteenth-century travellers.

In 1982, the Austrian demographers Michael Mitterauer and Alexander Kagan published an informative article based on data from the third Soul Revision (1762–1763), of the Yaroslavl region.⁹ They found only one case of a boy of fifteen who was already married. Nevertheless, the authors found it absolutely acceptable to declare that, for economic reasons, it was quite common for 'boys to be married very early to grown-up women' in the Russian provinces. They wrote this in the wake of Von Haxthausen, who in turn had repeated some conclusions by Wichelhaus, who was the only real witness and claimed to have seen 'strong women of 24 years carrying in their arms their six year-old little husbands' while he was travelling in Russia.¹⁰ However, the data from the sources analysed by the Austrian historians shows that a marriage pattern with large age differences between the partners cannot be considered typical for Russia. Nevertheless, they had no doubt that marriages between young boys and adult women were common among Russian peasants during the nineteenth century.¹¹ The only other evidence for this

⁸ В.Н. Харузина, *На Севере: Путевые впечатления* (Moscow 1889); Н.Н. Харузин, *Русские лопари* (Moscow 1890); Из материалов, собранных среди крестьян Пудожского уезда Олонецкой губернии // *Этнографическое обозрение* (Moscow 1890).

⁹ M. Mitterauer and A. Kagan, 'Russian and Central European family structures: a comparative view', *Journal of Family History*, 7 (1982) 103–131.

¹⁰ Quoted by Mitterauer and Kagan, 'Russian and Central European family structures'.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 118.

model of Russian peasant family behaviour is found in Mark Kosven's description of a scandalous affair concerning a father-in-law living in concubinage with his daughter-in-law.¹²

The literature on Karelian peasant family behaviour consists mainly of ethnographical material and of descriptions written by travellers, local clergymen or provincial clerks who lived there in the nineteenth century. However, the aim of these local writers describing ordinary peasant family life was not a thorough analysis of the available documentary sources of a mass nature. The classical studies devoted to the traditional culture of the Karelians and containing a special review of the development of family relations since the fifteenth century carried out by the academician Roza Nikolskaya (Taroeva) in 1965 and 1983 are based exclusively on interviews with elderly people.¹³ She concluded that the extended family appeared to have been replaced by the nuclear family (*malaya sem'ya*) around the end of the nineteenth century, when peasants began to be involved in capitalist productive relationships. However, these conclusions cannot be regarded as convincing since they are only based on a few wills and some commercial documents from the seventeenth century.¹⁴

Evgeny Klementiev and Victor Birin have recently¹⁵ placed research about the modern Karelian family on a new footing, but the incorrect findings regarding pre-industrial families, based on the idea that it was easier for an extended family of 25 to 40 members to survive the prevailing economic conditions, still remain in general use. These ideas have not been corrected by historians, although interviews showed that the nuclear family consisting of parents and unmarried children was more common. More than half a century ago, the eminent academic researcher Alexander Linevsky also concluded that in earlier times the only type of peasant family organization must have been the large traditional kinship network consisting of several generations,¹⁶ based on the fact that at the beginning of the twentieth century extended families were common for well-to-do peasants, and did not take into account the large number of sources which showed other patterns.

Foreign researchers interested in traditional demographic behaviour, a topic widely discussed in the West since the Second World War, were not able to study the historical reality of the Russian regions. The provincial ar-

¹² М. Косвен, *Семейная община и патронимия* (Moscow 1963) 75.

¹³ Р.Ф. Тароева, *Материальная культура карел* (Moscow/St Petersburg 1965).

¹⁴ Р.Ф. Тароева, Карелы. In the book (after В кн.), *Народы Европейской части СССР*. Т. 2. (Moscow 1964); Никольская (Тароева) Р.Ф. Семья и семейный быт. В кн.: *Карелы Карельской АССР* (Petrozavodsk 1983).

¹⁵ А.П. Новицкая and В.Н. Бирин, Карелы. В кн.: *Семейный быт народов СССР*. Под ред. Т.А. Жданко (Moscow 1990); Е.И. Клементьев, *Карелы* (Petrozavodsk 1991); В.Н. Бирин, *Брак и семья сельского населения Карельской АССР в 1950-1970 гг.* (Petrozavodsk 1992).

¹⁶ А.М. Линеvский, *Очерки по истории древней Карелии* (Petrozavodsk 1940).

chives were closed to foreigners during the Soviet period, while all the statistical documents, for example the state level third Soul Revision (*revizskie skazki*), the annual Church Reports (*metricheskie knigi*) and the Confessional Lists (*ispovednye vedomosti*) were stored there. Only the Englishman Peter Czap, who published two articles in 1978 and 1983 devoted to the feudal peasants of the Ryazan region, was successful in obtaining access to original demographic documentary sources.¹⁷ He analysed the demographic situation on an estate called Mishino, which belonged to Prince Gagarin. According to this demographer, important regional peculiarities in family behaviour are evident even in a small country like Belgium, for example. In Russia these local features still await discovery and analysis in detail. There are sufficient sources for such investigations and only after the publication of a significant number of studies will it be possible to reconstruct the structure and typology of national demographic behaviour for the whole of Russia. The aim here is to reconstruct a reliable picture of the traditional Karelian peasant family system by analysing mass documentary sources on a micro-regional level.

As far as possible the methods and terminology of the influential Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure will be followed, as has been done, for example, by Finnish scholars.¹⁸ This makes it possible to draw comparisons with their conclusions on the pre-industrial traditional family in some neighbouring territories.

The main aim of this research is to answer the question whether the marriage and family behaviour of the Karelian peasantry more closely resembled the Central Russian or the European model. In a famous study, John Hajnal pointed to the line from St Petersburg to Trieste as dividing two different demographic worlds.¹⁹ The Karelians live at the end of this line near St Petersburg but which side of it do they actually live on? The research aims to answer the following questions. What was the traditional age at marriage in Karelia in earlier times? What was the age difference between husband and wife and did extreme differences appear frequently? The answers to these questions will make it possible to determine whether the marriage behaviour of Karelian peasants did actually resemble the common Russian traditions.

¹⁷ P. Czap, 'Marriage and the peasant joint family in the era of serfdom', in: D.L. Ransel (ed.), *The family in Imperial Russia*: (Urbana/Chicago/London 1978); Czap, 'A large family', 105-150.

¹⁸ B. Moring, 'Land, labor, and love: Household arrangements in nineteenth century eastern Finland: cultural heritage or socio-economic structure?', *The History of the Family. An International Quarterly*, 4 (1999) 159-184; K. Siren, *Suuresta suvusta pieneen perheeseen: Itäsuomalainen perhe 1700-luvulla* (Helsinki 1999); E. Waris, *Yksissä leivissä. Ruokolahtelainen perhelaitos ja yhteisöllinen toiminta 1750-1850* (Helsinki 1999); M. Polla, *Vienankarjalainen Perhelaitos 1600-1900* (Helsinki 2001).

¹⁹ J. Hajnal, 'European marriage patterns in perspective', in: D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (eds.), *Population in history. Essays in historical demography* (London 1965) 101-143.

The reliability of Soul Revisions and Confessional Lists

Analysis of new information shows that the widely accepted idea in local historiography of absolute adherence by Karelian peasants before the era of industrialization to the large patriarchal family is extremely speculative. Knowledge on the structural composition of peasant households comes from investigations made by native historiographers of the Census Books (*Perepisnye Knigi*) from the last decades of the seventeenth and the first decades of the eighteenth centuries.²⁰ Earlier sources are the Census Books of 1646/47 and the Scribe Books (*Piscovye Knigi*) of 1628–31, which contain demographic information about the local Karelian peasant communities. Data concerning the territories of the parishes (*pogost*) Shuya and Shunga, which are located on the western and eastern shores of the northern part of Lake Onega, allow interesting observations to be made. The numbers of farmsteads which were lived in by one, two or three generations were in nearly the same proportions at the end of the 1620s as they were in the middle of the 1640s. The number of households consisting of the head of the house with his sons or with his brothers was respectively 70% and 63%. Households with the same people, but where at least one of them had their own sons or nephews present, were evidently less numerous (27% both times). The third variant where the head of household lived together with his son(s) and grandson(s) was very rare, less than half a % at the end of 1620s and about one % in the middle of the seventeenth century. However, it must be remembered that in both sources, the Scribe Books of 1628–31 and the Census Books of 1646/47, only the names of adult men older than 15 years were put on the lists, so that not too much can be concluded from these observations.²¹

The Census Books of 1678 contain more detailed data on customary family formation among Karelian peasants in the seventeenth century (see Table 1).²² Nevertheless, it has to be concluded that the information in these sources is not sufficient to provide exact answers to all the questions raised about the demographic behaviour of the local peasants. Fortunately, later documents of a mass character, such as Confessional Lists (*Ispovednye Vedomo-*

²⁰ Я.Е.К. Водарский, вопросу о средней численности крестьянской семьи и населенности двора в России в XVI-XVII вв. В кн.: *Вопросы истории хозяйства и населения России XVII в.: очерки по исторической географии XVII в.* (Moscow 1974) 117-119; Е.Н. Бакланова, *Крестьянский двор и община на Русском Севере: конец XVII- начало XVIII в.* (Moscow 1976); О.Б. Кох, *Крестьянский двор и крестьянская семья на Русском Севере в конце XVII-XVIII в.: Автореферат диссертации... кандидата исторических наук* (Ленинград 1987).

²¹ И.А. Чернякова, Население Заонежских погостов в XVI-XVII вв.: по писцовым и переписным книгам. В кн.: *Вопросы истории Европейского Севера: Межвузовский сборник статей.* (Petrozavodsk 1988) 115-133.

²² More detailed results of the research and the conclusions can be found in И.А. Чернякова, *Карелия на переломе эпох: Очерки социальной и аграрной истории XVII века* (Petrozavodsk 1998) 110-125.

sti, CL) and Soul Revisions (*Revizskie Skazki*, SR), make it possible to study the traditional family structures of Karelian farmers in much more detail.

Table 1 Composition of peasant families in the Olonets Region in 1678

Type of family	Number of families	
	Absolute	%
Direct Relationship		
Married couples and singles	251	16.9
Married couples and their unmarried sons	679	45.8
<i>Married couples, their married sons and grandsons:</i>		
with one son and grandsons	40	2.7
with two sons and grandsons	9	0.6
with three and more sons and grandsons	1	0.1
with one son, grandsons and younger sons	57	3.8
with two sons, grandsons and younger sons	13	0.9
<i>Widows:</i>		
Widows with unmarried sons	17	1.1
Widows with grandsons	1	0.1
Total	1,068	72.0
Lateral Relationship		
<i>Unmarried brothers:</i>		
own (including under aged)	104	7.0
cousins	6	0.4
<i>Married brothers:</i>		
two (or three) brothers with their sons	44	3.0
with own sons and younger brothers	114	7.7
with sons and grandsons	2	0.1
<i>Families with nephews:</i>		
married couples with sons and nephews	54	3.6
married couples with sons, grandsons and nephews	6	0.4
widows with sons and nephews	3	0.2
brothers with sons, younger brothers and nephews	27	1.8
with son-in-law and nephews	2	0.1
<i>Families with son-in-law:</i>		
with son-in-law and younger sons	29	2.0
with son-in-law, grandsons and younger sons	16	1.1
widows with son-in-law	1	0.1
brothers with their own sons and son-in-law	1	0.1
Total	409	27.6
Others:		
Families with brother-in-law	6	0.4
Total	1,483	100.0

Source: State Archive of Ancient Documents (*Rossiisky Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Drevnikh Actov*, RGADA), collection 1209, volume 1137, part 1.

NB: The data is for the parishes of Shunga and Megra, located to the south and to the north of Lake Onega, which showed some significant differences concerning social and agrarian development.

Research concentrates on the CL as these provide information about the preferred variants in the structure of households in Karelia.²³

These documents, which were prepared by parish priests who listed their parishioners when they appeared for confession and communion, are considered to be the most representative sources listing most fully the names of the people in each family. It should be noted that it was not significant whether the person concerned actually attended or not because, as a rule, the priests and deacons recorded the names not only of those who were present but also of those who were absent. The CL are regarded as providing a complete registration of the population which was counted as belonging to a particular parish at a given moment.

Nevertheless, these sources do not fully meet the requirements and expectations of the family historian. The most important flaw in the sources is the fact that priests, as a rule, entered names in this list according to their relationship with local families or even to a local peasant clan, without noting whether they were living in the same or in different households. Thus, the general picture relates not to households but to relatives living in a certain village. However, the questions in historiography concentrate on the household as the dwelling place of each particular family. Only when it is certain that the families mentioned in the source lived together in one household is it possible to identify the presence and/or predominance of particular family types.

Apart from this the information itself causes some confusion by replacing one person by another within a family. For instance, when entering the name of a peasant's wife in the list the priest did not note whether she was a second wife, or perhaps even a third one. Because of this, the researcher is often faced with strange combinations of ages of the people said to be living in the same household. For example, the household of a 55-year-old head of the family contains his 35-year-old wife and their 20-year-old son. The source suggests that he was their common son and this would mean that his mother was 15 years old when he was born. Since second marriages were not at all rare, this kind of situation is met with quite often in the sources. Not considering this kind of information critically could inevitably lead to drawing the erroneous conclusion that extremely early marriages of young girls were common in Karelian villages.

The only possible way of overcoming the limitations of the sources is to take a micro-historical approach, combining this with the data from the Revisions which were carried out regularly by the government in order to assess the population at a particular time. As a rule the SR listed households showing their position in the whole list of households, according to the tradition

²³ Polla, *Vienankarjalainen perhelaitos*.

used in the nineteenth century in the Petrozavodsk, Povenets and Olonets *uezd*. The number of a particular household in the revision being undertaken was shown but also its number in the previous one. The accurate attention paid by the maker of the SR to the information in the previous revision creates a unique situation which allows a check of all doubtful cases of the type described above to be made. While listing the names of persons living in the household at the time of the revision the maker also always mentioned what had happened to those who had left the household for whatever reason during the period since the previous revision. This means that there is a high chance of finding the name of the peasant's previous wife and even the reason for her no longer being present.

The SR can be considered to be the ideal sources not only for the investigation of the structure, size and composition of families, but also for identifying traditions concerning the choice of marriage partners. This is because the maker of the SR was obliged to indicate with comments the fact of the appearance of a woman in another family, that of her husband. At the end of the eighteenth century (Revisions III, IV and V), information can be found showing from which village and even from which family the bride came. Unfortunately, in the nineteenth century it was considered enough just to indicate the fact of the marriage itself. Possibilities for research are also limited by the fact that before 1764 females were not counted at all, the government only being interested in men since they were the tax payers.

A comparative analysis of the information about the people living in the Yalguba parish was carried out for the CL of 1794 and the SR of 1795. The time lag between the preparation of these two documents is not long enough for significant changes in the listed households to have taken place. If something had happened in between, such as a birth, marriage, change of residence or a death, the SR with its fixed form allows these changes to be followed. In most of the cases where information about inhabitants of a particular household does not match and this is not explained by remarks made by the person providing the information, it is clear that the reason for this is simply that he or she was left out.

Before drawing a conclusion on the general level of usefulness of the information to be found in these sources, it is important to determine which of the village lists for Emel'yanovskaya, Karpovskaya, Anhimovskaya and Kulievskaya provide the most complete registration of the peasants and their families in the middle of the 1790s. There are two sources to be considered. These are the lists of people prepared for the fifth revision by the *staraosta*, a local authority responsible for gathering the tax data for all community members, and secondly, the lists of names of the same people ordered by household and prepared by the priest while conducting the confession procedure.

The first thing to be noticed is that in only two of the four villages, Karpovskaya and Kullievskaya the number of households is the same in both sources. The same 4 households were listed for the first village and the same 8 households for the second one in both 1794 and 1795. In the two other villages, Emelivanovskaya and Eremeevskaya, the CL listed considerably fewer households, 15 and 11 respectively, than the SR prepared a few months later which showed 26 and 14 respectively. General figures of the population are also not always identical. In three out of the four villages the SR shows approximately 10% more people than the CL (Table 2).

The question arises what causes this considerable difference in the basic characteristics of the same group of villagers in these quite similar sources. In order to answer this question a further analysis of the peasant families was carried out. This led to the conclusion that 14 households with 20 people from Emelivanovskaya and 11 from Eremeevskaya were included in the SR who were not mentioned at all in the CL. However, this fact only partly explains the mismatches discovered at the level of the overall figures.

Table 2 Population of Yalguba district according to the Confessional List of 1794 and the Soul Revision of 1795

	CL (1794)			SR (1795)		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Emelivanovskaya	50	51	101	57	65	122
Karpovskaya	24	16	40	19	14	33
Eremeevskaya	39	41	80	37	45	82
Kullievskaya	29	19	48	33	29	62
Total	142	127	269	146	153	299

Source: National Archive of the Republic of Karelia (*Natsional'nyi Arkhiv Respubliki Kareliya*, NARK), collection 25, catalogue 21, volume 25/74; collection 4, catalogue 18, volume 10/67.

A considerable number of people not recorded in the CL appeared several months later in the SR. Among them were, for example, eight new daughters-in-law and sixteen children between the ages of 1 to 5 years. Some of these had only just been born or were too young to be at the confession and were therefore not included in the list by the priest. However, there are a number of situations which are very difficult to explain. For example, Fevronjya, an 18-year-old girl who was the eldest daughter of Matvej Vasiljev and his wife Sofjya Rodionova, is not recorded as forming part of their household in the village of Emelivanovskaya, and a whole new family, that of their younger brother, the 33-year-old Ksenofont with his wife and 9-year-old son, appeared in the household of Averkij, Anton and Vasilij Leont'ev in the village of Kullievskaya. There are also mysteries about the people who

disappeared. They are listed in the CL but, unlike those who were left out for a variety of known reasons and recorded, for instance, as 'died', 'got married', 'left to go to Petrozavodsk merchants', their absence is not explained at all in the SR. Among those who were not recorded in the various households were several children (10 between the ages of 2 and 13), widows (2 women who were rather old and 2 who were middle aged with children), and even 4 complete families consisting of husband, wife and children, a total of 34 persons.

Although not great in number the mismatches on personal level of the names of household owners their wives and children deserve special attention, being characteristic for these sources. This problem concerns the names of females particularly. For instance, 6-year-old Anna instead of 8-year-old Tat'yana is found in the household of Stepan Harlamov in the village of Emel'yanovskaya, and 3-year-old Fedosiya instead of 4-year-old Agaf'ya in the household of Matvej Vasil'jev. Stefanida Ivanova, 21 years old, is mentioned as the daughter-in-law and wife of the eldest brother's son in the household of Stefan, Philip and Andrei Minin in the village of Emel'yanovskaya, but 20-year-old Domna Dmitrieva appears in the SR instead of her. Katerina Parfent'eva, 38 years old, is found in the SR in the household of Yakov and Larion Silin instead of Yakov's wife Irina Penteleeva, 39 years old, who is recorded in the CL for the village of Eremeevskaya.

These examples cover most of the cases of absolute mismatch. As a rule, people listed in both documents can usually be identified, even if different versions of names and *otchestva* are used, for example, Stefan and Stepan, Matfei and Matvei, Isidor and Sidor, Ieremiya and Eremei, Porfirii and Perfil, Glikeriya and Lukerya. The identification can be completed even in less obvious situations, such as in the case of the sons of Konon Saveliev from the village of Eremeevskaya, whom the SR named Epifan and Merkulii while the CL calls them Stefan and Merkirii. Other examples are the head of one of the households in the village of Kullievskaya, who became Nikolai Lukin, after first being called Vikula Lukin, and the widowed daughter-in-law Stefanida, who lived in the village of Emel'yanovskaya in the household of her father-in-law Fedor Prokhorov after her husband Kipriyans had died, and was named after her father either as Markova or Maksimova. In these and similar cases the fact that information about the ages of the people in question given by both sources corresponds greatly assists positive identification. In general, however, information on ages causes the most confusion when comparing the CL with the SR. This is illustrated by the figures presented below which reflect all age mismatches discovered during the analysis of our sources.

Completely reliable information about age can be found for only around 15% (35 people) of all the 231 people, men, women and children identified.

Each of them became one year older in the period between the listing in *Is-povednaya Vedomost'* in 1794 and recording in the SR in 1795. The age of about 18% (41 persons) did not change, and this can also be considered reliable because at the end of the eighteenth century neither the CL nor the SR recorded ages more precisely than the number of full years. Information where mismatches are no more than 2 years can also be considered as relatively reliable because it must not be forgotten that the age recorded in those times relied entirely on the claim made by the person concerned. This gives another 33% of people for whom the information on ages as recorded in the CL and the SR is more or less similar. There are mismatches of one kind or another in 27 of the 38 families listed in both the CL and the SR.

The SR has the following advantages in comparison with the CL. First of all, the SR more fully reflects all the people living in the villages because some people were absent from the confession for a variety of reasons, including being too young to attend. Secondly, this source indicates the reasons why those mentioned in the previous revision are now absent, which allows the relative structure of the families living in the households to be reconstructed more adequately and fully and its development to be understood. Thirdly, the age information is more reliable.

However, care has to be taken not to regard the information given in the SR as being complete and historians rightly view the data in the two first revisions with some quite justified distrust. When these revisions were carried out, up to 50% of the population at that time was not clearly recorded. This information can, though, be restored by using a micro-historical approach. The data from revisions carried out much later on must also be carefully checked using parallel sources. Often only very detailed analysis of the names allows lacunas to be identified and it is necessary to search for data missing from the SR in order to make comparisons over time fully possible.

The SR were placed in archives along strictly departmental lines as was usual for keeping records in Russia. Since the Novgorod times, Karelia has been characterised by patchy ownership of the land by the state, the Tsar family, aristocrats from Novgorod and Moscow (*boyare*) and the Russian Church, including the local and Novgorodian monasteries, supplemented by a group of peasants who were not subject to state taxation (*obel'nye*) and peasant landowners (*votchinniki*). These last two groups appeared after the first repression by the Russian Tsar dynasty at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. This diversity sometimes creates serious difficulties for the researcher because the person preparing the SR listed people living in a particular territory (*volost'*) or even a village without ever indicating that a number of its inhabitants were left out to be counted under another department.

The local approach chosen for the study of the traditional peasant family in Karelia using mass information from both the SR and the CL and with the possibility of checking this with data from the registers of births provides the opportunity of studying demographic behaviour almost on a personal level. The method adopted involves taking into consideration information about several geographically distant parishes. The research conducted reveals much greater differences in the traditions of marriages and formation of families followed by the inhabitants of Karelian villages in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries than is generally accepted in the historiography concerning Russian marriage behaviour and the typical peasant family pattern.

Traditions in marriage behaviour in parish communities in Karelia

As many researchers have pointed out, the need to find a wife for each son and in this way obtain an additional pair of working hands in the household was the main principle which determined the marriage pattern in pre-industrial Russia. Obtaining an extra unit of labour for the burdensome peasant economy was accepted as the main reason for marrying. A stimulus was also that, as soon as the new couple married a peasant homestead could demand a larger share of the ploughed land which was in common use by the local community (*obshchina*).²⁴ In Western historiography this is usually emphasised as the reason for 15-year-old boys often marrying 18-year-old girls.²⁵

This appears to be one of the most important factors in explaining the matrimonial pattern that was clearly preferred among the Russian peasantry and has been considered as non-European in accordance with the classic study of John Hajnal, who showed how extremely high the age at marriage normally was in Central and Western Europe. The well-known line he suggested between Leningrad (St Petersburg) and Trieste showing the division between quite different traditions of marriage behaviour leaves the question unanswered as to which model was relevant in the Karelian rural parishes. Another and possibly the main aspect of the non-European way of creating families is that wives were often older than their husbands. Peter Czap showed that this was the case for between 33 and 46% of the marriages on the estate of Mishino which was located in the Central Industrial Region of Russia.²⁶

After reviewing data from a large number of earlier publications, the Estonian researcher Hel'dur Palli showed that during the eighteenth and nine-

²⁴ R. Smith, *Peasant farming in Muscovy* (New York 1977) 82; Б.Н. Миронов, *Социальная история России периода империи (XVIII — начало XX в.): Генезис личности, демократической семьи, гражданского общества и правового государства. Т. I.* (St Petersburg 1999) 161-162.

²⁵ Czap, 'A large family', 106.

²⁶ Czap, 'Marriage and the peasant joint family', 114.

teenth centuries the preferred age at marriage in Western European countries was not before 27 for men and not before 25 for women.²⁷ Peter Laslett showed that in Western Europe during the last 250 years, cases where the average girl married at an age less than 20 were very rare.²⁸ According to Bessmertnyi some municipalities in France already imposed minimum ages at marriage as early as in the last three decades of the sixteenth century. For example, in 1573 the magistrate of the French city of Amiens forbade men, particularly if poor, from marrying before the age of 24–25 and women before the age of 17–18.²⁹ Different historians showed that the typical age of a groom in the European rural areas was 27–28, while a bride was usually not younger than 25–26.³⁰

The European matrimonial model was also characterised by a small age gap between husband and wife.³¹ The third important characteristic of the Western European model of marriage behaviour is that many people did not marry at all with the figure reaching as high as 10% in the period of the Late Middle Ages.³² In some local communities in Western Europe the share of celibates rose to over 20% during the nineteenth century.³³

According to native Russian historiography, marriage formed some kind of personal duty to society for Russians, particularly those living in the rural areas in the period from the eighteenth to the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Unmarried men who were old enough to marry were regarded with suspicion by the people in the circle around them and were given special nicknames which were generally quite offensive.³⁴ Family historians in Russia showed that it was not only the relatives of the boy who encouraged their sons to marry as early as possible. The parents of girls also did not want to spend too much time trying to find the best husband, since they were afraid that their daughter might become pregnant before marriage if she did not marry early. The chance that a young woman would lose her honour and bring shame on her family was considered greater the longer she remained unmarried.³⁵ Because the community was firmly attached to Christian values

²⁷ H. Palli, 'Nekotorye harakteristiki razvitiya sem'i v stranah Zapadnoi Evropy XVII–XIX vekov (po materialam zarubezhnykh issledovaniy)' in: A.G. Vishnevsky and I.S. Kon (eds.), *Brachnost', rozhdaemost', sem'ya za tri veka* (Moscow 1979) 170–173.

²⁸ P. Laslett, *Family life and illicit love in earlier generations* (Cambridge 1977) 26–29.

²⁹ Ю.Л. Бессмертный, *Жизнь и смерть в средние века: Очерки демографической истории Франции* (Moscow 1991) 210.

³⁰ M. Anderson, *Approaches to the history of the Western family, 1500–1914* (London 1980) 18.

³¹ Hajnal, 'European marriage patterns'.

³² Бессмертный, *Жизнь и смерть в средние века*, 211.

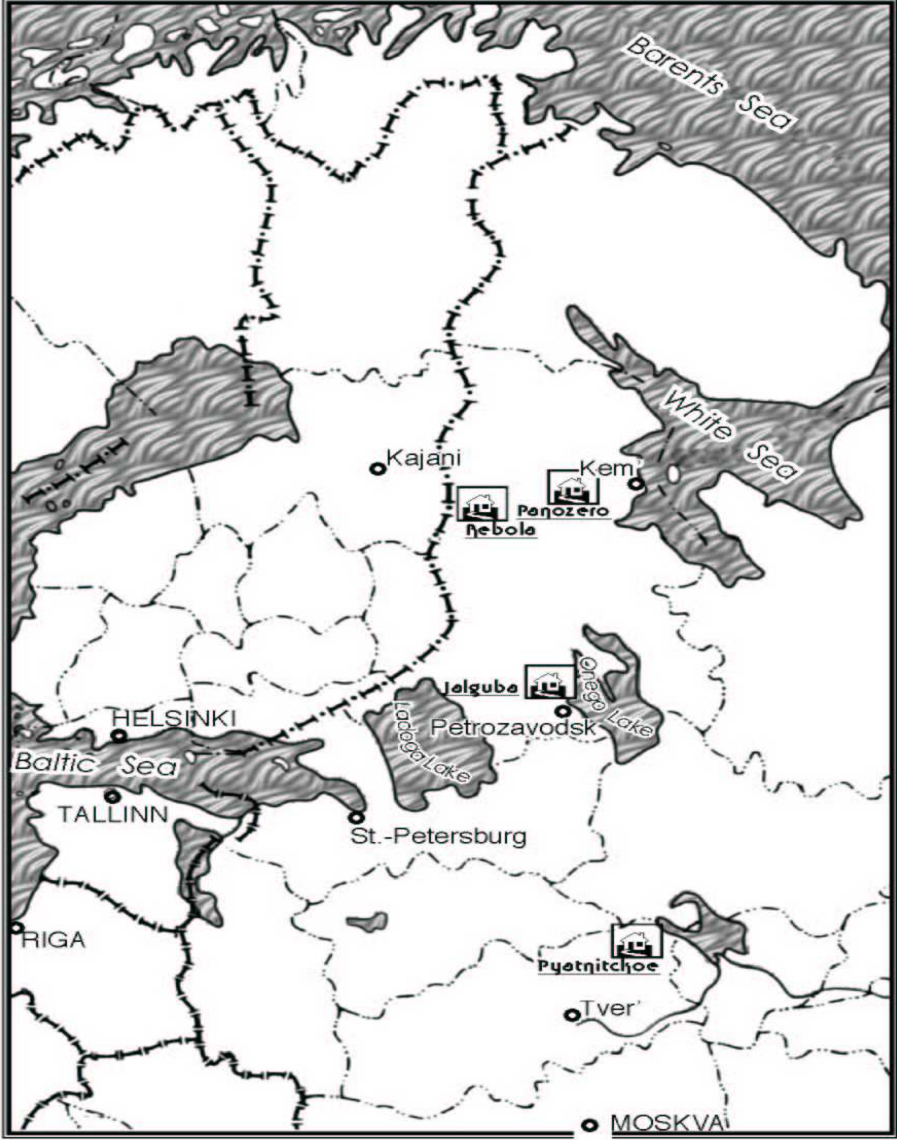
³³ Anderson, *Approaches to the history of the Western family*, 18.

³⁴ Миронов, *Социальная история России*, 161.

³⁵ Б.Н. Миронов, *Традиционное демографическое поведение крестьян в XIX – начале XX вв* (Moscow 1977) 90.

and ethics, families of girls who had illegitimate children fell victim to public scorn.

Figure 1 Map of north-west Russia showing the area investigated



The minimum age for marriage was set very low by the Orthodox Church. In accordance with the special regulations of 1774 the minimum age for

women was set at 13 and for men at 15.³⁶ These age limits had been even lower before. According to the 'Sobornoe Ulozhenie' of 1649, even a 12-year-old girl could marry.³⁷ These low ages seem to be associated with the ancient church rules of the Russian Church authorities which originated from the Greek Orthodox Church. However, in 1830 the official minimum age for bride and groom was raised significantly by the Russian emperor to 16 and 18 respectively.³⁸

The well-known Russian social historian Boris Mironov is convinced that the age at which girls in Russia married at the beginning of the eighteenth century was 12-14 and for boys 13-15.³⁹ In his opinion, everything seems to suggest that the tradition of marrying at such a very young age had already existed for a long time. Nevertheless, according to his data, the law declared by the State authorities and supported by the Orthodox Church influenced marriage behaviour a great deal, resulting in a significant rise in the average age at first marriage for girls from 15-16 to 18-20 and for boys from 16-18 to 20-21.⁴⁰

The age at marriage in large parts of Russia was also influenced by age boundaries set by the noble estate owners for their private estate population. The landlord (*pomeshchik*) could change these boundaries if the specific economic situation on his landed property warranted this. For example, in a local instruction issued by the landowner, Prince (*knyaz*) Scherbatov, in 1758 and addressed to all inhabitants of his estate in the province of Yaroslavl, girls were obliged to marry by their eighteenth birthday and boys by their twentieth year.⁴¹ Other examples show that seigneurial interference in the marriage process could very often be much more powerful and dramatic. Czap wrote about an order made by Prince Gagarin, addressed to his estate Mishino in December 1817, announcing the opening of a cloth mill on one of his other estates, Petrovskaya, which needed young female workers to be selected from unmarried girls aged 15 years and older.⁴² Parents were given the option of arranging marriages for their daughters before arrival in Mishino of an agent of the prince or risk losing their girls to a far away part of their landowner's estate. According to the next register dated February 1818, several girls aged 16, 17 and 18 did indeed get married after the issue of the order. Interestingly, the overseer emphasised particularly that a number of girls

³⁶ Л.А. Гурвич, *Экономическое положение русской деревни* (Moscow 1896) 60; D. Atkinson, 'Society and the sexes in the Russian past', in: D. Atkinson, A. Dallin and G. Warshofsky Lapidus (eds.), *Women in Russia* (Hassocks 1978) 30.

³⁷ Миронов, *Социальная история России*, 167.

³⁸ А.М. Анфимов, *Крестьянское хозяйство Европейской России: 1881-1904* (Moscow 1980) 24-27.

³⁹ Миронов, *Социальная история России*, 163.

⁴⁰ Миронов, *Социальная история России*, 167.

⁴¹ В. Александров, *Сельская община в России (XVII - начало XIX в.)* (Moscow 1976) 304.

⁴² Czap, 'A large family', 120.

were unsuitable for marriage because of physical handicaps and, moreover, making it clear how pressing the lord's will was, several girls of 15 and 16 years old were labelled as immature (*malorosla*) to explain why they were not able to get married immediately. Such instructions were regularly given to their managers (*prikazchik*) by the landowners and so are widely present in archive collections. These kind of documents always contain special regulations in the sphere of marriage in accordance with Mironov's conclusions. It was everyday practice for landlords to recommend their peasants to marry as early as possible.⁴³

It has to be mentioned in this respect that only one of our Karelian parishes, namely the estate Pyatnitckoe located in the province of Tver', was subject to the will of a landlord, the retired lieutenant-general Ivan Chertkov, and after 1849 his nephew staff-captain Alexander Chertkov. Two other parishes, Rebola and Yalguba, were inhabited by peasants who were not ruled by any private person in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These areas were located on the so-called black lands (*chernosshnye zemli*) which were state owned and mainly situated in north-west Russia.

The usual age at marriage of Karelian peasants

The specific marriage pattern is one of the important factors influencing household size and household composition and reflects the way in which people view family life. Although it would appear that the dynamics of marriage among Russian peasants is fully understood, the data obtained for Rebola, Yalguba and Pyatnitckoe make it clear that in Karelian parishes the pattern of marriage was quite different from the model previously presented in historiography.

The East European marriage pattern in the rural parts of Yaroslavl seems to have been less pronounced than in the Ryasan area, as shown by comparing the data published by Mitteraurer and Kagan⁴⁴ with that reported by Czap. The marriage behaviour in this last village is an illustration of what was common among people living under the strict control of landlords at the end of the eighteenth century in central Russian provinces.

Table 3 compares the percentages of people married in different age groups in the rural populations of Mishino (data obtained by Czap), of Yaroslavl (data obtained by Mitteraurer and Kagan) and of Pyatnitckoe (data from the archives). Clearly, the marriage pattern found in Pyatnitckoe is somewhere in between that of the other two. The group of the youngest men shows the biggest differences. In Mishino a majority of the men were married before their twentieth birthday (55%) while in Yaroslavl this group

⁴³ Миронов, *Социальная история России*, 167-168.

⁴⁴ Mitteraurer and Kagan, 'Russian and Central European family structures', 118.

was much smaller (13%) and approximately one fifth (22%) of the young men in the age category 15–19 were already married in Pyatnitckoe. It is also clear that in each of these areas almost all the people were married by their thirtieth birthday.

Table 3 Percentages of married people by age groups in different Russian villages around 1800

	Men (%)			Women (%)		
	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
Mishino 1814	54.7	94.7	96.4	34.4	90.3	97.6
Pyatnitckoe 1782	22.2	66.0	90.0	40.2	81.7	97.5
Yaroslavl 1762	13.0	52.4	77.3	25.8	65.2	95.9

Source: Czup, 'A large family', 119; State Archive of Tver' region (*Gosudarstvennyi Arhiv Tver'skoi Oblasti*, GATO), collection 312, catalogue 6, volume 117; Mitteraurer and Kagan, 'Russian and central European family structures', 118.

Table 4 compares the percentages of people married before the age of 30 in Rebola (Povenets region), Yalguba (Petrozavodsk region) and Pyatnitckoe (Tver' region), all for the same year, 1782. Different models of marriage behaviour can be seen for the same age group in these Karelian parishes, which are situated a long way from each other.

Table 4 Percentages of married people by age groups in Karelian villages in 1782

	Men (%)			Women (%)		
	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
Rebola	12.3	27.6	40.9	38.7	44.9	65.1
	n=65	n=76	n=66	n=75	n=49	n=43
Yalguba	6.5	50.0	60.0	22.6	73.5	92.5
	n=31	n=42	n=35	n=31	n=34	n=40
Pyatnitckoe	22.2	66.0	90.0	40.2	81.7	97.5
	n=99	n=94	n=79	n=87	n=104	n=80

Source: NARK, collection 4, catalogue 18, volume 9/58; volume 2/5; volume 2/10; GATO, collection 312, catalogue 6, volume 117. NB: n is the total number in the specific age group.

Pyatnitckoe was under the private control of a landlord so it is understandable why its marriage pattern reflects a different model of behaviour compared with that of the parishes of Rebola and Yalguba. This was related to the private wishes of the landowner of the estate of Pyatnitckoe, who could make regulations or at least could make his expectations regarding marriage very clear to the people living on his land, and because the people were heavily dependent on their landlord for their economic existence these wishes would

have been very important to them. The local parish priest also usually supported these kinds of orders about how the people were to manage their everyday lives. It must be emphasised that the youngest husbands recorded in the Revision of 1782 were three boys aged 15, three boys aged 16 and five boys aged 17. Only one girl aged 16 and ten aged 17 were found recorded as wives. All other persons in the youngest group of married people (22 men and 35 women) were already at least 18 years old.

While a fifth of the boys and almost every second girl between the ages of 15 and 19 living in the villages around the parish centre, *selo*, of Pyatnitckoe were already married, this was true for only about one tenth of the boys in Rebola and little more than one in twenty of the boys in this age range in Yalguba and for only a fifth of the girls there. A possible reason for this was the influence of the educated section of society, which was much stronger in the surroundings of Petrozavodsk, the capital of the Olonets province. Several administrative state institutions, schools and a hospital with a staff of professional medical workers who regularly contributed to the pages of the local newspaper '*Olonetckie Gubernskie Vedomosti*' were situated in Petrozavodsk. Gradually knowledge about the disadvantages of early marriages not only for the couple but also for their children spread through the peasant population, reflecting the influence of changes in the law and the ideas of enlightenment prevalent in society.

A very important factor affecting the marriage behaviour in two of the parishes discussed was the common practice of the men to regularly leave their native villages for a long time in search of additional earnings elsewhere in order to maintain their families. This explains why a significant percentage of the age group 25 to 29, particularly of the men (40% in Yalguba and 59% in Rebola) were still not married. Almost no unmarried women in this age group were found in Yalguba but they were quite common in Rebola with about 35% of the women aged between 25 and 29 still single. A possible explanation of this is that a lot of people were resettled by special order of the local authorities to villages near Petrozavodsk, one of which was Yalguba which was quite close to the provincial capital. These retired soldiers or factory workers had quite often never had their own families and were eager to look for a spouse when starting their new private lives. In contrast, in the parish of Rebola, which at the end of the eighteenth century was located a long way away from any centre of industry, the marriage pattern clearly demonstrates that a significant proportion of the local population was not ready to marry until after the age of thirty. Men were actively involved in trade and were very often not at home during the hunting season and sometimes even for longer periods. Because migration was limited, except for the traders who visited far away markets in Russia and Finland and sometimes

brought home wives from elsewhere, it was not easy for local women to find a husband.

The data reported for Mishino may be accepted as typical for Greater Russia whereas the marriage pattern in the Karelian parish of Pyatnitckoe, which was located in the Tver' region, one of the Central Russian Provinces, with the inhabitants living under the private control of Captain Chertkov, is clearly different for the youngest men. In the age group 15-19, more than one in five of the men (23%) was already married in Mishino, but only one in nine (12%) in Pyatnitckoe. On the other hand, it was more common for the girls aged between 15 and 19 to be married already in Pyatnitckoe compared to Mishino. In other respects these two places did not differ by very much with almost every man and woman in the age group 25 to 29 being married in both Pyatnitckoe and Mishino, and a large number of people already being married between the ages of 20 and 24. However, the marriage patterns in Rebola and Yalguba in Karelia in north-west Russia are very different from these two villages which had more or less typical Russian conditions. As is shown in Table 5, in Rebola in 1850 no young man was married before his twentieth birthday, and it was also very rare (0.9%) for women to be married as young as that.

Table 5 Percentages of married people by age groups in Rebola, Yalguba, Pyatnitckoe and Mishino in 1850

	Men (%)			Women (%)		
	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
Rebola	0.0 n=108	7.4 n=108	31.5 n=89	0.9 n=108	32.6 n=92	55.7 n=79
Yalguba	6.3 n=63	37.0 n=46	65.2 n=46	12.3 n=65	61.5 n=52	86.8 n=53
Pyatnitckoe	11.7 n=103	83.5 n=67	88.1 n=59	31.0 n=84	69.0 n=71	85.5 n=83
Mishino	22.6	82.5	98.1	23.6	87.1	94.1

Source: NARK, collection 4, catalogue 18, volume 70/696; volume 61/566; GATO, collection 312, catalogue 6, volume 683; Czap, 'A large family', 119. NB: n is the total number in the specific age group, which is not known for Mishino.

In Rebola age at marriage had evidently risen during the fifty years before 1850. Table 5 shows that the number of people already married at age 25 was quite insignificant, particularly for the men with about 93% of them still unmarried at that age and even in the age group 25-29 a lot of people were still unmarried (69% of men and 44% of women). In the Yalguba parish, situated on the shore of Lake Onega, many people were also still unmarried between the ages of 20 and 24 (63% of the men and 35% of the women). It was not

uncommon for men to celebrate their thirtieth birthdays still single, and even as many as one in ten of the women were forced to remain a spinster (*staraya deva*) for quite a long time.

It must be concluded that in the parish communities investigated less than half of the women were married by the age of 21. This is a relatively high marriage age in comparison with most areas in Imperial Russia between the end of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth centuries.

Age differences within marriages

Rebola shows the most interesting situation with regard to the common age difference between husband and wife. The Karelian peasants here lived very close to the Finnish border and had several relations across that border. Traders used to stay for quite long periods in the Russian capital of St Petersburg, or in different towns mainly in western Finland or in Sweden. Because of this they would have been likely to adopt a model of marriage behaviour more similar to that common in Western Europe. The Soul Revision list for Rebola in 1782 registered 296 households and that of 1850 registered 271 households. We have estimated 164 farmsteads and 236 conjugal family units in 1782 and 211 farmsteads and 317 conjugal family units in 1850.

Table 6 Age differences within married couples in the parish of Rebola in 1782 and 1850

Age difference	1782 (%)	1850 (%)	1782 (number)	1850 (number)
Man more than 20 years older	3.0	1.9	7	6
Man 16-20 years older	3.4	2.5	8	8
Man 11-15 years older	5.5	11.7	13	37
Man 8-10 years older	6.4	12.9	15	41
Man 4-7 years older	20.3	22.4	48	71
Man 1-3 years older	21.2	17.7	50	56
Equal ages	10.6	6.3	25	20
Woman 1-3 years older	17.8	14.8	42	47
Woman 4-7 years older	6.8	5.4	16	17
Woman 8-10 years older	2.1	2.5	5	8
Woman 11-15 years older	1.7	1.6	4	5
Woman 16-20 years older	0.8	0.3	2	1
Woman more than 20 years older	0.4	0.0	1	0
Total	100.0	100.0	236	317

Source: NARK, collection 4, catalogue 18, volume 9/58, volume 70/696.

Historiography normally states that ‘A unique feature of the Russian peasant marriage pattern... is the small age difference between spouses’.⁴⁵ However, the data presented in Table 6 is not in accordance with that conclusion. This brings us again to the question as to which model of marriage pattern the northern Karelian peasants belonged. It should be noted first of all that some of the husbands and wives in Rebola had the same age, 11% of all the couples at the end of the eighteenth century and about 6% in the middle of the nineteenth century. Table 6 shows that in 1782 the wife was older than her husband in 70 (30%) of the 236 conjugal units and in 141 (59%) she was younger. A small difference of between 1 to 3 years was found in only 82 cases (35%). Almost the same can be said for 1850 with a small difference between the wife's and husband's age in 33% of the cases. For the majority of couples the difference was more than 3 years and for a significant number of the marriages this difference can be termed large, from 8 to more than 20 years.

Panozero as an example of the local model of marriage behaviour and changes to this in White Sea Karelia

Analysis of the sources clearly shows that different models of marriage behaviour were in existence among Karelian peasants. Some of these differences can be explained by using the traditional arguments put forward by earlier scholars. Because the observations are to a certain extent theoretical, it was decided to show in depth how these models of marriage behaviour developed over a longer period of time in a rural society. The central settlement of Panozero that consisted of two villages, Pogost (*Pogoskaya*) and Mandera (*Manderskaya*), was chosen for this study. Western influences coming from Finland were less prominent in Panozero than, for example, in nearby Rebola. At the same time, the inhabitants of Panozero took part in trade and other market activities in the north of Russia although their main occupation was still agriculture.

It is not possible to study marriage behaviour in White Sea Karelia before the middle of the eighteenth century. It was not until the 1760s that the Russian government paid any attention to the female part of the population, when officials were first asked to also record the ages of women. This means that the third population census – the first had taken place in the 1720s and the second in the 1740s – provides the oldest data on the average age at marriage.

The percentages of married men and women in the different years show that local marriage traditions changed radically throughout the period under study. Between the 1760s and the 1850s the more active males and also the

⁴⁵ Czap, ‘A large family’, 119.

traditionally more passive females changed their marriage behaviour considerably.

Table 7 Percentages of married men and women aged between 15 and 29 in Panozero, 1764-1858

	Men			Women		
	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29
1764	11.8	25.0	75.0	16.7	30.8	60.0
1782	16.7	40.0	66.7	27.3	26.3	66.7
1795	0.0	18.2	50.0	4.5	50.0	66.7
1834	0.0	23.1	66.7	8.3	50.0	60.0
1858	0.0	7.7	25.0	0.0	12.5	61.5

Source: RGADA, collection 350, catalogue 2, volume 2407; State Archive of Archangel Province (*Gosudarstvennyi Archiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti*, GAAO), collection 51, catalogue 11, chapter 2, volume 2710; chapter 8, volume 12868; chapter 23, volume 412.

It is clear that the intention of marrying before the age of 20 gradually disappeared. By the end of the eighteenth century almost none of the men aged between 15 and 19 were married whereas in the 1760s and 1780s more than 10% of this age group had been. The same process took place with the women, though slightly later. About one in six of the women aged between 15 and 19 living in Panozero in 1764 were already married. This had increased to as much as a quarter of this age group in 1782. However, only 13 years later in 1795, being married before the age of 20 had already become quite exceptional and in the middle of the nineteenth century there were no such cases at all.

The data for the age group 20-24 also shows that the age at marriage increased during the period under study. Both men and women in this age range were considered by local public opinion to be mature enough to marry and between one in three and one in four of the women aged 20 to 24 was married in 1764 and 1782. At the very end of the eighteenth century and around 1834 as many as 50% of these women already had a husband. However, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the share of married women in that age group dropped drastically to one in eight. At that time the percentage of married men aged 20 to 24 was even less at 8%, whereas earlier it had been considerably higher ranging from 18% in 1795 to as much as 40% in 1782.

The proportion of married men and women among the oldest group analysed (25-29) also shows the same trend with the percentage of men in Panozero in the age group 25-29 who already had to support a family decreasing from 75% to 25% between 1764 and 1858. In contrast, the percent-

age of married women in that age group remained stable and surprisingly rather low. It is therefore clear that a large number of women (between 33 and 40%) were still not married during the second half of their twenties, an age which can be considered critical from the point of view of physiology and the ability to reproduce. The question arises whether this means that the majority of these women never enjoyed the pleasures of becoming a wife and mother. The clear answer to this question is no.

The analysis of the sources from the Soul Revisions (SR) shows that the marriage of a mature person was not unusual in Panozero. More than 40 unmarried women aged between 20 and 51 and 15 bachelors aged between 20 and 36 were mentioned in the list of 1782. The data from Table 8 suggests that by 1782 the majority of women living in Panozero who celebrated their twentieth, twenty-fifth or even thirty-fifth birthday while unmarried still had a good chance of marrying later on. The fate of those singles during the following 13 years can be traced by comparing the SR of 1782 with those of 1795 (Table 9).

Table 8 The number of unmarried men and women aged 20 years or older in Panozero in 1782

	Women	Men
20 - 24	14	5
25 - 29	13	7
30 - 34	1	2
35 - 39	6	1
40 - 44	3	0
45 - 49	1	0
50 >	3	0
Total	41	15

Source: GAAO, collection 51, catalogue 11, chapter 2, volume 2710.

It is therefore clear that at the end of the eighteenth century even single women in Panozero who were much older than 20 had a good chance of getting married. Only four girls among the twenty-seven aged between 20 and 27 were forced to stay single, approaching the status of 'old maid', while 19 women (or 70%) had successfully founded a family. Another three women died at the ages of 29, 30 and 31 respectively.

As has already been stated, even unmarried women over the age of 30 sometimes still had the opportunity of finding a husband. Three local examples can be given, first Fevronia, aged 32, from the village of Mandera and second daughter of Dimitry Kuzmin who was already dead by that time (two other grown-up daughters of Kuzmin are mentioned in the documents Domna aged 37 and Marya aged 26), second Matrena, aged 35, a sister of

Alexy Merculiev, the head of an extended family consisting of 9 persons, and third the orphan Varvara, 3 years older than Matrena, who had to bring up her little sister after the death of their parents. Public opinion considered these three women to be spinsters but they were all visited by relatives of their prospective husbands with the aim of arranging a marriage and in each case the marriage took place and the couples successfully raised children.

Table 9 The fate of unmarried women from different age groups in Panozero between 1782 and 1795

Age in 1782	Personal events				Total
	'died'	'went nobody knows where'	'got married'	'left as old maid'	
20 - 27	3	1	19	4	27
33 - 39	2	1	3	1	7
41 - 47	1	0	0	3	4
50 - 51	1	0	0	2	3
Total	7	2	22	10	41

Source: GAAO, collection 51, catalogue 11, chapter 2, volume 2710.

Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Panozero

The data suggests that there was a shortage of men in Panozero around the middle of the nineteenth century. Table 10 shows that the percentage of young women remained nearly constant at about 25% of the total female population in Panozero but that the percentage of young men recorded by the revision officials fluctuated a great deal, sometimes increasing (from 20% in the 1760s to more than 33% in the 1790s), then decreasing again (to 27% in the 1830s) and falling to only 16% by the end of the 1850s. Over the whole period between 1795 and 1858 the percentage of young men decreased drastically (by more than half). An important question is what social circumstances caused this development.

It is reasonable to relate this phenomenon to labour activities. Although there is not much statistical material at a local level there is sufficient evidence available to state that men from Panozero actively participated in fishing and hunting at sea (*rybnye i zverinye promysly*) which was common on the White Sea coast. They also organized special labour companies, so-called *arteli*, for squirrel and deer hunting and they were engaged in the seasonal work of cutting and floating timber. Some also went away to serve as coachmen at the Finnish fairs in Kajani, Kuopio and Torneo as well as at the main fair in the Olonets region which was held regularly in Shunga three times a year. These are all reasons why most of the active men were regularly away from Panozero for quite long periods.

Table 10 The percentage of people aged between 15 and 29 in the population of Panozero, 1764-1858

	Men			Women			Total		
	total	15-29 years		total	15-29 years		total	15-29 years	
		Abs.	%		Abs.	%		Abs.	%
1764	161	33	20.5	172	41	23.8	333	74	22.2
1782	154	43	27.9	231	57	24.7	385	100	26.0
1795	121	42	34.7	149	42	28.2	270	84	31.1
1834	151	41	27.2	154	38	24.7	305	79	25.9
1858	174	27	15.5	184	42	23.1	358	69	19.4

Source: RGADA, collection 350, catalogue 2, volume 2407; GAAO, collection 51, catalogue 11, chapter 2, volume 2710; chapter 8, volume 12868; chapter 23, volume 412.

Statistics published by Golubtsov for the beginning of the twentieth century help in determining the significance of the different non-agricultural activities of the local peasants.⁴⁶ The number of people involved as well as the amount of income resulting differed a great deal throughout Karelia. The geographical position, how far the area was situated from the White Sea coast, was a significant factor. Historians have traditionally pointed out the significance of hunting at sea and fishing nearby the Murmansk and Norwegian White Sea coasts. Data from the beginning of the twentieth century for Panozero can, however, give a more precise picture. As shown in Figure 2, agriculture was the main livelihood in Panozero (41% of the total income). A great deal of the income also came from the cutting and transport of timber (10%). Men of Panozero also used to work in sawmills and as coachmen. They went fishing and hunting to sell the catch and some of them cut and sold firewood or went to the coast at Murmansk to earn money.

Several historians emphasize that trade was one of the most popular occupational activities among the White Sea Karelian population. One of them, Olenov, wrote: 'you could hardly meet a man here who wouldn't try to sell small goods at least once in his life as a pedlar'.⁴⁷ This statement also holds good for Panozero where at the beginning of the twentieth century about one fifth of the total income was earned by trading small goods (*korobeinichestvo*) in the neighbouring Finnish provinces.

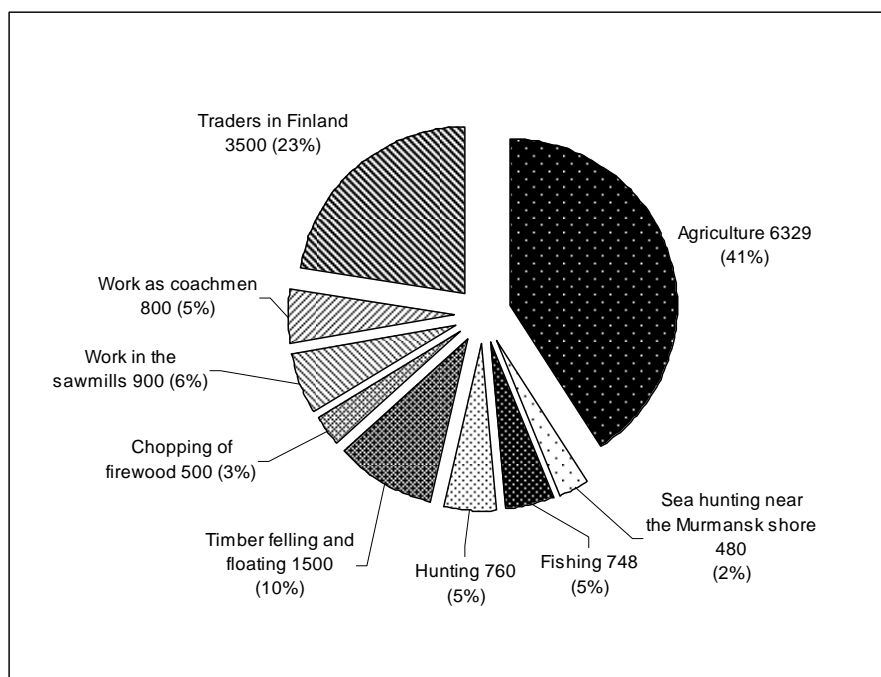
Chubinsky, an authority on the history of rural life in Karelia, stated: 'from the middle of August almost all the young men left for Finland. They visited Finnish settlements and villages to trade goods for money. They called

⁴⁶ Н.А. Голубцов, Кемский уезд. В кн.: *Памятная книжка Архангельской губернии на 1912 год / Издание Архангельского губернского статистического комитета* (Archangelsk 1913) 125.

⁴⁷ Оленов, По Карелии. В кн.: *Ежемесячное приложение к журналу "Нива" за 1902 год*.

themselves merchants (*kuptsy*)...'.⁴⁸ As secretary of the Statistics Committee of the Archangelsk province (*gubernia*), he collected data for the Kem region in the middle of the nineteenth century from all available sources, including interviews with some peasants and priests. His statistical data can be used as indirect evidence for the fact that the decrease in the number of young men in Panozero was the result of a high level of activity in the field of commerce and crafts by the local peasants. According to a table published by Chubinsky, the inhabitants of Panozero had more money left over (67 roubles and 11 kopecks) even after paying the taxes regularly imposed by the government,⁴⁹ despite the appalling poverty of the Karelians.

Figure 2 Sources of income in Panozero at the beginning of the 20th century (in roubles)



As a sum of money, 67 roubles is not much (particularly when it is taken into account that this amount relates to an average household), but the fact that Panozero peasants had twice or even three times as much as the inhabitants of

⁴⁸ П. Чубинский, *Статистическо-этнографический очерк Корелы; Труды Архангельского Статистического Комитета за 1865 год*. Т. 2. (Archangelsk 1866) 90.

⁴⁹ Nikolaj Kamkin wrote that Karelian peasants had to pay 5 roubles 25 kopecks for each person or about 19 roubles for each family.

Uhta (33 roubles), Jushkozero (30 roubles), Voknavolok (21 roubles) or even the people from Maslozero who worked in the profitable⁵⁰ blacksmith's trade (58 roubles), shows that the inhabitants of Panozero were greatly interested in earning extra money to supplement their income obtained from rather poor agriculture.

Table 11 Percentage of children in the population of Panozero, 1764-1900

	Male			Female			Total		
	Total	Children < 15		Total	Children < 15		Total	Children < 15	
	Abs.	Abs.	%	Abs.	Abs.	%	Abs.	Abs.	%
1764	161	72	44.7	172	55	32.0	333	127	38.1
1782	154	51	33.1	231	78	33.8	385	129	33.5
1795	121	25	20.7	149	32	21.5	270	57	21.1
1834	151	60	39.7	154	49	31.8	305	109	35.7
1858	174	66	37.9	184	62	33.7	358	128	35.8
1900	159	49	30.8	204	63	30.9	363 ⁵¹	112	30.9
1910	186	61	32.8	230	70	30.4	416 ⁵²	131	31.5

Source: RGADA, collection 350, catalogue 2, volume 2407; GAAO, collection 51, catalogue 11, chapter 2, volume 2710; chapter 23, volume 412; collection 29, catalogue 29, volume 605; volume 615.

The absence of men for many weeks or even months would significantly have influenced the reproduction figures in Panozero. A first requirement is to check that there was no demographic disaster taking place within this local community of two villages. An adequate indicator of pre-industrial demographic development is the proportion of children in a population which would normally be between one third and a half. According to the standards of that time girls and boys were to be considered as grown up and workers (*rabotniki*) after they were 15 years old while books written in the seventeenth century referred to girls and boys older than 14 as ready to work (*v rabotu pospelí*). Inhabitants of farmsteads who were younger than 14 were therefore considered to be children (*nedoroslí*). Table 11 shows that the proportion of children in Panozero remained stable throughout the period under investiga-

⁵⁰ There were 8 forges in Maslozero at the beginning of the 1860s, each yielding at least 300 roubles of pure income per year. Maslozero blacksmiths were considered to be the main suppliers of guns, axes, scythes and sickles in White Sea Karelia. Maslozero craftsmen sold these essential goods in the whole of the Olonets region.

⁵¹ In fact Panozero actually had more inhabitants in 1900. The SR only provides data on the peasants so information from twentieth century sources was combined with this. Some other categories of the population also lived in Panozero, such as clergy (*prichetniki*) and their families and military personnel (*voennye*) stationed in frontier territories in order to protect them. This special group consisted of 32 men and 33 women in Panozero so that at the beginning of the twentieth century Panozero had a total population of about 441.

⁵² There is no data on the military in the church registers from 1910. The total Panozero population, including the clergy and the members of their families, can be estimated at 422.

tion, so the reproduction process can be characterized as positive and in balance with the traditional way of life.

The variations in the percentages of boys (from 30% to 45%) and girls (from 30% to 38%) can be considered as normal for the demographic behaviour of pre-industrial societies in Russia.⁵³ Only the figures for 1795 are unusual. In that year children (both girls and boys) formed only 20% of the Panozero population. It should be taken into account that the total population of Panozero in 1795 was only 270, which was 30% less than the maximum of 385 thirteen years earlier in 1782 and was the lowest figure for the whole period being studied. The total population had increased to 416 in 1910, which was 35% more than in the critical year 1795.

Marriage behaviour at the beginning of the twentieth century

After analyzing the documentary sources the conclusion can be drawn that nothing extraordinary happened in the sphere of demographic development except small decreases in the population, which took place at the turn of the centuries. It is also clear that the age at marriage increased throughout the period from the 1760s to the middle of the nineteenth century. The data on the beginning of the twentieth century will now be analyzed. Although there are no Soul Revision lists and the last inspection was organized in Russia in 1858, the Confessional Lists prepared by the clergy can be used and these can easily be combined with the data from the previous centuries. Unfortunately, this source has not always been preserved completely, but the unique opportunity of analyzing the lists of inhabitants in 1900 and 1910, where the family status and the age was indicated in every case, exists for Panozero. The lists of names was prepared by the local priest Vasily Petohov, who diligently and regularly filled in the forms sent from the consistory and did not forget to note his parishioners' presence or absence at Confession and the Eucharist.⁵⁴

These sources show that at the beginning of the twentieth century, just as in the nineteenth century, men in Panozero preferred to marry after they were at least 20 years old. Table 12 shows that there were no men younger than 20 married in Panozero during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The situation around 1900–1910, however, resembles that of 1834 more than that of 1858. This is mainly caused by fluctuations in the age at marriage. As Table 12 shows, in the twentieth century some girls married before they were 20, although this occurred less often than in their great grand-

⁵³ Demographers concluded that the percentage of children younger than 15 in pre-industrial societies could change and on average was about 40%. This conclusion was drawn for the situation in Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century. See *Воспроизводство населения в СССР* (Moscow 1983) 261.

⁵⁴ Thanks to T. Hamunen, Professor at Joensuu University (Finland), who kindly allowed me to use the documents copied by him in the GAAO.

mothers' time in the eighteenth century. Probably the situation in 1858, when there were no such young wives, was an exception for Panozero. It is also clear that many more people (both men and women) married when they were aged between 25 and 29 (see Table 7 for a comparison). In 1900, no less than 82% of the men in this age group already had their own families while 10 years later 80% of the women of that age were already married.

It must be borne in mind that the SR and CL are mass sources and therefore can only provide the data of the local society as a whole. This is the reason why another group of sources, the Church Registers (ChR) were also investigated. This material contains information on the individual lives of members of the local community. The analysis of the ChR helps to verify the conclusions given above about the marriage age in Panozero.

Table 12 The percentage of married men and women aged 25-29 in Panozero, 1900-1910

	Men			Women		
	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29
1900	0.0	40.0	81.8	5.5	50.0	73.3
1910	0.0	23.1	73.3	4.3	22.2	80.0

Source: GAAO, collection 29, catalogue 29, volume 605; volume 615.

The priests were obliged to fill in their regular registers (ChR) with the details of their parishioners' weddings, births and deaths, making it possible to reconstruct the real age of brides and grooms. Although the clergy were only obliged to point out 'rank, occupation, name, the second name, surname, faith and where the person lived', as a rule they also found it necessary to note when the bride and groom were going to marry. The diligence of the priests is understandable because it was forbidden to marry people who had not been divorced. If one of the partners was not marrying for the first time, it was necessary to examine the circumstances in which the previous marriage ended. They were asked especially to specify those who wanted to marry for the fourth time, because the Orthodox church authorities considered three marriages to be enough for one person. Usually the age of the bride and groom was also recorded as the clergy had to prevent boys younger than 18 and girls younger than 16,⁵⁵ as well as people older than 80, from marrying.

According to these records, 29 weddings were celebrated in the period 1873-1877 in the main parish church of St. Iliya in Panozero. More than half of the brides and grooms (19 couples) were from Panozero itself. The major-

⁵⁵ There was an exception for priests who had parishes in Southern Russia as stated in a special church order: 'in the Zakavkazsky region boys could marry when they were 15 and girls when they were 13 years old'. See М. Ливанов (ed.), *Свод Законов Российской Империи. Т. X. Ч. 1. Ст. 3; Устав духовных консисторий* (1874) 30.

ity of the partners (11 out of 19 couples) also came from Panozero. Only 6 brides came from other villages – 3 from Sopasalma, 1 from Pebozero and 1 from Ushkovo, which were all part of the nearby Jushkozero parish and Maslozero district and 1 from Nikonova Varaka, a part of Muezero parish situated slightly further away. Two men came from Maslozero – Dimitry, son of Grigory Dimitriev, and Pavel, son of Prokopy Gavrilov – to marry girls from Panozero and to continue to live there.

More evidence for the increased age at marriage is that in the period 1873–1877 only 2 (out of 19) couples were younger than 19. These were Feodor, son of Jacob Dementiev, 18 years old, who married Vassa, daughter of Karp Karbasnikov, aged 19, and Anton, son of Maxim Popov, 19 years old, who married Marina, daughter of Sisoj Bogdanov from the village of Sopasalma, also aged 19. There were three other brides who were only 19, two of them were 3 years and the other 7 years younger than their husbands. Timophej, son of Terentij Nikiforov, aged 22, married an 18-year-old girl, Domnika, daughter of Gavriila Kulliev from the village of Pebozero, in the nearby Maslozero district. All the other brides and grooms were between 20 and 29 according to the records (ChR).

In Panozero, just as elsewhere in Karelia, weddings were traditionally celebrated in the winter. The Finnish scholar Hamunen, who investigated wedding ceremonies in the Suojarvi region, pointed out that throughout the period from 1802 to 1918 local peasants preferred to marry in January and February, while by the end of the nineteenth century, following the example of their Finnish western neighbours, they also started to organize weddings in the autumn, from September to November. Research carried out by Turpeinen shows that the most popular ‘wedding month’ in the nineteenth century in Lutheran Finland was December.⁵⁶ According to the ChR that have been analysed, Panozero peasants evidently preferred to organize the weddings of their children in January (10) and February (5). Only 4 couples celebrated their marriages in summer, at the end of June or during July.

As in the whole of Russia wedding dates in Panozero depended to a very large extent on the Church calendar. According to the Orthodox Church Order, priests could not hold wedding ceremonies during fasting. They had to abide by the Christmas Fast (14 November to 6 January), the Easter Fast, the Fast of St. Peter (from the first Sunday after Holy Trinity Day to 29 June) and the Fast of the Assumption of Our Lady (from 1–15 August). It was also forbidden to marry on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays or on the eve of the

⁵⁶ T. Hamunen, ‘Paha pahan kera, pahatta vie pahempi’: Rajakarjalaiset avioliitot erilaisten kontaktien kuvaajana 1802–1918’, in: *Ihmisiä, Ilmiöitä ja Rakenteita Historian Virassa* (Joensuu 2001) 230.

Great Orthodox holidays, including the days of the coronation and inauguration of the Russian emperor.⁵⁷

One of the main characteristics of the model of marriage behaviour in a society is the age difference between the partners (Table 13). The percentage of traditional families where the wife was younger than the husband clearly decreased in Panozero from 82% in 1782 to 57% in 1910, while the percentage of the couples where the husband and wife were of the same age increased (from 8% in 1782 to 14% in 1910). The number of marriages in which the husband was younger than his wife also increased. Such families were rather rare (only 10%) in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. However, in the middle of the nineteenth century, 23% of wives were older than their husbands and this increased to 30% by 1910.

Table 13 Age differences between husband and wife in Panozero families, 1858-1910

	Age differences in marriages			Total number of marriages
	Wife older than husband	Wife younger than husband	Wife and husband of same age	
1782	7 (10%)	60 (82%)	6 (8%)	73 (100%)
1858	15 (23%)	44 (69%)	5 (7%)	64 (100%)
1910	22 (30%)	42 (57%)	10 (14%)	74 (100%)

Source: GAAO, collection 51, catalogue 11, chapter 2, volume 2710; chapter 23, volume 412; collection 29, catalogue 29, volume 615.

It is important to determine the exact age differences between husbands and wives, because a situation where the woman was only one to three years older than the man cannot be considered as very critical from both biological (the ability to give birth) and social (the participation of the daughter-in-law in decisions concerning family problems) points of view. The data shown in Table 14 allows the conclusion to be drawn that the share of marriages in which the wife was older than the husband not only clearly increased (it doubled throughout the period from the middle of the eighteenth to the beginning of the twentieth centuries), but also that there were considerable changes in the characteristics of such marriages.

The age differences are graded as insignificant (from 1 to 3 years), essential (from 4 to 7 years), significant (from 8 to 10 years), great (from 11 to 15 years), enormous (16 years and more) and extraordinary (20 years and more). There were traditionally more families in which the wife was the younger partner than those where the husband was younger. It is clear that such marriages were the norm in the second half of the eighteenth century (63% in 1764 and 82% in 1782). Marriage behaviour did not seem to change radically throughout this period. At the end of the eighteenth century the age differ-

⁵⁷ М. Ливанов (ed.), *Устав духовных консисторий* (1874) 31-32.

ence in the majority of the families was insignificant (63% in 1782 and 53% in 1795) but there were also a lot of situations where the wife was essentially (from 4 to 7 years) younger (30% in 1782 to 43% in 1858) and significantly (from 8 to 10 years) younger than her husband (14% in 1764 to 17% in 1910). Marriages where the wife was 11-15 years younger than her husband were recorded throughout the period under study, but in the second half of the nineteenth century they appear more frequently with 11% in 1858 and 10% in 1900.

Table 14 Differences in age in Panozero married couples, 1764-1910

Difference in age in years	Year						
	1764	1782	1795	1834	1858	1900	1910
A) Wife younger than her husband							
1 - 3	15	38	20	14	15	19	19
	35%	63%	53%	45%	34%	37%	45%
4 - 7	18	18	13	10	19	17	16
	42%	30%	34%	32%	43%	33%	38%
8 - 10	6	2	1	4	5	7	7
	14%	3%	3%	13%	11%	13%	17%
11 - 15	2	1	3	2	5	5	-
	5%	2%	8%	6%	11%	10%	-
16 and more	-	1	1	1	-	2	-
	-	2%	3%	3%	-	5%	-
20 and more	2	-	-	-	-	2	-
	5%	-	-	-	-	5%	-
Total	43	60	38	31	44	52	42
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
B) Wife older than her husband							
1 - 3	9	5	5	8	7	6	11
	82%	71%	71%	50%	46%	38%	50%
4 - 7	1	2	2	7	6	6	9
	9%	29%	29%	44%	40%	38%	42%
8 - 10	-	-	-	-	1	3	1
	-	-	-	-	2%	18%	4%
11 - 15	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
	-	-	-	6%	-	6%	4%
16 and more	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 and more	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
	9%	-	-	-	2%	-	-
Total	11	7	7	16	15	16	22
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: RGADA, collection 350, catalogue 2, volume 2407; GAAO, collection 51, catalogue 11, chapter 2, volume 2710; chapter 8, volume 12868; chapter 23, volume 412; collection 29, catalogue 29, volume 605; volume 615. NB: There were also marriages where the partners were of the same age.

Marriages in which the wife was older than her husband were rather rare in Panozero in the eighteenth century and the age difference was usually not significant (82% in 1764, 71% in 1782 and 1795). Only four wives were 4 years older than their husbands (two in 1782 and two in 1795) and three wives were 7 years older than their husbands (one in each of the years 1764, 1782 and 1795). In the nineteenth century, the percentage of marriages with an older wife clearly increased, with almost 50% of the wives being between 4 and 8 years older (in 1834 and 1858) than their husbands. In this period almost half of the marriages had essential (from 4 to 7 years) or significant (from 8 to 10 years) age differences and this remained the case at the beginning of the twentieth century (9 out of 16 in 1900 and 10 out of 22 in 1910).

The data from the Confessional Lists allows the conclusions derived from the Soul Revision books and Church Registers to be checked. From 1873 to 1877, 12 out of the 19 brides were younger than the grooms (in 2 cases one year younger, 3 cases two years younger, 2 cases three years younger and 5 cases from four to nine years younger), two marriages were between partners of the same age and 4⁵⁸ out of the 19 wives were older than their husbands (in 3 cases one year older and in 1 case four years older).

Together all these sources reveal both that there was a tendency for the age at marriage to increase and that the model of marriage behaviour model in Panozero in the period 1750-1910 changed a great deal. The share of marriages in which the wives were much younger than their husbands gradually decreased, suggesting that a different model of marriage behaviour took over. The traditional model, in which young girls were considered old enough to get married, was a result of the high infant mortality rate and the practice of having as many children as possible in order to be sure that at least some of them would survive into maturity and be able to support their parents.

Conclusions

The investigation concentrated on the territories of three parishes situated in different regions of Karelia. These were Yalguba in the southern part of the Olonets Karelia region, Rebola in the western part of the White Sea Karelia region and Pyatnitckoe in the north-eastern part of the Tver' Karelia region. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries these areas were populated by different groups of Karelians, who had been forced to leave their native land in the neighbourhood of Lake Ladoga in search of new places to live. Many different Karelian dialects are still used locally. Most of the people who settled in the White Sea and in the Tver' regions of Karelia spoke the so-called 'standard Karelian language' (*Sobstvenno karel'skoe narechie*) as shown in the plan published by Petr Zaikov. The people living in the Re-

⁵⁸ NB: In one case the age of the bride was not recorded in the ChR.

bola area, in the northern part of the modern Republic of Karelia and the people who reached Pyatnitckoe in the Tver' Region during the Great Migration of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, spoke languages which belonged to the same southern group of dialects of the Karelian language (*Rebol'sky and Vesiegonsky dialects*), while people living on the shore of Lake Onego in Yalguba parish used to be called *lyudiki*, and spoke a different group of Karelian dialects (*Ludikovskoe narechie*), which were strongly influenced by standard Russian.

The precise area of the investigations will be described more clearly before any conclusions are drawn. There were 11 villages in Yalguba parish with 950 inhabitants at the beginning of the 1780s. Six decades later, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the population had grown to 1,315 people, an increase of 38 percent. There were 31 villages in Rebola parish where the population did not grow as much during the 60-year period investigated, an increase of 15 percent from 1,158 to 1,337 respectively. There were 22 villages in Pyatnitckoe parish with a population of 1,937 in the 1780s which fell to 1860 by the middle of the nineteenth century, a decrease of about 4 percent. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century there was a total population of 4,045 living within the borders of these three parishes. Six decades later the population had increased by 500 people to 4,512. It should also be emphasised that these villages appear to be representative for the regions not only in the sense of quantity, but also in the sense of quality.

These three sites represent quite different natural and social conditions for the people who lived there, and because they were located far from each other allow various conclusions to be drawn. First of all it should be mentioned that the sources show that the models of marriage behaviour in these three Karelian parishes were clearly different.

The data of 1782 show that one in every five young men (22 percent) between the ages of 15 and 19 who lived on the estate of landowner Captain Chertkov Pyatnitckoe in the Tver' region was already married. The peasants in Rebola and Panozero parishes used to organise the marriages of their sons in more or less the same way, and between 12 and 17 percent of these young men were already married. The local peasants of these two parishes in White Sea Karelia followed the Pyatnitckoe marriage practice more closely than that of Yalguba. They did this even though as state peasants or *chemososhnue* (*gosudarstvennye krestyane*) they were never subjected to the powerful will of a private landowner. It should also be mentioned that the native historiography used to relate the everyday behaviour in such local communities closely and exclusively linked it to the regulations made by the landowner. The number of married girls in the age group 15-19 was clearly higher with about 39 percent in Rebola and 27 percent in Panozero already being married.

In Yalguba, at the beginning of the 1780s, only 7 percent of the male peasants in this age group were already married. This can possibly be explained by the location of Yalguba parish which was very near to Petrozavodsk. This city was undergoing a revival during the last decades of the eighteenth century due to the foundation of a new plant to make weapons which was called *Alexandrovsky Zavod*. The Russian-Turkish War (1768–1774) stimulated Empress Catherine the Great to develop the industry in Karelia. The navy was short of cannons and a new foundry for this purpose was already under construction in the spring of 1773. Local authorities needed the labour of local peasants and tried hard to involve them in the work for the plants.

This clearly corresponds with the situation shown by the data for other age groups. The percentage of unmarried men in the age groups 20 to 24 and 25 and 29 was also high, about 50 and 40 percent respectively. At the same time almost all the women approaching the age of 30 were married. This may be explained by the quite short distance between Petrozavodsk and Yalguba which allowed the men to be at home in their native villages sufficiently often to start a family. It must be noted, though, that the share of women still unmarried in the age group 25–29 was clearly higher in Yalguba, 7.5 percent, than in Pyatnitckoe, 2.5 percent.

A very different model of marriage behaviour was found in the White Sea Karelian parishes under observation. Unmarried men evidently predominated in the age group 20–24 in Panozero and in Rebola during the last quarter of the eighteenth century (60–70 percent). In Rebola, which was located closer to Finland, more than half of the men, 59 percent, in the age range 25–29 were still unmarried. Women also clearly behaved differently in this respect compared with those in the southern parish of Yalguba. In Rebola, 55 percent and in Panozero, 74 percent in the age group 20–24 were still unmarried. Even in the oldest group, one out of three women, 33–35 percent, was still unmarried.

The marriage behaviour registered six decades later in the documentary sources allows the following conclusion to be drawn. It appears that the differences mentioned above reflected not just a tendency but evidently a pattern of behaviour which was accepted by the majority of the people in the local communities under observation.

Very little change was discovered in either the Tver' region or in Yalguba parish, but in White Sea Karelia a completely new pattern of marriage behaviour and the age at which to start a family began to appear. During the period between the 1780s and the 1850s, not only the most active male part of the population but also the females changed their marriage behaviour radi-

cally. None of the men married any more as young as 19 and this same change took place among the women, although rather more slowly.

This development can be explained by describing some of the particular livelihoods of the local people which forced them to spend time outside their households for weeks at a time or even a whole season. Karelian pedlars (*ko-robeiniki*) had been wandering to Finland for centuries, but the opening of the border after 1809 increased the number of pedlars significantly with most of them coming from White Sea Karelia. Although the authorities did not approve of the pedlars and even prohibited this activity at times, nothing could stop this old traditional trade. During the Crimean War (1853-1856), the value of the goods the Karelian pedlars delivered to the Grand Duchy was approximately half of the official Russian exports to Finland. In 1872, more than 1,200 pedlars from White Sea Karelia and about 300 pedlars from the Olonets region had an official permit to trade in Finland, but according to some estimates the real number of pedlars was probably two or three times this.

The border between the Grand Duchy and Russia was open so that goods and people could pass quite freely with only a passport being needed after paying the customs dues. Trade began to flourish in White Sea Karelia particularly. Because Russia had its own supply of sawn timber, planks and stocks of wood from northern Karelia were mostly exported to western markets. Well-known and quite valuable was the so-called Karelian butter which was at first only exported to St Petersburg, but the building of railways to Finnish Karelia and the first Finnish ice-breaker in the 1890s opened up the western markets for a year-round trade for this product also.

It is not difficult to imagine how different contacts started to become regular between Finnish Karelia and White Sea Karelia, and also between White Sea Karelia and St Petersburg, the Russian capital which had about half a million inhabitants as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century. Large amounts of foodstuffs and firewood were needed for servicing this enormous city and this meant a great deal for the small population of Karelia so that the production of meat, milk and butter became an important source of livelihood. Grain, however, was brought to the city from southern Russia. Chopping firewood and transporting goods also became important sources of income. Emigration to St Petersburg became very common with the city offering possibilities of work in factories or as craftsmen for the men and as maids for the women. All these influences began to change the behaviour of the Karelian people in all sorts of areas. The data clearly shows this for their marriage behaviour.

This study initially concentrated on the period from the 1780s to the 1850s. However, in order to have a longer term view, documentary sources

containing data from the end of the seventeenth century concerning the situation in two additional territories populated by Karelians were also used. Both parishes were located near Lake Onego, Shun'ga to the north and Megra to the south. Data covering the period from the second half of the eighteenth to the beginning of the twentieth centuries was then studied for the parish of Panozero in White Sea Karelia.

It can clearly be concluded that the most accepted family form among peasants by the last third of the seventeenth century was based on the direct line through the generations, grandfather - father - grandson (72%). The *malaya semya*, a conjugal unit with unmarried sons, was evidently the commonest form of family but at the same time there was a considerable share of *nerazdelelnaya semya* or extended families (36%). There were also families where married brothers lived together. In this kind of family the brothers did not just continue to occupy the same household after their father's death. Normally, these *bratskaya semya* were made up of brothers who had lost the former head of the household before the sons had been able to establish their own families. As a rule, an extended peasant family consisted of the oldest brother, usually married, who was the head of the household and was forced to continue to live with his unmarried, often very young brothers. Certain demographic developments, influenced significantly by the organization of the local population into regiments of *pashennye soldaty*, literally 'ploughed soldiers', may have been the cause of this. The local population was obliged to defend the nearest border with Sweden, which, after the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617, ran quite close to Olonets, a newly founded fortress (1649) and capital of the region. Unfortunately, at round about the same time, state officials also started to conscript Karelians into the regular army to participate in the war between Russia and Poland (1654-1667). A large number of local peasants were killed, while others returned wounded or exhausted, dying soon afterwards and not being able to see their sons grow up. It can be concluded that complicated family structures, with fathers living with their married sons, who in turn already had their own sons, were quite rare in Karelia in the last part of the seventeenth century. The preferred type of family here was the *malaya semya*, literally the small family.

The second set of additional observations allows knowledge of the development of the demographic and social behaviour in a single peasant community, that of Panozero, to be extended over a longer period from the middle of the eighteenth up to the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The aim was to see if the preferred model of marriage behaviour found for the end of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth centuries had continued to exist over the longer time period. As was mentioned earlier, a very important feature of marriage behaviour in a local community is the difference in ages

between husband and wife and the number of years in which the husband was either older or younger than his wife. The results of the analysis are clear. The percentage of couples in which the wife was traditionally younger than her husband decreased gradually from 1782 to 1910 (from 82% to 57% respectively), but at the same time the number of marriages in which the woman and the man were the same age increased from 8% to 14%. The sources show more and more cases where the woman was older than her husband. While these kinds of marriages were quite rare, only one out of every ten marriages in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, in 1910 the woman was older than her husband in 30% of cases. Clearly the situation, which might be called traditional and was closely related to the commonly accepted Russian model of marriage behaviour in pre-industrial times, changed within the local peasant community. People living in Panozero increasingly preferred not to follow the practice which required women to be married as early as possible and to give birth to the maximum number of children. This practice was 'regulated' predominantly by the very high death rate among the youngest children. At least one of the children was expected to survive to have a household of its own so that it could take care of the parents in their old age.

One of the aims of this research was to answer the question as to which model of marriage and family behaviour the Karelian peasantry resembles the most - the Western European model or the non-European one - in accordance with Hajnal's idea of dividing Eastern Europe into two parts by a virtual line. It has become clear that answering questions about the traditional marriage age and age differences between husbands and wives in Karelia in earlier times is not sufficient to completely solve the problem. Even though these questions have been approached using totally new perspectives, it is still not possible to rule out that the marriage behaviour of Karelian peasants actually resembled the common Russian traditions most closely.

The present stage of the investigation has shown that certain cycles of marriage behaviour traditions were quite usual for local communities. This became particularly evident when the longer time perspective was considered. It might be concluded that not only external factors, which are widely mentioned and accepted in native historiography, but also internal factors such as self-regulation, particular traditions, and to some extent the common memory of generations, have more or less equally influenced the marriage behaviour of the local Karelian communities. However, this is still more or less a hypothesis which has to be investigated more precisely and with a wider historical background.

