Strong families and declining fertility

a comparative study of family relations and reproductive careers in Soviet Ukraine

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Prologue

In June 2012, just before starting my pilot fieldwork in Lviv in western Ukraine, I visited my family in Khmelnitsky, a provincial centre in west-central Ukraine, which is five hours away by train from Lviv. During the stay I conducted a trial interview with my maternal grandmother. Although I lived with her for more than half of my life, I still did not entirely know the story of her marital and reproductive life. This interview was not intended to be part of my sample. However, it did cover the same key topics discussed in the interviews that were later conducted in Lviv and Kharkiv. I started this interview very simply by asking my grandmother to tell me the story of her marital life, and I used a similar interview strategy throughout my fieldwork. Similar to other informants, my grandmother answered this question broadly by starting from the very beginning of her life. And this is where her life history and my research journey began.

My grandmother was born in 1937 in a village close to Khmelnitsky. She was the seventh and youngest child in her family. She was born when my great grandmother was 36 years old and six years after the birth of my great grandmother's sixth child, my great aunt. In 1944, my great grandfather went to Donbas, a mining region in eastern Ukraine, where he, like many men of his generation, helped to rebuild the region after the Second World War. He was away for 15 years, and during this time my grandmother's family received support from their relatives in the village. At the age of 16, my grandmother finished high school, and while she applied to several colleges, she was not accepted at any of them. Eventually, she also went to Donbas, where she found work in the mining sector and lived with one of her sisters. In 1957, at the age of 20, my grandmother married my grandfather, who was then 26 and working in the USSR military.

My grandfather was born in the same village as my grandmother and they had known each other since high school. They met again in a local club before her high school graduation, and for a few years after that, they kept in touch through letters and saw each other when they visited their families during the holidays. During one of these visits, my grandfather proposed to my grandmother, and she agreed as he was the most attractive candidate she had ever had: a military man

several years older than she was. Immediately after their wedding, they moved to Lutsk, a city in the north-western part of Ukraine, where my grandfather worked. After a few months, they moved to another city in the same area – Ovrych – and there in 1959, they had their first child, my uncle. For the first three years of my uncle's life, my grandmother did not work. The family then moved to Kapustin Yar – a military base near Volgograd in the southern part of Russia. There my grandmother started to work part-time as a nanny in a kindergarten, which allowed her both to work and to take care of her first child. Their second child, my mother, was born some years later in 1965. At the time, my grandmother was 28 and grandfather was 34. My grandmother acknowledged that both her and my grandfather wanted to have a second child and my grandmother particularly wanted to have a baby girl.

Given the number of years before their first and second child, my grandparents undoubtedly practiced some sort of birth control. However, I do not know exactly which methods of birth control they used as my grandmother was reluctant to discuss these issues with me and I did not insist. She also said that she did not discuss these issues with my grandfather either because he believed that children were her main concern and not his. From her testimony, however, I could sense that they used some traditional means of birth control, such as *coitus interruptus* and maybe abstinence, as they managed to achieve a six-year gap between their first and second child, and similar to their first pregnancy, the second one was not expected either. I do not know if my grandmother had any abortions, but I do know that four years after my mother was born, my grandmother again became unexpectedly pregnant, but she miscarried. My grandparents would have happily accepted a third child if the pregnancy had been successful. However, because they never planned on having another child, my grandmother never again tried to get pregnant.

After my mother was born, my grandmother stayed at home for about a year taking care of both children, and then she resumed working in the kindergarten and also started working in a library. Both jobs were part-time. During this time, my uncle helped to care for my mother. However, my grandmother's flexible work schedules still allowed her to be the major childcare provider, while my grandfather supplied most of the family income. My grandmother accepted that gender responsibilities within the family were distributed this way as it allowed her to be in charge of the issues related to household and childcare.

Throughout our talk my grandmother always emphasised that her relationship with my grandfather was very good and that they never quarrelled. She said that he was a very kind father and husband and that he was also the closest person to her throughout her entire life. Of course, she had some female friends, but

none of them were as close to her as he was, and in truth, she did not feel a need to have a close friendship. Besides that, the family moved often from one place to another, which also made establishing strong friendships problematic. A few years after my mother was born, the family moved to Aralsk – a small city in the south-western part of Kazakhstan, close to the Aral Sea. There my grandmother started working in a military hotel. The family still frequently changed homes, but within this area, so my grandmother could continue to work at the same place. Despite these frequent changes of residence and being more than 3450 km away from their relatives in Ukraine, the family visited them every summer for at least a month. Despite these visits, my grandmother acknowledged that it was hard for her to have these long distance relationships. Consequently, when my grandfather demobilised in 1977, the family decided to settle down in Khmelnitsky to be close to their family in the village.

Some years later, my grandmother's parents, my great grandmother and great grandfather, died. According to the family inheritance rules, the parental property, which was a house and the land around it, had to be equally divided among the siblings.[1] However, because my grandmother cared for her parents before they died, her siblings agreed to give her their shares of the parental property. Some years later, in 1983, my mother and father got married. She was 18 and in her first year of college (*technikum*) specialising in accounting. My father was 22 and in his second year of technical university. After they married, they lived with my paternal grandparents. They occupied the second floor of the parental house and shared the kitchen with them. A bit more than a year later, my mother got pregnant, but she had a miscarriage. Afterwards, she underwent some fertility treatments and got pregnant with me. I was born in 1988.

My grandmother remembered the years between my mother's first and second pregnancies as the most worrying time in both of their lives because the threat of another miscarriage was high. Shortly before my birth, my parents moved to my maternal grandparents. They had a three-room apartment and gave my parents the biggest room. My grandmother never mentioned if my parents tried to apply for a social housing from the state. When I asked my mother about it, she said that they never thought about it because they always had enough living space at both parental homes. Moreover, when my grandfather died in 1989, it was definite that my mother would stay with my grandmother. Similar to the way it happened with my grandmother and her inheritance and elderly care responsibilities, my

[1] According to the Article 10 of the 1936 Soviet constitution (Constitution, 1936), the law protects the right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens. In 1977, when the constitution was updated, the private property rights remained unchanged and appeared under Article 13 (Constitution, 1977)

uncle agreed to give his share of my grandmother's apartment to my mother if she would take care of my grandmother, and this is what she has been doing ever since. When I was two years old, my mother finished her educational training and started working as an accountant in a shop. My grandmother used to share many practical and emotional childcare responsibilities with my mother until I finished high school. My mother does not have any more children.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation for this study

> "[*T*]*here are many European societies where fertility declines were so recent that many can still be interviewed from all cohorts during the process.*"
>
> Szreter 2011, p. 86

Although the life of my grandmother was different from the lives of many Ukrainian women at that time primarily because she was the wife of a military man, lived far away from her relatives and moved often, her reproductive career highlights the main trends that characterize the fertility transition in Ukraine and other European republics of the Soviet Union after the Second World War: *early* and *universal marriage*, *early starting* and *stopping with childbearing*, *significant spacing of children*, *prevalence of natural methods of birth control*, and *a two-child family ideal*. Her life story also shows that many of these trends were echoed in the next generations, such as that of my mother whose reproductive years fell in the decades that are commonly associated with the appearance of lowest-low fertility in the 1990s in this part of Europe (Perelli-Harris, 2005; Sobotka, 2004b). The lowest-low fertility trend in the Eastern European context was characterised by first marriage and pregnancy occurring at an even earlier age than that of their parents' generation, typically in an individual's early twenties, while stopping with childbearing also took place at an earlier age, often in a woman's mid- to late-twenties. As a result, one-child families became more prominent and even predominant in this part of Europe (Perelli-Harris, 2005; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010; Sobotka, 2004b; Zakharov, 2008). This gap suggests that my great grandmother probably used birth control to postpone or maybe even prevent this pregnancy. The parenthood years of my great grandmother took place in the 1920s and 1930s

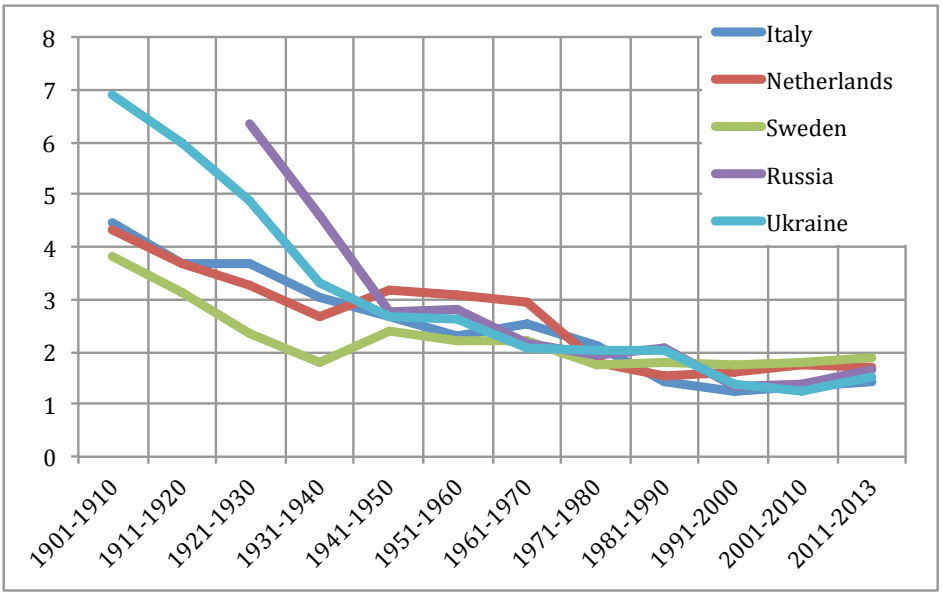


Figure 1.1: Total fertility rates for Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Russia, and Ukraine, 1901-2013. Sources: Chesnais 1996; Demoscope 2015b; Eurostat 2015a; Lutz et al. 1990; Ptuha 1960; Steshenko 2010; Ukrcensus 2015; Vishnevskij 2009.

and coincided with the start of the First Demographic Transition in the European part of the Soviet Union (Zakharov, 2008). Figure 1.1 illustrates that compared to other European countries, such as Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden, fertility decline in Ukraine started comparatively late but quickly accelerated. In only 40 years, fertility declined from around 6 children per woman in the 1910s to 2.62 in the 1950s. After the Second World War Ukraine did not experience a baby boom as the West did, and fertility continued to decline sharply until it reached a below-replacement level of 2.05 in the 1960s and a lowest-low fertility of 1.39 in the 1990s. In many ways the fertility decline in Ukraine was similar to that in Russia; however, in Russia fertility started to decline even later and at a faster pace. This rapid decline of fertility to below-replacement level during the 1960s in the European part of the Soviet Union is also defined by some scholars as the beginning of a latent depopulation (Vishnevskij, 2006, 2009).

The rapid fertility decline in Ukraine implied that people who were in their reproductive age in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, such as my grandmother, were among the first who entirely experienced the decline of fertility from its onset during their childhood to the sub-replacement level in their own reproductive careers. This phenomenon corresponds with the above quote by Szreter (2011) where he states that in some European countries first-hand accounts of fertility

decline can still be collected from those who witnessed and experienced it in their own reproductive decisions. Ukraine, as well as other post-Soviet states, is one of these countries. Not solely for this reason but also for more substantial theory-driven motivations that I describe below, this dissertation brings into light men's and women's personal experiences of marriage, pregnancy, childbearing(s), birth control, and abortion that took place in the course of the post-war fertility decline, namely during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, in Ukraine. In the study of each reproductive event, this research will pay close attention to the role of family and other social relationships and how these shaped individual reproductive experiences, the issue that was also prominent in my grandmother's narrative. By focusing on the role of social relationships for reproductive behaviour this research seeks to bring an alternative perspective to the debate on fertility behaviour in the (post-) Soviet space that until now has largely been characterised by the modernisation theory and politico-economic premises.

1.2 Theoretical background

1.2.1 Towards a socio-cultural analysis of reproductive behaviour change: the importance of social relationships

In Ukraine and in the European part of the Soviet Union, the first three decades after the Second World War were not only a time of continuous fertility decline but also a time of crucial political changes linked to the Cold War and to the overall liberalisation of the Soviet regime. These political changes eventually resulted in a rapid increase in urbanisation rates and a shortage of housing, in an increase in female employment and educational attainment, and in the legalisation of abortion even though there was still limited access to other modern methods of contraception. Those analysing the fertility decline in the Soviet Union conventionally associate it with these 'Soviet-type' modernisation factors (Blum, 1994; Lutz et al., 2002; Vishnevskij, 2006, 2009; Zakharov, 2008), which, on a theoretical level, often results in a re-application of the Demographic Transition Theory (DTT) to the (post-) Soviet case. In contrast, studies on the lowest-low fertility decline go beyond the modernisation paradigm but, nonetheless, still present transformations of the politico-economic structure as the sole explanation for fertility changes (Bühler, 2004; Perelli-Harris, 2005, 2008b; Sobotka, 2004b; Philipov, 2003; Philipov et al., 2006; Sobotka, 2004b; Thornton and Philipov, 2009; Wesolowski, 2015a,b). At first glance, explaining fertility decline in the (post-) Soviet space through modernisation and post-Soviet transformations per-

spectives seems plausible. However, the singular focus on structural changes ignores the fact that relationships between people also adjust to politico-economic changes based on the values that already exist in society. By doing so, the studies in this realm often remain blind to the kaleidoscope of social (in)equalities, both outside and within the household, emerging alongside the politico-economic modernisation, which in tandem contribute to the formation of different demographic realities on a micro-level and different fertility trends on a macro-level (Ehmer, 2011; Greenhalgh, 1995; Rivkin-Fish, 2003; Szreter, 1996, 2011). As such, social relationships could be seen as playing an intermediary role in the interplay between the politico-economic reality and the formation of interpersonal (in)equalities. Because they surround our everyday lives and choices, social relationships form a coherent social structure that helps us to interpret, make sense of and adjust to everyday reality, including state legal regulations, political ideology, and economic crises (Hagestad, 2009; Huinink, 2009). Therefore, social relationships and surrounding values should stay at the core of our explanations on fertility decline.

In studies on fertility decline, the role of social relationships in reproductive behaviour change was first acknowledged by the Princeton Fertility Project (Coale et al., 1979; Coale and Watkins, 1986). Later, the works stemming from this project adopted a diffusion approach to study fertility behaviour. This approach showed that differences in the pace and timing of fertility decline are associated more with cultural characteristics, such as religion, language and ethnicity as the most common factors (Bocquet-Appel and Jakobi, 1998; Bongaarts and Watkins, 1996; Cleland and Wilson, 1987; Montgomery and Casterline, 1993; Pollak and Watkins, 1993; Watkins, 1991). It has been suggested that social interactions are the primary channels through which changes in reproductive behaviour occur. For example, in the process of day-to-day interactions a woman can learn from her mother, older sisters or other women how to breastfeed, and similarly she could exchange with others her knowledge on abortion or other birth control methods (Watkins, 1990, 1991). Likewise, such information could be transformed through gossip, which is also an important social instrument to permit and approve certain behaviour (Watkins and Danzi, 1995).

The weakness of the diffusion approach is, however, that it suggests that individuals learn the norms of their social environments and then internalise and comply with them. In reality, individuals negotiate, acquire and reproduce their social identities through their everyday practices and interactions. In anthropological demography, these two perspectives on the role of culture in demographic behaviour are often described as 'culture *for* the people' *versus* 'culture *by* the people' (Hammel, 1990). While the former perspective implies that individuals

are passive actors who submit to their socio-cultural environments, the latter advocates an incorporating view. It perceives individuals and their agency to be central in their behaviour, which implies that individuals interpret and transform cultural symbols though social relationships, interactions, practices, and conversations (Bernardi and Hutter, 2007; Hammel, 1990; Kertzer, 1997). These social relationships form a certain social structure that builds a framework of opportunities for individual actions to take place (Bernardi and Hutter, 2007; Browner, 2000; Carter, 1995; Townsend, 1997).

Building on that, Szreter (1996, 2011, 2015) additionally suggests the need for contextualising these social structures through the so-called 'communication communities', which he defines as 'encompassing socio-cultural environments of language, values, and roles in which individuals and families participate and through which they form and negotiate their meanings, goals, and social identities' (Szreter, 2015, p. 155). He posits that over the life course an individual may belong to different communication communities, each of which may matter for a differ sphere of life. However, before we try to define which of these socio-cultural environments are important for reproductive behaviour change, we first need to understand the actual role of family relationships in these changes, such as the relationship between spouses, with parents(in-law), siblings and other kin, since in some societies family and kin may take over a significant share of responsibilities concerning reproductive life (see for example anthropological studies on Asia and Africa: Niehof (1985); Van der Sijpt (2011)).

In the context of Eastern Europe and Ukraine, the involvement of family and social relationships over a life course is particularly high as in this part of Europe family has been the major source of welfare for centuries (Heady and Kohli, 2010; Heady and Schweitzer, 2010; Kis, 2012; Robila, 2004b; Viazzo, 2010). Studies indicate that in the pre-transitional context families used to reside in multigenerational households over the entire life course. This stimulated individuals to marry early and thus to have longer reproductive life spans and to have more children because infant mortality was high (Czap, 1982; Hajnal, 1982). In the more contemporary context, strong family ties continue to provide welfare to individuals, especially around crisis events, such as childbearing and elderly and child care (see, for example, Gruber and Heady 2010a,b; Jappens and Van Bavel 2012).

Intriguingly, similar to Southern Europe, in Eastern European societies strong ties between family members are also seen as contributing to lowest-low fertility today (Castiglioni et al., 2016; Ghodsee and Bernardi, 2012; Heady and Kohli, 2010; Heady and Schweitzer, 2010; Rodin, 2015). This suggests that some changes between family and fertility already occurred during the historical fertility decline.

Additionally, in the context of Ukraine, it has been suggested that local-level family values could be a vital lens to understand persisting regional differences in fertility trends in the country Perelli-Harris (2008b). That said, little research has empirically studied the actual role of social and family relationships in fertility behaviour change in Ukraine. Moreover, studies that do address family and gender relationships treat these merely as background environment for reproductive decision-making (Carlbäck et al., 2012; David and Skilogianis, 1999b; Goldman, 1993; Gradskova, 2007; Kligman, 1998; Lapidus, 1978; Leinarte, 2010; Mezei, 1997; Rotkirch, 2000). However, if family and social relationships are considered actual actors of demographic change alongside individual agency in a society where family plays such a crucial role in individual lives, this should help to better understand fertility changes both in the past and today. Therefore, the primary aim of this dissertation is to study the effects of family relationships and their continuities on changes in reproductive behaviour through a comparative regional perspective in Ukraine during the post-war fertility decline.

In the next sections, I present the main theoretical concepts from which this study derives its theoretical and methodological premises. I start with my reconceptualisation of reproductive behaviour through a reproductive career perspective. Afterwards, I discuss how social and family relationships may actually influence individual reproductive decisions. Finally, I suggest a framework to contextualise the influence of social and family relationships on reproductive behaviour within local traditions of family relationships. Against this background, I underline the research questions and theoretical strategy of this dissertation.

1.2.2 Reproductive behaviour as a process: a reproductive career perspective

At the onset of fertility decline, an important shift occurred in individual understandings of parenthood. Gillis (1992, p. 32) notes that at the end of the 19th century the cultural meaning of motherhood among the upper- and middle-class in Britain shifted 'from an understanding of motherhood as childbearing to an understanding of motherhood as childrearing'. For women this shift also implied that motherhood became almost a 'masculine *career* but without an option of retirement' (Gillis, 1992, p. 32). The perception of seeing motherhood and parenthood as a career or as a process and a life-long experience with different stages and sub-transitions is still relevant for contemporary societies experiencing demographic changes.

Similarly to the changes in individual mind-sets to childbearing and parenthood that took place in the course of fertility declines across Europe, a pre-definite view of vital events in demography has been widely criticised since the 1990s

primarily by social historians and anthropologists. This critique eventually contributed to the reconceptualisation of demography and to an emergence of a new discipline of anthropological demography alongside the classical demography (for more on the establishment of anthropological demography as a discipline, see: Bernardi and Hutter 2007; Kertzer and Fricke 1997; Kertzer 2005). A key principle in anthropological demography considers demographic behaviour not solely as an outcome like death, marriage, migration or fertility but also as a process and pathway (Hobcraft, 2007; Johnson-Hanks, 2002; Townsend, 1997). This view on demographic events opens up new vistas for incorporating a kaleidoscope of various social and contextual factors in the analysis of demographic behaviours, and more importantly the meaning attached to each transition, how people undergo it, how the transitions are interrelated, and who plays which role in it.

In classic demography, fertility is typically seen as the biological ability to give birth and, as such, it often refers to the number of children that a woman can bare over her reproductive life span (Weeks, 2008, p. 200). The processual characteristics of fertility refer to the social side of the childbearing experience, such as parenthood and its related responsibilities, and to other reproductive experiences that are related to childbearing, such as courtship, marriage, and cohabitation, as well as miscarriage, infanticide, birth control and divorce. Seeing fertility behaviour as a process thus encompasses the meaning and content of events across men's and women's reproductive life span that relate to childbearing and parenthood. This processual and pathways view on fertility and related life course events constitutes what I refer to in this study as *a reproductive career*.

Although the timing, pace and order of events in a reproductive career could be standardised (Kohli, 1988) as can be observed in some time periods, for example, the golden age of marriage in the 1950s and 1960s in the West, *a priori* these characteristics should not be seen as universal over time and space (Bledsoe, 2002; Johnson-Hanks, 2002, 2007). This idea is also supported by recent studies on the dissolution of marriage and the appearance of other forms of partnership in the West (Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos, 2015; Perelli-Harris et al., 2014). As such, time, pace and order of reproductive events, on the one hand, are shaped by individual expectations and intentions for these vital events to happen (Johnson-Hanks, 2002). On the other hand, in their choices and decisions individuals are constantly constrained by various factors reaching from political-economic circumstances to cultural norms. As such, social relationships help individuals to find the balance between these two polar sites of individual life, which makes relationships crucial for reproductive career development.

1.2.3 Family and social influences on reproductive behaviour

> *"A person's fertility is a description of a place in a web of relationships with offspring, with other kin, and with a range of social groups and institutions."*
>
> Townsend 1997, p. 108-109

To identify the roles of 'others' in reproductive behaviour, scholars have started to study social influences that different actors of a social network exert on each other and what effect these influences have, or do not have, on reproductive decisions and practices. This line of research was pioneered in the previously mentioned diffusion studies on fertility behaviour, but it was first empirically studied by Bernardi (2003). Bernardi was among the first to examine different social influences on reproductive decision-making of men and women in northern Italy. Later, this approach was advanced by follow-up studies on other European countries (Bernardi and White, 2010; Diaz et al., 2011; Keim et al., 2009, 2012; Rossier and Bernardi, 2009).

Bernardi defines social influence as the 'process by which attitudes, values or behaviour of an individual are determined by the attitudes, values or behaviour of others with whom he or she interacts' (Bernardi, 2003, p. 535). Her first empirical classification of social influences consisted of such mechanisms as social learning, social contagion, normative pressure and social pressure (Bernardi, 2003). She developed this classification based on the accumulated knowledge from social psychological and sociological studies on this topic, which in many ways opened up new vistas to describe reproductive-decision making. In their most recent theoretical overview on social influences, Bernardi and Klärner (2014) reframe Bernardi's original classification and define four main mechanisms of social influence on reproductive behaviour: social learning, social contagion, social pressure, and social support. This classification constitutes the main point of departure for the analysis in this study, and I briefly describe the classification's four main mechanisms below.

- *Social learning* is often defined as an on-going process of perception of others' behaviour via socialisation, communication and (un)conscious observations. Through these processes individuals may adopt behavioural models of others as well as learn about positive or negative consequences of these models.

- *Social contagion* and emotional contagion are even more unconscious than social learning. Social contagion often takes place in an intimate and close-knit setting, such as that of close friends and siblings who are seen as socially similar. In the context of reproductive intentions, if an individual

is surrounded by childbearing experiences of people whom they are close to and these people share information and feelings related to childbearing and childrearing, this is likely to facilitate the individual's positive or negative fertility choices into behaviour. Emotional contagion describes more a spontaneous copying of emotional states and behaviours.

- *Social pressure* refers to the force that leads an individual to conform to another person's expectations. Conformity in this respect implies that certain sanctions and rewards create channels through which this mechanism works. Social pressure may also occur in the context of close-knit settings as well as in broad cultural settings. In the last instance, social pressure would be closer to normative pressure, or subjective obligation, which is more of a perception of what others think and want you to do rather than a direct influence from someone.

- *Social support* refers to the provision and social exchange of tangible and/or intangible resources. As such, social support can be material, instrumental, and emotional.

Although Bernardi and Klärner (2014) do not put a special accent on the role of individual expectations regarding certain influences, it should be mentioned that the main particularity of social support and social pressure is that they may be consciously experienced by the anchor person unlike social learning and social contagion, which are typically seen as the mechanisms functioning below the level of individual awareness and therefore cannot be anticipated. The uniqueness of social support and social pressure implies that these mechanisms are often part of more complex relationship structures in which individual *expectations* of perceived support and pressure also play an important role.

It is obvious that unmet expectations of receiving social support may hamper one's reproductive decisions. At the same time, extensive social support may also negatively affect reproductive decision-making. Klärner and Keim (2016) conducted an empirical study where they differentiate between negative and positive effects of social support on reproductive practices in Germany. They found that in western Germany the postponement of first parenthood is strongly linked to the acquisition of material security in which the expectations and actual provision of grandparental resources plays an important role.

In another study on Southern Italy, Bernardi and Oppo (2008) discovered that the maternal grandmother, who is expected to be the main provider of childcare support and with whom a young couple often lives, often encourages the couple to achieve educational and employment goals before having children. This promotes a double-presence model of combining work and family life, which in this society is

perceived as the only option for a young woman to cope with changing economic conditions. Similarly, some studies in evolutionary anthropology suggest that the so-called 'helpers in the nest', such as mothers(in-law) and other female kin, may also hinder women's childbearing under some circumstances (Voland and Beise, 2002, 2005) even though they are generally seen as the childcare providers (Crognier et al., 2001). As such, depending on the circumstances, social support may also turn into competition relationships. Non-kin can also discourage an individual's reproductive intentions and provoke competition via expressing envy and disapproval of the individual's (childbearing/childrearing) behaviour (see, for example, Heady 2007).

Cooperation and conflict relationships may also arise between spouses and partners with regard to reproductive intentions or birth control practices. As Browner (2000) showed in her comparative study on several Latin American countries, in some countries women often underwent an abortion to submit to their husband's reproductive wishes in order to avoid conflict. Similarly, it was showed that before the pill and other modern methods of birth control were introduced in Britain, women exercised their agency by practicing abstinence, which despite the risk of spousal conflict, was their way to communicate their wishes to their partners and challenge the patriarchal structure of gender relationships (Fisher, 2006; Seccombe, 1992; Szreter and Fisher, 2010). As such, cooperation and conflict are not mutually exclusive as the lack of cooperation does not necessarily imply conflict.

These are only a few examples of a large corpus of literature on social influences on reproductive behaviour, but they vividly illustrate that social influences are highly interlinked with interpersonal power dynamics and other types of interdependencies between individuals. Identifying how individuals relate to and influence each other is a crucial step to understand why social relationships influence individual reproductive decisions in a certain way within a given socio-economic context.

Thus far, most studies on reproductive behaviour have framed social influences as universal (Bernardi, 2003; Bernardi and Klärner, 2014), while only recently have scholars started to notice that certain social influences could be particular and important in one context and less in another (Bernardi and Oppo, 2008; Heady, 2007; Klärner and Keim, 2016). This may suggest that the nature of power relationships and social interdependencies could be crucial not only for identifying the grounds of these influences but also for identifying contextual differences in which they appear and why. Until now, however, little research has focused on this aspect. In the following section, I discuss how I approach the contextualisation of social influences as deriving from the local traditions of

family relationships.

1.2.4 Family systems as framework to study continuity and change between family relationships and individual reproductive careers

> *"Family systems are neither good nor bad,but they are not neutral either"*
>
> Reher 1998, p. 215

One way to grasp what drives family relationships into certain power structures and social interdependencies from which social influences may arise is through the study of how family and broader kinships are organised in a society. The organisation of kinship has been the primary focus of anthropologists since the discipline was established (see the classical anthropological studies: Levi-Strauss (1971); Malinowski (1913); Murdock (1949); Radcliffe-Brown (1931)). However, once the traditional forms of kinship systems connected to inheritance and co-residence patterns started to dissolve, the interest in 'regular' kinship also declined (Segalen, 2010).

Recently, however, the issue of kinship has become extremely prominent in historical and sociological studies that have started to re-conceptualise the notion of traditional kinship systems and to explore the implications they have for value formation and interpersonal relationships in the modern context (see, for example, Heady and Kohli 2010; Heady and Schweitzer 2010; Kertzer 1984; Mönkediek 2016; Mönkediek and Bras 2014; Reher 1998). This line of research suggests that although the organisation of household, and co-residence and inheritance patterns, *aka* traditional kinship systems, may change quickly, family relationships and underlying values behind these traditions are more systematic. When putting this notion on organisation of family relationships into a context of social change, these studies suggest that not only an individual but also family relationships surrounding the individual should be seen as agents that challenge social structure rather than silently adapt to it, which corresponds to the notion of 'culture by the people' discussed earlier (Hammel, 1990).

This contextualisation of family relationships as connecting both historical and modern aspects of family life is typically defined under the concept of *family systems*. However, there are many definitions of family systems. Mason (2001, p. 160-161), for example, suggests that family systems should be seen as 'sets of beliefs and norms, common practices, and associated sanctions through which kinship and the rights and obligations of particular kin relationships are defined'. As such, Mason argues that family systems define what it means and implies for

an individual to be related to others by blood, descent or marriage. Mason's definition also shows how an individual life course can be interdependent on other people's life courses and what social, sexual and economic rights and obligations individuals have depends on their social position in relation to the each other.

Additionally, Mason (2001) thinks that family systems are 'intertwined, but not coterminous' with gender systems. By gender systems she understands 'a set of beliefs and norms, common practices and associated sanctions through which the meaning of being male and female and the rights and obligations of males and females of different ages and social statuses are defined' (Mason, 2001, p. 161). This implies that gender systems are equally encompassed both in family systems and in surrounding socio-economic structures. In other words, family systems may promote a certain gender order, as well as a social order, but it is through their interaction with socio-economic conditions that certain (in)equalities within and outside the family, including genders, may arise.

The most common elements that are typically used to describe general principals of family organisation are residence and descent traditions, or respective marriage, household, and inheritance patterns (Das Gupta, 1997, 1999; Mason, 2001; Skinner, 1997). Through these elements family systems can be described and compared, and based on them, three ideal types of family systems can be defined: nuclear, stem, and joint. Below, I briefly describe each of them following Skinner (1997).

The *nuclear* or *conjugal family system* is based on neolocal residence of both bride and groom, and it is usually defined as a unit consisting of a wife and a husband living with their dependent unmarried children. The neolocal unit often emerges as a result of equal inheritance division among offspring and an absence of succession per se. Often, the conjugal unit is treated as a building block to distinguish between other types of families.

Following this idea, several, usually two, conjugal units residing together can be defined as *the stem family system*. Under the stem family system, the household consists of only one married couple from each generation, and these are typically a married daughter or son living with her or his parents. The inheritance is typically non-divided favouring a single successor, and the transmission typically takes place at marriage or at the death of the head of household.

When members of at least two conjugal units co-reside it is defined as *a joint family system*. This family system implies that spouses of more than one offspring are brought into a family; thus, parents and several of their married children reside together. Inheritance is partible and equal among all the successors qualified for it; however, the succession and its timing may vary.

It is important to understand that a family system is not equal to only a single

type of marriage, household, or inheritance pattern, but it is rather a *unique* combination of these three that forms norms and beliefs, as well as rights and obligations, or in other words, the underlying logic of a nuclear, stem or joint family system (Das Gupta, 1997, 1999; Skinner, 1993, 1997). That said, the role of inheritance is one of the major factors underlying this logic, as inheritance often defines the type of post-marital residence and subsequent household structure.

A comprehensive overview of the role of inheritance in a society is provided by Heady and Grandits (2003). They argue that inheritance 'places people and collectives in relation to physical resources; places people socially; helps to shape the social structure within which they live' (Heady and Grandits, 2003, p. 3). As such, inheritance concerns not only the family but also the rest of the community. In line with this, 'inheritance systems are interlocking systems of property and kinship relationships, which make them highly resistant to change' (Heady and Grandits, 2003, p. 13)

What Heady and Grandits (2003) suggest for the logic behind inheritance systems – as being resistant to change – can also be applied to family systems, in general. As such, the key aspect of the family systems approach, particularly in the modern context, is not only to identify a marriage, household and inheritance type associated with a certain family system, which certainly do change over time, but also – and probably even more importantly – to find out how the combination of these patterns forms a logic of relatedness between kin and non-kin members and subsequent power dynamic between them.

In line with this view, Reher (1998) was among the first to argue in favour of the continuity and path-dependency between historical family systems and family ties in contemporary societies. He distinguished between 'strong family ties' where the family group has priority over the individual, and 'weak family ties' where the value of an individual tends to predominate. Reher (1998) also shows that certain patterns of inheritance and household structures that were associated with family systems in the past also define relatedness between kin and non-kin members through solidarity, social cohesion, and social control in contemporary society. As such, he suggests that strong family ties in the Mediterranean today can be connected to stem and joint family systems in the past. Similarly, other studies on Southern Europe also find confirmation for this continuity, even under the rapidly changing social and economic conditions since the 1960s (see, for example: Bernardi and Oppo 2008; Dalla Zuanna and Micheli 2004; Schneider and Schneider 1996). More importantly, these studies illustrate how families re-configure their livelihoods and reproductive decisions to these economic changes while still operating by the same logic of close interrelatedness of kin members over the life course. Yet, in the contemporary context, that same logic of family

relationships has led to the drastic decrease in family size in Southern Europe, which is often referred to as a paradox (Dalla Zuanna and Micheli, 2004).

The so-called paradox between strong family ties and lowest-low fertility is also applicable to the Eastern European context, as family there has played a crucial role in the lives of individuals both in the past and today (Castiglioni et al., 2016; Ghodsee and Bernardi, 2012; Hajnal, 1982; Heady and Kohli, 2010; Heady and Schweitzer, 2010; Robila, 2004a; Rodin, 2015). Scholars have also traced the roots of these strong family ties in the family system values that were prevalent in the past in Eastern Europe (Viazzo, 2009, 2010). Over time, these local family values did not disappear but went through some socio-economic changes that, in fact, not only reinforced the values during the socialist regimes but were also reinforced by the socialist regimes even after their collapse (Kligman, 1998; Mezei, 1997; Semenova and Thompson, 2005).

1.2.5 Scope of the study

This dissertation explores continuities in family relationships in Ukraine and their role in the country's fertility decline from around the 1950s to the 1970s. In doing so, it addresses two main research questions:

(1) *How did family and social relationships influence individual reproductive careers in Soviet Ukraine from around the 1950s to the 1970s?*

(2) *How can local family systems and their associated power dynamics and social interdependencies help to understand fertility decline in Soviet Ukraine?*

I define a reproductive career as all the events that are linked to reproduction as a social process (Hobcraft, 2007; Johnson-Hanks, 2002; Townsend, 1997). As shown in Figure 1.2, transitions, such as marriage, pregnancy and childbirth, could be seen as the main events of a reproductive career that could also repeat over the life course. These transitions can also be accompanied by sub-transitions, such as abortion and miscarriage.

To answer my first research question on the role of family relationships in individual reproductive careers, I will focus on how family and other social influences shaped individual reproductive decisions in Ukraine from around the 1950s to the 1970s. With social influences I refer to social learning, social contagion, social pressure, and social support, following the classification of Bernardi and Klärner (2014). The last two influences, social pressure and social support, will also be studied from the perspective of expectations of support or social pressure. Additionally, I also include social cooperation and competition relationships as part of the possible social influences.

Through defining these family influences and expectations, I will try to uncover the *power dynamics* and other *social interdependencies* that underlie family

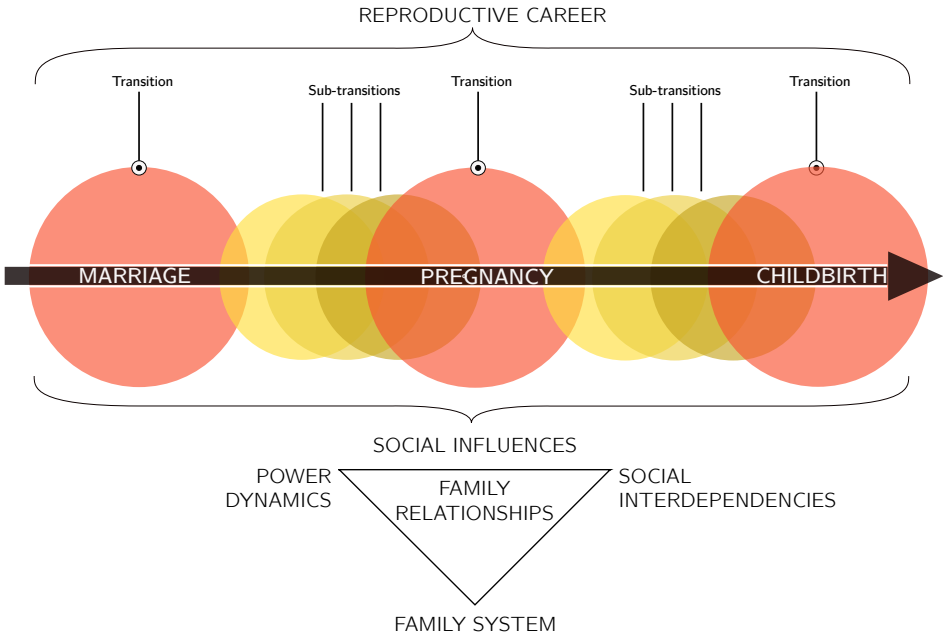


Figure 1.2: Conceptual framework: Reproductive careers and family relationships

relationships (see Figure 1.2), and that subsequently may drive individuals to undertake a certain reproductive activity or not (Das Gupta, 1997, 1999; Mason, 2001). By power dynamics I understand how the authority between family members is spread and how it is exercised on an everyday basis, particularly with regard to reproductive decisions and practices. By social interdependencies I understand the patterns of relatedness between individuals, such as who is close to them in their reproductive decisions and practices and who they rely on and expect help from and who they do not.

Overall, the power dynamics and social interdependencies within the family underlie how family members connect to each other and non-related people. In a contemporary context, these could be traced through the study of social influences. In a historical context, these could be revealed through the study of marriage, household, and inheritance structures (Skinner, 1997; Todd, 1988). A unique combination of marriage, household and inheritance structures and their associated power dynamics and social interdependencies would constitute a local family system. Historically, the ideal typical family systems would be nuclear, stem, and joint (Skinner, 1997), which, of course, rarely appear in real life.

To answer my second research question, I will first try to uncover what the variety of observed social influences can say about the existence of certain power

dynamics and social interdependencies, and I then will try to connect these to historical power relationships and dynamics underlying local family systems. As Figure 1.2 shows, I perceive the components of family relationships as interrelated in the sense that social influences are rooted in and derived from certain power dynamics and social interdependencies, both of which of which simultaneously belong to a local family system.

The main premise of this dissertation that family influences may vary depending on the local family system is also the reason why I adopted a comparative perspective. It has been suggested that in Ukraine, regional variation in many aspects of social life is a crucial characteristic of the society (Hrytsak et al., 2007). Regional differences more than ethnic and class differences also underline different patterns of fertility behaviour, which some suggest could be anchored in local values characterising family relationships (Perelli-Harris, 2008a). Given that, for my comparative analysis I focus on two borderland cities: Lviv in western Ukraine and Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine. The localities are different in many socio-cultural aspects that make them interesting sites for comparison. In the next section I discuss the major principles of my methodology and provide a brief overview of the two localities and the socio-economic situation in Ukraine during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

1.3 Methodology and data

1.3.1 General methodological strategy

In investigating the role of family relationships in individual reproductive careers in the context of fertility decline in Soviet Ukraine, the available regional data on demographic vital events helped me to see the setting's macro picture. Most of these regional demographic data were collected in the archives of Lviv and Kharkiv. The micro level insights on individual reproductive experiences I received from the life history interviews, along with the life history calendars and family photographs I collected. Some of these photographs appear throughout this dissertation.

There are various approaches to researching and analysing life histories. Methodological literature often differentiates between approaches that are deductively, inductively or narratively driven. For example, Miller (2000) differentiates between neo-positivist, realist, and narrative approaches to study life stories and family histories. He defines clear boundaries for each approach suggesting that an ideal neo-positivist approach is anchored in the deductive testing of an existing theory, a realist approach focuses on the inductive generation of grounded theory, and a narrative approach concentrates on situational dynamics within the interview

itself (Miller, 2000, p. 18). However, and as Miller (2000) himself suggests, in practice researchers adopt an approach that lies at the intersection of those three; however, the researcher has to clearly define the main premises underlying the chosen approach (Maxwell and Chmiel, 2013).

As discussed in the previous section, my theoretical thinking provided me with the analytical tools to depart from that I used as a starting point during the data collection. These are possible types of social influences and life events that may appear in a man's and a woman's reproductive careers. These premises I used as a guide to define the themes I wanted to touch upon in the interviews. As such, my interviews were open-ended, direct, and personal conversations that, on average, lasted for two hours. In every interview I attempted to uncover individual experiences of reproductive events, such as marriage, pregnancy and childbirth as the major ones. I also addressed the meanings that participants attached to significant others, namely those who influenced, helped with, or prevented them from making reproductive decisions. Finally, I tried to understand how their reproductive choices were shaped by the broader context of influential historical events and policy regulations, such as the introduction of abortion and maternity leave, as well as other social-economic conditions (for the interview guide, see Appendix B).

My second methodological point of departure was that I did not try to repeat the same interview procedure with every informant. In practice, this meant that I did not focus on comparing individual lives to each other but instead on gaining as many insights as possible into different reproductive events and social relationships surrounding them. Adopting this strategy was also important given that individual memory is not perfect and that people may intentionally omit discussing certain issues. As such, during the interviews the intention was not to reveal the truth in every single case but rather to inform the general narrative that was appearing in the course of data collection through gaining insights of different individual examples.

To start detecting the reproductive events, I started every interview with a narrative question. In this question, I first asked an informant to tell me about his or her family of origin. Starting with this question was important since it allowed me to first hear an individual life story as narrated freely by him or herself, which often lasted up to forty minutes. During this time I tried not to intervene with the narrative flow but instead made notes for the follow-up questions to be asked later. The difference between the life story and life history is that the former corresponds to how the biographical experiences are constructed in the situation of the interview, while the latter refers to the sequence of biographical events (Miller, 2000; Rosenthal, 1993, 2006). The life history cannot be analysed

without understanding the life story. The main aspects of the life story that I prioritised were those related to how an informant positioned him/herself to the social structure around him/her. This mainly implied observing how his/her gender, ethnicity, religion, and political views shaped his/her self-presentation during the interview.

Quite often, the first narrative also touched upon the informant's life up to the present interview. If this did not occur, I asked another narrative question: to tell the story of his/her marital life, and in the case of childless people, to tell about their lives up until the interview. Important to note is that before every interview the informants were told about the broad topic of the study: parenthood experiences and family relationships of elderly people in Ukraine.

After the narrative part, I started addressing the reproductive events mentioned by the informant in the context of the overall decision-making process, social relationships and constraints that were encountered during the event. At this stage, I was interested in detecting the logic that underlined family relationships and exerted family influences, such as social pressure and support, and in their reproductive decisions in the context of indirect social influences, such as social learning and social contagion, and socio-economic constraints. In some cases, I conducted a follow-up interview if some issues had to be addressed in more depth.

The final key point of my methodological strategy was that I had to position myself in front of my informants. Recognising a position that an interviewee occupies during the interview situation is not only an important part of self-reflexivity during the analysis but also a way to establish certain relationships during the interview itself. Being a young female researcher helped me to build trust with both the male and female informants primarily because I was young and showed interest in the lives of the elderly. However, some informants tried to use 'we' and 'you' rhetoric to highlight the regional differences in Ukraine, which remained a sensitive issue throughout the fieldwork. In such situations, I tried to position myself as belonging to the younger generation rather than being from another region; all of the informants knew that I came from west-central Ukraine. This approach to the interviewing process allowed me to emphasise the importance of conducting an interview with a generation that has seldom been studied previously. Telling this to the informants, in turn, seemed to motivate many of them to be more specific and elaborate more about their past experiences.

In the next sections, I shall address more factual and practical aspects of the fieldwork.

1.3.2 Data collection

The life history interviews were conducted with men and women born between 1925 and 1948, residing in the Ukrainian city of Lviv or Kharkiv during the 1950s through the 1970s, and who were also in their reproductive age during this period, which was characterised by a rapid decline of fertility rates in Ukraine. In total, 66 interviews were conducted: 33 from Lviv and 33 from Kharkiv. Table 1 illustrates some general characteristics of the informants, while Appendix E provides more detailed information on each informant.

Fieldwork was conducted between July 2012 and April 2015. I spent 10 months conducting fieldwork in both cities: July-August 2012, March-May 2013, August-November 2013, and February 2014. During October 2014-April 2015, 20 interviews were conducted with the help of a research assistant in Kharkiv. The socio-demographic profile of the research assistant is similar to mine – a female, PhD student in her mid-twenties – except that she originates from eastern Ukraine, and I come from western Ukraine. Recruiting a research assistant was not in the original plan, but it was necessary due to the unstable political situation in eastern Ukraine after November 2013. However, coming from the relevant cultural background allowed her to build trust with the informants more easily during the fieldwork. The same methodological premises that I described in Section 1.3.1 were applied to train the research assistant. Similar to my experience of conducting follow-up interviews with informants when needed, the research assistant also practiced this strategy; however, together we reviewed the topics to be addressed during the follow-ups.

Snowball and purposeful samples were employed to recruit the informants. Both samples are purposeful in their nature (Patton, 1990). However, while snowball sampling, also called chain sampling, is applied to search for a possible interview subject through the previous informants, the later sampling technique is applied to search for potential informants through other sources (Patton, 1990; Silverman, 2006). This allowed me to collect interviews from different networks of people. These two sampling techniques were used to ensure that the informants came from economic and educational backgrounds as diverse as possible.

That said, I did not aim for a representative sample of the entire population of the two cities but rather to interview a diverse enough group of individuals to enable a study of differences along a number of axes. The aim for acquiring the diversity within the sample was also the reason why 66 and not six interviews were collected. That said, more than 66 interviews could also have been collected, but at some stage I realised that many patterns I had investigated started to re-appear. These were mainly those patterns that concerned cohabitation and marriage, childbearing, birth control and abortion. These patterns

Table 1: Characteristics of the informants interviewed for this study

	Lviv	Kharkiv
Number of informants	33	33
Men	9	8
Women	24	25
Number of couples	6	4
Rural origin	13	10
Urban origin	20	23
Working class	12	13
Civil servants	17	13
Scientific elite	3	7
Number of children:		
0	2	2
1	9	13
2	19	16
3	3	2
Age at marriage:		
min	18	18
max	35	34
mean	24.5	23.67
standard deviation	3.55	3.51
Age at first child:		
min	19	19
max	36	41
mean	26.12	26.06
standard deviation	3.52	4.47
Age at second child:		
min	22	23
max	40	42
mean	31.79	31.64
standard deviation	4.17	4.79

Source: the author's dataset 'Family and Fertility in Soviet Ukraine'

also correspond to the four content chapters in this thesis. However, if I had decided to get more information on individual experience of divorce, miscarriage and child mortality, which in this dissertation are analysed in the context of the aforementioned events, I should have collected more interviews applying critical case sampling techniques to find people who had experienced these rare events (Patton, 1990).

I found it difficult to recruit couples for interviewing. At the time of interviewing, many of the women whom my research assistant and I approached and interviewed were already widowed. This was particularly the case in Kharkiv province, where the average life expectancy at birth among males was 66.05 in 2014, while that of females was 75.97 (Tymoshenko, 2015, p. 50). In the same year, the average life expectancy at birth in Lviv province was 68.16 for males and 77.94 for females (Tymoshenko, 2015, p. 50).

The informants were recruited with the assistance of non-profit organisations working with the elderly, through Internet advertisements, and with the help of local people encountered during the fieldwork. This meant that in some cases the informants directly contacted my research assistant or me, while in other situations we had to contact the informants whose contact information we had received. We worked with such non-governmental organisations as Red Cross, Salvation Army, Veteran Unions and other local organisations. Through these organisations we were able to recruit people from the working class and civil servants. To access the higher class (scientific elite), we used our own networks of people working in scientific institutes and universities.

In addition to the interviews, we collected life history calendars (LHCs) in which data on household composition, births, marriages, and employment history of the informant and spouse were recorded (see Appendix C for a LHC example and for general information on LCH see Axinn and Pearce (2006)). LHCs were filled in with every informant after the interview. Information provided in Table 1 derives from the informants' LHCs. With some informants we also reviewed family photographs together and descriptions for these were recorded. I have incorporated some of the photographs following page 58. Finally, I used published information on vital events and census data to calculate basic demographic categories, such as crude birth rates, crude marriage rates, infant mortality rates, abortion ratio's and other categories, for the regions, and incorporated ethnographic literature on historical family systems in western and eastern Ukraine.

1.3.3 Data analysis

The interviews were collected and transcribed verbatim in the original language (Ukrainian or Russian). I developed a special transcribing strategy to indicate

pauses, breaks in the speech etc. (see Appendix A). I developed this strategy when transcribing the first 10 interviews myself and then I used it to train research assistants to transcribe the remaining interviews. The research assistants were Ukrainian sociology students whom I got to know during my fieldwork. I used *Atlast.ti* qualitative software to code and analyse the interviews. Because the software does not recognise all the symbols in Cyrillic, I transliterated all the interviews. For this I used the online transliteration tool (http://translit.cc).

The life history interviewing method can provide incredibly rich data, in my case complete reproductive histories of men and women. However, because this method typically gathers retrospective data, life histories (the sequence of biographical events) should be analysed in line with life stories (how the biographical experiences are constructed in the interview situation) (Rosenthal, 1993, 2006). To do so, I reconstructed each informant's life story by making memos of the moments of the informant's self-presentation. I paid particular attention to how these self-presentations were linked to his/her ethnicity, religion, gender, and family situations. I used these memos to interpret the values that informants attached to different life course events during the later stages of my analysis.

The coding was performed in three stages. First, I carried out structural coding aimed at identifying reproductive transitions and their sequences in every interview (Saldaña, 2012). I then performed domain and values coding of the transitions related to each reproductive event that appeared during the interviews (Saldaña, 2012). My aim at this stage was to grasp the interpersonal connections an individual developed at every life stage discussed in the interview, attitudes and perceptions of the life course event itself, and structural conditions underlying this event. At this stage most of the coding was performed both in English and in the original languages. I first performed an open coding that was aimed at identifying the descriptive categories (Friese, 2014). In the later stages, when I started to observe the relationships between the descriptive categories, I grouped them into sub-categories related to each reproductive transition, such as 'spousal cooperation around childcare', 'parental control over courting' 'choosing a partner accompanied by parental solidarity', 'readiness and second birth', 'uncertainty and second birth' among others. When I had a clear research question that I wanted to answer, I grouped the sub-categories under the relevant research questions (for an example, see Appendix D). The sub-categories also guided me in formulating the right research question. I then used the query tool to select the quotations according to the groups of related documents that were created in the previous steps (i.e. documents families): city (Lviv or Kharkiv) and gender (male or female). Finally, I used LHCs as a triangulation tool to reconstruct a biographical profile (life history) of every informant and link it to their narratives

during the analysis. Because LHCs were collected after the interviews and were focused on an individual's life chronology, I usually used them when I needed to identify occupation, household composition and other contextual information related to a particular informant.

It is important to mention that Chapter 4 is based on a smaller sample of 30 interviews because that chapter was written during data collection. After all the interviews were collected, I reviewed them on the subject of the research question addressed in this chapter. The main phenomena addressed in this chapter – birth control and abortion, women's agency, and spousal power dynamics – remained unchanged. Additionally, in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5, I added contextual information on the use of abortion and birth control as related to the transition to first and second birth.

1.4 Context and setting

Since Ukraine's independence, scientific interest in comparing the western and eastern regions in Ukraine has grown significantly. Historically, the western and eastern regions in Ukraine have been seen as bipolar, not only in terms of language, ethnicity, and religion, but also in terms of regional identities, collective memory, and political preferences.[1] However, in exploring these cultural differences scholars have paid less attention to reproductive behaviour and family relationships in a regional perspective. In this section I explain why I chose the cities of Lviv and Kharkiv as comparative sites during the period 1950-1975. This section also provides a general overview of demographic behaviour, family policy, and socio-economic situation in the two regions.

1.4.1 Fertility transition and Soviet family policy

Just as the pace of fertility decline in Ukraine was different from that in other Soviet republics (Figure 1.1), significant regional differences in fertility transition also existed within Ukraine. As Figure 1.3 illustrates, after the 1950s the western and eastern regions were the outliers in fertility decline. The western part had the highest birth rates in the country and a slower pace of fertility decline, whereas the eastern regions had the lowest birth rates and the fastest fertility decline.

This tendency is also pronounced when zooming in on the provincial level. Take, for instance, Lviv and Kharkiv, the largest provinces and cities in western

[1] Amongst the largest comparative projects are 'Lviv-Donetsk' (for resent results, see: Hrytsak et al. (2007)) and 'Region, Nation and Beyond. An Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Reconceptualisation of Ukraine' (for an overview of the project, see http://www.lvivcenter.org/en/researchprojects/stgallenproject/)

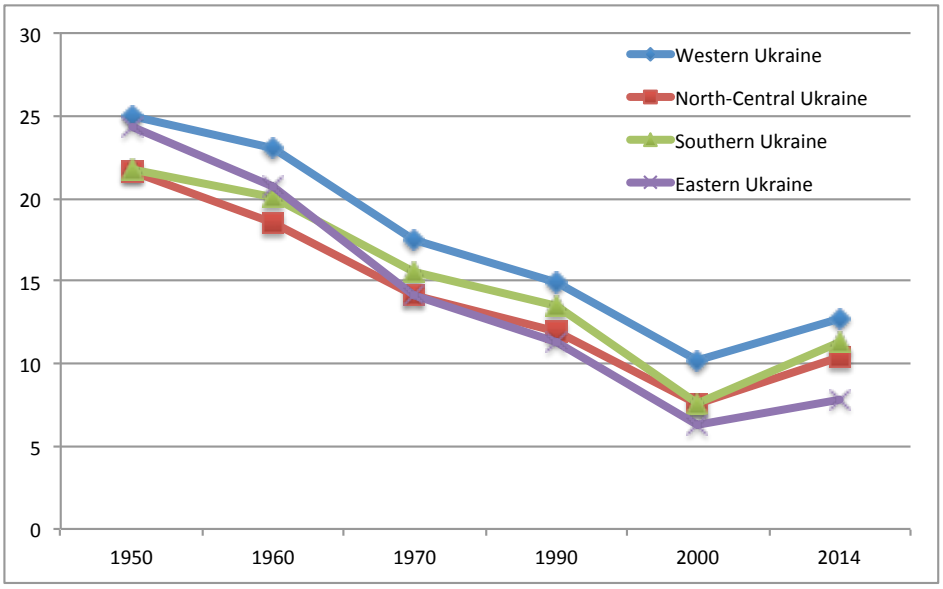


Figure 1.3: Crude birth rates per 1000 people for western, north-central, southern, and eastern Ukraine, 1950-2014. Sources: Dmitrieva 1973; Podjachih 1965; Ukrcensus 2015.

and eastern Ukraine. Figure 1.4 visualises birth rates for Lviv and Kharkiv as a single time-dependent path. The path starts in 1885 with highest rates for both provinces (top-right corner) and goes in a diagonal fashion to the much lower rates in 2014 (bottom-left corner). When compared to the dashed guideline, which depicts an equal rates for the two provinces, it becomes clear that fertility declines in Lviv and Kharkiv were drastically different.

When the curve goes parallel to the guideline, the pace of the decline is the same in the both provinces. This, however, holds only partially true for the beginning of the 20th century when the First Demographic transition just started and for the mid-1980s and 1990s when lowest-low fertility took place in both regions, but not for the period in between. The birth rate in Lviv province was already lower than it was in Kharkiv province at the end of the 19th century, with CBRs at 40 and 50, respectively, in 1885. From 1900 to 1925, fertility declined in both provinces, with Kharkiv declining a bit faster; yet, Kharkiv province still had higher CBRs than Lviv province. However, a rapid increase in birth rates took place in both provinces in the 1930s and lasted until 1955 when fertility rates once again declined in Lviv while they remained relatively high and stable around 43 in Kharkiv. This increase is indicated in Figure 1.4 by the curve becoming a horizontal line. The trends reversed between 1956-1959, when the birth rate in Lviv slightly increased, yet still remained lower than in Kharkiv. This trend is

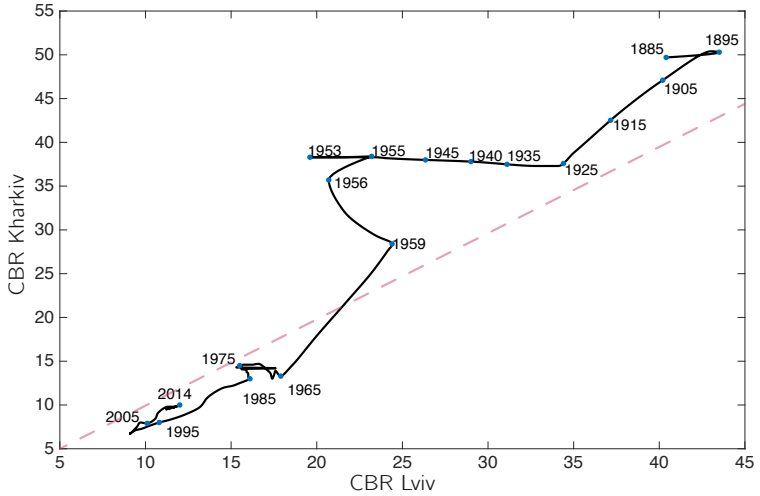


Figure 1.4: Crude birth rates (CBR) per 1000 people for Lviv and Kharkiv provinces, 1895-2014. Based on the yearly data of CBRs for the both provinces. Sources: Lviv state archive fonds 312, 283 and 406; Kharkiv state archive *fond* 1962, *fond* P-5125 and *fond* P-5231; Population yearbooks 1991-2001; Main Statistical Office in Lviv region databases: http://www.lv.ukrstat.gov.ua [accessed on April 15, 2015]; State Statistics Service of Ukraine documents publishing: http://ukrstat.org [accessed on April 5, 2015].

shown in Figure 1.4 by the curve pointing left from the dotted line. In Kharkiv, however, the rapid decline started in 1955, and it continued through the 1960s and 1970s when it declined from 35.7 in 1956 to 14 in 1970. The curve crossed the dotted line in 1962 when the CBR was 21.7 in both provinces. After that the birth rate in Kharkiv fell for the first time below that of Lviv. In Lviv fertility declined steadier from 20.7 in 1956, with a peak of 24.2 in 1959, and to 17.1 in 1970. Only in the 1980s and 1990s was the pace of fertility decline more or less similar in both provinces, and that was when lowest-low fertility took place. In the mid-2000s, the fertility rate slightly increased in both provinces.

Understanding these drastic differences in birth trends, particularly during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, is not only interesting but also necessary because in these three decades, in fact, for the first time in Ukrainian history, Lviv and Kharkiv were regulated by the same family and economic policies. The Soviet family policies after the Second World War, like those in the economic sphere, were influenced by the Cold War. The death of Stalin in 1953 and the appointment of Nikita Khrushchev as the prime minister of the Soviet Union signalled a course towards liberalisation of life in the Soviet Union. In many ways, this liberalisation implied that the private sphere of life now became a battlefield for

national super powers, as also featured in the famous 'Kitchen Debate'.[2] In practice, this liberalisation implied significant shifts and advancements in family and health care policy.

One of these advancements was the introduction of the patronage system around maternal and infant care. This system was already introduced after the Second World War but was effectively implemented during and after Khrushchev. The system aimed to decrease mortality rates among women and infants, and this type of care meant to supervise and consult young mothers to prepare them for delivery and after delivery to consult them on breastfeeding and infant care (Batkis, 1940). The Soviet Union also introduced the so-called milk kitchens that provided baby food to mothers who could not breastfeed their babies for any reason, such as work or medical conditions.

In 1955, the maternity leave for working mothers was introduced and it granted 112 days at full pay, 56 before delivery and 56 days after delivery (Lapidus, 1978). Additionally, mothers could have three months of unpaid leave. Those who decided to stay longer at home with their infant had the legal right to return to work in the same position within one year of childbearing; however, this right did not always work in practice (Lapidus, 1978)[3]. Altogether these regulations had a positive effect on the decrease in infant mortality rates (IMR)[4] in both regions (Figure 1.5), and particularly in Lviv where in just one decade IMRs declined from 79.9 in 1955 to 19.2 in 1965.

By improving maternal health and childcare opportunities, the Soviet state also aimed to increase and stabilise rapidly declining fertility rates in its European republics, including Ukraine. Moreover, from the 1940s until the 1990s, the state collected a tax on childlessness from men and married women without children to encourage child birth. Altogether, these healthcare and family policy regulations contributed to the reframing of the Soviet family policy towards a more modern incorporation of pronatalist and paternalistic premises. In this respect, even though the re-legalisation of abortion in 1955 may sound contradictory when referred to as a part of the pronatalist and paternalist Soviet ideological thinking, the underlying features behind this legalisation were indeed derived from these premises. In addition to abortion, no other female birth control methods were introduced. Only in the mid-1970 were intrauterine devices (IUDs) gradu-

[2]'The Kitchen debate' refers to the series of improvisational exchanges between Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev during the opening of the American National Exhibition in Moscow on July 24, 1959. The debate featured discussions on everyday standards of life and particularly those related to household organisation and consumption. For more on this subject, see in: Oldenziel and Zachmann 2011; Reid 2002.

[3]The Soviet Union extended parental life benefits to non-working mothers as well only in 1989 (Lahusen and Solomon, 2008, p. 207)

[4]The infant mortality rate is the number of deaths of children under the age of 1 per 1,000 live births.

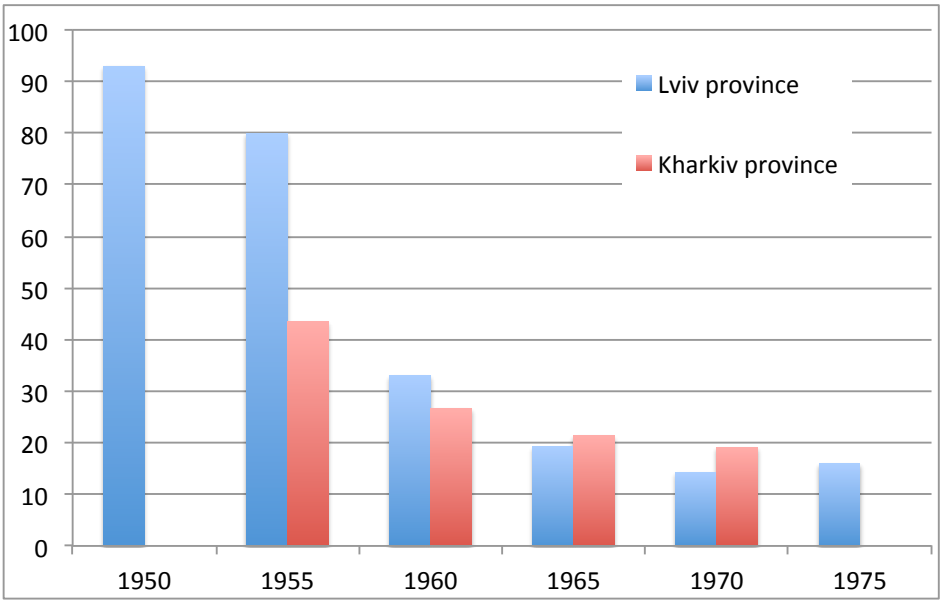


Figure 1.5: Infant mortality rates per 1000 births, Lviv and Kharkiv province, 1950-1975. Sources: *Demograficnuy shorichnyk* 2007, 68; Kharkiv State Archive, *fond* 5231, *opis* 9, *dokument* 1154, 1-45.

ally introduced (David and Skilogianis, 1999b). The rhythm (calendar) method, abstinence, and Soviet-made condoms that were not always reliable also constituted the main alternatives to abortion that the healthcare system promoted. The birth control pill was legalised in the West in the 1960s and primarily aimed to reduce illegal abortion (Burgnard, 2015) but in the Soviet Union the pill was used solely for treatment purposes (David and Skilogianis, 1999b). This contradiction of abortion *versus* the pill also most likely stemmed from the Cold War healthcare politics on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

On the individual level, these advancements in the Soviet policy brought many changes in how reproduction and childcare were handled because before these changes the family primarily regulated these arenas of private life. In the following section, I will address some aspects related to traditions of family relationships as well as structural developments in the two localities under investigation.

1.4.2 Socio-economic developments and family relationships in Lviv and Kharkiv

The cities of Lviv and Kharkiv are located more than 1000 kilometres apart (Figure 1.6). While Lviv is situated near the western Ukrainian border with Poland,

Figure 1.6: Map of Ukraine showing research field sites Lviv and Kharkiv. Source: OCHA/ReliefWeb (2013).

Kharkiv is situated near the eastern side of Ukraine and the Russian border. Lviv joined the Soviet Union in 1939, the actual Soviet-type industrialisation and new policy implications took place there mainly in the 1950s and thereafter. Kharkiv, in contrast, became part of the Soviet Union in 1919 and was also the capital of the Ukrainian SSR until 1934. Kharkiv city was also seen as the most vivid implementation of Soviet ideological thinking in many aspects of life.

Historically, Lviv was slower to industrialise and to adopt Soviet social reforms than Kharkiv, which was comparatively a more industrial and secular city. The modernisation process in Lviv started in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when it was part of Austro-Hungary and later Poland. However, this process was slower than in central and eastern Ukraine (Hrytsak, 2007), which at that time fell under the rule of the Russian Empire. During the interwar period, Lviv was a multicultural city where ethnic Polish and Jewish groups constituted the majority of the population. Industrialisation was further reinforced when western Ukraine became part of the Ukrainian SSR in 1939, and especially after the Second World War. By 1959, the population of Lviv had reached almost half a million (411,000), which made it the largest city in western Ukraine (Bodnar,

2010, p. 41). The city's population also became more homogeneous in the aftermath of the Soviet and German occupations during the Second World War, primarily because most of the Jewish population was sent to concentration camps during the war and the Polish population was deported to the ethnic Polish territories during the mid- and late-1940s (Amar, 2015). During the 1950s and 1960s, the rapid influx of migrants primarily from the neighbouring rural and urban areas meant that Ukrainians came to constitute the city's majority (60% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007, p. 41). During this period, Russian migrants were the second largest minority in the city (27% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007, p. 41); however, their percentage declined over the years.

Lviv after the Second World War can thus be seen as an entirely different city than it was in the interwar period because mainly Ukrainian migrants populated the city. The Soviet government started the process of dissolution of private property rights and also started *russification* and *sovietisation* campaigns in western Ukraine. These campaigns, however, were softer in comparison to those in other Belorussian or Baltic regions at that time (Amar, 2015; Hrytsak, 2007). This facilitated Ukrainians of provincial origin to retain their more traditional habits, such as strong religiosity, commonly Greek Catholicism, and strong family ties. During the post-war years these values made a significant contribution to the formation of the city's mentality, which even today is characterised by religiosity, patriotism and family values (Amar, 2015; Bodnar, 2010; Hrytsak, 2007; Perelli-Harris, 2008a). By maintaining relationships with family in villages and towns, as well as with other immigrants to Lviv, newcomers to Lviv were able to retain their traditional life styles and were thus slower in adopting new socialist norms (Bodnar, 2010). Moreover, their often family-oriented values were also reinforced by common opposition to the Soviet regime in this area and the idea that personal information should be shared only with those whom you trusted, usually relatives and family members.

Along with the importance of family relationships in their everyday lives, these migrants' personal values were built around notions of autonomy and aspirations of sustaining their own livelihood independent from their parents (Bodnar, 2010). As ethnographic studies show, this notion of independence was already typical in western Ukraine in the nineteenth century. After marriage, a couple usually set up a separate nuclear household and worked on their own land, which they had received from their parents. Only an older son and his family stayed with the parents, worked on the same land and provided elderly care in later life. Inheritance was typically partible and equally distributed among all the sons and occasionally among daughters as well (Behey, 2003). A similar pattern of family system is also typical for the northern-central part of Romania and is defined by

Kaser (2002, 2006) as a mix of stem and nuclear family systems.

In comparison to Lviv, patterns of family relationships and economic development followed different trajectories in Kharkiv. Rapid economic development in the Kharkiv region started in 1919 when the city of Kharkiv also became the capital of the Ukrainian SSR. From that moment, the machine industry and various light industries started to develop in the city. The industrial developments during the interwar years, which later continued during the 1950s and 1960s, led to a rapid influx of migrants to Kharkiv from the neighbouring areas and from Russia. However, the city's ethnic composition remained the same as before the Second World War. According to the 1959 census, Kharkiv was composed of 48.4% Ukrainians, 40.4% Russians, and 8.7% Jewish residents (Pikalova, 2004, pp. 452-457). In the mid-twentieth century, the city became one of the largest in Ukraine with a population of 950,000 people in 1959 (Rachkov, 2011, p. 213).

As soon as the Soviet regime was established, Kharkiv became one of the cities held up as an example of communist life. In fact, the tradition of communal life, where the entire family shares the household goods obtained from working together on the same land, was common in the Kharkiv area long before the Soviet regime was established. In this respect, communal life in Kharkiv was similar to traditional patterns of family relationships found in central and southern Russia where joint family systems prevailed (Czap, 1982; Hoch, 1982; Melton, 1987; Polla, 2006). An important aspect of the joint family system in the Kharkiv area is that it implied co-residence of more than two married couples in one household, typically parents with more than one married son (Hrymych, 2013; Kravec, 1966; Smolyar, 1998). During the nineteenth century, co-residence patterns started to change and only a younger son's family remained with the parents. However, in this region land was often family-owned, meaning that even when residing separately from parents, children still worked on the same land with their parents (Hrymych, 2013; Kravec, 1966; Smolyar, 1998). Inheritance was typically divided after the death of the father between all the married sons. These co-residence and inheritance patterns made children economically dependent on the parents not only before marriage but also later in life.

As described in historical perspective (see also Szoltysek (2015)), the traditional patterns of co-residence and inheritance rules in Lviv and Kharkiv could be the underlying factors forming regional family values in contemporary Ukraine, which are described by Perelli-Harris (2008a, p. 1157) as having a 'more traditional, religious and nationalistic family orientation' in western regions and as more community oriented in the eastern regions. These connections, though plausible, are still vague, as little is known about family relationships during the Soviet time in Ukraine. This dissertation addresses this lacuna.

1.5 Outline of the dissertation

This dissertation is organised into six chapters that mainly focus on the role of family relationships in an individual's reproductive careers in the course of the fertility decline in Soviet Ukraine from 1950 to 1975. Considering this, the structure also follows a reproductive career approach to present the findings. After the introductory chapter, chapters 2 to 5 discuss the major events of informants' reproductive careers – marriage, entrance into parenthood, birth control and abortion, transition to second birth – in the light of family and other social relationships.

Chapter 2 focuses on individual experiences of marriage and its surrounding sub-transitions, such as courtship and wedding, which together could be seen as a family formation process. This chapter addresses a long lasting question in demography and family sociology of how and why an early and universal marriage pattern has been maintained in Ukraine over time, and particularly in the 1950s-1970s when in many Eastern European countries marriage rates remained high. This was a reverse trend to most other European countries where during the same decades the decline of the golden age of marriage had started. The core idea on which I base my theoretical assumption in this study derives from the findings of Kligman (1998) and Mezei (1997) that socialist family policies often incorporated many traditional family values also common for historical family systems, such as pronatalism and paternalism. Based on this idea, I investigate the theoretical assumption that family relationships could also have supported and reproduced these values alongside policy, which altogether might plausibly explain why an early and universal marriage pattern has prevailed in this part of Europe until today. This chapter address this question by investigating individual values and decisions underlying family formation and the influences of family relationships on this process connected to aspects of continuity of demographic behaviour and values underlying family relationships.

Chapter 3 addresses the question of entrance into parenthood, which in the pre-transitional, Soviet-time and contemporary Ukraine has always taken place at an early age compared to other European countries. Similar to Chapter 2, I also suggest that the effects of pronatalist family policies encouraging early parenthood and the emergence of certain reproductive norms favouring early parenthood together are seen as underlying factors behind this reproductive trend and could also be connected to family values in Ukraine and their continuity. This chapter, therefore, examines how family relationships influenced decisions about the transition to first parenthood in Ukraine around 1950-1975 when the pronatalist family policies and modern reproductive norms emerged.

Chapter 4 discusses individual experiences of abortion and birth control in the context of gender relationships. In this chapter I particularly examine the role of

spousal power dynamics in birth control and abortion practices, as the two regions had significant differences in abortion rates before and after abortion legalisation in 1955. The debate that I address in this chapter is whether abortion practice can be seen as a sign of or as lack of female agency in spousal reproductive decisions and what this knowledge on female agency can tell us about the predominance of this practice over other birth control practices. As such, this chapter examines the role of local gender regimes and women's agency in the emergence of the so-called abortion culture and, specifically, regional differences in the frequency of abortion between the two cities in Ukraine from around the 1950s to the 1970s.

The discussion of abortion and other birth control methods in the context of other family relationships is also addressed in more detail in Chapter 5. Here I mainly focus on the informants' experience of transition from first to second births. In the literature on the lowest-low fertility decline, the transition to second birth and the associated behaviour of early stopping are always seen as the main preconditions behind this trend. As such, it has been suggested that regional family values in Ukraine could help to understand these demographic processes (Perelli-Harris, 2008a). I argue, however, that the tendency to early stopping had already emerged during the Soviet time when the two-child norm was established and that the changing role of the family relationships and values should already be addressed at this time. This chapter explores the role of family relationships in individuals' decisions surrounding the transition to second birth Ukraine from around the 1950s to the 1970s when the two-child family norm was establishing.

Chapter 6 highlights the main findings and conclusions in the light of the main two research questions. It also addresses the implications of the theorisation of family influences through the framework of local family systems and the theoretical and methodological implications of this approach. Finally, I discuss the societal relevance and policy implications of my findings and avenues for future research.

Chapter 2

Marriage

2.1 Introduction

Nearly every country in Europe has experienced declines in marriage over the past half century and Eastern European countries are no exception to this trend (Sobotka and Toulemon, 2008). Despite this decline, Eastern Europe has managed to maintain a pattern of universal and early marriage, as marriage rates there have been among the highest in Europe for the last half century (Figure 2.1) and the average age at first marriage has been among the lowest. In Ukraine, for example, the average age at first marriage in 2011 was 24.1 for females and 27.1 for males (Eurostat, 2015b). That said, like the rest of Europe, cohabitation in Eastern Europe is more common today than in the past, but it is practiced as a 'prelude to marriage' rather than as an alternative to it. This also then suggests that in this part of Europe marriage still remains an important event in the life course (Hoem et al., 2009; Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos, 2015; Perelli-Harris et al., 2014). Additionally, premarital cohabitation is more common today in Eastern Europe than it was in the past.

So how and why has this marriage pattern been maintained in Eastern Europe over time, and particularly from around the 1950s through the 1970s when most other European countries experienced a decline in marriage and the start of the marriage crisis. This study re-visits this question by focusing on individual values underlying family formation in Ukraine from around the 1950s through 1970s, and in particular the role of family and other social relationships in these processes.

The focus on family and other social relationships in the context of family formation in Eastern Europe is important as classical demographic studies on the area suggest that family structures in Eastern Europe have traditionally facilitated early and universal marriage through frequent intergenerational post-

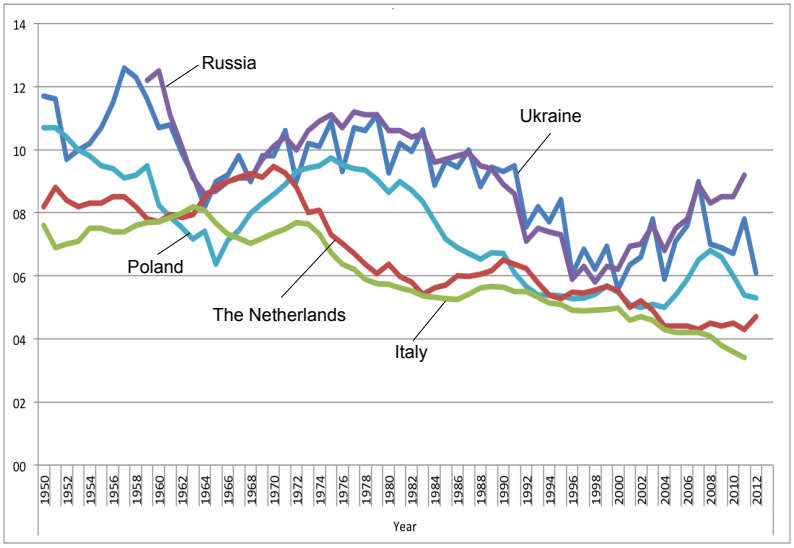


Figure 2.1: Crude marriage rates per 1000 population for Ukraine, Russia, Poland, the Netherlands and Italy 1950-2012.[2]Source: Demoscope 2013.

marital co-residence and a tradition of equally partible inheritance (Coale, 1992; Coale et al., 1979; Czap, 1982; Hajnal, 1965). Other studies argue that starting after the Second World War this traditional marriage pattern was crucially maintained by Soviet family policy. Namely, socialist family policies in Eastern Europe often incorporated many traditional family values also common to historical family systems, such as pronatalism and paternalism (Goldman, 1993; Kligman, 1998; Mezei, 1997). This suggests that family relationships could have supported and reproduced traditional values alongside policy, which taken together might plausibly explain why an early and universal marriage pattern has prevailed in this part of Europe until today. This assumption seems even more plausible in the context of recent studies showing that some countries with a socialist past no longer have a universal and early marriage norm. In Eastern Germany, for example, both the decline in marriage and the de-coupling of marriage and childbearing stem from a society that is rejecting an early marriage norm as a relic of the socialist past (Klärner, 2015). As a result, in contrast to the socialist period, economic and social uncertainty now postpones marriage and replaces it with cohabitation. However, it must be said that family relationships have never been important for the family formation stage in Eastern Germany (Klärner and Keim, 2016).

[2]Data are not weighted by the population size of given countries.

For many Eastern European countries scholars show that the early and universal marriage practice is closely connected to social pressure from parents to marry and to have at least one child early in the marriage to avoid the risk of becoming an 'old maid' (Perelli-Harris, 2008a). Moreover, the need for social recognition is high in these societies, and marriage, in contrast to cohabitation, often functions as a justification for others that partners trust each other and that they are ready to take on adult responsibilities (Isupova, 2015; Mynarska et al., 2014). Finally, some studies also suggest that path-dependency in family relationships may play a role in marriage, reinforcing past patterns of early and universal first marriage and parenthood in Eastern Europe (Ghodsee and Bernardi, 2012; Romaniuk and Chuiko, 1999). However, little empirical research has been conducted on how family relationships shape family formation decisions in practice. The present study therefore asks how did family relationships and family values influence family formation in Ukraine during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s when the Soviet pronatalist and paternalist family policies were just enacted? To address this question, I refer to the framework of social influences on reproductive behaviour introduced by Bernardi (2003) and also empirically studied in other investigations (Bernardi and Klärner, 2014; Keim, 2011b,a; Keim et al., 2009, 2012; Rossier and Bernardi, 2009).

I start with an overview of family values underlying family formation in Ukraine over time. I then reconsider these values and relationships in the context of my empirical data findings. The empirical data consist of 66 life history interviews with men and women who married, or remained single, from around the 1950s through the 1970s, and who at the time lived in the city of Lviv in western Ukraine or in the city of Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine. These regions are often presented as having differing family values and reproductive strategies in both historical and contemporary contexts (Hrytsak, 2007; Perelli-Harris, 2008a). As such, including both of them allows a comparative study of family formation in Soviet Ukraine.

2.2 Family formations, family relationships and paternalism in Ukraine over time

In Ukraine, kin members, particularly parents, were historically involved in their children's marriages. Parents played a crucial role in many aspects of married life, such as the choice of a suitable partner, the timing of courtship, and the organisation of a wedding (Kis, 2012; Smolyar, 1998). Ethnographers have shown that from the 19th to the early 20th centuries, Ukrainian wedding ceremonies were typically surrounded by rituals where a wife- and a husband-to-be were passive

participants who would simply be 'waiting to be guided' through this life transition (Mayerchyk, 2011). In this context, 'waiting to be guided' meant that parents, as well as in-laws, siblings, and other kin would take care of everything regarding the wedding's organisation, such as cooking and cleaning. More surprisingly, parents would also undertake such intimate acts as bathing and dressing up the bride- and groom-to-be (Mayerchyk, 2011, pp. 90-92). Taken together these rituals signify not only that young people exercised little agency in marriage decisions but also that marriage was typically initiated and organised by parents.

The lack of agency in marriage decision-making did not necessarily imply submissive parent-child relationships. In fact, ethnographers have documented that parents sometimes forced their children into an unwanted marriage to improve the family's economic conditions and thus young person well-being. These incidences aside, scholars suggest that parental involvement in these matters of marriage was usually seen as an essential and welcomed step in securing their children's future livelihoods because parents, and elderly in general, were considered wiser and more experienced in these matters than young people (Kis, 2012). Before the 20th century, parents also secured their children's livelihoods in marriage by granting their children a share of their inheritance as permitted under the partible inheritance system in some parts of western Ukraine (Behey, 2003), or by granting them the right to use parental property together with the parents and other married siblings, as was done in some regions of eastern Ukraine (Hrymych, 2013). As such, primarily for males the transition to marriage signified the entrance into adulthood. For females this transition was often realised through a change of residence to either neolocal or patrilocal residence.

All these traditional inheritance systems and their link to post-marital residence patterns indicate that a child's dependency on the parents, both moral and financial, was especially high before marriage, and that this dependency was frequently prolonged after marriage. Of course, these intergenerational dynamics would gradually change over the life course, and when the youngest generation became parents themselves, the cycle would start again. This pattern suggests that strong intergenerational ties characterised by paternalistic values surrounded family formation in the pre-historic Ukraine.

In modern times, when the Soviet regime eliminated private property and thus traditional inheritance patterns, marriage in Ukraine seemed to lose its importance in conventional terms. Moreover, new legal regulations governing relationships were introduced in the 1920s, such as as the legal recognition of cohabitation and divorce. These regulations supported the idea that the choice of a partner had to be a personal one and thus detached from the economic profit of other family members. The choice of partner was now meant to be primarily based on

romance and love, and the traditional and pragmatic idea of marriage had to be replaced by a marriage based on these ideals (Goldman, 1993).

However, this idealistic view of marriage was never realised in Soviet Ukraine. In practice marriage still continued to perform a pragmatic function: marriage was an investment in an individual's future livelihood and security, the two main criteria for choosing a potential spouse (Lapidus, 1978; Shlapentokh, 1984). Even during Soviet times, parents played an essential role in their children's married life, but less with regard to partner choice and more with respect to post-marital residence, as many Soviet families resided in multigenerational households (Blum, 2003). In addition, studies show that marriage in the Soviet context often preceded other life events that were also typically linked to the transition into adulthood, such as acquiring material independence from parents and sometimes even finishing educational training (Blum et al., 2009). This implies that until marriage, and frequently also afterwards, children would remain under parental supervision and protection (Ghodsee and Bernardi, 2012; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010). As such, marriage signified an entry stage into adulthood in the Soviet society, rather than an achievement of adulthood as it was in the West.

Additionally, transition into marriage also changed an individual's social status. Particularly for females, marriage and first childbirth signified the attainment of womanhood, as only after these events was a woman allowed to proceed with her career and other self-realisation goals without being subjected to social judgments (Rotkirch, 2000; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010). Those women who aimed to establish their career before marriage and childbearing would typically be considered selfish in these societies (Rotkirch, 2000).

On the state level, marriage also became an important societal institution, especially after the 1944 Family Edict when only registered marriages were considered legal, and cohabitation was no longer recognised (Lapidus, 1978). In the context of declining fertility rates, marriage started to perform a twofold function. First, marriage was an essential mechanism to decrease the number of children born out of wedlock. Particularly during the Second World War, the number of children born out of wedlock increased, as well as did the number of orphans (Lapidus, 1978). Second, marriage helped to control not only illegitimate births but also birth rates, in general, which was essential to maintain population growth. In the context of homogenisation of genders, which was a part of the Soviet egalitarian discourse, 'a couple, despite being based on marriage, was valued only when it (re)produced' (Mezei, 1997, p. 225). To encourage reproduction, the state offered many social benefits to married couples with children, such as accommodations and jobs, while non-reproducing couples received none of these.

In many ways, the Soviet state re-introduced some traditional paternalistic

and pronatalist values around family formation (Kligman, 1998; Mezei, 1997). However, the state's maintenance of these values and the implications of these values for family formation decisions would not have been effective without the acceptance and practice of these values within society and particularly within family. Understanding post-war marriage practices from the perspective of personal relationships between generations, siblings, spouses, and peers is therefore necessary.

The approach to study family formation from a social relationships perspective was also used in a study by Bernardi and Oppo (2011). In their 2012 study, Bernardi and Oppo argue that alongside individual choices of family formation, family relationships in the form of the strength of family ties and family culture, shape these experiences as well. They argue that 'romantic relationships, in most cases, bring along a quest for social recognition', which, in turn, is conditioned on the evaluations and expectations of others (Bernardi and Oppo, 2011, p. 100).

At the same time, and as Bernardi (2003) argued earlier, social relationships can also influence individual reproductive decisions. Scholars define four main mechanisms of social influence on reproductive decisions: (1) social learning, (2) social and emotional contagion, (3) social and normative pressure, and (4) social support (see, for example, Bernardi and Klärner (2014)). For a more detailed description of these influences, see Chapter 1. Until now, studies have examined social influences only in the context of childbearing decisions. In this present study I expand this framework to include the study of family formation decisions and I connect these social influences on childbearing decisions to the character of family ties and cultural values surrounding them.

2.3 Research methodology

2.3.1 Data collection

Life history interviewing is often used to collect retrospective data on complete life courses or on parts thereof (Miller, 2000). For this study, I used this method to collect 66 complete reproductive histories of men and women who resided in the Ukrainian cities of Lviv or Kharkiv from around the 1950s through the 1970s (for the informants' characteristics, see Table 1, Chapter 1). Fieldwork was conducted between July 2012 and April 2015.

The interviews were open-ended, direct and personal conversations that, on average, lasted for two hours. In every interview I attempted to uncover the individual's experiences of various reproductive events, including courtship, marriage, childbearing, and birth control. I also addressed the meanings that participants attached to significant others in their reproductive decisions, namely those who

influenced, helped with, or prevented them from making reproductive decisions. Finally, I tried to understand how their reproductive choices were shaped by the broader context of influential historical events and policy regulations, such as the introduction of abortion and maternity leave as well as other social-economic conditions in Ukraine.

Purposeful and snowball samples were used to recruit the informants. These two sampling techniques ensured that the informants came from economic and educational backgrounds as diverse as possible. I did not aim to create a representative sample of the entire population of the two cities, but rather I aimed to interview a diverse enough group of individuals to enable a study of differences along a number of axes. The interview structure, sampling techniques, and recruitment of informants are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 1.

Secondly, life history calendars (LHC) were filled in with every informant after every interview. The calendar method helped to structurally gather biographical data on household composition, births, and marriages over the life course as well as the informant's career development and that of the informant's spouse were also recorded (Axinn and Pearce, 2006).

2.3.2 Data analysis

To analyse the interviews, I used *Atlas.ti* qualitative software. I applied two coding strategies to my analysis. First, I carried out structural coding (Saldaña, 2012) aiming to identify life course transitions and their sequences in every interview. Second, I performed domain and values coding (Saldaña, 2012) of the transitions related to marriage: courtship, wedding and post-marital residence. After coding, certain sub-themes emerged, such as 'practical marriage', 'parental control over courting' and 'partners choice and parental solidarity'. I then used the query tool to select the quotations according to the groups of documents that were created beforehand (i.e., document families): city (Lviv or Kharkiv) and gender (male or female). Finally, throughout the analysis, I used the LHCs as a triangulation tool with which I could reconstruct a biographical profile of every informant and could link it to their narratives when needed.

2.4 Setting

For decades, the western and eastern parts of Ukraine have been seen as interesting comparative sites primarily because they have historically differed in many socio-cultural aspects, such as language, religion, and family relationships. The provincial centres (*oblast*) Lviv in western Ukraine and Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine were chosen as the comparative field sites in this study. Over the last

two centuries, these two cities have undergone different social changes. Lviv, first part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and later Poland, became part of the Soviet Union in 1939. Yet, in practice many Soviet policies were implemented there only after the Second World War, such as industrialisation and collectivisation, Khrushchev's more liberal policies concerning female employment in more flexible spheres, and the re-legalisation of abortion in 1955 and divorce in 1968.

In terms of population, Lviv had a population of almost half a million (411,000) in 1959, making it the most populated city in western Ukraine at the time (Bodnar, 2010, p. 41). Its population also became more homogeneous in the aftermath of the Soviet and German occupations during the Second World War. During the 1950s and 1960s, the rapid influx of Ukrainian migrants primarily from the neighbouring rural and urban areas meant that Ukrainians came to constitute the city's majority (60% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007, p. 41). During this period, Russian migrants were the second largest minority in the city (27% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007, p. 41); however, their percentage declined over the years.

Lviv after the Second World War can thus be seen as an entirely different city from that in the interwar period, as mainly Ukrainian migrants populated the post-war city. In western Ukraine in the late 1940s, the Soviet government started the process of dissolution of private property rights, and also started *russification* and *sovietisation* campaigns. These campaigns, however, were softer than similar campaigns in other Belorussian or Baltic regions at that time (Amar, 2015; Hrytsak, 2007). This allowed Ukrainians of provincial origin to retain their more traditional values, such as strong religiosity, commonly Greek Catholicism, and strong family ties. During the post-war years these values significantly shaped the city's mentality which even today is characterised by religiosity, patriotism and family values (Amar, 2015; Bodnar, 2010; Hrytsak, 2007; Perelli-Harris, 2008a). By maintaining relationships with family in villages and towns as well as with other immigrants in Lviv, newcomers to Lviv were able to retain their traditional life styles and were thus slower in adopting new socialist norms (Bodnar, 2010). Moreover, their often family-oriented values were reinforced by the area's common opposition to the Soviet regime and by the idea that personal information should be shared only with those whom you trusted, usually relatives and family members.

In contrast to Lviv, Kharkiv was proclaimed the first capital of the Ukrainian SSR in 1919, and after that it was one of the best implementations of the Soviet ideological thinking. This automatically implies that forced industrialisation and collectivisation started there much earlier than in the rest of Ukraine. In 1959, Kharkiv's population was nearly one million (950,000) and it was also the biggest city in the area (Rachkov, 2011, p. 213). The city's ethnic composition did not

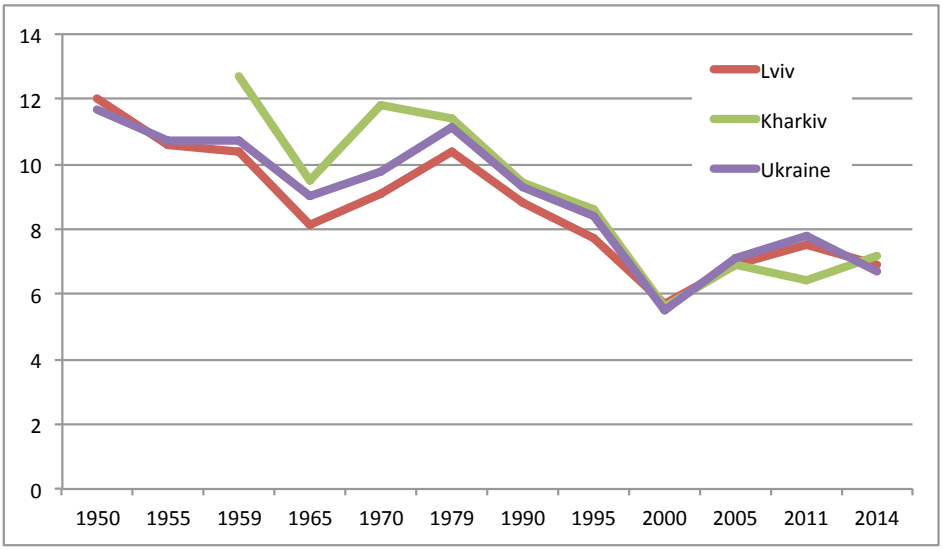


Figure 2.2: Crude marriage rates per 1000 population for Lviv province, Kharkiv province, and Ukraine 1950-2012. Source: Kharkiv State Archive, *fond* 5231; *Statystychnuy shorichnyk Lvivskoi oblasti za 2003, 2007, 2011 rik.*

change after the Second World War. According to the 1959 census, Kharkiv was composed of 48.4% Ukrainians, 40.4% Russians, and 8.7% Jewish residents (Pikalova, 2004, pp. 452-457).

With regard to marital behaviour, Lviv and Kharkiv were very similar during the Soviet period (Figure 2.2). In both localities marriage rates first sharply declined during the first decade after the Second World War, a result of the large decreases in the male population due to war causalities. By the 1970s, the sex ratio normalised for all ages under forty-three (Lapidus, 1978, p. 251), and as of the mid-1960s, marriage rates started to increase and reached 10-12 marriages per 1000 population in both regions until the early 1990s (Figure 2.2). This development indicates a return to a traditional marriage pattern after the Second World War in Ukraine. In the following section I analyse individual family formation experiences at the onset of this return.

2.5 Results

The unique status that family formation has in individual lives in Ukrainian society can be traced through a simple example of language use when referring to the transition into marriage. In both Ukrainian and Russian, both spoken in Ukraine, the meaning of the words ‘woman’ and ‘man’ are identical to those of

wife and husband. In Ukrainian, *zhinka* is used for both 'wife' and 'woman'. In Russian *zhena* and *zhenshina* are used. Similarly, *cholovik* in Ukrainian is used for 'husband' and 'man' and in Russian *myzh* and *myzhchina*.[3] Putting this language aspect into the context of the transition to marriage also signifies the overlap with the entry into social adulthood in this society. The former would denote not only a change in one's marital status but also a change of one's gender identity and a sense of maturity. Together, these life course changes place incredible pressure on the individual with regard to family formation, which may require assistance, support and often even the approval of others, such as family and kin members. In this section, I examine different life-course stages linked to family formation that appeared during the analysis, namely courtship, decision to marry, and wedding, and the role family relationships played in these stages in Lviv and Kharkiv from around the 1950s through the 1970s.

2.5.1 Courtship: norms on premarital sexuality in the context of family relationships

From the 1950s through the 1970s men and women in Ukraine viewed courtship and marriage through a lens similar to that of their counterparts in other European countries. While courtship was generally associated with romantic relationships as well as love and passion, marriage was linked to practical considerations (Rotkirch, 2000; Szreter and Fisher, 2010). Similarly, the informants from Lviv and Kharkiv also associated courtship with romantic love, but courtship rarely meant having long-term pre-marital relationships. The nature of the courtship practice is also reflected in how the informants referred to it. In nearly every testimony, courtship was referred to as friendship, similar to what Rotkirch (2000) also finds for Soviet Russia. In this respect, it was common 'to be friends' with several potential candidates without making a promise to marry. However, once individuals reached a marriage agreement, it was normal to get married soon thereafter. On average, a courtship period with a future spouse lasted for about a year and in some rare cases for two or three years. At this stage, continuing dating other potential candidates was not acceptable and could cause a break up.

After courtship, a brief betrothal period followed. In addition to its brevity, betrothal had another crucial aspect: it was uncommon for the betrothed to have intimate contact before marriage. In fact, intimate contact was even stigmatised as the quotes of these informants highlight:

[3]The same implies for the words 'boy' and 'boyfriends, and 'girl' and 'girlfriend', which have identical spellings: *hlopec* and *divchyna* in Ukrainian, and *paren* and *devushka* in Russian, respectively. Rotkirch (2000, p. 60), shows that courtship relationships were typically referred to as 'to be friends' (*dryzhit*) or courting somebody (*uchazhivat za kem-to*)

> I have to tell you that although there were several guys before I got married at the age of 35, I remained 'honest' until marriage. When we visited his parents one week before our marriage, his mother arranged a bed for us. But I told her that we would not sleep in the same bed. I did not have anyone before I got married, and I also agreed with my husband that only after marriage would that happen (Khrystyna, born in 1931, unskilled worker, Lviv).

> *Raisa:* There were a few [guys], but there was nothing serious between us.
> *Interviewer:* Do you mean that you didn't have sex?
> *Raisa:* No, of course we didn't. It was not acceptable. At that time it was not even spoken about, these kinds of issues. It was an enormous shame, for God's sake. No, no, never.
> *Interviewer:* Didn't you have friends who went through such experiences [having sex prior to marriage]?
> *Raisa:* No, neither my girlfriends nor me went through it. They all were normal. They were very strict about it, and the discipline was strict, very strict (Raisa, born in 1934, skilled worker, Kharkiv).

These quotes vividly illustrate the aspect that was prominent in many testimonies – a vitality of pre-marital female virginity. Similar to Soviet Russia (Rotkirch, 2000), female virginity before marriage in Ukraine was also a matter of a woman's pride. In her quote, Khrystyna highlights that she kept her 'honesty', meaning virginity, until marriage, even though she married for the first time when she was 35, which even today is quite late by Ukrainian standards. Even though Khrytyna was exceptional in this respect, her experience indicates that a strong norm regarding female virginity before marriage not only existed but was also followed. She also acknowledges emphasising it to her future mother-in-law by refusing to share a bed with her husband-to-be before they got married. This may suggest that premarital sex was socially controlled not only through an individual's consciousness to follow the norm but also through constantly communicating it to and confirming it with the social environment, which can also be seen as a normative pressure (Bernardi, 2003). Such a normative pressure appears even more explicitly in the testimony of Raisa, who describes the existence of a strict discipline and hence external social control of female virginity before marriage.

The crucial role of controlling a woman's pre-marital sexuality was performed by her parents. In the narratives of female informants, parental control was often enacted by restricting their young daughters' freedoms of pre-marital dating in different ways, as the quotes below illustrate:

> With my parents, we had an agreement that I had to be back home by ten in the evening. God forbid if it was later, at eleven or so. That never happened! Otherwise, it would lead to a huge quarrel with my stepfather (Kateryna, born in 1942, skilled worker, Lviv).

> My mother always told me 'Be careful not to invite something on your lap'[4](laughing) (Naida, born in 1936, unskilled worker, Kharkiv).

> When I was at technical college and also worked at the factory, most of my peers were already married. And then if something didn't work out with a man's wife, he would cheat with factory girls. But my parents always told me, 'You don't need this type of man. You should not destroy other women's families. You don't need it'. My parents were very strict about it, and as long as there was no [marriage] stamp in my passport, I had to be silent (Zoya, born in 1938, civil servant, Lviv).

As the quote by Zoya suggests that once women could show in their passport that they were married, they received many freedoms, including freedoms in their relationship with their parents. However, until that moment parents extensively supervised the courtship of the daughters by controlling their reproductive activities to help them preserve their virginity. This is also supported by Naida's quote, which refers to a famous Ukrainian proverb that her mother used to tell her and that warns a young woman to be careful and not to get pregnant before marriage. Similar to traditional Ukrainian culture (Kis, 2012), a woman who got pregnant before marriage in Soviet Ukraine would be stigmatised and could even be marginalised. Although the Soviet family policy granted extensive social support to single mothers, these women and their families were often dishonoured in society, and it was harder for them to get married and to have stable relationships afterwards.[5] To reduce their daughters' risk of pre-marital pregnancy, parents typically exercised a strong discipline by setting up rules, such as when a girl is expected to be back home, as in Kateryna's case, or with whom she can 'be friends', as in Zoya's case.

In the context of a strong patriarchal culture, which the Soviet Union unofficially promoted, the norms on premarital relationships for males before marriage were less strict, as is suggested for the case of Soviet Russia (Rotkirch, 2000). However, the oral testimonies in this study indicate that Ukrainian culture had some restrictions on male sexuality.

[4]The original Ukrainian saying is: *'dyvys v podoli ne prynesy'*

[5]In traditional Ukrainian culture, parental and community control over the sexuality of unmarried females was extremely strict primarily because females who gave birth out of wedlock, the so-called *pokrytka*, would be stigmatised. Moreover, this stigma would also often spread to their families. Ethnographers describe various rituals related to different ways of checking female virginity before marriage, such as the proof of vaginal bleeding after the first intercourse, which then would be presented to either a community or in-laws as a proof of the bride's honesty (Kis, 2012). Another example is that of courting nights, or *vechornyci* in Ukrainian, where unmarried boys and girls would be allowed to meet and to do some non-sexual activities together while being surrounded by an older generation, such as was done in western Ukraine (Kis, 2012; Mayerchyk, 2011). In other regions, such as in central and eastern Ukraine, these activities could imply some sexual play (Kis, 2012; Worobec, 1990). However, the issue of female virginity still remained strict even when some sexual experience was allowed, as not every male would agree to marry a woman if she became accidentally pregnant (Mayerchyk, 2011).

> Today, young people are more open about these issues. Back then it was very strict. Free sexual relationships were not allowed, unless within marriage. Normally, it was not even discussed and very much self-understood. Of course, there were always those who did not obey the rules. But the general rule was that in case of something [pregnancy], one should get married. And when I was dating a woman who I didn't want to marry because she was much older than me, and it was just for fun, I tried to be very careful with her (Andrei, born in 1934, scientific elite, Kharkiv).

> Before marriage, no sexual relationships were allowed. But my mother got to know. She calculated that our first son was conceived before our marriage. She caught us in this (laughing). It was quite a big scandal (Vasyl, born in 1934, civil servant, Lviv).

The quotes by Andrei and Vasyl suggest that restrictions on male sexual experiences before marriage were less concerned with the issue of virginity and more concerned with the responsibility to marry a woman if pre-marital sex resulted in pregnancy. While there were differences in male and female pre-marital sexuality norms, male sexual experiences, like their female counterparts, were also controlled by direct parental and community pressure.

These strict regulations and pressure on the pre-marital sexualities of both males and females, as well as the short-term courting practices that quickly led to marriage, could explain why marriage and first childbearing often occurred in close succession, within one or two years. As indicated above, childbearing was less likely to be accepted by parents and others if it took place outside marriage. In relation to this, I observed that a clear age norm existed for when each sex was supposed to enter into marriage. For females, the age norm was between 20 and 25 years of age. After that, a woman would be considered an old bride, which Perelli-Harris (2008a) also indicates for contemporary Ukraine. For males, the age limit was slightly higher; however, by the age of 30 men were expected to be married. In this respect, parental interest in protecting their children's reproductive activities before marriage could be driven by the common acknowledgment of its fundamental purpose – to enter into parenthood, which I elaborate on in the following section.

2.5.2 Marriage: norms, decision-making, and family influences

In addition to the practical aspects of marriage (Rotkirch, 2000; Shlapentokh, 1984), another crucial reason for getting married was its close link to childbearing. Women, in particular, connected their marriage decisions to their reproductive roles and to the importance of family in a female's life course. This furthermore

justifies why the norm of pre-marital female virginity aimed to secure procreation within marriage. Surprisingly, men also acknowledged that for them marriage was also a necessary step to having children, as the quote of a male informant illustrates.

> Once you are married, you are meant to have children. At least one child should be around. You create a family and children should be a part of it. Otherwise, why should you get married? You can continue having a relaxed life. There are many girls around, beautiful girls, and every day you can go out with a different one to enjoy the theatre, cinema and so on (Maksim, born in 1935, civil servant, Kharkiv).

Similar to other testimonies, Maxim's view on marriage indicates that this life stage created a different set of responsibilities than those surrounding the pre-marital stage. When still young and not married, a man and a woman had more freedom with regard to whom they wanted to meet but also with regard to their leisure time. Entering into marriage restricted these leisure activities and added extra responsibilities. However, because these changes were among the major signs of being a proper grown up, many informants perceived them as their major thresholds to the adult life. At the same time, those who remained single after passing the marriageable age were seen as not yet being aware of real life. The narratives explicitly illustrated that people rushed to grow up and to become proper men and women, both of which could be achieved and confirmed by passing into a marriage and by acquiring marital status.

As a result, this significance of marriage in an individual's life created normative and social pressure to get married as soon as possible. This meant that the informants not only had a subjective obligation to get married (Bernardi, 2003), but also received explicit external promotion to do so. Social pressure often came from the closest circles, such as parents, family and peers as the quotes below illustrate.

> I was 26 when he offered to marry me, and I realised that all my girlfriends were already married and some even had children, while I was still as free as a bird. And in a way my mother urged me to accept his offer (Zoya, born in 1938, civil servant, Lviv).

> On the moral level, I often felt a pressure that my life was not yet 'settled' (Evgenija, born in 1930, civil servant, Kharkiv).

The quotes by Zoya and Evgenija illustrate that for women in their early and mid-twenties, the normative pressure to get married would appear, and it would only grow with age urging the transition to happen. Parents reinforced these feelings by providing support in advising on a future partner, as in Zoya's case, or sometimes also by helping to find a partner, as I show later. Additionally, in some cases, parents could exert social pressure and literally force their children into marriage, as the following testimonies illustrate:

> My mother really wanted me to get married. It was something horrible. It seemed that I hindered her somehow (Oksana, born in 1932, unskilled worker, Lviv).

> His mother basically forced him into marriage. She thought I was a great candidate. So, one day he came to my place to ask me (Naida, born in 1936, unskilled worker, Kharkiv).

Parental supervision of their children's marital trajectories was often driven by some practicalities, such as the benefits that parents would receive from getting their children married, especially daughters. Marriage often implied patrilineal post-marital residence, at least during the first half year. In poorer households, such as with Okasana, marriage was an opportunity to free up space in the parental household as the bride would leave to live with the groom's parents. Moreover it served a practical function both for the parents and for the newlywed. At the same time, the quote by Naida illustrates that in-laws could also help to accelerate this event, as residing together with a daughter-in-law would bring additional household help. At first glance these realities may seem archaic for the Soviet time. However, particularly among people from rural areas who were the first generation to settle in cities, as with Oksana and Naida, these were the everyday realities.

In choosing a partner, many of the informants met their future spouses through work or studies. A variety of educational and work opportunities in Soviet cities allowed meeting a partner from more or less the same social background, i.e. similar interests and life priorities, which informants often mentioned as decisive categories for choosing a future partner. Additionally, Soviet discourse discouraged parental involvement in their children's marital choices. That said, in many cases a marital choice still remained a practical choice often made for the rest of the individual's life, as the informants portrayed it. In this respect, parents and other kin were often seen as helpful in finding a suitable partner.

In Lviv, it was typical for extended kin or for a village community, in the case of rural migrants, to mediate in helping individuals find a potential partner. Because the informants in Lviv distrusted the Soviet regime (Bodnar, 2010; Hrytsak, 2007), they maintained particularly strong ties with kin and relatives and tended to spend more time in these social circles and to have most of their friends from these environments. Additionally, looking for a person from the same community or through kin would secure the appropriateness and reliability of a future spouse, as the testimonies clarify:

> He was also from Khmelnytskuy oblast, but from a neighbouring village. And how did we meet? Well, once our mothers went together to pick blueberries in the forest, and then they started to talk, and my mother said that her two daughters lived in Lviv. And my mother-in-law said that her son had just got back from military service. So, they gave him my address, and one day he came to visit me (Anna, born in 1930, skilled worker, Lviv).

> We met accidentally. One of my relatives who also lived in Lviv introduced me to my wife (Petro, born in 1933, unskilled worker, Lviv).

After the two future spouses made a marriage agreement, it was common to have an official meeting with the family during which this decision was announced. Even when the future spouses knew each other's families, this ceremony was a matter of tradition. For many informants, particularly women, meeting the future in-laws for the first time and before marriage played an important role in making a final decision about marriage, as the following testimonies describe:

> He said that he wanted to introduce me to his mother. I made dinner for this occasion. His mother came; she was a bit plump and big, similar to my current mother-in-law. And when we started to eat, the first thing she said was 'Are you sick?' and I replied 'No, I am not sick!' That was it. You know, I was very thin when I was young, and I still am, as you can see (laughing). After this dinner, we arranged a visit to his extended family, but just before that, I realised that I wouldn't go. I knew that she [mother-in-law] didn't like me from the start and that I wouldn't be able to live like that. So we split up (Lidia, born in 1929, civil servant, Lviv).

> I liked him a lot, and more importantly, I trusted him. I knew his family, I knew his father, and that they are respectable people. And because they were like that I knew that he couldn't be a bad person (Evgenija, born in 1930, civil servant, Kharkiv).

As the testimonies suggest, in reality marriage was a union not only between a man and a woman, but also 'with' and 'between' their families. Particularly for women, the relationships with future in-laws could play a crucial role in their decisions to enter the marriage with a particular man.

Introducing a future spouse to the parents could also take place after the marriage registration. The informants who did this claimed that their marriage was their own choice and that they did not want to involve their parents. However, behind the presented independence, the informants still feared that their parents would not approve of their decision.

> Well, his mother was against him getting married at all. She wanted him to get an education first and then to get married. He was 25 when we got married and by the time he finished his studies he would've been 30, you see. That's too late. And one day he told his mother that we got married. It was big surprise for her, but it went well. (Viktoija, born in 1931, civil servant, Kharkiv)

The fear that parents might intend to influence their child's marital choice suggests that parental control in its conventional sense still existed in the Soviet context. Therefore, when parental control was strong, spouses would meet their families after the marriage registration so that parents could not object to their child's marriage. Regardless if spouses met their families before or after the marriage registration, the union was usually celebrated. In the following section I discuss the rationale behind the marriage celebration and how it is actually connected to practices of post-marital residence.

2.5.3 Rationale behind a marriage celebration

The informants typically celebrated their marriage in one of two ways: a formal wedding or a simple marriage celebration. A formal wedding was a large affair to which family, extended kin, friends and neighbours were invited. This kind of celebration was more expensive, and many informants claimed that they did not do it because of the costs. A marriage celebration, on the other hand, was a small dinner to which only the closest family and friends were invited. The latter was a more common and a cheaper alternative to the large wedding.

The marriage celebration typically followed the marriage registration in close proximity, either on the same day or a few days afterwards.[6] However, even though the informants said that these two events often coincided, each of these events conveyed a different meaning. The marriage registration was the legal recognition of a marital union and was more important to the couple. This attitude was also supported by the practice of not having anyone present at this occasion, not even parents, even if they were informed about the registration in advance.[7] On the other hand, the marriage celebration was an essential event that had a particular social meaning, especially for parents and extended family

[6] Among some Lviv informants, the tradition of a church wedding, before or shortly after the marriage registration was also common. However, because the Greek Catholic Church was banned during the Soviet time, these informants usually had a church wedding either secretly by inviting a priest to their homes, or in the Orthodox Church, restrictions on which were less severe.

[7] In this respect, the church wedding was often performed in a close-knit setting, either with only spouses present or with only close kin. The initiative of a church wedding always came from the couple itself and less from the family, which contrasts to a baptism, which was also always performed secretly, both in Lviv and in Kharkiv, but was often initiated by elderly family members.

and, typically, was also financially supported by them.

> We didn't tell anyone that we were going to get married. We went there [*ZAGS*] alone and registered our marriage (laughing). Just registered and that was it. Then, there was also a small celebration, a small one with a family, only family (Nadia, born in 1938, civil servant, Lviv).

> It was an ordinary student-like thing. Of course, when we applied to register our marriage, we informed our parents. But we also told them not to come, and that we would come and visit them afterwards. After the registration, we went to them and they organised a celebration for us, a very small one (Viktor, born in 1938, scientific elite, Kharkiv).

These testimonies illustrate that the marriage celebration most importantly served to satisfy parental aspirations of having this event. In this respect, the marriage celebration was a formal way to justify the relationship not only to the parents but also to the whole community, which the following quotes show:

> Well, we registered our marriage a year after the wedding, one year after. I fist moved in with him and his family and then we announced to my parents that we were getting married. But then there were no free spots available on the date we planned, but I'd already moved to his place, so we had to get married on that date. Otherwise, it would've been awkward and my father would not have approved (Naida, born in 1936, unskilled worker, Kharkiv).

> Well, my mother wanted it [wedding] because she could not handle that her only son would be left out, you understand? So we save a bit of money for it and had a small wedding. For my mother it was important, but it was less important for us (Vasyl, born in 1934, civil servant, Lviv).

As these quotes illustrate, the marriage celebration served to publicly validate the relationships and to give the relationship certain rights. For example, it allowed partners to reside together, as Naida also indicated, and to have children in a conventional and widely accepted way – within marriage. For parents, organising their child's marriage celebration was typically a matter of parental pride, as Vasyl mentioned in regard to his mother.

Overall, the testimonies also illustrate that the matter of who was financially responsible for the marriage celebration differed between the informants. The Kharkiv informants often expressed that they expected to receive financial support for the marriage celebration from their parents. Moreover, the actual practice of parental support was also common during the first years of marital life. Among the Lviv informants, a couple would either receive some support from their parents or they would be entirely self supporting. That said, the informants from Lviv often tried to acquire material independence before marriage. As a result, some of them became financially independent before or shortly after marriage. In Kharkiv, in

contrast, acquiring material independence from parents was not a pronounced theme in the narratives, and in practice, many informants materially relied on and resided at their parents' house even for some years after their first child was born. The following quotes illustrate the most typical experiences of post-marital residence in the two cities:

> First we lived apart. I lived at my mother's place. Then, after some time we married in November and somewhere in spring he came to visit me and told me that we had gotten an apartment (Bohdana, born in 1933, civil servant, Lviv).
>
> We lived at my aunt's for a few months after we got married and then we started to rent an apartment (Oleh, born in 1929, civil servant, Lviv).
>
> At first we lived at my parents' place. When Zhenechka [first son] was born, we moved to my grandmother's, my father's mother, and lived with her until she died, and we inherited the house (Natalija, born in 1933, civil servant, Kharkiv).
>
> We lived in another half of my mother-in-law's house. It was in a neighbourhood called *Holodnaja Hora*. She shared the house with her sister, who lived in another part of the house. Shortly after our marriage, they [parents-in-law] moved to Donbas, and I lived together with my husband in their part of the house (Zinaida, born in 1939, skilled worker, Kharkiv).

Certainly, the expectations to reside with parents for some time after marriage strongly depended on the housing availability in urban areas, which at that time was very scarce, and as some scholars suggest, the urban housing shortage forced many people to reside with their parents (Blum, 2003). However, the testimonies above, as well as some other studies on this topic (Ghodsee and Bernardi, 2012; Gruber and Heady, 2010b), illustrate that material factors were also reinforced by a particular pattern of intergenerational relationships, which differed between the informants in the two localities. The main difference could be linked to the degree of paternalism in intergenerational relationships over the life course, particularly to the patterns of post-marital residence and the reliability of receiving support from parents and/or a spouse. These issues are explored in greater depth in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5.

2.6 Conclusions

The main assumption of this chapter is derived from the argument posed some two decades ago by Mezei (1997) and Kligman (1998). These authors showed that the normative premises underlying the Soviet family policy, such as pronatalism and paternalism and that today are often seen as reinforcing factors behind the early and universal marriage pattern in Eastern Europe (Blum, 2003), are, in

fact, anchored in the values underlying historical family systems. In this chapter I primarily focused on this continuity in family values as interrelated with family formation behaviour. Yet, unlike Mezei (1997) and Kligman (1998), I examined how these values were expressed within actual family relationships. My main focus in this chapter was on how family relationships and accompanying values influenced family formation in Ukraine during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s when the Soviet pronatalist and paternalist family policies had just been enacted. Because Ukraine is known for its regional diversity in many socio-cultural aspects, such as language, religion, and family structures, I explored this issue in a comparative perspective of two urban localities, Lviv in western Ukraine and Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine, where I conducted 66 life history interviews that are the main source of my results.

Throughout the analysis I distinguished between three stages in the family formation process: courtship, marriage, and marriage celebration. The courtship, or betrothal stage, was often brief among the informants in both cities and its particularity was the value of pre-marital virginity, especially female virginity. In a previous study (Rotkirch, 2000), the issue of female virginity is frequently emphasised in the context of stigma attached to illegitimate births. Even though the Soviet state granted many rights and possibilities to single mothers, the 1944 Family Edict, which declared children born out of wedlock as illegitimate, in actuality victimised both women and children (Lapidus, 1978). Considering this, the parental control over female virginity before marriage was the main means to secure a decent future for the younger generation. Moreover, the informants associated livelihood security with a successful marriage and with the right choice of marital partner.

Like female pre-marital sexual experiences, male pre-marital sexual experiences were also subjected to parental control but not directly by protecting male virginity but rather indirectly by controlling the outcomes of their pre-marital sexual experiences. Specifically, when needed, parents reinforced the normative pressure on their sons to marry the woman he unintentionally got pregnant.

Overall, parental social control around male and female pre-marital sexual practices was not necessarily characterised by both sanctions and rewards, as Bernardi (2003) and Bernardi and Klärner (2014) assign to social pressure. Instead, sanctions associated with social control occurred to keep behaviour in a certain order for the sake of both an individual's and a community's life being. That is, sexual behaviour was controlled to avoid the shame of pre-marital birth for the family. This makes social control a distinct mechanism from social and normative pressure, although the last two reinforce the first. Together, these findings also suggest that the overall historically low rates of illegitimacy in Eastern

Europe are not only linked to the taboo on pre-marital sexual relationships but also to the social norm that if a woman became unintentionally pregnant, the child's father would marry the mother given the strong parental control on these matters both in historical and contemporary contexts.

In addition to thinking that a successful marriage provided more security over the life course, informants also perceived marriage as a way to achieve more rights and personal freedom. Informants frequently mentioned the state guarantee to married couples to provide better access to housing and job opportunities as a major factor for rushing into marriage. Additionally, informants often commented on the freedom achieved in interpersonal relationships with parents when they got married. They mentioned that getting married implied less parental control over their lives, which made them feel more mature. Marriage indeed signified an entry into adulthood as some previous studies have mentioned (Blum et al., 2009; Rotkirch, 2000). The rush to grow up by entering adulthood and by getting married could also be connected to the fear of becoming an 'old maid', which Perelli-Harris (2008a) emphasises as one of the crucial pre-conditions for early and universal marriage in Ukraine today.

Informants also associated the moment of receiving individual freedom from their parents with receiving recognition of their marital choice. Although marital choice among the informants was typically portrayed as an individual one, individuals still sought parental recognition, which I link to the expectations of and reliability on parental help during early marital life. In this respect, parental pressure regarding the decisions on early marriage, or fast transition to parenthood after marriage, as I show in Chapter 3, was followed by the expectations of receiving parental support when the desired outcome was achieved.

However, the expectations of receiving this support and the degree of its provision differed between the two localities. As an example, I present the case of post-marital residence and individual expectations of residing with parents after marriage or not. I observe that the informants from Kharkiv felt the need to confirm their marital decisions with the parents, as many of them also expected to reside with their parents for some time after marriage. Of course, these expectations could also be linked to the housing shortages at the time. However, and as the examples of the Lviv informants show, even though state-provided free housing was limited everywhere, informants always had the possibility to rent an apartment. This option, however, was rarely considered among the Kharkiv informants. Among the Lviv informants, on the other hand, a faster transition to neolocal residence after marriage prevailed either through renting an apartment or renting a shared apartment, or though applying early enough for a state apartment. It could well be that the practice of neolocal post-marital residence,

particular for Lviv informants, was linked to the availability of rental houses.

My analysis of family relationships illustrates that the informants' expectations and practices of post-marital residence were linked to a different degree of dependency on parental support, which I associate with the presence of paternalistic values in intergenerational relationships. An analogy here could be drawn with the historical patterns of post-marital residence in the joint-family system that prevailed in Kharkiv, where collective inheritance of parental property made children longer dependent on their parents. In Lviv, where the nuclear-stem family system historically dominated, the pattern of equally partible inheritance still made children dependent on their parents but only until marriage after which they received a share of parental property.

Of course, this continuity aspect should be studied further, but other studies also suggest that patterns of post-marital residence in Eastern Europe are linked not only to the availability of rented housing and family policy implications but also to the character of intergenerational relationships (Ghodsee and Bernardi, 2012; Gruber and Heady, 2010b). Gruber and Heady (2010b) suggest that the demand for rented housing could be connected to the culture of giving a dwelling as a gift, which is more common today in urban areas in Eastern and Southern Europe, where intergenerational residence of parents and their married children is also the most prevalent across Europe. That said, if this historical continuity in paternalistic intergenerational values can be connected to that of the socialist state, which also exercised the same paternalistic values on young people, then this connection could very well explain why universal and early family formation patterns prevailed in Ukraine before, during, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Left: Woman with her two children. (*Kharkiv,* mid-1950s)

Bottom: Child in a typical stroller. (*Kharkiv,* 1950s)

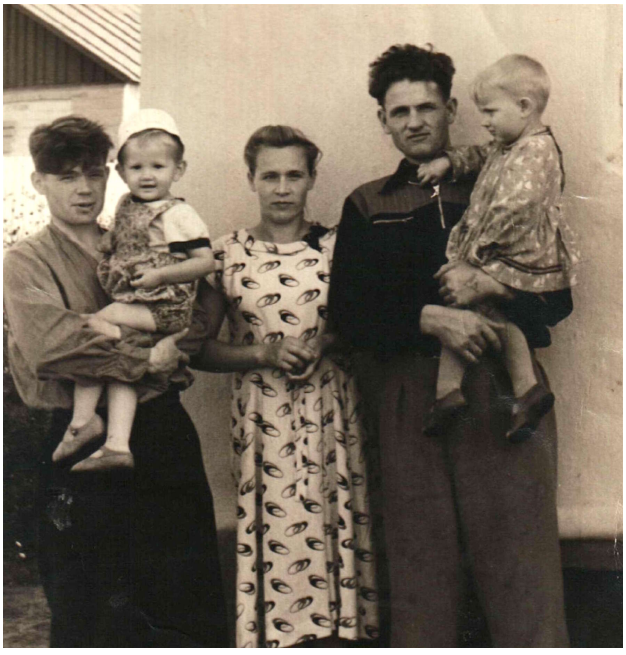
Top: Family with friends at the picnic. (*Kharkiv,* 1960s)

Left: Father with his daughter during May 1st demonstration. (*Kharkiv,* 1960s)

Top-left: Two friends with their children.
(*Kharkiv,* circa 1950)

Top-right: Family with a child.
(*Kharkiv,* mid-1950s)

Bottom: Family with friends.
(*Kharkiv,* mid-1950s)



Top-left: Great grandmother with her great grand-child. (*Kharkiv,* 1960s)

Top-right: Birth registration ceremony at municipality (ZAGS). (*Kharkiv,* 1960s)

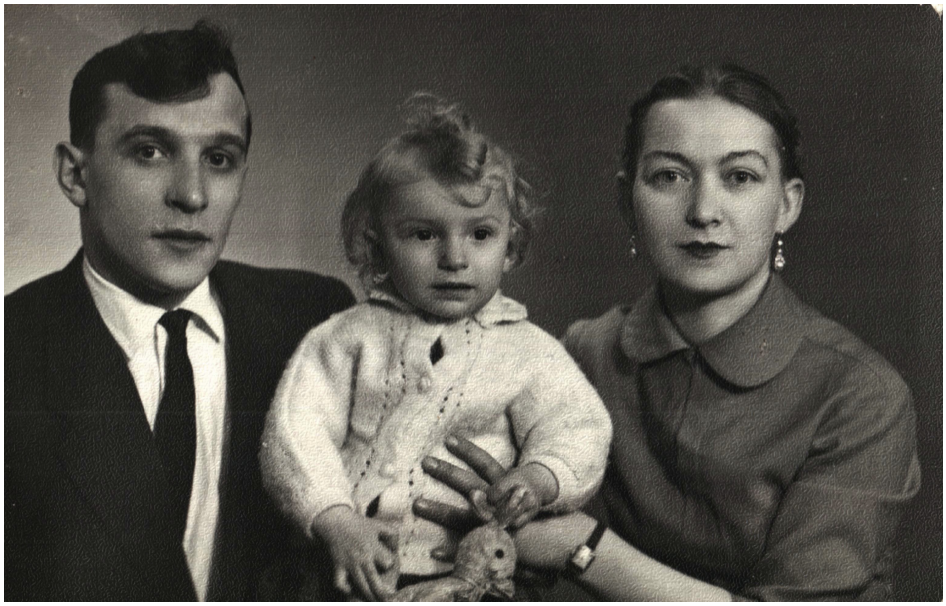
Bottom: A husband took a photo of his wife's pregnancy. (*Kharkiv,* circa 1960)

Top: Family together. (*Lviv*, 1950s)
Left: Twin brothers with their wives and children. (*Lviv*, 1960s)

Top-left: Wedding photo after marriage registration. (*Lviv*, 1960s)

Top-right: Wedding photo, married couple with their witnesses. (*Lviv*, 1960s)

Bottom: Wedding celebration with family and friends at home. (*Lviv*, 1960s)



Top: Family picture taken at the studio. (*Lviv*, 1950s)

Bottom-left: After baptising, at the entrance of St.Yurii Church. (*Lviv*, 1960s)

Bottom-right: Father with his child. (*Lviv*, 1960s)

Family (*Lviv*, 1960s)

Family (*Kharkiv*, mid-1950s)

Chapter 3

Entrance into Parenthood

3.1 Introduction

One of the biggest puzzles of contemporary fertility behaviour in Eastern Europe is that although there is a wide availability of modern contraception and diffusion of new family values, first parenthood still takes place relatively early in the life course and in close proximity to marriage. In Ukraine, for example, the mean age at first birth among women was 24.5 in 2011, while the mean age at first marriage was 24.1, which today is among the lowest marriage ages in Europe (Eurostat, 2015b,a). Scholars often argue that pronatalist policies, uncertain economic conditions and social anomie have encouraged early entry into parenthood in this part of Europe (Billingsley, 2010; Frejka, 2008; Perelli-Harris, 2005, 2008a; Sobotka, 2004b; Thornton and Philipov, 2009). Others additionally suggest that the reproductive norms particular for these regions also favour early first childbearing. These norms include early motherhood as a biological necessity (Gabriel, 2005; Mynarska, 2010), grandparental support with childcare (Gabriel, 2005; Rotkirch, 2000; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010), and first birth as the greatest achievement of adulthood and womanhood (Blum et al., 2009; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010).

Although these explanations shed some light on recent developments in the early transition to parenthood, they do not attempt to grasp the historical continuity of this trend, such as explaining why and how early first birth has been a particular feature of fertility behaviour in Eastern Europe for at least the last 150 years, as historical demographic studies show (Coale et al., 1979). One vital issue that needs to be addressed in this continuity behaviour is how the transition to first parenthood occurred under the changing structural conditions imposed by the USSR, particularly when the pronatalist policies of the Soviet Union, economic uncertainty, and modern reproductive norms were just appearing in the

1950s and 1960s. This chapter therefore examines individuals' decision-making on the transition to first parenthood in Ukraine at that time, and it pays particular attention to family relationships in these processes.

The family constitutes the primary social environment for reproductive decision-making. Moreover, in Eastern Europe, family relationships have been characterised by strong ties over several decades. In the historical context, strong family ties were reinforced though frequent intergenerational co-residence and patterns of partible inheritance (Czap, 1982; Viazzo, 2010). Although during the Soviet time changes in some traditional practices occurred, such as the abolishment of private property and thus the discouragement of traditional inheritance and residence patterns, traditional family values were still promoted by the state. This especially holds true for the later period of Stalin's regime (1935-1953) and the de-Stalinization processes after 1953 both of which signalled a return to the traditional family values (Goldman, 1993; Lapidus, 1978). In practice, the state's promotion of these values meant that, like the historical context, the family continued to provide the major welfare for its members, especially in crisis situations, such as child and elderly care. Moreover, post-war Soviet family policy reproduced paternalistic and pronatalist values that were also typical for historical family systems in many Eastern European regions (Mezei, 1997). So far, however, little attention has been paid to understand how the continuity in family values anchored in historical family systems has shaped the continuity in early transition to parenthood in the Soviet context and more specifically what role family relationships played in this transition. This chapter therefore asks: how did family relationships influence decisions about the transition to first parenthood in Ukraine from around 1950 to 1975 when the pronatalist family policies and modern reproductive norms emerged?

To detect family influences, I use the framework introduced in Bernardi (2003) and later studies (Bernardi and Klärner, 2014). I analyse 66 life history interviews with men and women who were in their parenthood years during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s in the cities of Lviv and Kharkiv. The cities are the major centres in western and eastern Ukraine, respectively, and were chosen for a comparative analysis because they provided differences in many socio-cultural aspects, such as language, religion and historical family systems.

In the following section, I provide an overview of the ethnographic and historical literature on family relationships in Ukraine over time, and I compare them for western and eastern Ukraine. I also discuss how I apply these influences to detect cultural patterns of family relationships and values in relation to entry into parenthood. In the third section, I describe the field sites, data collection, and data analysis. In the fourth section, I address family influences on timing

and decisions of first parenthood, including grandparental support provision with childcare. In the concluding section, I discuss the links between the continuity in early transition to first parenthood and family relationships in Ukraine.

3.2 Family relationships in Ukraine over time

In the territories of current western Ukraine,[1] strong intergenerational dependencies up until marriage and cooperative relationships between siblings after marriage characterised families in this region. These family relationships largely derived from the historical co-residence and inheritance patterns typical for the region. As such, inheritance was historically partible and land was equally distributed among all sons at marriage (Behey, 2003; Kaser, 2002). After marriage, a couple typically set up a nuclear household, separate from the parents, and worked their land alone. Siblings could decide to merge their land if their own parcels were too small.[2] Only an oldest son and his family stayed with the parents, worked the same land, and provided elderly care in later life. According to Kaser (2002, 2006), a similar pattern of family relationships can also be observed in parts of Romania, and it represents a mix of stem and nuclear family systems.

In the territories of current eastern Ukraine, such as the Sloboda Ukraine region,[3] historical household and inheritance patterns were different from those in western Ukraine, which also promoted different types of relationships between family members. As sons transitioned to marriage, they did not move to their own households but lived with their parents until their father's death. The inheritance was collectively owned, meaning that the land was not divided between the sons at marriage; however, they had the right to use it only if they got married (Kaser, 2002; Kravec, 1966). Only after the father's death would the sons be allowed to divide the inheritance. However, the rules on whether they divided it equally differed from household to household, which was also the major cause of conflicts between adult siblings. In this multigenerational household setting, one's social status strongly depended on age. Ethnographic studies have shown that newly-wed women had the lowest status in the household and were often subordinate to other kin members, such as mothers-in-law (Hilevych and Rotering, 2013; Ivanov, 1898; Kis, 2012). However, when they became mothers-in-law

[1] Current territory of western Ukraine covers the areas of historical eastern Galicia, to which belong today's Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil provinces (*oblasts*).

[2] Austro-Hungarian laws encouraged collective ownership of the land because the land fragmentation in eastern Galicia became a crucial issue in the late 19th century. The peasants, however, opposed these laws, and they have never been fully adopted (Franko, 1888; Kaser, 2002).

[3] Current territories of Sloboda Ukraine occupy the entire Kharkiv province, and parts of Symmy and Lyhanks provinces (*oblasts*).

themselves, they would acquire one of the highest positions in the household. As a result, intergenerational dependency at least during the early years of marital life was among the main characteristics of families in Eastern Ukraine. Scholars suggest that this tradition of family relationships was also common in historical Southern and Central Russia and is typically defined as a joint or communitarian family system (Czap, 1982; Hoch, 1982; Polla, 2006; Todd, 1988).

When the Soviet regime was established in the early 20th century, these traditional household and inheritance patterns were discouraged. However, the Soviet ideology still supported a communal lifestyle, like the communitarian model, yet not necessarily between kin members. Some argue that traditional communal lifestyle made adapting to the Soviet values easier in the regions where the communitarian family systems prevailed, such as in parts of European Russia and in Eastern Ukraine, and harder in the areas where stem family systems had prevailed, such as in western Ukraine and the Baltic states (Todd, 1988, 1990).

After the 1950s, the Soviet state started a return to traditional family values, and now the family, not the community, was seen 'as a fundamental agency of socialisation, as a supplier of essential productive, reproductive and emotional services, and as a basic unit of decision-making that mediates the relation between public and private domains' (Lapidus, 1978, p. 234). Moreover, the forced industrialisation and rapid urbanisation that characterised the Soviet state in the 1950s and 1960s also facilitated the re-adoption of rural family values in Soviet cities – a phenomenon typically defined as *'ruralization'* (Blum, 2003). Studies on urban families in Soviet Russia and Ukraine show that collective values and reciprocal support between colleagues and neighbours, as well as strong intergenerational relationships, constituted an essential part of people's everyday lives (Semenova and Thompson, 2005; Vinokurova, 2007). Studies on western Ukraine also illustrate that in the 1950s and 1960s, the patterns of family relationships that existed in the city of Lviv were also based on the local peasant family values brought by migrants from the neighbouring rural areas (Bodnar, 2010). Some additionally suggest that after the 1950s, the Soviet family policy started to implement paternalistic and pronatalist values also particular for historical family systems (Mezei, 1997), which reinforced the conservation of these values in society. So far, however, little attention has been paid to how this continuity in family values and relationships could have shaped the continuity in early transition to first parenthood in the Soviet context. This chapter therefore asks: how did family relationships influence decisions on transition to first parenthood in Ukraine from around 1950 to 1975 when the Soviet family policies and modern reproductive norms emerged?

As discussed earlier, depending on which family values are important, different

types of interdependencies in terms of power structures and support provision can drive family relationships. In this respect, family members can wield direct or indirect influences on each other's (reproductive) actions, decisions and attitudes to reinforce certain interdependencies. Scholars define four such mechanisms, among which social learning and social contagion are indirect influences, while social pressure and social support are more direct influences (Bernardi, 2003; Bernardi and Klärner, 2014). For more on each of these influences, see Chapter 1. Moreover, social support and social pressure may not only be expressed by family members but can also be expected from a target person. For example, before getting pregnant, a woman may have a certain idea of how her future childcare could be arranged and who may be involved in it, such as the husband, grandparents or friends. If she expects to receive support from any of these people, but the person cannot fulfil her expectation, this situation may alter her decision to enter parenthood. In this respect, expectations and actual provision of social support are crucial in fertility decision-making.

3.3 Research methodology

3.3.1 Data collection

The life history interviewing is often used to collect retrospective data on complete individual life courses or on parts thereof (Miller, 2000). For this study, this method was used to collect 66 complete reproductive histories of men and women who resided in the cities of Lviv and Kharkiv during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. I spent 10 months conducting fieldwork in both cities: July to August 2012, March to May 2013, August to November 2013, and February 2014. From October 2014 to April 2015, 20 interviews were conducted with the help of a research assistant in Kharkiv.

The interviews were open-ended, direct and personal conversations that, on average, lasted for two hours. In every interview, an individual's experiences of various reproductive events, including courtship, marriage, childbearing(s) and birth control were uncovered. The interviews also addressed the meanings that participants attached to significant others in their reproductive decisions, namely those who influenced, helped with, or prevented them from making reproductive decisions. Finally, it was important that the informants put their reproductive choices in the broader context of influential historical events and policy regulations, such as the introduction of abortion and maternity leave as well as other social-economic conditions in the Ukraine?

Purposeful and snowball samples were used to recruit the informants. These two sampling techniques ensured that informants came from economic and edu-

cational backgrounds as diverse as possible (for the informants' characteristic, see Table1 in Chapter 1).

That said, this sample is not representative of the entire population of the two cities. Moreover, because of its diversity and, thus, relatively small numbers of individuals belonging to certain ethnic and religious groups, the sample does not allow the exploration of these differences in depth between the two localities. The structure of the interviews, sampling techniques, and recruitment of informants are more extensively discussed in Chapter 1. After every interview, life history calendars (LHC) were filled in with every informant. The calendar method structurally gathers biographical data on household composition, births, and marriages while the informant's career development and that of the informant's spouse were also recorded (Axinn and Pearce, 2006). Finally, I collected population statistics and ethnographic literature on both regions. I used data on births and population numbers to calculate crude birth rates for the regions (see Figure 3.1).

3.3.2 Data analysis

Given the specific nature of retrospective data, I did not try to detect the exact reality or the truth behind every life story to answer my main research question. Instead, I aimed to inform the general narrative by discussing various reproductive experiences and the logic individuals attached to their decision-making and to surrounding family relationships.

To perform the analysis, I used *Atlast.ti* qualitative software. I applied two coding strategies to analyse the interviews. First, I carried out structural coding (Saldaña, 2012) to identify life course transitions and their sequences in every interview. Second, I performed domain and values coding (Saldaña, 2012) of the transitions related to first parenthood: pregnancy, childbirth, abortion, miscarriage and childcare. After the coding, certain sub-categories emerged, such as 'right timing of parenthood', 'decision-making on parenthood', and 'expectations of parental support'. I then used the query tool to select the quotations according to the groups of documents that were created beforehand (i.e. 'families' of documents): city (Lviv or Kharkiv) and gender (male or female). Finally, throughout the analysis, I used the LHCs as a triangulation tool with which I could reconstruct a biographical profile of every informant and link it to their narratives when needed.

3.4 Setting

The cities of Lviv in western Ukraine and Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine are the field sites in this study. Historically, western and eastern regions of Ukraine differ

in many aspects, such as religion, language, economic development, demographic behaviour, and traditions of family relationships.

In general, the city of Lviv was slower to industrialise and to adopt Soviet social reforms than Kharkiv, which was comparatively a more industrial and secular city. The modernisation process in Lviv started in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when it was part of Austro-Hungary and later Poland. However, this process was slower than in Central and Eastern Ukraine, which at that time fell under the rule of the Russian Empire. During the interwar period, Lviv was a multicultural city where ethnic Polish and Jewish groups constituted the majority of the population. Industrialisation was further reinforced when western Ukraine became part of the Ukrainian SSR in 1939 and especially after the Second World War. By 1959, Lviv's city population had reached almost half a million people (411,000), which made it the biggest city in western Ukraine (Bodnar, 2010). The city's population also became more homogeneous in the aftermath of the Soviet and German occupations during the Second World War. During the 1950s and 1960s, the rapid influx of migrants primarily from the neighbouring rural areas and small towns meant that Ukrainians came to constitute the city's majority (60% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007). During this period, Russian immigrants were the second largest minority in the city (27% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007); however, their percentage declined over the years. Female labour force participation in Lviv also increased from 12.3% in 1950 to 42.3% in 1960 (Hyk, 1987, p. 193).

In contrast to Lviv, socio-economic development in Kharkiv followed a different trajectory. Rapid economic development in the region started in 1919 when the city of Kharkiv also became the capital of the Ukrainian SSR. From that moment, the machine industry and various light industries started to develop. The industrial developments during the interwar years, which later continued during the 1950s and 1960s, led to a rapid influx of migrants to the city from the neighbouring rural areas and from Russia. The city's ethnic composition, however, remained the same as before the Second World War. According to the 1959 census, Kharkiv was composed of 48.4% Ukrainians, 40.4% Russians, and 8.7% Jewish residents (Pikalova, 2004). In the mid-twentieth century, the city became one of the largest in Ukraine with a population of 950,000 people in 1959 (Rachkov, 2011, p. 213). Female labour force participation during these years was high. According to the state statistics, in 1950, the proportion of women among blue-collar and white-collar workers was 46.9%.[4]

During the interwar period, the fertility transition was underway in Ukraine, and by the 1960s, fertility fell below replacement level in some regions in eastern Ukraine, including Kharkiv. In the Lviv region, the fertility transition started

[4]Department of demographic statistics of Kharkiv Statistical Office, email request on April 2, 2014.

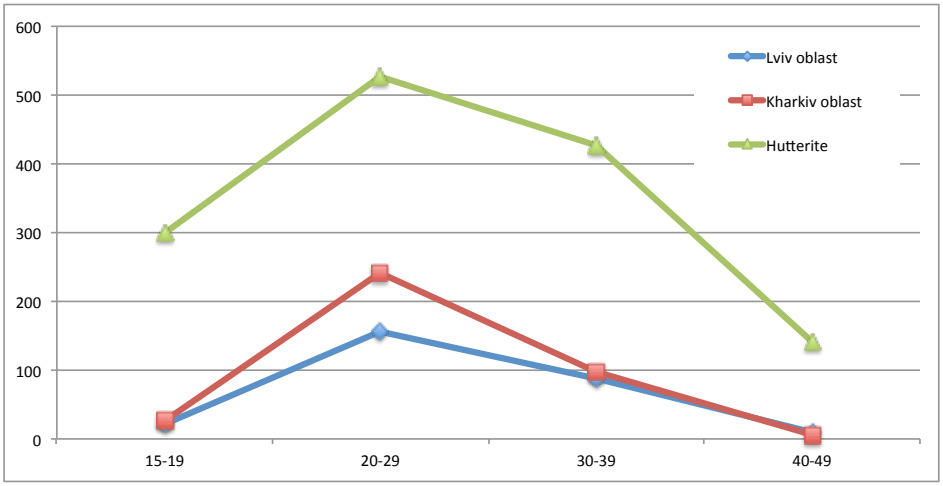


Figure 3.1: Age specific fertility rates per 1000 women for Kharkiv and Lviv provinces (*oblasts*) in 1960 compared to Hutterite ASMFR, 1921-1930. Sources: Lviv oblasts – Department of statistics of Lviv Statistical Office, acquired on September 9, 2015; Kharkiv oblasts – Department of statistics of Kharkiv Statistical Office, acquired on April 5, 2013.

earlier, at the end of the 19th century, but it was more prolonged and below-replacement fertility was reached only in the 1990s. The main consequences of Ukraine's post-war fertility decline were an even earlier entrance into parenthood than in the interwar period, typically by the age of 25; considerable spacing between births; and the tendency of stopping reproductive activities after first birth (Steshenko, 2010). A decline in later-order births rather than postponement of first birth also characterised the lowest-low fertility trend in the mid-1990s in Ukraine (Perelli-Harris, 2005, 2008a; Sobotka, 2004b). Figure 3.1 illustrates that on the regional level in 1960s, early entrance into parenthood, as well as the majority of other births, took place before the age of 30. Moreover, compared to Hutterite age-specific fertility rate (ASFR) in 1930 that represent the universal pattern of uncontrolled fertility, the ASFRs in Lviv and Kharkiv were two to three times lower for all age groups. This suggests that fertility was significantly controlled in these areas.

In response to the general tendency of declining fertility during the post-war years, the Soviet family policy took pronatalist and paternalistic measures to boost fertility rates primarily by encouraging early first parenthood. In the 1950s and 1960s, some significant parental benefits were introduced, such as granting working mothers 112 days of paid maternity leave: 56 days before delivery and 56 days after delivery, and in cases of complications during delivery, additional days

could be added (Lapidus, 1978). Non-working mothers did not have any limits on maternity leave and it was not paid. Officially, however, the state granted any mother with children priority on the labour market (Lapidus, 1978). This measure was meant to encourage women not to delay parenthood but to enter it at an early age. Another legal mechanism that encouraged early age at first parenthood was that married couples with children had priority in receiving state housing. Moreover, the size of the apartment depended on the size of the family. In some cases, it was also possible to receive a temporary apartment first before getting a permanent one.

Another prominent event of the time was the re-legalisation of abortion in 1955. It is generally suggested that abortion legalisation negatively influenced fertility in the Soviet Union (Blum, 2004). That said, it did not significantly impact the timing of the entrance into parenthood because before first birth, abortion was rarely practiced and even strongly discouraged by medical practitioners (see Chapter 3). Discouraging abortion before first birth combined with a limited knowledge and availability of alternative birth control methods also facilitated a faster transition to first parenthood after marriage.

3.5 Results

Throughout the analysis, I observed two phases where family influences were crucial: timing of and decision on first parenthood. The distinction between these two phases is crucial in the context of Ukraine because the legalisation of abortion allowed couples to make an actual decision about first parenthood after conception took place. In this section, I address both phases in the context of family influences, and the interdependencies in family relationships they implied. In doing so, I discuss: 1) which social norms existed around the 'timing' and 'decision' on first parenthood; 2) family and peer influences on the formation of these norms, namely 'right' timing of first parenthood, and how they motivated the informants to follow these norms; 3) how the social influences, particularly from the parents and spouses, formed certain expectations regarding support provision with childcare; and 4) how these expectations were fulfilled.

3.5.1 First parenthood: the most important, yet rarely planned event in life

Among all the informants, first parenthood was seen as one of the main events in life. The importance of this event was linked to certain legal possibilities that entrance into parenthood could reinforce: ability to apply for an apartment, and

even an increase in the chances of getting a job. These possibilities were mainly available to married couples with children, which would be 'considered a family', as one informant put it (Maria, born in 1936, qualified worker, Lviv). Although this phrasing could derive from legal terminology, it also conveys a social meaning related to the change of social status upon entry into parenthood. Rotkirch and Kesseli (2010) in their study on the post-Soviet period underline that for Russian women, entrance into motherhood signifies achievement of womanhood. Others additionally indicate that in Russia during the Soviet period, marriage and parenthood preceded the stages of leaving the parental home, establishing financial independence and finishing educational training (Blum et al., 2009). Similarly, for my informants in Ukraine, entrance into parenthood signified the transition from youth to adulthood, and this was equally important to both men and women.

Remarkably, although first parenthood constituted one of the most important events in life, it was rarely planned and the informants commonly claimed that 'planning' was not an appropriate term to describe their first parenthood decisions. In fact, the absence of any planning habits was related to limited or no use of birth control before first pregnancy, as well as few discussions between spouses about it, as the following quotes illustrate:

> It happened like it should. We did not plan it. No one planned these things. It was legal, so to say. We were married (Andrij, born in 1937, civil servant, Lviv).

> It happened like it is, during our very first night together, at the very first moment... It just happened. There were no birth control methods at that time, nothing (Larisa, born in 1939, scientific elite, Kharkiv).

These accounts show that first pregnancy not only took place but also had to happen spontaneously. Some informants even expressed critical views on using any means of birth control to delay first pregnancy and perceived this behaviour as unacceptable and even selfish if practiced among married couples. The common view was that when an individual married, it meant that s/he was ready to have a child and thus to have a family:

> It was supposed to be like that: once you're married, you have a child. If there is nothing, then you may start worrying. Generally, it was like that in all families (Natalka, born in 1945, civil servant, Lviv).

In this respect, not planning first parenthood complied with the understanding of 'right' timing of first pregnancy – typically within a few years after marriage. Surprisingly, among my informants, 'right' timing of first parenthood was not linked to biological age, as previous studies find for contemporary Russia and Poland (Gabriel, 2005; Mynarska, 2010), but was associated with a deadline for marriage. Age limits for marriage were well defined, particularly for women: at

the age of 25 and above a woman was considered an 'old maid' if she was not yet married. In the following section, I show how these social norms around the 'right' timing of first parenthood were embedded in individual relationships with family and peers.

3.5.2 The 'right' timing of first pregnancy in the context of social relationships

To underline the importance of the 'right' timing of first pregnancy in one's life course, I start discussing it with the cases that deviated from the norm, namely when first pregnancy did not take place within one year after marriage. The following quotes from female informants illustrate these experiences:

> Sveta (first child) was born in 1957. But I did not get pregnant during the first year (after marriage). It worried me, and so I decided to consult my gynaecologist, who said that everything was fine and I just had to try more (Evgenija, born in 1930, civil servant, Kharkiv).

> I wanted to have a child soon after the marriage, but I didn't get pregnant for some time. His parents also worried. They worried that I may not have children. But later I gave birth to Andriy (Oksana, born in 1932, unskilled worker, Lviv).

As the quotes illustrate, the common concern behind a delayed first pregnancy was that one of the spouses, typically the wife, could be sterile and thus unable to have children. Such a diagnosis was seen as 'a tragedy and often a social taboo' (Rotkirch, 2000, p. 7) in Soviet society. Surprisingly, this issue would worry not only the spouses but also the parents and the in-laws, as Oksana mentioned. While first pregnancy was typically not discussed and some women mentioned that they were too shy to tell anyone that they were pregnant until they showed, the delayed pregnancy provoked discussion on this topic and could even cause spousal and inter-generational tensions. These tensions were particularly apparent when it was not immediately clear whether delayed first parenthood was a biological inability or a purposeful delay. So, at this stage parents and in-laws would closely supervise their children, as the quotes below illustrate:

> It seems that they (parents-in-law) talked about it to him (her husband), because once he told me: 'We've been living together for such a long time, but nothing has happened yet' (Sofia, born in 1935, civil servant, Lviv).

> She (wife) didn't want to have a child right after marriage. And my mother suspected her... But my wife knew all these tricks. First, she wanted to finish her educational training, and then she started with her work (Maxim, born in 1935, civil servant, Kharkiv).

Similar to Maxim's wife, some females would purposefully decide to postpone first pregnancy to pursue their educational or career goals first. But this was often considered selfish, and eventually it could imply less support from a husband. This would automatically mean fewer opportunities for cooperation in birth control. Certainly, traditional female methods of birth control, such as sponges, the calendar method or even abortions, could be used, but this behaviour would create even more conflict in spousal and intergenerational relationships. Therefore, a married woman trying to delay a first pregnancy was very likely to be exposed to social pressure to submit to the 'right' timing.

Intriguingly, when the postponement of parenthood was a couple's mutual decision, less normative pressure would be attached to this behaviour, and a couple would be allowed to exercise more agency in their decisions but, of course, within certain time limits. This was especially true if a couple could justify their decision with concrete reasons such as not having their own place to live (e.g., when residing with parents was not possible), living in separate residences after marriage (e.g., husband was in military service), or explaining that they needed some time to settle down as a couple, as the quotes below illustrate:

> The first one was born two years after we got married. It was not strict that it should happen right away, and moreover we did not have a place to live. We did not have an apartment yet. But when Lena was born, we received a room in a shared apartment (Raisa, born in 1934, skilled worker, Kharkiv).

> We did not want to have children right after marriage, as life only starts at this stage, so we wanted to wait a bit. At that time, it was not as if one had to immediately have a child. But when we were ready for it, it was our mutual decision. Our daughter was born in 1954 (one year after the marriage) (Markian, born in 1929, unskilled worker, Lviv).

Besides spousal and intergenerational relationships, peers and siblings also exerted social influences favouring first parenthood to happen soon after marriage. At the moment of marriage and entrance into parenthood, many male and female informants were often close to completing their studies, or had just started to work and, thus, they were often in close relationships with their peers. In addition, some couples resided with their parents or other kin, such as aunts or older siblings, during the first years after marriage, which also made them more inclined to have closer relationships. Surrounded by peer and sibling environments, the informants could observe how marriage and first parenthood took place in other couples, and compare these experiences to their own.

> Within three years after we graduated from the institute, we all got married. My friends also gave birth and we had many common interests, like children. For example, my friends [showing pictures with them] this friend Lida gave birth to Sergey a bit earlier. And all my friends were giving birth and we lived through that together (Svetlana, born in 1941, civil servant, Kharkiv).

> During the first few months we still lived at his parents and with his siblings and their families. As sisters-in-law we used to help each other and sometimes took care of each other's children. The oldest son of one of my sisters-in-law was half a year older than my son, and children of other sisters-in-law were also born very close to each other, so it was easy for us to help each other out. However, soon thereafter we received our own place (Kateryna, born in 1942, skilled worker, Lviv).

Through communication, support and spending leisure time together with peers and siblings, the informants learned about the advantages of 'right' timing of first parenthood. As Svetlana indicated, friends having children around the same time was beneficial, as it allowed maintaining close friendships also after marriage through sharing parenthood experiences. Friends might also form an exchange network to swap children's clothes and other things that were not easily available as well as to consult each other with practical household issues (Rotkirch, 2000).

At a first glance, relationships with siblings(-in-law) implied similar influences as those from peers. But, because siblings(in-law) are also related through kin ties, they automatically put them into a certain social position with respect to the parents and other kin. As Kateryna's testimony illustrates, when siblings(in-law) share a household, they might feel more obliged to help out each other with some issues, such as childcare (see also Hilevych and Rotering 2013). Such support may unconsciously impose feelings of sameness, as well as feelings of completion between siblings(in-law) with respect to the timing of parenthood, which would be especially crucial in a society where first birth is associated with achieving adulthood.

In the following sections, I show that close parental supervision around the timing of first parenthood eventually resulted in expectations of receiving grandparent support with childcare.

3.5.3 Looking for a safety net: deciding on first parenthood and spousal expectations of receiving support with childcare

In their testimonies of first parenthood, informants generally expressed confidence and security in proceeding with first parenthood even though many still did not

have their own apartment or a permanent job, and some even had to finish their studies. Surprisingly, such attitudes contrast to those surrounding the transition to second birth when material uncertainty was seen as the major obstacle for proceeding with a second pregnancy (Hilevych, 2016). The informants actually experienced economic uncertainty at both transitions, but they seemed to rely on certain premises when entering parenthood. These premises seemed to compensate for the uncertain material conditions. I observed a vivid illustration of such premises in the cases where aborting the first pregnancy was considered but not carried out, as the quotes below illustrate:

> I told my husband that I got pregnant, and right away I asked, 'What shall we do? You live there, and I live here. But once the child is born, what then?' At that time I didn't live in Lviv yet. And I worried a lot about how we were going to arrange everything. I even thought of not giving birth at that time. But he said, 'You will definitely give birth'. He also discussed it with his parents 'What shall we do? We do not have a place to live in Lviv'. I also didn't have any work in Lviv. 'Maybe we can stay here, in Malynivka (a town in Lviv province)?' I thought. But he had to stay in Lviv because of his work. So, his parents said, Immediately move me to Lviv. They were so wise. And then he found a job for me, and so I moved (Halyna, born in 1943, civil servant, Lviv).

> *Zoya:* We talked about my first pregnancy with my mother-in-law.
> *Interviewer:* Did you discuss it?
> *Zoya:* Of course, we needed to!
> *Interviewer:* Can you describe what it was like?
> *Zoya:* On the 14th of April (1954) we got married. We did not live together yet. On the 1st of May (1954) we went to my village, and there I got pregnant. Then, there was the question: whether to abort it or not? We gathered with the three of us: my husband, my mother-in-law and I. We thought, 'So, what to do?' She said, 'Of course, give birth'. And I said, 'But how? I still have to write my thesis. It's not only about going to university. Lectures and writing the thesis, how will I cope with all of this?' And she said, 'Don't worry, I'll help you. You should not do it (abortion)'. And I didn't do it (Zoya, born in 1931, civil servant, Kharkiv).

As these testimonies show, considering pregnancy termination constituted an actual moment of making a decision about first parenthood, and it implied a different set of social influences. The moment of deciding on whether to terminate first pregnancy or not was also often the moment when practical matters around this event would be discussed. Although the practical aspects were the primary concern of the spouses, these concerns would also be discussed with the parents, as Halyna and Zoya described. This means that at the decision stage, couples would start to seek cooperation with parents. By consulting parents, a young couple would seek not only advice but also support with childcare. The promise

of support with childcare seemed to be an important factor for not terminating the first pregnancy but proceeding with it. When these expectations were not met, the pregnancy would likely be aborted. However, among my informants the termination of first pregnancy happened only in a few cases.

More importantly, I also observed expectations of receiving grandparental support with childcare among the couples that did not consider termination. These informants indicated that they typically did not plan anything, neither pregnancy nor childcare arrangements in advance, which may sound risky when one still had to finish educational training or did not have a place to live. The reason for the absence of such planning was often that there was an implicit understanding that parents would always help.

> You know, at that time we didn't plan far into the future, not really. I knew that the child would be born, but how life would be afterward, whether I would defend my *kandydatska* [an equivalent to the PhD thesis] and would build my career, I didn't think about it. I knew that I would have a child that I needed to take care of. Besides, I thought that I might have some help. My mother would help for sure, and maybe my parents-in-law would also help (Daryna, born in 1939, scientific elite, Lviv).

> During the first year after the marriage, we were renting the flat. We wanted to enjoy life [laughing]. Later, our son was born and we moved back to my parents. We lived with them for some time until we received our own apartment (Andrei, born in 1934, scientific elite, Kharkiv).

In the following section, I discuss how these expectations of receiving support with childcare were fulfilled.

3.5.4 Provision of support with childcare

Surely, frequent post-marital residence with or close to parents or in-laws made access to grandparental support easier. Even when residing separately, grandparents were still able to provide some support, yet not on a daily basis. In this way, post-marital residence defined the degree of grandparental involvement in childcare, which differed between Lviv and Kharkiv.

In the context of Lviv in western Ukraine, couples commonly resided separately from their parents before or shortly after marriage. Separate post-marital residence made a couple primarily responsible for childcare, and complementary gender roles were often practiced between spouses. A husband would be the main source of income in the family, while the wife would stay with the child during the first year(s). A woman would arrange a part-time work schedule or would even resign from work for this period. When a wife had to return to work after maternity leave, a couple would hire a nanny or would hand over their child to a

nursery. In this respect, both spouses would still equally contribute to childcare by sharing the time and material costs spent on it. In Chapter 5, I show that because both spouses commonly contributed to childcare in Lviv, they chose to have a second child soon after the first, saving childcare costs for both husband and wife.

Even though spouses were primarily responsible for childcare, the role of grandparents or other kin was also important in this process. During the first months after delivery, a woman would typically either reside with her family (separate from her husband), or the maternal grandmother would visit the family during the first few weeks. Bodnar (2010) indicates that the habit of staying at the maternal grandparents was especially common among couples of rural origin. In either way, the role of a grandmother or other female kin was to assist a wife with childcare.

> After delivery, my cousin took me to her place, and I stayed with her for a few days. After that, I went to my sister in the village and stayed with her for three weeks. My husband was in Lviv at that time, and he visited me often. When I returned to Lviv, I took care of my daughter until she turned eight months, and then we handed her over to the nursery (Maria, born in 1936, qualified worker, Lviv).

> My mother came to help me at the beginning. She was with us for around one month, and she showed me some essential things, like how to bath and swaddle, and what I should or should not to do during this process (Olena, born in 1925, civil servant, Lviv).

Despite that hospital midwives frequently consulted women on childcare, the role of maternal kin was essential in providing assistance with bathing, swaddling and breastfeeding, and the female informants very much valued these experiences. The assistance, however, rarely implied that a grandmother or other kin would entirely take care of the child if a wife stayed at home.

Not frequently, some of my Lviv informants also resided with parents after marriage, and mother or mother-in-law would assist them with childcare. In these conditions, a wife would still do most of the childcare duties herself, while her mother or mother-in-law would take over this duty at later stages, i.e., after maternity leave.

> My in-laws stayed with the child afterwards. My mother-in-law would stay with her during the day, and I would come to feed her during the lunch break (her child) (Lybov, born in 1932, civil servant, Lviv).

> I intended to take maternity leave for eight months, and I was going to take some holiday hours for this. But my mother-in-law said, 'Why should both of us take care of one child?' So, eventually she took care of my first and also of my second one (Nadia, born in 1938, civil servant, Lviv).

A similar way of arranging childcare was even more common among the informants from Kharkiv, as post-marital residence with parents after first birth was widespread there. When a wife returned to work after maternity leave, she would also be expected to carry most of the household and childcare responsibilities. The support of the grandmother was essential under these conditions, as with the birth of a(nother) child, the double burden on a young wife would increase (see Chapter 5). Usually, the grandmother would entirely take over childcare duties after maternity leave ended.

> My children [twins] were born in May, so I had my maternity leave throughout June, July and August, as I did not have to teach during these months. When I returned to work, I had to teach both day and evening classes, but I still could come in between to feed them. My mother-in-law was my greatest supporter at that time. We lived with her, and she stayed with them all the time (Larisa, born in 1939, scientific elite, Kharkiv).

> I had maternity leave, and I also saved some holiday hours. So, in total I had three months of maternity leave after the delivery. After these three months, I had to go back to work and my mother-in-law took care of my children, both of them actually. Some women took their children to nurseries, of course, but it is//that's because they did not have anyone to help them (Naida, born in 1936, unskilled worker, Kharkiv).

The couples from Kharkiv tried not to hand over their children to nurseries at an early age, if that was possible. Grandparental support rather than their own coordination of the process or husband's involvement was preferred. Women often tried to arrange a grandmother to be with a child even when they lived in different cities. Handing a child over to the nursery after maternity leave was considered rare and inappropriate if grandparents were available. When no grandparental support was possible, a couple would ask their neighbours to help. Finally, involving a husband in childcare was not only uncommon, but it was also not even expected. Instead, women often felt that men could not properly handle children and might even need care themselves. These attitudes towards and practices of childcare in Kharkiv coincide with the observations Rotkirch (2000) drew about the Soviet families in Saint-Petersburg, Russia. She observed that for Russian women, maternal care implied not only taking care of her biological children, but also taking care of 'grandchildren, children of relatives and friends, husband, elderly parents and parents-in-law' (Rotkirch, 2000, p. 118). Rotkirch calls this phenomenon extended mothering. My observation is that this phenomenon as

practiced in Soviet Kharkiv and Saint-Petersburg was part of the communitarian family system, where a mother-in-law held great authority in the household.

3.6 Conclusions

In this chapter I showed that parents and spouses exerted mainly social pressure and cooperation, while siblings and peers exerted social contagion and social learning to influence couples' understandings that entrance into parenthood should take place soon after marriage, which I defined as the 'right' timing for parenthood. I also observed that the notion of 'right' timing of first parenthood often coincided with the moment in life when a couple's economic uncertainty was high. Surprisingly, this uncertainty rarely discouraged the informants from postponing or terminating the first pregnancy. On the contrary even, informants experienced security and confidence when making a decision to enter parenthood early. I showed that this feeling of security surrounding the entrance into first parenthood is closely linked to the reliability on grandparental support with childcare. If these expectations were not fulfilled, informants were likely to terminate the pregnancy; however grandparents would often conform to these expectations.

The existence of such expectations and that they were often confirmed suggests that paternalistic and protective values characterised intergenerational relationships in both Ukrainian cities during Soviet time. These paternalistic values around intergenerational relationships also prevailed in historical family systems in both regions, where in the nuclear-stem family system in Lviv parents had to equally provide for their children until marriage. In the communitarian family system in Kharkiv, this was also the case, even after marriage. After the Second World War, these family values were reinforced by the Soviet state through family policy. Furthermore, because the Soviet political-economic system was characterised by shortages in everyday goods, food and housing, that state portrayed the family, rather than the community, as primarily responsible for the socialisation and raising of children. This made grandparental support essential. Additionally, grandparental support with childcare was also perceived as more desirable than other types of childcare possibilities, such as those provided by the state. When grandparents are still young and employed, they are also likely to have more resources and possibilities to provide sufficient material and non-material support to their children and grandchildren. Therefore, in contemporary scholarship early childbearing is often seen as a livelihood strategy to overcome economic uncertainty by receiving parental support (Gabriel, 2005; Perelli-Harris, 2005; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2012).

Although family relationships in both Lviv and Kharkiv were based on pa-

ternalistic intergenerational relationships, the degree of reliability on their help depended on post-marital residence. When a couple resided separately from parents or in-laws after the marriage, they would also take the greatest responsibility for childcare and, thus, grandparental support would become an additional and temporary option. This behaviour I observed in Lviv in western Ukraine. It also complies with the pattern of post-marital residence typical for the nuclear-stem family system where only an oldest son and his family stayed with parents while family's other sons formed independent households based on the resources the parents provided them. However, when a couple resided with either of the parents after marriage, the couple also tended to rely more on parental support with childcare, as observed in Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine, where communitarian family systems had historically prevailed. Under the conditions of prolonged post-marital residence, childcare would become a shared responsibility of a woman and her mother(in-law), rather than that of the couple.

Rotkirch (2000, p. 118) links these aspirations to a phenomenon she calls extended mothering – when maternal care implied not only taking care of biological children but also taking care of 'grandchildren, children of relatives and friends, husband, elderly parents and parents-in-law'. She finds this care pattern to be particular for Russia, and I also find it relevant for eastern Ukraine. However, this shared responsibility did not always imply cooperation between female generations, and it may also have resulted in conflicts, particularly between mothers- and daughters-in-law, as was showed in an earlier study (Hilevych and Rotering, 2013). The culture of submissive, subordinate and in some societies even abusive relationships between mothers- and daughters-in-law is widely discussed in anthropology. As such, evolutionary anthropologists suggest that intrafamilial conflict of interest between mothers- and daughters-in-law could especially arise in the context where reproductive competition is likely to happen (e.g., when remarriage and widowhood are part of the demographic regime) (Voland and Beise, 2005). Cultural anthropologists additionally suggest that this phenomenon has geographic boundaries stretching from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, where co-residence with in-laws is widespread and which forms the so-called 'the great mother-in-law belt' (Brown, 1997).

With regard to sibling and peer relationships in the case of Lviv, siblings also encouraged the 'right' timing of first parenthood, while in Kharkiv similar influences were coming more from peers. Although this assumption should still be more closely examined in the future, I suggest that these differences could be linked to more cooperative relationships between siblings in Lviv, which are in line with the tradition of partible inheritance discussed earlier. In Kharkiv, closer relationships with peers than with siblings could be an outcome of collective

inheritance where siblings historically had to compete for its division before and after the father's death. In my earlier study, I show that the competitive nature of sibling relationships was also crucial for the transition to second birth when the expectations of receiving grandparental support were high in Kharkiv, but parents had to choose whom to help (see Chapter 5).

Based on the discussed earlier dichotomy between parental authority versus conjugal authority in the decision-making, my findings additionally suggest that the character of intergenerational relationships shapes not only the character of couple relationships but also that of sibling and peer relationships. This aspect should be taken into account in future studies focusing on how family ties shape(d) fertility behaviour in Eastern Europe.

Chapter 4

Birth Control and Abortion[1]

4.1 Introduction

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, Eastern Europe had the world's highest abortion rates. The re-legalisation of abortion in the USSR in 1955, underdeveloped medical care and generalised social tolerance of the practice are commonly cited as the primary drivers of these high abortion rates (David and Skilogianis, 1999a; Remennick, 1991), which rose above birth rates – a phenomenon often referred to as an 'abortion culture' (Stloukal, 1999). Outside state and medical policies, however, it is not entirely clear how this abortion culture was fostered. This chapter examines the role of local gender regimes and women's agency in that change and, specifically, regional differences in the frequency of abortion between two cities in Ukraine.

Many scholars have addressed the relationship between patriarchal gender regimes and women's reproductive activities. Some argue that, within a patriarchal context, women have little possibility to exercise reproductive choice, and therefore abortion often becomes the only option (Browner, 2000; McIntosh, 2000). Others argue that women practise abortion to exercise their reproductive freedom (Cook, 2000; Mackinnon, 2010).

This question becomes even more complex when it comes to the Ukrainian Soviet context where female empowerment was encouraged in the public sphere, while traditional patriarchal gender roles prevailed within the household. This combination of legal abortion and informal patriarchy may indicate that Ukrainian women could have used abortion as a way to counter male authority in the same way as women in Yugoslavia did (Morokvasic, 1984). It has, however, also been

[1] This chapter is based on Hilevych, Y. (2015). Abortion and gender relationships in Ukraine, 1955-1970. The History of the Family, 20(1), 86-105.

documented that some women sought abortion to maintain traditional gender roles and not to challenge men's authority in birth control matters (Drezgić, 2010; Paxson, 2002). The main question I address in this chapter is therefore: What was the role of women's agency in abortion decisions?

In order to answer this question, I reconsider the relationship between individual agency and abortion practice from the perspective of spousal power relationships. By looking at how spousal dynamics shape the perceptions and practices of fertility-limitation methods, I aim to uncover how these dynamics may promote or discourage women's agency in these decisions. By studying two urban localities in western and eastern Ukraine – the cities of Lviv and Kharkiv, respectively – I also address regional patterns in abortion behaviour which have been noted for present-day Ukraine (Levchuk and Perelli-Harris, 2009), but whose origins have seldom been examined for the historical period. I employ original qualitative sources, in-depth biographical interviews, and both qualitative and quantitative archival data to address these issues.

I start with an overview of the existing debate regarding birth control and spousal power relationships in Europe. The second section discusses the methods and sources of the study. The third addresses the sociocultural contexts of the study locations, based on an analysis of secondary literature. Soviet policy concerning abortion and sexuality is discussed in the fourth section. The fifth and sixth sections, based on in-depth biographical interviews, analyse the gender aspects of birth control practice, and how abortion perceptions and practices were shaped by different spousal power dynamics. Finally, I compare the impacts that spousal power dynamics had on men's and women's agency in abortion practices in the two cities.

4.2 Birth control and spousal power relationships

The use of birth control is a complex decision-making process in which both husband and wife are involved, either as active or passive decision-makers (Carter, 1995). Condoms, the birth control pill, intrauterine devices and medical abortions are often referred to as 'birth control methods', as are traditional arrangements such as periodic abstinence and *coitus interruptus*. Practising and arranging any of these methods requires a certain degree of cooperation between spouses. Spousal cooperation is influenced by individuals' perceptions regarding who should be responsible for birth control, and by the way that family-size decisions are communicated and disagreements are resolved (Greene and Biddlecom, 2000). These behaviours are established in gender-specific rights and obligations. This collectively results in different patterns of gender power relationships, which

can generally be referred to as a 'gender system' (Mason, 2001).

It is generally argued that, in traditional patriarchal gender systems, women's reproductive activities are controlled by men due to the substantial reliability of 'male' birth control methods, such as *coitus interruptus* (Folbre, 1983; Mason, 2001). Fisher (2006), in her study of birth control practices in Britain between 1918 and 1960, questions whether women who were compelled to use *coitus interruptus* indeed felt sexually restrained. She finds that although men practised their authority through the use of coital-dependent methods of birth control and often initiated sexual intercourse, their behaviour was not perceived as oppressive by women. In Fisher's view, birth control was considered a male's duty, sexual ignorance and passiveness were integral components of female identity, and women were not passive victims, despite the perpetuation of an apparently patriarchal regime of reproductive control. Their acceptance of male authority also suggests, as Fisher (2006, p. 2) contends, 'women's confidence that most men would concur with the need to keep one's family size relatively small'.

However, what happens if there is a conflict of interests and women begin to demand a greater role in reproductive decisions? For many women in Western Europe, abstinence was an important means of reproductive self-assertion until the introduction of modern female contraception. As Fisher (2006), Seccombe (1992), and Szreter and Fisher (2010) demonstrate, in Britain during the nineteenth century and until the 1960s, abstinence was often exploited by women as a type of resistance towards potential unwanted pregnancies. This resistance helped make husbands aware of wives' reproductive wishes, which ultimately facilitated spousal cooperation.

This adaptation of traditional patriarchal-type gender relationships in Western Europe towards more cooperation and sharing became even more pronounced in the second half of the twentieth century (Finch and Summerfield, 1999). On the one hand, men became more cooperative in family-size-limitation issues. On the other hand, women found a suitable way to accept male authority, as Fisher's (2006) study also shows. Recent studies show that, within these sharing marital relationships, the role of women's agency in accepting modern female birth control methods was, however, crucial.

The modernisation of patriarchal gender relationships, however, can occur in different ways (Therborn, 2004). After gender equality was introduced in the public sphere by socialist regimes in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, traditional patriarchal gender roles within the family remained unchallenged (Drezgić, 2010). As women achieved equal rights in the labour market, they were faced with the reality that they must carry a double, or even triple, burden of being a working woman, housewife and mother. Moreover, in these parts of Europe, motherhood

remained an integral element of womanhood, and women faced the strong expectation that they continue carrying the greatest responsibility for childbearing and childrearing (Drezgić, 2010; Morokvasic, 1984; Paxson, 2002; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010). Men, on the other hand, still held the major responsibility for birth control. Paxson (2002, p. 315) describes this model of gender relationships as one where 'men play the active role in initiating sexual relationships, while moral women either resist their advances (when unmarried or with no intention to commitment) or submit (according to the sacrament of marriage)'. The stringent division of gender roles within the household seems to provide little opportunity for women to challenge traditional power dynamics. The question is, then, if and how they resisted and challenged the tradition.

Within the strictly patriarchal set of gender roles, abortion provided a means of post-coital family limitation that could be practised without involving the husband, which made it a convenient way (if not the only way) of eliminating an unwanted pregnancy without risking spousal conflict. This method may thus encourage a traditional patriarchal gender order (Paxson, 2002), and scholars often associate high abortion rates with a low level of female autonomy within marriage (Browner, 2000; McIntosh, 2000; Szreter, 1996), although some (Cook, 2000; Mackinnon, 2010) contend that it can also indicate women's power over male pronatalism. It is therefore not yet clear how regional patriarchies can influence women's agency in abortion decisions, especially in societies where abortion rates are high.

In this chapter I take up this puzzle by reconsidering the relationships between agency and abortion practice from a conjugal dynamics perspective. By looking at how spousal cooperation shapes the perceptions and practices of fertility-limitation methods, I aim to uncover how these dynamics may promote or limit women's agency in abortion decisions. With regard to agency, I consider women's conscious actions undertaken to control their own fertility within 'the broad utilitarian sense of balancing means and ends' (Carter, 1995, p. 65).

4.3 Research methodology and sources

The primary subjects of analysis are men and women who were born between 1929 and 1941, married between 1949 and 1965, and were resident in the cities of Lviv and Kharkiv, with whom I conducted in-depth, biographical semi-structured interviews. In total, I collected 30 in-depth interviews – 16 from Lviv and 14 from Kharkiv, in July-August 2012, August-October 2013 and September-October 2014. The Lviv informants comprised 4 men and 12 women, among which were 2 couples. The Kharkiv informants comprised 12 women and 2 men, among which

was one couple. In the case of couples, the husband and wife were interviewed separately. I found it difficult to recruit couples for this study as, at the time of interviewing, many of the women whom I approached and interviewed were already widowed. Purposeful and snowball samples were employed to recruit informants. These two sampling techniques were used to ensure that the subjects came from as diverse economic, educational and ethnic backgrounds as was possible. Amongst the informants from Lviv, 10 had a university qualification and worked as civil servants, while the rest were skilled or unskilled workers. In Kharkiv, 7 of the informants were university graduates and worked as civil servants, and 7 were trained or unskilled workers. I recruited the informants via purposeful sampling and with the assistance of non-profit organisations working with the elderly, through Internet advertisements, and with the help of local people encountered during my fieldwork.

The interviews, based on a topic list, were open-ended, direct and personal conversations that, on average, lasted for two hours. In every interview, I attempted to uncover individuals' experiences of various reproductive events such as courtship, cohabitation, marriage, pregnancy, abortion and birth control. I also addressed the meanings that participants attached to significant others in their social network, which influenced, helped with or prevented them from making reproductive decisions, as well as influential events, socio-economic conditions, policy regulations and other structural conditions. The interviews were collected and transcribed in the original language (Ukrainian or Russian). Analysis was performed with *Atlast.ti* qualitative software in English, and primary coding was done in Ukrainian and Russian.

Abortion is not an easy topic to discuss, since it requires building a certain level of trust with an informant. Being a young female researcher helped me to build trust with both the male and female informants. However, some of the informants tried to use 'we' and 'you' rhetoric, highlighting the regional differences in Ukraine, which remain a sensitive issue. In such situations, I tried to position myself as belonging to the younger generation, rather than being from another region; all of the informants knew that I originally come from west-central Ukraine. This approach to the interviewing process allowed me to emphasise the importance of conducting an interview with a generation that has seldom been studied previously. This, in turn, motivated many of the informants to be more specific and elaborate more about their past experiences.

When broaching intimate topics such as birth control and abortion, I introduced them by using non-personalised questions regarding the general popularity of different contraceptive methods within society and other people's experiences. A number of the informants, in this flow of conversation, subsequently revealed

their personal experiences. A few preferred to keep their personal experiences private; I nevertheless analyse their attitudes regarding abortions in general and the circumstances amongst their friends. There were also women who had had many abortions and could not remember the conditions surrounding all of them. Often, only the memories of the first few were retrievable. These memory and silence issues form part of the analysis inasmuch as they indicate individuals' attitudes towards abortion practice.

In order to locate abortion and birth numbers, I gathered hospital, Ministry of Health and statistical office reports from the city archives. These reports provided the data on abortion and birth numbers from 1949 and 1970, and some accounts from district gynaecology departments. Based on the data from these reports, I calculated abortion ratios for Lviv and Kharkiv (see Figure 4.1). The gynaecology departments' reports provided detailed information on how contraception prescriptions worked, in practice, during the 1950s and 1960s. Some of the Ministry of Health and statistical office reports containing information on abortion numbers in Kharkiv were declassified only after I requested them, meaning that they have not been previously studied. I thus exploited this data to support or question the arguments in the existing literature.

Lastly, during the interviews, some of the informants referred to magazines that contained information on contraceptive measures. I investigated the contents of one of these magazines – *Zdoroviye* (literally means health) – in order to gain an understanding of the type of information they offered about birth control. The magazine was established in 1955 and is still published under the same name. I studied the contents of the 76 available issues published between 1957 and 1970, and refer to some of this information in the text where it provides additional relevant information.

In the following sections, I will first discuss some background information on the study localities based on the literature and archival research. I then present the analysis of the interviews.

4.4 Setting

The cities of Lviv and Kharkiv are located more than 1000 kilometres apart. Although they have been under the same political rule since 1939, they have strikingly different demographic patterns and behaviour, which might have been influenced by the historical development of the regions. Regional variations in reproductive behaviour, including abortion behaviour, have been addressed for present-day Ukraine (Levchuk and Perelli-Harris, 2009; Perelli-Harris, 2005, 2008a). However, the historical differences and changes that took place during the

first demographic transition have largely been neglected. This makes the period immediately after the Second World War, and the cities of Lviv and Kharkiv, interesting laboratories to explore regional variations in reproductive behaviours. In general, Lviv may be thought of as slower to industrialise and adopt Soviet social reforms than Kharkiv, which was comparatively more industrial, secular and educated, and had a more gender-balanced workforce.

The western city of Lviv only became part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1939. During the interwar period, Lviv province, as well as the entire region of Galicia, belonged to the Second Polish Republic, which emerged as a result of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. At the time of Lviv province's annexation to the Soviet Union, Galicia was predominantly agricultural. Ethnic Ukrainians constituted the majority of the rural population but a minority in Lviv, which contained large Polish (64.8%) and Jewish (24%) communities (Lozynskyj, 2005). Before the Second World War, Roman Catholicism and Judaism were thus the major religions in the city, while Greek Catholicism prevailed in rural areas.

By the 1950s, the percentage of Polish people living in the city had decreased to 3.4%, as a result of post-war forced ethnic mobilisation processes initiated by the Soviet government, and rapid industrialisation and collectivisation programmes, which led to increased rural-urban migration flows within the region (Bodnar, 2010). By 1959, the population of Lviv as a city had reached almost half a million (411,000), which made it the largest city in western Ukraine. Ukrainians primarily originating from neighbouring rural areas constituted the majority of the population (74.3%) (Bodnar, 2010). Although religion was officially banned and discouraged, Ukrainian peasants coming to Lviv after the Second World War retained their traditionally strong religiosity and, during this period, Greek Catholicism became the major religion in Lviv (Bodnar, 2010). Unfortunately, because the Soviet government did not collect statistics on religious affiliation, it is not possible to provide percentages with regard to religion in Lviv during the Soviet rule.

The Soviet government brought new industries to Lviv – mainly machinery, textiles and food processing. This resulted in labour force participation opportunities not only for men, but also for women. In 1950, the proportion of women in the labour market of Lviv was only 12.3%; by 1960, it had reached 42.3% (Hyk, 1987, p. 193).

Kharkiv, which is located in the east of Ukraine, became part of the Soviet Union in 1919, when it was proclaimed capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Beginning in the early 1920s, Kharkiv developed a machine industry and various light industries. Women in the early years of the Soviet regime were

perceived as an essential foundation of the new communist society, and their participation in the workforce was greatly encouraged. In 1950, the proportion of women amongst blue-collar and white-collar workers was already 46.9% (compared to 12.3% in Lviv).[2] Following the Second World War, the ethnic composition of the region remained approximately the same and, according to the 1959 census, Kharkiv was composed of 48.4% Ukrainians, 40.4% Russians and 8.7% Jews (Pikalova, 2004). Kharkiv was one of the largest cities in eastern Ukraine, with a population of 950,000 in 1959 (Rachkov, 2011). Similarly to Lviv, Kharkiv also experienced an enormous influx of migrants between 1950 and 1970 – both from the surrounding rural areas and from Russia – as a consequence of rapid economic development.

With regard to demographic behaviour, there were striking regional differences between the locations. In Lviv province, the decline in fertility that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century was slow and protracted, with fertility achieving replacement level only in the late 1990s. In Kharkiv province, fertility started to decline in the 1930s, but fell much more abruptly and was already nearing replacement level in the 1960s. Regional variations in abortion behaviour were also conspicuous. In Kharkiv, abortion numbers in 1959 were substantially higher than the number of live births: 2621 abortions for every 1000 live births. Lviv had a much lower rate of 850 abortions for every 1000 live births (see Figure 4.1).

Lviv and Kharkiv developed extremely dissimilar reproductive behavioural patterns, despite having similar Soviet-instituted social and medical policies. This suggests the importance not only of economic factors, but also of sociocultural factors, such as religion and culturally anchored family values (Stloukal, 1999), where spousal relationships play a key role. Before discussing spousal relationships and family-limitation methods amongst couples in Lviv and Kharkiv, I will briefly address the policy conditions in which they were situated.

4.5 Soviet politics of contraception and sexuality

In June 1921, abortion was legalised in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and women gained the right to request an abortion free of charge at any medical institution. The policy was intended to advance women's emancipation, allowing for their incorporation into the labour market, which was a required step in building a new socialist state. The Soviet government did not, however, see legal abortion as a means of freeing women from childbearing; instead, it wished 'to demonstrate its commitment to women's equality yet not to condone limitation of birth' (Rivkin-Fish, 2003, p. 290).

[2]Source: obtained on April 2, 2014 at the main Department of Statistics in Kharkiv oblast.

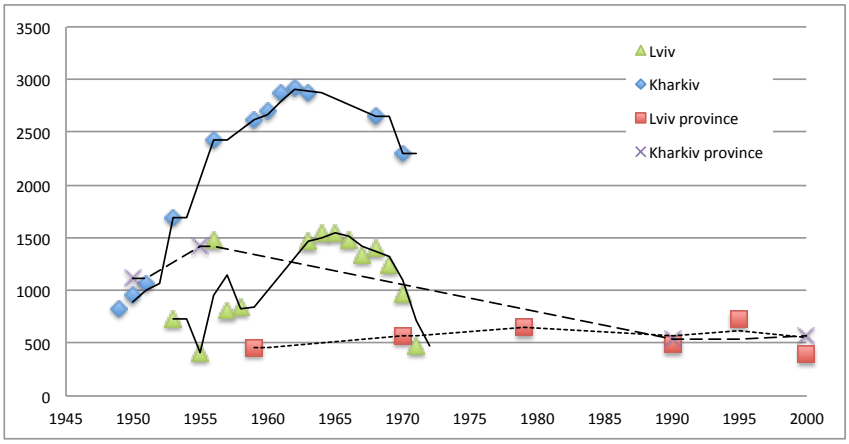


Figure 4.1: Abortion ratios for Lviv and Kharkiv, city and province levels, 1949-2000. Source: Lviv city, 1950-1957: Lviv State Archive, fond P-312 and fond 283; Lviv province, 1955 – 2000: Population Yearbooks for 1991 – 2001; Kharkiv city, 1949-1965: Kharkiv State Archive, fond P-5125 and fond P-1962; Kharkiv province, 1950 and 1955: Kharkiv State Archive, fond P-5125 and fond P-5231, respectively; Kharkiv province, 1990, 2000: obtained on April 2, 2014 at the main Department of Statistics in Kharkiv oblast.

The pronatalist Soviet state understood population growth as a necessary element to ensure rapid industrial development (David and Skilogianis, 1999a) and, in the context of declining fertility, the government soon began to perceive abortion as a problem. As a result, some restrictions were introduced in 1924, and a special commission was created to grant permission for free abortions (Popov and David, 1999).[3] In this manner, the state attempted to prevent declining fertility, yet retain working women in the labour market.[4] With Stalin's rule (1934-1953), many pronatalist actions were taken to encourage population growth. Amongst these were policies designed to create an insufficient number of contraceptives and a complete re-criminalisation of abortion, with punishment for both physicians performing operations and women attempting to procure them.[5] Stalin's rule generally coincided with a broad reassertion of the traditional patriarchal gender

[3] Amongst the main restrictions was that single mothers and factory workers were unofficially afforded priority in receiving permission (Blum, 2004).

[4] Abortion and birth statistics, however, indicate that the fertility decline in Ukraine continued at a rapid pace. The total fertility rate decreased from 5.38 in 1925 to 4.61 in 1928 (Lutz et al., 1990, p. 6), while the abortion rate simultaneously increased almost threefold from 3.0 in 1924 to 8.4 in 1927 (Shreider, 1930, p. 3).

[5] Physicians arrested for performing an illegal operation could be imprisoned for one to two years, while women attempting to terminate their pregnancies were to be reprimanded on the first offence, and, if the attempt was repeated, fined up to 3000 roubles – approximately an average yearly income (Popov and David, 1999).

system: maternity benefits were significantly augmented, and childbearing was declared one of women's primary responsibilities, in addition to maintaining the household and full-time employment (Popov and David, 1999). The Soviet state did not interfere with the existing gendered division of labour within the household, where all duties and childcare remained a woman's responsibility, while the man was considered to be the principle breadwinner (Ashwin, 2000). Shortly after Stalin's death, in 1955 the government once again legalised abortion in accordance with the 1921 regulations – free of charge at any point up to 12 weeks gestation.[6] After 12 weeks, abortions were only allowed for medical reasons – a generous policy (by European standards of the time) (Popov and David, 1999). In the 1960s, women who underwent an abortion were also allowed to take unpaid sick leave of up to five days. These conditions made abortion a convenient means of pregnancy regulation for many women, especially in circumstances where other birth control methods were either not reliable or required additional effort.

Family planning centres did not exist in Soviet Ukraine, and it was only possible to obtain technical birth control information from gynaecologists, who rarely prescribed female contraceptives, forcing many women into abortion. Intrauterine devices, for example, were perceived by gynaecologists to be harmful to women's health (Popov and David, 1999). Oral contraceptives imported from Hungary and Czechoslovakia (from the late 1960s) were high-dosage pills with numerous side effects. Their use was thus prohibited for contraceptive purposes and only permitted for specific therapeutic reasons (Popov and David, 1999). Hospital medical reports from Lviv and Kharkiv indicate that only in the late 1960s did some gynaecologists begin to provide information on different contraceptive methods such as cervical caps, sponges, and the birth control pill.[7] These consultations, however, were arranged primarily with women who were advised not to give birth due to health problems or who were older than a specified age, usually 30 – 35, and had already borne two children (Popov and David, 1999).

Obtaining information from other sources was not easy, as issues regarding sexuality and contraception were omitted from the public discourse, and sex education only appeared in secondary school programmes in the 1980s (Rivkin-Fish, 2003). During the 1950s and 1960s, a number of magazines were, however, publishing articles on the disadvantageous aspects of abortion. In 1957, for example, *Zdoroviye* published an article on the film 'Why Did I Do It?' (see: *Zdoroviye*,

[6]Some contend that a small fee of 5 roubles (at a time when the average monthly salary was 120-160 roubles) was charged for an abortion (Savage, 1988). Hospital reports from Lviv show that, indeed, during the 1950s and 1960s, hospitals collected some money for performing abortion operations. This money was later used for the hospitals' needs – for example, to purchase cots. See Lviv State Archive, fond P-312, opis 2, dokument 572, 225.

[7]Lviv State Archive, fond P-312, opis 2, dokument 646; Lviv State Archive, fond P-312, opis 2, dokument 84.

Issue 2, 1957). It is the story of a woman who becomes infertile after aborting her first pregnancy, and then gradually convinces another woman not to use a referral to an abortionist. However, neither in this story nor in other *Zdoroviye* stories on the downsides of abortion published between 1957 and 1970 was information provided on modern methods of preventing unwanted pregnancy. In other articles, the main alternatives to abortion were rhythm method and abstinence as the most accessible methods for every woman (see: *Zdoroviye*, Issue 9, 1963; Issue 2, 1966). To know about other methods, a woman was encouraged to consult her gynaecologist (see: *Zdoroviye*, Issue 8, 1957).

During the 1950s and 1960s, men and women were limited to methods with extensive failure rates, such as withdrawal, vaginal douches, the rhythm method or Soviet-made condoms, which were known for their poor quality (Remennick, 1991). The lack of reliable contraceptives and information can, to some extent, explain the high abortion rates during the 1950s and 1960s, yet it can hardly provide an explanation for the regional variations presented in Figure 4.1. The following section addresses these regional differences, referring to the examples of Lviv and Kharkiv.

4.6 Results

4.6.1 Spousal cooperation in birth control practice

Zoya got married in 1954 at the age of 23 and gave birth one year later. At the time, she was completing her final year at the university in Kharkiv, as was her husband. Zoya's pregnancy was a surprise and, because both she and her husband were still studying, raised some concerns. They nevertheless decided to keep the child, with the understanding that Zoya's mother-in-law would assist with childrearing. When I asked Zoya about birth control methods she and her husband were using prior to their first child, she claimed that, in her life, modern contraception did not exist:

> *Zoya:* I got married in 1954 and moved out of the dormitory, which was a mistake because I would have completed my studies better in peace. I moved to the in-law's . . . to my mother-in-law . . . But these were hard times for me. But the positive thing is that I gave birth soon after marriage. We did not know how to prevent pregnancy; we simply did not know how to do it. So, soon after I got pregnant.
> *Interviewer:* Did you use any birth control methods after you gave birth?
> *Zoya:* There was no information about it. There were no condoms, neither was the pill available. These were the 'dark ages' . . . No one, not my mother-in-law, no one was telling us anything . . . We all lived like that. We tried to be careful . . . He would pull out and that's it (Zoya, born 1931, married 1954, two children, two abortions, Kharkiv).

Zoya's story reveals a few critical issues that are distinctive for her generation. A deficiency of contraceptive knowledge resulted in limited or no birth control prior to a woman's first pregnancy, and *coitus interruptus* appeared to be the primary remedy for controlling later births. However, how did spouses cooperate regarding these matters? This section discusses spousal cooperation regarding birth control and, particularly, what roles men and women played in acquiring birth control knowledge and taking responsibility for it.

The lack of contraceptive knowledge and methods resulted in general ignorance, particularly amongst women. As Fisher (2006) writes for Britain, before the 1960s, sexual ignorance was a central element of female identity. This also appears to have been the case for Ukrainian women who, similarly to the British, referred to their lack of birth control knowledge as not merely the result of a shortage of information, but also as a way to be a virtuous woman. Amongst the Ukrainian women, sexual ignorance often also meant not interfering in their husband's sphere of responsibilities, which included methods to prevent her from becoming pregnant. One of the respondents – Toma from Kharkiv, a researcher at the city's university – clearly expressed this:

> Why should I have thought about that [birth control]? He should have thought about it (Toma, born 1931; married 1965; one child; no abortions, Kharkiv).

In Soviet Ukraine, however, sexual ignorance appeared to have been less correlated with class than, for example, in Britain, where Fisher (2006) contends that sexual ignorance was a crucial component of womanhood amongst working-class women in particular. Toma and Zoya both completed higher education and were white-collar workers. Yet Aglaia, also from Kharkiv and an unskilled factory worker, had a similar experience:

> I did not know anything about the methods he used. I was even shy to ask about it. At that time we did not even feel comfortable to pronounce the word 'condom'. It was close to profanity to say it (Aglaia, born 1931; married 1951; 2 children; 18 abortions, Kharkiv).

Aglaia's quote, as well as other oral testimonies, indicates that women often relied on their husband fully with regard to birth control matters. Men's methods, such as *coitus interruptus* and, sometimes, condoms, appear to have dominated marital contraceptive practice, as Larisa's case also reveals:

> We sometimes used condoms, but he did not like them much, so more often it was, as people call it, '(coming) on the side' (Larisa, born 1939; married 1966; two children (twins); no abortions, Kharkiv).

Relying on men's methods was a long-standing tradition in Ukraine. According to a medical survey conducted in 1929, nearly 72% of married Ukrainian women residing in rural locations relied primary on male-dependent methods such as *coitus interruptus*, and less on condoms (9%) (Hurevych, 1931). By 1999, the percentage of married women relying on these methods had decreased to 34.9%, but they were still the most favoured methods (Levchuk and Perelli-Harris, 2009). These percentages and the testimonies above may suggest that women were rather passive in birth control matters. However, in order to understand what a woman's behaviour was, behind the socially accepted role of a virtuous woman, one needs to understand how spouses approached birth-control-related issues, and what they did if a woman was not satisfied with her husband's primary arrangements.

During their marital life, certain couples discovered that withdrawal and Soviet-made condoms were unreliable and sought other options. Although birth control was generally regarded as the husband's responsibility, some women demanded alternatives, especially those who rarely communicated with their husbands. Viktorija, from Kharkiv, got married at the age of 18 to her classmate from university. Afterwards, she worked as a chemistry teacher and her husband as an engineer. They had 3 children, and Viktorija had 15 abortions. However, communication regarding birth control issues between the spouses remained difficult throughout their married life:

> *Viktorija:* I did not discuss it with my husband. After intercourse I would usually take a shower and use a bulb syringe with vinegar afterwards.
> *Interviewer:* And how did you get to know about it?
> *Viktorija:* That's obvious. From other women. Not from the doctors, of course. I didn't go to them (Viktorija, born 1931; married 1949; 3 children; 15 abortion, Kharkiv).

Viktorija received information on traditional post-coital methods from other women who were not necessarily her closest friends but co-workers or acquaintances. As other informants mentioned, this information was commonly shared

in the form of gossip rather than discussion amongst friends since, even between friends, sharing intimate issues was considered shameful.

Some of the informants, however, approached birth control as a mutual agreement between spouses. Daryna, a former research assistant at the university in Lviv, said:

> We started to be careful later in order not to have a baby shortly after the first child was born. But not before that . . . Honestly, at that time I did not know that it might occur. I did not even know that I might get pregnant (Daryna, born 1939; married 1964; two children; one abortion, Lviv).

In fact, amongst the Lviv informants – more so than in Kharkiv – mutual agreement about birth control choices (usually in favour of male methods) was an essential element of marital life. Women, despite their general ignorance of birth control, often knew which methods their husband used, and men's consideration of their wives' wishes appears to have been deemed an integral component of male identity. Vasyl and Nadia, a couple from Lviv, got married in their thirties at a time when both of them were working – he as an engineer at the bus factory and she as a nurse in a kindergarten. Vasyl mentioned that he sought reliable methods:

> *Vasyl:* Maybe she has told you this before, but she was terrified of abortion and we actually had no need for it.
> *Interviewer:* Were there some religious reasons for it?
> *Vasyl:* I don't know, I have never asked her, but I knew that she was scared of having an abortion.
> *Interviewer:* So, how did you manage not to have children between 1968 and 1974?
> *Vasyl:* Well, we relied to a great extent on contraception.
> *Interviewer:* Which one do you mean?
> *Vasyl:* I used to go to Poland quite often, and it was possible to get some there . . . It happened sometimes, of course, that at customs they checked the baggage . . . and these were quite inconvenient situations, you know.
> *Interviewer:* Do you mean because they might have found condoms in the baggage?
> *Vasyl:* Yes, yes, yes!
> *Interviewer:* Were there no condoms here?
> *Vasyl:* Well, sometimes it happened that there were no condoms in the pharmacies and, moreover, the quality of them was pretty bad. . . . So, sometimes I was also asked to bring some for my colleagues, you know (Vasyl, born 1938; married 1966; two children; no abortions, Lviv).

Vasyl took primary responsibility for contraception but also demonstrated awareness of his wife's concerns regarding the risks of abortion. Although reliable methods were not readily available anywhere in Ukraine, amongst the informants from Lviv, spousal cooperation in birth control helped them to find alternative solutions, in contrast to the situation in Kharkiv. Spousal cooperation played an

integral part in birth control practice, especially because both spouses often held similar views on these matters.

4.6.2 A backup plan or a birth control method: abortion and women's agency

In both Lviv and Kharkiv, couples conformed to the generally accepted view of women being ignorant in sexual matters and men being responsible for birth control. In practice, however, spousal cooperation was implemented differently in the two cities. While couples in Lviv often sought more cooperation in birth control matters, in Kharkiv birth control was practised as a solely male concern, although women who were dissatisfied with their husband's arrangements often sought alternatives themselves, with little cooperation from their husband. Likewise, coping with an unexpected pregnancy was primarily a woman's issue, where she sought a solution herself, which often entailed abortion. In this section, I investigate how spousal cooperation could have shaped the perception of abortion practice amongst the couples in Lviv and Kharkiv – as either a backup plan or a proper birth control method.

When a decision about pregnancy termination was under consideration, both the men and women informants from Lviv stated that they approached this matter together with their spouse. Fedir was a university lecturer and his wife a part-time teacher at a school. They had three children together. Fedir recalled his wife having two abortions, during one of which he supported her at the hospital:

> We discussed it, and we decided to abort. It was a joint decision, and I went with her to the hospital (Fedir, born 1934; married 1957; three children; two abortions; Lviv).

Fedir's account suggests that his role in abortion decisions could have been as important as, if not more important than, his wife's. For nearly all of the female informants from Lviv, their abortion decisions also had a joint character and, even if some of them portrayed them as their own decisions, their husband's opinion still mattered to them. Oksana was working as a tailor in Lviv when she got married. Later, she switched to working as a waitress in a hotel restaurant, where she stayed until her retirement. She had two children and two abortions – one after her first birth and one after her second birth. Oksana's view on abortion was rather different from the rest of the female informants from Lviv, as she tried to portray it as her own choice. At the same time, in her account of her first pregnancy termination, which occurred soon after her first birth, she testified that it was discussed with her spouse:

> *Interviewer:* Did you tell your husband about it?
> *Oksana:* Yes, I did! He knew about it and then he visited me in the hospital.
> *Interviewer:* But just after the consultation with the doctor, when he said that you were pregnant, what did you say to your husband? Did you consult with him about what to do?
> *Oksana:* Well, I said, 'I will have an abortion', that's it (Oksana, born 1932; married 1957; two children; two abortions, Lviv).

More commonly, however, the women from Lviv reflected the same ideas about abortion decisions as their husbands. They argued that it was a mutual choice, where often the husband, but sometimes also a close relative such as a sister, might have been asked to assist. Daryna, who was mentioned above and was a former research assistant at the university in Lviv, sought one abortion where her husband and sister supported her during this event:

> *Daryna:* We always discussed these issues. It was our common decision.
> *Interviewer:* So, did you tell him that you wanted to terminate the pregnancy?
> *Daryna:* No, we had to discuss it first . . . I also told my sister about it, and she . . . there was one person at her work . . . I did not know where to go and, at my sister's work, there was a person who knew someone who could do it.
> *Interviewer:* Where was it?
> *Daryna:* He was in Lviv, and I went to his place to do it.
> *Interviewer:* Did you take sick leave?
> *Daryna:* No, there was no such thing. I stayed one day at home and the next day I went to work.
> *Interviewer:* Was your husband with you? How did you feel about it? Weren't you scared? *Daryna:* I think there was someone with me. I think it was my sister there, yes, and her colleague took us to the place. Of course I was, and I did not want to have one again (Daryna, born 1939; married 1964; two children; one abortion, Lviv).

Daryna's testimony reveals that she had little confidence in seeking an abortion. This, in turn, might have facilitated her to go to a private doctor. Therefore, she sought support from her husband and sister to ensure that she had assistance when having her abortion. Daryna expressed that abortion was not her preferred method and she never had another one. At the same time, she made little effort to protect herself afterwards, as she said that she did not try to use any female birth control methods – exercising her agency – and kept relying on her husband's arrangements. In this respect, Daryna's testimony represents a commonly held view on abortion found amongst the Lviv female informants, who seldom perceived it as a female liberation choice. For them, it was, rather, a backup plan that was used if the husband's arrangements failed. Men, on the other hand, exercised significant influence over their wife's decisions, and thus often felt responsible to ensure that their methods rarely failed.

When it comes to the testimonies from Kharkiv, the female informants commonly mentioned abortion as being a woman's issue that would rarely be discussed with the husband. Moreover, in Kharkiv, the women were already certain of their decision before informing their husband. Viktorija, who was mentioned above and was a former schoolteacher from Kharkiv, never discussed birth control matters with her husband. However, she mainly relied on his methods of birth control and also used some traditional female methods privately. During her reproductive life, she had 15 abortions, yet only a few of these were to her husband's knowledge, as she did not perceive abortion to be a matter of joint decision-making:

> *Interviewer:* Did you tell him [the husband] that you wanted an abortion?
> *Viktorija:* No, we did not discuss it.
> *Interviewer:* And did he know that you went to have the abortion?
> *Viktorija:* Well, of course he did. When I was already at the hospital, he would obviously know about it (Viktorija, born 1931; married 1949; 3 children; 15 abortions, Kharkiv).

Viktorija's case was not an exception, but rather typical of women's behaviour in Kharkiv, where the majority of the female informants preferred not to discuss their abortion decisions with their husband. For Kharkiv women, abortion seemed to be a specifically female concern, about which women made their own decisions. The view on the frequent use of abortion in the Soviet context was, however, rarely questioned from a gender perspective. Particularly, how did men perceive their wife's abortion practices and what role did the men themselves play?

In the few accounts from Kharkiv men, I also encountered this lack of shared decision- making regarding abortion. Viktor, a researcher at the Physics Research Institute in Kharkiv, recalled that his wife had one abortion following the birth of their first child. This was not discussed, as his wife was already certain of her decision prior to informing him:

> *Interviewer:* She did not have an abortion afterwards then [after the first child], did she?
> *Viktor:* Yes, she did. She had one . . .
> *Interviewer:* Did you discuss it [the abortion] with her?
> *Viktor:* Yes, this we probably discussed. Probably, yes. I mean, she said that she got pregnant and will have an abortion. I did not object.
> *Interviewer:* Do you mean that she actually asked you to face the fact that she was going to have an abortion?
> *Viktor:* Yes, yes, yes (Viktor, born 1939; married 1960; two children; one abortion, Kharkiv).

Viktor, however, had little, if any, objection to his wife's decision. He shared her concerns that having a second child right after the first one would have been too much for her, as she was planning to continue with her work as a university

lecturer. Because the women claimed to act independently in their decisions and informed their husband, they may have been exercising their agency in making reproductive decisions in favour of abortion to challenge the existing gender order.

However, in certain couples, the women preferred to keep abortion a secret from their husband, as it might have caused tension, especially if abortions were sought often, as in the case of Larisa.[8] A former unskilled factory worker from Kharkiv, her first child – a girl – died at the age of nine months as the result of a stomach infection. Within one year of the child's death, Larisa gave birth to a second child. She then had 15 abortions and never gave birth again. From her testimony, it became clear that she was not completely happy in her marriage and showed little trust towards her marital partner. According to Larisa, she did not discuss any of the abortion plans with her husband, as she did not want to live through childbearing or child death again. In the interview with her husband, Tolik, a former electrician, I discovered that he was aware of only one of the abortions that his wife had had, and that this abortion was disclosed to him by a neighbour.[9] He suspected that Larisa might have had more abortions. However, even the knowledge of just that one abortion had caused many quarrels and general mistrust within the family, which eventually led to divorce.

Little consultation with husbands was often compensated for by discussions with female friends and colleagues, whom women could ask for advice and/or help, as Naida's testimony also illustrates. Naida, a former unskilled worker and later a brigade leader, had four abortions, three of which occurred after her first birth. After her second birth, she had one more abortion, which was her last. Naida claimed that the doctors had probably done something to her, as she was never pregnant again; however, this did not really disturb her. In her narrative, Naida stated a number of times that her decisions regarding abortion were rather spontaneous, and she rarely mentioned her husband's role in her choices. She also mentioned that she did not want her mother-in-law to know about them. Instead, abortion was something that she discussed and shared with a female co-worker:

> *Naida:* When I went to have my second abortion, I think I was in the second month already. When I had the abortion . . . it was a midwife from the hospital who did that for me.
> *Interviewer:* Did you know her from before?
> *Naida:* No, she was a friend of a friend. And I actually went to her with another woman.
> *Interviewer:* Was she your friend?
> *Naida:* Well, she was from my work. She also got pregnant, and I said, 'Let's go?' She said, 'Let's go!' (Naida, born 1936; married 1959; two children; four abortions).

Naida had two abortions after bearing her first child, one in 1961 and two in

[8] Larisa, born 1948; married 1968; 1 child; 15 abortions, Kharkiv.
[9] Tolik, born 1941; married 1968; 1 child; 15 abortions, Kharkiv.

1962, and at that time she was still living with her in-laws. She decided to go to a private midwife as it was more confidential and did not require her to remain in hospital for extra days, which would have raised suspicions at home. She was especially scared that her mother-in-law would find out, which could also have been a reason why she kept them secret from her husband.

Like Naida, the Kharkiv female informants typically experienced fear of clearly asserting their reproductive wishes to their husband, as men's authority was strong in many Soviet households. These women, however, sought abortion in order not to run into spousal conflict, and also to satisfy their needs to continue working and contributing to the household budget. In other words, they not only exercised their agency to fulfil their living needs, but also to submit to the dominant patriarchal gender regime, as they understood it. They thus often used abortion as the only reliable female method of birth control.

Additionally, frequent discussions with and support from other females helped the women to accept abortion more easily. These broad female networks of colleagues and acquaintances, defined by Watkins and Danzi (1995, p.483) as heterogeneous networks, are 'more likely to bring new information and to offer an opportunity to consider a wider range of options for reproductive behaviour and less pressure to conform to prevailing community norms'. They are thus very likely to promote women's agency. Conversely, strong bonds with their husband and family of origin amongst the women in Lviv meant that these women sought external support only if required. Limited communication with peers could have thus resulted in little credibility being given to abortion as an alternative birth control method, as homogenous networks are 'more likely to support the prevailing social norms rather than challenge them' (Watkins and Danzi, 1995, p.483).

4.7 Conclusions

Previous research has emphasised the popularity of abortion practices in societies where strong patriarchal gender regimes prevail (Browner, 2000; McIntosh, 2000; Paxson, 2002; Szreter, 1996), as abortion is a convenient way to limit family size and, at the same time, does not challenge "proper" gender roles (Drezgić, 2010, p. 203). Some scholars, however, have found that, in some societies, women seek abortion, as they use it as their power to resist men's authority and thus make their own decisions (Cook, 2000; Mackinnon, 2010). Dissimilarities between patriarchal regimes (Therborn, 2004) led me to assume that women's agency in reproductive decisions can be shaped by the regional implementation of patriarchal values and associated spousal dynamics. In other words, in different patriarchal structures, women may have differing needs and possibilities to exercise their

agency in reproductive activities.

At first glance, the men's and women's testimonies from Lviv and Kharkiv seemed to support similar patriarchal gender values. The generally accepted view of men being responsible for contraception and women being ignorant in these matters, which Fisher (2006) also found for pre-war British society was typically recalled by the Ukrainian informants. However, by uncovering what people implied by these norms and how they claimed to implement them, I revealed different spousal strategies of coping with birth control and abortion issues amongst the couples in Lviv and Kharkiv.

Amongst the Lviv informants, birth control practicalities were often agreed on, and the details of arrangements were commonly taken for granted. This was generally achieved through a husband's awareness of his wife's wishes. Both spouses typically claimed mutuality where birth control was concerned; the men, however, in particular, claimed mutuality and responsibility where it was a matter of abortion decisions linked to family size regulation, which, in a traditional patriarchal society, is typically a man's responsibility. This suggests that, behind the public idea of spousal cooperation, the men actually exerted private dominance and authority in reproduction and marital life. This, in turn, worked as a discouraging factor for a woman to seek other alternatives. Further research is needed to explore the origins of the spousal power relationships in Lviv and, in particular, the influence of Greek Catholicism, which might have contributed to, or even formed, the discourse of spousal mutuality.[10]

[10]In this study, some of the informants from Lviv considered religion to be an integral part of their lives, although not in the sense of following the church postulates, but rather in existential terms, perceiving difficulties in marital life and unexpected pregnancies as part of fate, especially amongst women. It is therefore hard to understand the link between religion and marital life. However, in the Catechism of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, I found a section that speaks about spousal relationships in the same manner as my informants did. This section describes spousal relationships as cohesive, trustful and sharing with regard to all aspects of marital life. This mutuality is especially emphasised in the birth control section, where abortion, for example, is perceived as a guilt shared by both the wife and her husband (Cat, 2012).

Chapter 5

Transition to Second and Later Order Births[1]

5.1 Introduction

Universal marriage, early entrance into parenthood, and early stopping with childbearing have characterised the fertility transition in Eastern Europe since the Second World War (Frejka, 2008; Perelli-Harris, 2005, 2008a; Philipov, 2003; Rychtarikova, 1999; Zakharov, 2008). Stopping with childbearing after the first child has also been argued to be the major cause of the recent lowest-low fertility trend in this part of Europe (Perelli-Harris, 2005; Sobotka, 2004b). The dominant explanation of this trend suggests that individuals decide not to have a second child because of material and emotional uncertainties they face in the aftermath of the collapse of the socialist regimes (Bernardi et al., 2015; Hollos and Bernardi, 2009; Mynarska, 2010; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2012).

However, the exceedingly low fertility of the late 1990s and early 2000s was not only an outcome of a rapid change in reproductive strategies under the difficult economic and political conditions. Below-replacement fertility can be observed in many Eastern European regions long before anyone could have predicted that the socialist regimes would collapse. For example, the eastern regions in Ukraine experienced rapid fertility decline just before the Second World War, and already in the 1960s fertility reached below-replacement levels, especially in urban areas. In other regions, such as western Ukraine, fertility decline started at the end of the 19th century, but was more prolonged, reaching lowest-low fertility only in the late 1990s both in urban and rural areas. These diverse trends, even within

[1] This chapter is based on Hilevych Y. (2016) Later, if ever: Family influences on the transition from first to second births in Soviet Ukraine. Continuity and Change, 31(2),275-300.

the borders of a single country, signal that even if declining post-war fertility was a response to changing socio-economic standards, the process of adjustment to these new standards varied between regions. Moreover, declining fertility after the Second World War occurred mainly due to changing patterns of the transition to second and later-order births rather than the transition to first birth, which has always taken place at relatively young ages in Ukraine (Perelli-Harris, 2005; Steshenko, 2010). However, not many studies have analysed the transition to second birth on a regional level, mainly because of the scarcity of (statistical) sources. This study examines individuals' decisions regarding the transition to a second birth during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s comparing two borderland cities: Lviv in western and Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine.

Of the various social institutions, the family is one of the primary social environments where the process of adjustment to socio-economic and political structures, as well as reproductive decision-making, takes place. In the context of Soviet Ukraine, the ideological changes during the later years of Stalin's regime (1935-1953) and the de-Stalinisation processes after 1953 signified the return to the traditional family (Goldman, 1993; Lapidus, 1978). Additionally, similarly to other Eastern European countries, family in Ukraine has always provided an essential network for support, especially during crisis and transitional life course moments, such as marriage and childbearing (Gabriel, 2005; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010). This pattern of family relationships has long been contrasted with family types in (North-)Western Europe, as in the 'Hajnal/Laslett model' (Hajnal, 1982; Laslett, 1988). In line with this model, recent studies show that in those areas where multigenerational households and kin residence in close proximity were historically common, such as in Southern and Eastern Europe, stronger ties and support relationships between family members are still typical of family formation behaviour even today (Gruber and Heady, 2010a; Jappens and Van Bavel, 2012; Robila, 2004b; Viazzo, 2010). The main argument that these studies put forward is the path-dependence of patterns of family relationships in contemporary societies. Scholars show that traditional norms of residence and inheritance present a sense of how people should relate to each other, including both kin and non-kin (Das Gupta, 1997, 1999; Therborn, 2004; Todd, 1988; Viazzo, 2010). As such, even after the transformation or dwindling of these concrete households and inheritance patterns, norms and values underlying the relationships between generations, siblings and spouses, do not dissolve as socio-economic environments change, but adapt to them.

Scholars suggest that in contemporary Ukraine differences in family values may be a vital explanation of regional reproductive trends. It was recently concluded that the 'western regions of the country have followed a more traditional, religious

and nationalistic family orientation, (...) and the eastern part of the country has remained under the influence of Soviet ideology' (Perelli-Harris, 2008a, p. 1157). However, these regional family values have seldom been explored thoroughly. How these values shaped reproductive behaviour, such as the transition to second birth was never examined on a micro level. This study therefore asks: how did family relationships influence individuals' decisions surrounding the transition to second birth in post-war western and eastern Ukraine? In order to answer this question, I analyse 66 life history interviews with men and women who were parents during the period of the 1950s through the 1970s in Lviv and Kharkiv. To describe family relationships, I refer to the mechanisms of social influence on reproductive behaviour previously developed by Bernardi (2003), used also in other studies (Keim et al., 2009, 2012; Rossier and Bernardi, 2009).[2] I use this analytical framework to trace the interplay between patterns of family relationships and underlying the values, and individual reproductive decisions.

5.2 Research methodology

5.2.1 Data collection

Life history interviewing constitutes the primary research method of this study. The interviews were conducted with men and women born between 1929 and 1948, residing in the Ukrainian cities of Lviv and Kharkiv during the 1950s through the mid-1970s, and their reproductive years also fall within this period, which was characterised by the rapid decline of fertility rates in Ukraine. In total, 66 interviews were conducted: 33 from Lviv and 33 from Kharkiv. Fieldwork was conducted between July 2012 and April 2015. For the general characteristics of the informants and more on the interviews structures see Appendix E.

In addition to the interviews, I collected life history calendars (LHCs) by which data on household composition, births, marriages, and employment history of the informant and spouse were recorded.[3] LHCs were filled in with every informant after the interview. Information provided in Table 1 derives from the informants' LHCs. Finally, I used published vital event and census data to calculate crude birth rates for the regions, and reviewed ethnographic literature on historical family systems in western and eastern Ukraine.

[2]For a recent overview of social influences on individuals' fertility behaviour see: Bernardi and Klärner (2014).

[3]More on LHC see: Axinn and Pearce (2006)

5.2.2 Data analysis

To perform the coding I used *Atlast.ti* qualitative software. I applied three coding strategies to every interview in order to reveal the main sub-categories related to the transition to second birth. First, I carried out structural coding aiming at identifying life course transitions and their sequences in every interview (Saldaña, 2012). Then, I performed domain and values coding of the transitions related to first and second births: pregnancy, childbirth, abortion, miscarriage and childcare (Saldaña, 2012). My aim at this stage was to grasp the interpersonal connections an individual developed at every life stage discussed in the interview, attitudes and perceptions to the life course event itself, and structural conditions underlying this event. During the final stage of the analysis, the relationships between different codes were defined. Based on these relationships, the codes were grouped into sub-categories, such as 'readiness and second birth', 'uncertainty and second birth', 'companionate spousal relationships and childcare'. I then used the query tool to select the quotations according to the groups of related documents that were created in the previous steps (i.e. documents families): city (Lviv or Kharkiv) and gender (male or female). Finally, I used LHCs as a triangulation tool to reconstruct a biographical profile (life history) of every informant and link it to their narratives during the analysis.

5.3 Socio-economic developments and traditions of family relationships in western and eastern Ukraine

Western and eastern Ukraine have been subjects of comparative research for decades, primarily because of the persisting differences in socio-cultural aspects, such as religion, language and traditions of family relationships.[4] The cities of Lviv and Kharkiv located in the western and eastern Ukrainian borderlands, respectively, therefore constitute interesting comparative sites in this respect.

Historically, Lviv was slower to industrialise and adopt Soviet social reforms than Kharkiv, which was comparatively an industrial and secular city. The modernisation process in Lviv started at the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when it was part of Austro-Hungary and later of Poland. However, this process was slower than in central and eastern Ukraine, which at that time was situated under the rule of the Russian Empire. During the interwar period, Lviv was a multicultural city where ethnic Polish and Jewish groups constituted the

[4]The results of the largest study comparing western and eastern Ukraine are presented in: Hrytsak et al. (2007)

majority of the population. Industrialisation was further reinforced when western Ukraine became part of the Ukrainian SSR in 1939, and especially after the Second World War. By 1959, the population of Lviv had reached almost half a million (411,000), which made it the largest city in western Ukraine (Bodnar, 2010, p. 41). The city's population also became more homogeneous in the aftermath of the Soviet and German occupations during the Second World War. During the 1950s and 1960s, the rapid influx of migrants primarily from the neighbouring rural and urban areas meant that Ukrainians came to constitute the city's majority (60% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007, p. 41). During this period, migrants coming from Russia were the second largest minority in the city (27% in 1959) (Hrytsak, 2007, p. 41); however their percentage declined over the years.

Lviv after the Second World War can thus be seen as an entirely different city from how it was during the interwar period, as mainly Ukrainian migrants populated the city. The Soviet government started the process of dissolution of private property rights, and also started *russification* and *sovietisation* campaigns in western Ukraine. These campaigns however were softer in comparison to other Belorussian or Baltic regions at that time (Hrytsak, 2007). This facilitated Ukrainians of provincial origin to retain their more traditional habits, such as strong religiosity, commonly within the Greek Catholic tradition, and strong family ties. During the post-war years these values made a significant contribution to the formation of the city's mentality, which even today is characterised by religiosity, patriotism and family values (Bodnar, 2010; Hrytsak, 2007). Maintaining relationships with family in villages and towns, as well as with those who also migrated to Lviv, the newcomers were able to retain their traditional life styles, and thus were slower in adopting new socialist norms (Bodnar, 2010). Reinforcement of their often family-oriented values was also due to common opposition to the Soviet regime in this area and the idea that personal information can only be shared with those whom you could trust, usually relatives and family members.

Along with the importance of family relationships in their everyday lives, these migrants' personal values were built around the notions of autonomy and aspirations of being able to sustain their own livelihood independently from their parents (Bodnar, 2010). As ethnographic studies show, this notion of independence was already typical in western Ukraine in the nineteenth century. After marriage, a couple typically set up a separate nuclear household and worked their own land, which they received from their parents. Only an older son and his family stayed with the parents, worked on the same land and provided elderly care in later life. Inheritance was typically partible and equally distributed among all the sons (and occasionally among daughters as well) (Behey, 2003). A similar family system is also typical for northern-central Romania and is defined by Kaser (1996, 2006) as

a mix of a stem and a nuclear family system.[5]

In contrast to Lviv, patterns of historical family systems and economic development in Kharkiv followed different trajectories. Rapid economic development in the Kharkiv region started in 1919, when the city of Kharkiv also became the capital of the Ukrainian SSR. Machine industry and various light industries developed. The industrial developments during the interwar years, which later continued during the 1950s and 1960s, led to a rapid influx of migrants to the city from the neighbouring areas and from Russia. The ethnic composition of the city, however, remained the same as before the Second World War, and according to the 1959 census, Kharkiv was composed of 48.4% Ukrainians, 40.4% Russians, and 8.7% Jewish residents (Pikalova, 2004, p. 452-457). In the mid-twentieth century, the city became one of the largest in Ukraine with a population of 950,000 people in 1959 (Rachkov, 2011, p. 213).

As soon as the Soviet regime was established, Kharkiv became one of the cities held up as an example of communist life. In fact, the tradition of communal life, where the entire family shares the household goods obtained from working together on the same land, was common in the Kharkiv area long before the Soviet regime was established. In this respect, it was similar to traditional patterns of family relationships found in central and southern Russia where joint family systems prevailed (Czap, 1982; Hoch, 1982; Melton, 1987; Polla, 2006). An important aspect of the joint family system in the Kharkiv area is that it implied co-residence of more than two married couples in one household, typically parents with more than one married son (Kaser, 2002; Kravec, 1966). During the nineteenth century, co-residence patterns started to change and only a younger son's family remained with the parents. However, in this region land was often family-owned, meaning that inheritance was not partible, and even when residing separately from parents, children still worked on the same land with their parents (Kravec, 1966). These co-residence and inheritance patterns could lead to children's economic dependence on their parents not only before marriage, but also in later life.

As described in historical perspective, the traditional patterns of co-residence and inheritance rules in Lviv and Kharkiv could be the underlying factors forming regional family values in contemporary Ukraine, described by Perelli-Harris as having a 'more traditional, religious and nationalistic family orientation' in western regions, and 'as more community oriented in the eastern regions' (Perelli-Harris, 2008a, p. 1157). These connections, though plausible, are still vague, as little is known about family relationships during the Soviet time. The analysis

[5]Kaser argues that the stem family in Eastern Europe was different from that in the Pyrenees or Japan, mainly due neolocal post-marital residence, but yet with equally partible inheritance. See: Kaser (1996, 2006).

in this study addresses this lacuna. Before discussing family relationships in connection to the transition to second birth as depicted in the interviews, in the next section I address the main aspects of Soviet family policy during the post-war years, as this provides the actual historical boundaries within which family relationships and second childbearing took place.

5.4 Soviet family policy and fertility in Ukraine

After the death of Stalin in 1953, de-Stalinisation processes brought some relaxation in Soviet family policy, primarily that abortion and divorce became more accessible. At the same time, some aspects of Stalin's pronatalist policy were still enacted, such as the effort to promote the stabilisation of family in order to increase fertility rates. The stabilisation of the family was mainly performed through assigning women maternal responsibilities alongside labour force participation. In order not to discourage women from participating in the labour force, the new family policy proceeded from the assumption that 'fundamental biological differences between males and females require the adaptation of working conditions to women's distinctive needs' (Lapidus, 1978, p. 123). The policies introduced were the same for all provinces (*oblasts*) within the republic.

In addition to these ideological changes, women's incorporation in the labour market also started to change after the Second World War. Women started to occupy more positions in education, health care and culture, where the working week was shorter (33-39 hours), which allowed them de facto to perform part-time working duties (Vinokurova, 2007). Compared to the 1920s Soviet ideological thinking of women as being equal to men in labour force participation, the post-war ideological shift stressed women's duty as citizens to be mothers and wives, which in many ways was similar to the trend in the capitalist Western European societies (Carter, 1997; Reid, 2002). Scholars argue that the rising 'male-female income gap was more the result of the different distribution of men and women in the occupational structure than of direct wage discrimination' (Lapidus, 1978, p. 127). These changes, however, did not impact the overall share of female labour force participation which was high when compared to Western European countries at that time and continued to increase. In 1950, the proportion of women among blue-collar and white-collar workers was 46.9% in Kharkiv and 12.3% in Lviv (Hyk, 1987, p. 193).[6] Women's employment in Lviv increased rapidly to 42.3% in the following decade (Hyk, 1987, p. 193).

Overall, Soviet family policy after the Second World War became more supportive to mothers than to women in general (Lapidus, 1978). As such, maternity

[6] Kharkiv Statistical Office, requested via email on April 2, 2014.

leave introduced in 1955 was only accessible for working mothers. Maternity leave granted 112 days at full pay, 56 before delivery and 56 days after delivery. In addition, mothers could have an additional three months of unpaid leave. Those who decided to stay at home with their infant for longer could return to work in the same position within one year of childbearing; however, this right did not always work in practice (Lapidus, 1978). The Soviet Union extended parental life benefits to non-working mothers as well only in 1989 (Lahusen and Solomon, 2008).

Parents received additional support with infant care from the state-owned nurseries, kindergartens, and milk-kitchens. These facilities were available for both working and non-working parents. However, working parents often had access to work-site nurseries or kindergartens. Milk-kitchens provided mothers with baby food and milk during the first year after delivery, which allowed mothers to stop breastfeeding early and leave even young infants at a nursery. The number of milk kitchens, nurseries and kindergartens grew rapidly during the post-war years. For example, in 1957, in the city of Kharkiv there were eight milk kitchens, located in every city district, and 98 nurseries (Pavlova, 2004). By 1968, the number of nurseries increased to 141.[7] In Lviv, these facilities were also growing, but still remained less developed than in Kharkiv. In 1950, Lviv had 1 milk kitchen and 8 distribution points, and 12 nurseries per 6 city districts.[8] By 1958, the number of nurseries had increased to 28 (Muratov and Shamraj, 1970).[9]

As mentioned earlier, this pronatalist policy reflected an emerging problem for Soviet society, the problem of fertility declining below replacement levels. The fertility decline in Ukraine was rapid, but regional differences persisted. As Figure 5.1 shows, the Lviv region entered the fertility transition in the late nineteenth century, before it became part of the Soviet state. During the 1950s and 1960s fertility was declining in the Lviv region, and especially in the city of Lviv. However, during this time fertility still remained higher on average than that in Kharkiv, as well as in comparison to Ukraine as a whole. In Kharkiv, fertility was declining in the early twentieth century, and during the 1950s and 1960s fertility rates fell to as low level as 13-15 births per 1,000. After the mid-1970s, the trend towards convergence in fertility rates can be observed, which could be linked to the adoption of a two-child family ideal (Sobotka and Beaujouan, 2014). However, the regional differences could still be observed after the 1970s and even more explicitly in the late 2000s.

Demographers suggest that the post-war fertility decline in Ukraine was caused by considerable spacing between births and by the tendency of stopping repro-

[7] Kharkiv State Archive, fond 5231, opis 15, dokument 316, 5
[8] Lviv State Archive, fond 406, opis 2, dokument 166, 9.
[9] Lviv State Archive, folder 312, opis 2, dokument 572, 30-31

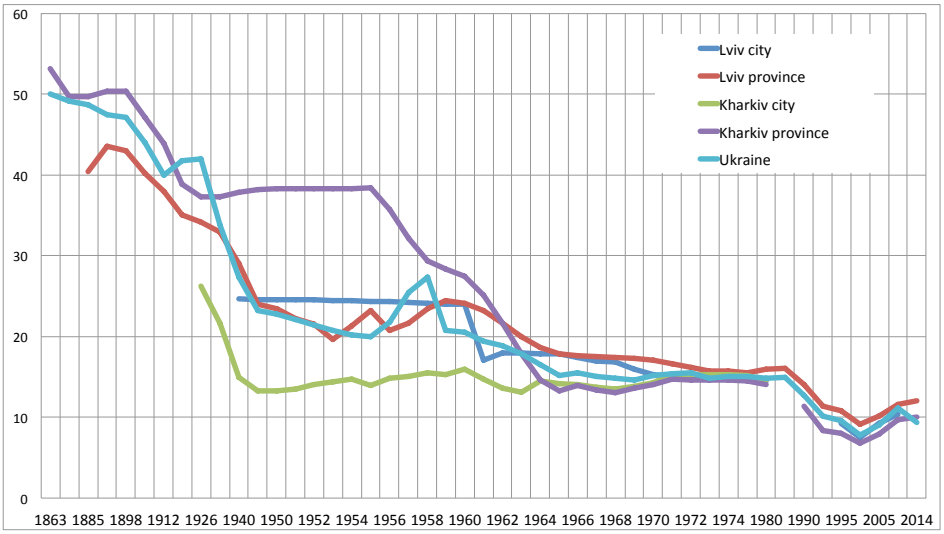


Figure 5.1: Crude birth rates, per 1000 people, for Lviv (city and province), Kharkiv (city and province), and Ukraine,1861-2014. Sources: A.G. Rashin, 'Naselenie Rossii za 100 let (1813 - 1913) Statisticheskie ocherki', http://istmat.info/node/80 [accessed on 13 April 2015]; Franz Rothenbacher 'The Central and East European Population since 1850' (Hampshire, 2013), 1244; The Human Fertility Database: http://www.humanfertility.org/cgi-bin/main.php (accessed on April 2, 2015); Lviv State Archive, fond 312, fond 283 and fond 406; Kharkiv State Archive fond 1962, fond P-5125 and fond P-5231; Population yearbooks 1991-2001; Main Statistical Office in Lviv region databases: http://www.lv.ukrstat.gov.ua [accessed on April 15, 2015]; State Statistics Service of Ukraine documents publishing: http://ukrstat.org (accessed on April 5, 2015)

ductive activities after first birth at the early age of around 25-30 (Steshenko, 2010). Before 1955, spacing and early stopping practices could have been caused by the high infant mortality rates (IMRs) in the aftermath of the Second World War.[10] However after the mid-1950s, IMRs were steadily declining. In Ukraine, the IMR was 36.6 in 1960, and in Lviv and Kharkiv provinces it was 33.0 and 26.6, respectively.[11] In theory, this indicates that intentions to have more children were more common in Kharkiv than in Lviv. However, in contrast, this does not seem to be the case among the informants, as I discuss in the following section.

5.5 Results

In this section I discuss individuals' experiences of the transition to second birth in Kharkiv and Lviv between the 1950s and mid-1970s. I first explain what meanings individuals attached to the transition, and then I show what role relationships with family and peers played in the transition. To reveal how these relationships influenced individuals' decisions and attitudes regarding second childbearing, I refer to the mechanisms of social influence, particularly social learning, social pressure and social support, which are described in detail in Bernardi and Klärner (2014). Lastly, I focus on the role of social support with childcare in the context of intergenerational and spousal relationships. The analysis for Kharkiv and Lviv is presented separately in order to better emphasise regional aspects. For reasons of confidentiality, the names of the informants are pseudonyms.

5.5.1 Eastern Ukraine: Kharkiv

5.5.1.1 Material uncertainty and the long transition to second birth

In the European Soviet republics, including Ukraine, the two-child family norm became accepted in the 1960s (Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2012, p. 150). This vision on family composition was also explicit in the Kharkiv informants' narratives. However, having two children was perceived as a maximum rather than a desired number, which is similar to the contemporary situation in Ukraine and Russia (Perelli-Harris, 2008a; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2012). Both male and female informants commonly linked their aspirations of having a small family of one or at most two children to the general material hardship and the costs of bringing up a child, as male and female informants framed this concern:

[10] More on infant mortality rate in both regions see Chapter 1.

[11] Sources: (Demoscope, 2015a); *Demograficnuy shorichnyk* 2007, 68; Kharkiv State Archive, fond 5231, opis 9, dokument 1154, 1-45.

> At that time having two children was, so to say, too many (...). Because of the material provision issues and upbringing; it was not easy (Vasilij, born in 1939, skilled worker, Kharkiv).

> It is a lot of responsibility (to have a second child) and this made it hard, also because everyone had to work (Svetlana, born in 1941, civil servant, Kharkiv).

For many, to have adequate material conditions meant to achieve financial security, namely to have stable employment for both spouses and a residence independent from that of their parents. These two steps are considered among the major thresholds in the transition to adulthood. In Western European societies these are historically perceived as steps that are integral to the forming of a union (Blum et al., 2009). In the context of the Kharkiv informants, however, marriage and first childbirth commonly preceded financial independence, and both men and women married at an early age. After getting married, couples typically co-resided with parents/in-laws before getting an independent place, and some still had to finish their educational training. First, childbearing conventionally occurred within one year of marriage, and often took place under close (grand)parental supervision (Hilevych and Rotering, 2013). As such, a first child was typically also seen as a responsibility of grandparents and their support with childcare was common.

In the context of the Kharkiv informants, marriage and first childbearing were the entry phases into adulthood, while material security and independence from parents were subsequent steps. Before having a second child, many couples still had to establish their own livelihoods, which often resulted in a prolonged transition to second birth.

5.5.1.2 Social influences on birth postponement

When discussing with the informants the transition to second birth, it became apparent that decisions to space childbirths were closely related to the character of spousal relationships. Both male and female informants perceived childbearing and infant care as a primary responsibility of the mother, or equally of both parents. As such, men usually referred to the decision to have a second child as made by their wives, even when it was discussed between spouses. The quote of a male informant illustrates an example of the decision-making process:

> *Interviewer:* When she got pregnant with the second child, did either of you consider aborting it?
> *Viktor:* No, she did not want to abort this time. On the contrary, I first showed that I was not happy to have a child. But I told her If you really want it, then do it. It was her decision, and she gave birth. (Viktor, born in 1938, scientific elite, Kharkiv).

In women's narratives, their husbands' role in the timing of a second child

was also often invisible, and the expectation of infant care was not common. Men's and women's visions of childbirth and infant care were related to the ways in which spouses arranged their relationships, especially with regard to fertility control: while men held the major responsibility for birth control, they did not participate in women's abortion decisions, which in fact were closely related to the timing of second birth (see Chapter 4). As such, the decision about when to have a second child, and whether to have one at all, was mainly taken by the woman.

In their reasoning about prolonging the timing of having a second child, female informants typically linked it to the difficulty carrying a double burden: combining infant care and paid work. The female informants, regardless of their social-economic position, commonly emphasised their need to work and contribute to the family income in order to improve the material situation of the family. In this context, postponement of a second child was a rational decision, typically made by a woman, as a female informant frames it: 'I could have had of course more (children), but I had two abortions. It was necessary to get out of this misery. It was necessary to work'.[12] Women's frequent attempts at pregnancy termination certainly derived from their experiences of carrying a double burden. However, women in Kharkiv also learned from other women's experiences, as they closely communicated with colleagues, neighbours and friends.

For women in Kharkiv, peer relationships played an important role in everyday life, even after marriage (Hilevych and Rotering, 2013). These ties were not necessarily strong and stable throughout the life course, and could change depending on place of work or residence. However, in those typically female close-knit settings women tended to discuss their problems and seek advice, often on family issues. In the fragment below, the female informant explains how communication with other women helped her to make her own childbearing decisions:

> At work, the women told me 'Well, are you sure you can do it (to have a second child)? Why would you do it? Your baby is still too small!' (...) My female friends also had two children. We did talk about it, and all of them had abortions. We did not discuss contraception, as it was an individual matter. But if one of us got pregnant, we all would give her advice (Naida, born in 1936, unskilled worker, Kharkiv).

The woman shows that her reproductive choices and aspirations were similar to those of her colleagues who also had two children on average. What is important to understand here is that having a second child, although it was a woman's decision, was not necessarily planned, given that methods of contraception were unreliable, and often not carefully performed (see Chapter 4). The aspirations to have fewer children, typically no more than two, were commonly achieved through

[12]Maria, born in 1929, unskilled worker, Kharkiv.

prolonged birth spacing. Abortion was the most common method to achieve birth spacing, at least in part because it was the most accessible. Female informants discussed these matters. However, when seeking advice from their peers, they did not learn from each other the benefits of having one or two children, as this would be a long-term learning process. Instead, they learned the advantages of birth terminations and how to choose the right moment to have a second child. For many informants waiting for a perfect moment to have a second child took years.

In this context, the vision of abortion as the only remedy of birth termination was often also reinforced through social pressure – 'the force that leads individuals to conform to accepted social norms' in order to gain the approval of their peers (Bernardi and Klärner, 2014). In some female networks, peer judgment was a strong controlling mechanism used against those women who 'lived following their pleasures', as one of the informants described women who had frequent childbirths.

Social pressure also existed with regard to the age limit within which it was considered appropriate to have a child. Most of the female informants with a second child typically had them by the age of 35-40 (see Table1 in Chapter 1). Among many female informants, this age was considered as a deadline for motherhood, and some linked it to the idea that having a child after the age of 40 could be dangerous for a woman's health. This concern could have derived from the Soviet medical discourse that favoured early motherhood. However, there seemed to be another part to this prejudice, which carried more of a cultural interpretation of female's reproductive age limit. As such, the deadline for motherhood was related to the notion that parents' and their children's childrearing years should not overlap, which is very likely to occur in the context where early marriage and early first childbearing are practiced. This consideration, even unconsciously, provided a clear understanding of a stopping moment for reproductive activities, particularly among women, as a female informant describes:

> We wanted more children, and I could have given another birth at the age of 39. But Al'osha (an older son) at that moment was married, and his wife Tamara already got pregnant. And only this stopped me from having a third child, which my husband and I really wanted (Zoja, born in 1931, civil servant, Kharkiv).

The deadline for motherhood and pressure to space births by using abortion certainly facilitated the postponement of the transition to second birth to the mid-thirties. After the first birth, there typically was no normative expectation about when, at what age, to have a second child and a new family still had to establish its own livelihood. At the same time, peers' reproductive strategies offered a more convenient model of prolonged transition to second birth, which allowed women to keep working for a longer time. By the age of 35, women started to realise that if they did not give another birth in the next few years, they may not

have another child at all. This reproductive strategy of delaying the second birth due to persistent economic uncertainty is different from what demographers call birth spacing, though birth spacing and postponement are not mutually exclusive. According to (Agadjanian, 2005, p. 628), birth postponement can be described as a 'waiting' strategy. Among the couples in Kharkiv, this waiting strategy was characterised by frequent pregnancy terminations, due to material uncertainties. Female informants from Kharkiv typically gave birth first before or during their mid-twenties and had their second birth closer to the mid-thirties. The average gap between first and second births was between 7 to 15 years, and in some cases a second birth never occurred. This behaviour signifies that the transition to second birth was not planned and intentions changed depending on material and emotional circumstances. What is important to address further in this respect, is whether the postponement of a second birth was solely linked to the lack of husbands' help and women's difficulty of carrying a double burden. In the next section, I argue that in addition to those two factors, material uncertainty was also related to the available grandparental support with childcare for the second child.

5.5.1.3 Seeking grandparental support with childcare

In Kharkiv, female informants usually arranged and provided infant and child care. They typically did not stay at home with a child after maternity leave expired, and most of them returned to work after the 56-day paid maternity leave was finished. Although nurseries and kindergartens during the 1960s were available all over the city of Kharkiv, the majority of the informants rarely considered these options as adequate alternatives for infant care. Some informants would have tried to make special part-time arrangements at work, but most commonly they would first seek support from their parents or from their in-laws. Grandparental help was typically seen as the major source of support in this matter, as a female informant describes:

> First I did not even think about having a second child, and later when I did want one, I had some health issues. All in all, there was always this problem of who will take care of a child. For my mother it was hard to do it, as she had to take care of Irina's Lesha (her sister's child), and two children would have been too much for her (Varvara, born in 1938, civil servant, Kharkiv).

Although during the first childbearing many couples easily acquired grandparental support as many of them still lived with their parents, this support was not always possible with a second child, when a couple typically lived separately from their parents. When the informants finally considered having a second child, often while in their thirties, grandparents were not easily available. They were

more likely to be helping out with other siblings' children, were too old, not in a good health, or lived far away. In the interviews I observed that the lack of grandparental support with infant and/or childcare was the major reason behind postponing having a second child and eventually having one at all, as the quotes of two female informants describe:

> I spoke with my mother-in-law about whether to keep a child or to have an abortion. But she said, 'You both should decide yourself. You are adults and do what you think is possible.' That was it. I had an abortion (Raisa, born in 1934, skilled worker, Kharkiv).

> After my father told me that if we decided to have a second child it would be that we should count on ourselves only, and that we cannot expect any substantial help from them. (Svetlana, born in 1941, civil servant, Kharkiv).

The post-war period phenomena of postponing a second birth, which in some cases resulted in early stopping, led to the establishment of the one-child family norm in the Kharkiv region. This phenomenon could be a key explanation for why fertility declined so fast and substantial there during the 1950s and 1960s, and then only slightly increased during the mid-1970s. More detailed analysis of this process however is still needed.

5.5.2 Western Ukraine: Lviv

5.5.2.1 Early self-independence and the faster transition to second birth

Among the Lviv informants, material conditions, such as housing issues and women's temporary unemployment, were also mentioned among the reasons to prolong the transition to second birth. However, this reasoning was typically indicated along with the desire to wait until the first child was older, as the following male and female informant quotes illustrate:

> My wife and I did not have any objections regarding not having a child after the second one was born. Therefore, we did not think in the categories that we would not have one afterwards, as we did not reject the possibility. And even when my wife had an abortion, there was only one reason for it – that the pregnancy occurred too soon after the second child, meaning, we wanted a third child to happen at the right moment. It was a time-related decision (Fedir, born in 1934, scientific elite, Lviv).

> I did not want another child yet, because the first one was still too small. But then I got pregnant, and I thought, What should happen, shall happen (Oksana, born in 1932, unskilled worker, Lviv).

The Lviv informants claimed to be more open towards having a second or a

third child. Many stated that for them having two children was 'a must' and that 'one child is not a child'. Lviv couples often portrayed a second or even third birth as planned. It may have been the case that even when a pregnancy was not expected, spouses were likely to accept the fact.

The readiness and willingness of Lviv couples to have a second child shortly after the first could be linked to material independence from parents near the time of marriage. Both male and female informants often worked when they got married, and some even lived independently from their parents. The necessary level of material security, which implied independence from the parental family, could have also been achieved if a woman married a man who had stable employment at the time of marriage. This was more likely when the husband was older than the wife. Among the Lviv couples, a fairly large spousal age difference, with men being older than women, was more common than in Kharkiv. In this context, marriage, first and later order births typically took place when at least one of the spouses was economically secure. These two transitions – marriage and economic security – also signified entrance into adulthood.

5.5.2.2 Social influence on the establishment of the two-child family norm

The strong proscription against having a single child was one of the central motives among Lviv couples to have at least two children. Informants typically justified this motive by saying that they perceived it important for a child's development to have siblings. Here are the quotes of a male and female informant that illustrate this aspiration:

> If having only one child, than all attention goes to him or her, and so to say the child will be egoistic. But when there are two, then there is some collaboration going on between them and they have to take care of each other as well (Svyatoslav, born in 1941, civil servant, Lviv).

> My parents also had two children. Later, my mother-in-law also told me One child is not a child. You should have a second one. I did not have a husband but had two children. One child is no, no, never (Zoya, born in 1938, civil servant, Lviv).

The informants often related the advantages of having siblings to their own experiences, as many of them grew up in families with more than two siblings. Throughout the life course, relationships with siblings played a crucial role, and the role of older siblings was particularly important. An older brother or sister was often a primary source of material support for the younger ones, and typically helped to pay education fees or to find a job. The ideal of having a larger family was also transmitted from the parents as part of the socialisation process or from

in-laws during marital life. The last quote above illustrates how strong social pressure from her mother-in-law influenced the woman's vision that having one child is not good.

Compared to their Kharkiv counterparts, the Lviv informants had more pronatalist views with regard to childbearing. However, a more rational approach to birth control, particularly after a second birth, signifies that the perception of the two-child family norm was becoming more and more accepted in this region as well. This implied using more reliable, typically male-controlled, methods of contraception. Among the methods commonly used were *coitus interruptus* and condoms, which worked effectively for many couples. A pro-natalist stance can also be inferred from avoidance of abortion, which was typically used only in urgent occasions rather than as a means of birth control. Overall, average abortion rates in Lviv were half those in Kharkiv (see Chapter 4).

Another factor that affected the establishment of the two-child norm in Lviv was that sometimes women's aspirations to limit fertility after a second child were stronger than those of their husbands. Even though spouses often communicated about these matters, some women started to oppose their husbands' pronatalist wishes. The quotes from the interviews with a male and female informant illustrate this aspiration:

> We did talk about having another child, but she... Well, we already had two daughters and our first son died. She said We cannot make it with more (children) [...] I don't know, sometimes it happens that a husband has an opinion, but the mother may think differently (Petro, born in 1933, unskilled worker, Lviv).

> I gave birth to a girl first. She is four years senior than the son...four years and two months. After her the son was born. I then did not want any more children. I wanted to work (Bohdana, born in 1933, civil servant).

Women's aspirations to limit fertility after their second birth were often linked to their intentions to return to work. In Lviv, the Soviet ideological norm that a woman has to contribute at least in part to the family income was commonly supported. However, this norm in practice was implemented differently than in Kharkiv. As stated earlier, Lviv society did not experience the radical actions regarding intense women's incorporation in sectors, such as heavy-, machine-, and light industries taking place in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s. Instead, the post-war Soviet ideological shift of seeing women primarily as mothers and wives, and only secondarily as workers, conformed with the patriarchal tradition of complementary gender relationships existing in Lviv. This type of gender relationships, where a husband performs a breadwinner role and a woman is responsible for the household duties, fitted well with Lviv couples' ideals of marital live. This normative gender order also created less pressure on women

who took an extended maternity leave and stayed with children longer, typically until kindergarten or even school age.

In addition to women's aspirations to return to the labour market, social pressure regarding a deadline for motherhood was also pronounced in Lviv. Female informants typically had their first birth after their mid-twenties and their second (or even third) birth by their mid-thirties. This allowed for an age gap between births of a maximum of five to seven years. As such, having two children born relatively closely together helped couples preserve financial independence from their parents. Although women typically stayed at home during the first few years after delivery, and could even have resigned from work for this purpose, the shorter birth spacing still allowed them to return to work more quickly. To understand the logic and necessary self-control of this strategy, in the next section I review how infant and childcare responsibilities were arranged.

5.5.2.3 Spousal responsibilities for childcare

The Lviv couples presented childbirth decisions and the arrangement of childcare as a shared responsibility of both spouses. In practice, men held the major role in decision-making, while women typically conformed to their husbands. For example, couples perceived birth control as the male's primary responsibility, and a decision to abort was commonly discussed with the husband (see Chapter 4). At the same time, women performed most of the infant and childcare duties. Even though some husbands could have helped their wives, couples more commonly hired a nanny who would help the wife within the household and/or with infant care. Because women usually stayed at home during the first year(s) after delivery, or switched to a more flexible work schedule, they were able to perform childcare duties themselves. A male and female informant describe their experiences in this realm:

> She was at home with the child for about two years. Then she I found her a job at the laboratory. It was just across the road, so she was able to come home for a short moment any time she needed. And the child was then in kindergarten (Markian, born in 1929, unskilled worker, Lviv).

> I was at home with Myroslav (second child) for some years as well. We went to the village to my family and lived with them for some time. When he got older, I brought him to the kindergarten. It was right before the school started. At the hospital I had patients starting at 8am, so I often was able to finish by mid-day. When I had home visits, which sometimes were shorter, only three hours, I could drop by the kindergarten first and bring him home. Then the boys were taking care of themselves (Natalka, born in 1945, civil servant, Lviv).

Contrary to Kharkiv, in Lviv I did not observe informants' expectations of

receiving grandparental support with infant and childcare. Although grandparents could provide some support, it was not arranged on a daily basis because many couples resided separately. Sometimes, however, as a female informant also indicates above, a wife could have stayed at her parents' place for few months during the infant care period. This made infant care easier for a wife, as she did not have to cook and clean. However, after a short while a woman would typically return to living with her husband.

Even though in Lviv spouses performed different roles with regard to infant and childcare, they both felt equally responsible for this process: a husband in providing material support to the family, and the wife in taking care of children. This type of spousal cooperation can be seen as the underlying factor behind a short-term spacing strategy in the transition to second birth. On the one hand, this reproductive strategy allowed spouses to save material and time resources spent on childcare. On the other hand, it permitted them to internalise the norm: to have at least two children.

5.6 Conclusions

The findings indicate that socio-economic standards, Soviet family policy and related material uncertainty were indeed crucial factors for couples' reproductive decisions in Soviet Ukraine. However, how these conditions were practiced in family life and, hence, in individual reproductive strategising about a second birth, differed between the regions. I associate these differences with the patterns of family relationships historically predominant in the Kharkiv and Lviv regions: the joint and nuclear-stem family systems, respectively.

It is argued that in the context of strong parental authority and prolonged multigenerational residence, which were prevalent in the joint family system in the territories of historical Kharkiv, spousal relationships are less important because negotiations of livelihood strategies constitute a concern for all family members living in the household and sharing its goods (Das Gupta, 1999). This, in turn, facilitates less cooperation between spouses, also with respect to reproductive decisions, and produces interdependencies between generations. I also observed this pattern of intergenerational relationships among the Kharkiv couples in the 1950s-1970s. Strong intergenerational ties often surrounded the transition to first birth and continued even after the family started to reside separately from the parents or in-laws. The expectation of receiving grandparental support with second childcare existed among many informants despite the separate residence. However, when it was clear that grandparents would not be able to provide immediate help because they were taking care of other grandchildren; or had health issues,

were far away, were still working, or experienced other constrains, it contributed to increasing uncertainty, particularly among women. An important aspect of this family pattern was that a grandmother rather than the husband was seen as a major helper with infant care. As a result, the realisation of limited possibilities for receiving grandparental support in case of a second birth, which also coincided with other uncertainties related to a female double burden, motivated many of the female informants from Kharkiv to adopt a waiting strategy of delaying the transition to second birth, with abortion among the main means of birth control (Hilevych, 2015). Additionally, women often also learned from each other about the benefits of adopting a waiting strategy.

Many of the Kharkiv informants practiced this waiting strategy until they reached the social deadline for parenthood, typically in the mid-thirties, and this is when the second birth was likely to take place. As such, the adoption of the waiting strategy often led to more prolonged birth intervals between first and second children, sometimes as long as 7 to 15 years. Scholars define the waiting strategy as postponement, in contrast to spacing (Agadjanian, 2005; Timæus and Moultrie, 2008). Additionally, those women still feeling insecure about proceeding with another birth could become early stoppers if the waiting period went on too long. The appearance of early stoppers in the 1950s-1960s contributed to the emergence of a one-child family norm that undoubtedly facilitated the rapid decline in fertility rates in the Kharkiv regions at that time. Scholars argue that the postponement strategy and one-child families became even more widespread in the 1990s and early 2000s, which eventually led to the occurrence of the lowest-low fertility decline (Perelli-Harris, 2008a).

When a new family does not reside with the parents, or intends to reside independently shortly after marriage, such as in the stem and nuclear-stem family system typical for the territories of the historical Lviv region, intergenerational cooperation and dependency in livelihood strategies would eventually become less strong and spouses themselves would tend to make primary decisions about their economic, social and emotional issues (Das Gupta, 1999). I also observed this behaviour among the Lviv informants, where the spouses would negotiate and arrange childbearing and childrearing responsibilities together. To do so, the Lviv informants often adopted a traditional male-breadwinner model at least at some stage of their reproductive careers. This model was based on a temporary practice of complementary gender relationships where a husband earns most of the income, while the wife either does not work or works part-time while taking care of the children. Some husbands also helped their wives with childcare. More often, however, the Lviv couples hired a nanny for this purpose. Sometimes, grandparental help with childcare was also available, but it was not central, unless the genera-

tions resided together. As such, childcare can be seen as increasing material and emotional costs for both spouses, and not only for women. Negotiations of these costs between spouses were a reinforcing factor for many couples in Lviv to adopt a shorter birth spacing strategy. At the same time, this strategy reinforced the solid establishment of the two-child family norm in practice, which possibly also helped to stabilise fertility rates in the region in the 1950s-1970s.

All in all, these findings contribute to the recently introduced debate by Agadjanian (2005) and Timæus and Moultrie (2008) on spacing as contrasted to postponing reproductive strategies. In the context of Eastern Europe, this distinction is particularly important as up to the present many countries in this region have been characterised by a relatively early and universal entrance into parenthood, while fertility decline mainly occurred due to changes in the transition to second and later births. While the analysis here is of a more explanatory nature on this matter, further research may use this argument to formulate hypotheses that will cover other geographic areas in other Eastern European regions, as well as in other time periods and delving more into ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Chapter 6

Conclusions and Discussion: Strong Families and Declining Fertility

6.1 Introduction

The rapid changes in fertility behaviour that took place in Ukraine during the first three decades after the Second World War signified the end of the First Demographic Transition, as fertility in Ukraine reached the below-replacement level of 2.05 in the 1960s. Some suggest that in this part of Europe the period after the 1960s also witnessed the start of a latent depopulation and that this was later followed by an evident depopulation in the 1990s and 2000s, also referred to as the lowest-low fertility decline (Vishnevskij, 2009). However, this fertility decline that already begun to manifest itself in the early 1920s gained speed within only a few generations as those who were born in families of six siblings in the 1920s and 1930s had only two children themselves in the 1950s, the 1960s and the 1970s.

A significant body of literature has focused on describing these demographic changes on a macro-level for the Soviet and post-Soviet periods by typically linking these changes to the processes of modernisation and transformation (Billari et al., 2009; Blum, 2003; Bühler, 2004; Lutz et al., 2002; Perelli-Harris, 2005, 2008a; Philipov, 2003; Philipov et al., 2006; Sobotka, 2004b; Vishnevskij, 2006, 2009; Wesolowski, 2015b,a; Zakharov, 2008). In this dissertation, I argue that the impact of modernisation and transformations on reproductive behaviour should be understood through the analysis of social relationships and changes occur-

ring within them alongside these transformations, as together they contribute to the formation of social (in)equalities both within and outside the household that eventually shape individual reproductive choices.

The focus on the role of social relationships in reproductive behaviour is particularly important in the context of Eastern Europe, where family relationships have provided welfare in critical situations, such as childbearing, child and elderly care both in the past and today (Czap, 1982; Gruber and Heady, 2010a,b; Hajnal, 1982; Jappens and Van Bavel, 2012). Similar to Southern Europe, the prevalence of strong family ties in Eastern Europe is also often connected to the high fertility rates before the Demographic Transitional (Czap, 1982; Hajnal, 1982) and to the rapid fertility decline to the lowest-low level in the 1990s and 2000s (Heady and Kohli, 2010; Heady and Schweitzer, 2010). The lowest-low fertility phenomenon is often referred to as a paradox of strong family and low fertility (Dalla Zuanna and Micheli, 2004; Micheli, 2000). Moreover, in the specific context of Ukraine, where regional differences remain pronounced in many aspects of social life, it has been suggested that regional variations in fertility could also be linked to the local family values (Perelli-Harris, 2008a). Therefore, to better understand and to predict the course of fertility decline in this part of Europe, it is essential to understand these complex connections between family relationships, including their continuities and effects on changes in reproductive behaviour, through a comparative regional perspective during the post-war fertility decline in Ukraine. Consequently, the main research questions that I addressed in this study were the following:

(1) How did family and social relationships influence individual reproductive careers in Soviet Ukraine from around the 1950s to the 1970s? (2) How can local family systems and their associated power dynamics and social interdependencies help to understand fertility decline in Soviet Ukraine?

To answer these questions, I used first-hand interviews with and the accompanying life history calendars of men and women who were in their reproductive age from the 1950s to the 1970s. The interviews were collected in the two Ukrainian borderland cities of Lviv in the western part of the country and Kharkiv in the eastern part of the country. These two sites allowed me to observe differences and similarities both in how family relationships were organised there and in how these relationships shaped the informants' reproductive decisions. Additionally, I also collected population statistics on vital events at the city and provincial levels, such as marriage, birth, abortion and infant mortality rates, and ethnographic literature on historical family systems in two regions.

In this concluding part I discuss my main findings with respect to the two research questions. I also discuss the theoretical and methodological implications

of my findings. I then discuss the limitations of my study and suggest the avenues for the future research. Finally, I hope to illuminate the societal relevance and policy implications of this study.

6.2 The role family relationships in individual reproductive careers

So, what did we learn about how family and social relationships influenced individual reproductive careers during the post-war fertility decline in Ukraine? By focusing on individual reproductive careers, I studied the whole set of life course transitions that are related both to reproduction as a process and pathway (Hobcraft, 2007; Townsend, 1997), and to the timing, pace and order of reproductive events (Johnson-Hanks, 2002, 2007). Chapters 2-5 described each transition belonging to this reproductive pathway, namely marriage, entrance into parenthood, birth control and abortion, and transitions to second and later births all in the context of family and peer relationships. In this section I briefly review each transition with respect to the first research question.

Marriage and family formation

Chapter 2 addressed the transition to marriage. As appeared from the interviews, three related sub-transitions surrounded marriage: a short betrothal stage, the decision to marry, and the marriage celebration. Together, these subtransitions were also seen as parts of family formation and entry into adulthood. Despite the immense importance of family formation in the life course, both male and female informants rushed from the betrothal phase into marriage even though they were often not yet materially secure. At the same time, those who did not marry in time were perceived as inexperienced in real matters of life.

Rushing into marriage was certainly understandable for women and men as getting married also meant entering womanhood and manhood (Gabriel, 2005; Rotkirch, 2000; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010). This association is already prescribed in language use, both in Ukrainian and Russian, as the words 'woman' and 'wife' have the same meanings, as do the words 'man and 'husband'. Additionally, marriage was also the guarantee to achieve more legal and social freedom. On the one hand, these were freedoms related to receiving a housing allowance from the state, higher chances of getting a better job, and a legal reason for staying with a spouse after finishing educational training instead of doing compulsory state service in another city or village. On the other hand, marriage also granted individuals, particularly women, more independence from their parents as well as parental recognition of becoming mature.

Parental control over pre-marital sexual experiences of daughters was strong. In Ukrainian society, the issue of female virginity is frequently emphasised in the context of the stigma attached to illegitimate births in historical times, as an illegitimate birth could bring dishonour not only to a woman but also to her entire family. Although during the Soviet time many rights and possibilities were granted to single mothers, the stigma around giving birth out of wedlock was still very strong. This stigma especially increased after the introduction of the 1944 Family Edict that labelled out-of-wedlock births as illegitimate, in this way victimising unwed mothers and their children (Lapidus, 1978).

Under these circumstances, the main social influence on men's and women's courtship decisions was exerted by parents through social control mechanism. Social control mechanism was reinforced through sanctions, e.g. parental restrictions on time by when a child has to be back home, that forced young men and women to submit to their parents' wishes. Sanctions are also relevant in the context of social and normative pressure mechanisms (Bernardi and Klärner, 2014). However, in contrast to social pressure, where the sanctions are usually accompanied by individual rewards, in the context of social control these sanctions were primarily sought to keep behaviour in a certain order for the sake of both a family's and an individual's life being. As such, parents controlled pre-marital sexual behaviour to avoid the shame of pre-marital birth for the family and to secure a decent future for their children and their grandchildren. In fact, this control was a parent's main means of ensuring a secure future for their intergenerational family. Moreover, livelihood security was also associated with a successful marriage and the right choice of a marital partner.

This strong parental control before marriage was not without consequences as it seems to have created an imaginary dependency of children on their parents. A clear appearance of this intergenerational dependency was the need to have a marriage celebration. For the informants, a marriage celebration seems to have been the main means to justify and gain recognition of their relationship from the family and the community. One of the main rationales behind the celebration was that many young couples expected to receive some support from their parents or even to reside with them during their early years of marital life. Post-marital residence with parents was more common among the Kharkiv informants than it was among their Lviv counterparts. In Kharkiv, couples commonly resided with parents or in-laws while waiting for social housing or cooperative housing, a housing form where many families combined their resources and contributed to the building of a block of flats. In contrast, the Lviv informants considered post-marital parental support as an additional resource rather than as a primary one. Moreover, many of these informants practiced neolocal residence before or shortly after

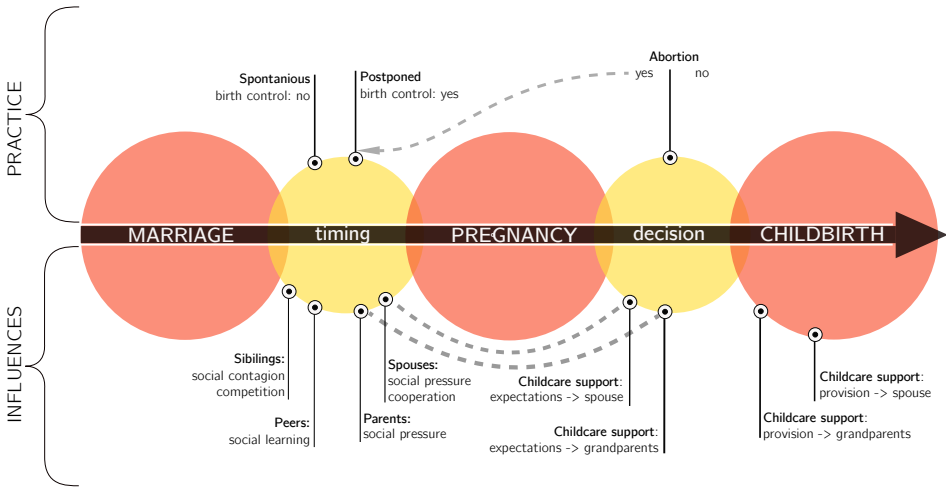


Figure 6.1: Family influence on entrance into parenthood in Lviv and Kharkiv

marriage either by typically renting a (shared) apartment or by applying early enough for social housing from the state. I argue that these different responses to the lack of housing and the different co-residence patterns that derived from it may largely be explained by the diverging intergenerational interdependencies in both localities.[1]

Entrance into parenthood

During later reproductive events, the dependency between generations and the paternalistic family values were also prominent. As discussed in Chapter 3, relying on parental support was one of the reinforcing factors to enter first parenthood shortly after marriage, typically within one year. The value that informants attached to this transition was also linked to achieving adulthood. In contrast to marriage, parenthood signified achievement of adulthood. Transition into first parenthood was characterised by two sub-transitions: the understanding of the 'right' timing of first parenthood and the actual decision about giving birth or terminating the pregnancy (Figure 6.1). I suggest that the latter was possible due to the legalisation of abortion.

The 'right' timing for parenthood meant that entrance into parenthood should

[1] Other studies also suggest that patterns of post-marital residence in Eastern Europe are not solely linked to the availability of rented housing and family policy implications but also to the character of intergenerational relationships (Ghodsee and Bernardi, 2012; Gruber and Heady, 2010b). Gruber and Heady (2010b), in particular, suggest that the demand for rental housing could be connected to the culture of giving a dwelling as a gift. This practice is more common today in urban areas in Eastern and Southern Europe, where intergenerational residence of married and married children is also the most prevalent than it is in the rest of Europe.

take place soon after marriage, and as Figure 6.1 shows, right timing was often shaped by social pressure from parents(in-law), by the cooperation between spouses, and by social learning/contagion from peers/siblings. Social pressure from parents(in-law) occurred when one of the spouses, typically the woman, either wanted to postpone first parenthood or experienced difficulties conceiving, which also suggests that traditional gender connotations were attached to reproduction. In Kharkiv, friends were also a source of social learning about the advantages of early parenthood. Among the Lviv informants, however, this niche of influence was more likely to be occupied by siblings(in-law); in addition to the close ties that siblings may have, siblings(in-law) are also related by blood, which immediately gives them a certain hierarchical position with respect to their parents. This relatedness through kinship that is supported by co-residence often imposes supportive relationships. As such, even providing some minor support to a sibling, for example, through childcare, imposes cooperative but also competing feelings, especially in a society where first birth is associated with entrance into adulthood.

Social influences to meet the 'right' timing of first parenthood often coincided with the moment in the life course when a couple's economic uncertainty was high, for instance, when a person still had no stable income or was still undergoing educational training. Surprisingly, this uncertainty rarely encouraged the informants to postpone or terminate the first pregnancy. On the contrary, they even experienced security and confidence when making a decision to enter parenthood relatively early. I showed that this feeling of security surrounding the entrance into first parenthood derived from earlier social influences surrounding the timing of parenthood, as well as courting and marriage practices, all of which eventually lead to high degree of dependency on their parents. Similar to the pressure to marry that I described earlier, social pressure in earlier stages of life resulted in expectations of receiving parental support in later stages of life. As Figure 6.1 indicates, if these expectations were not fulfilled, a woman would likely terminate her pregnancy. However, grandparents would often reinforce these expectations. This again suggests that the paternalistic family values surrounding intergenerational relationships were crucial in promoting early entrance into parenthood in the two localities.

At the same time, I observed that although family relationships both among the Lviv and Kharkiv informants were based on paternalistic values underlying intergenerational relationships, the degree of dependency on parental help differed between the two localities. I associate this difference with the intra-familial logic of post-marital residence. If after marriage a couple lived alone, they would also take greater responsibility for childcare, and grandparental support was an

additional and temporary option, as was often the case in Lviv. However, when spouses resided with either set of parents, they tended to rely more on the parents in terms of childcare, which I more often observed in Kharkiv and less in Lviv.

Under the conditions of prolonged post-marital residence, childcare became a shared responsibility of the woman and her mother(in-law) rather than that of the couple. This phenomenon of intergenerational female cooperation Rotkirch (2000, p. 118) captures in the term extended mothering – when a woman's maternal care includes not only taking care of her biological children but also taking care of her 'grandchildren, children of relatives and friends, husband, elderly parents and parents-in-law'. However, because the boundaries of who cares for who were not clearly defined within family, intrafamily female cooperation also frequently resulted in competition and conflicts between daughters- and mothers-in-law.

Birth control and abortion

The difference in cooperation between generations and spouses in the two localities became even more pronounced in birth control and abortion practices discussed in Chapter 4. I observed that spousal cooperation on these matters was related to the birth control methods used to space second and third births but these methods were rarely used before a first birth. Amongst the Lviv informants, birth control practicalities were often agreed upon, and the details of arrangements were commonly taken for granted. This was generally achieved through a husband's awareness of his wife's wishes. Both spouses typically claimed mutuality where birth control was concerned; however, the men, in particular, claimed mutuality and responsibility where it was a matter of abortion decisions linked to family-size regulation, which, in a traditional patriarchal society, is typically a man's responsibility. This suggests that, behind the public idea of spousal cooperation, the men actually exerted private dominance and authority in reproduction and marital life. This, in turn, worked to discourage women from seeking alternative birth control.

Conversely, for the female informants from Kharkiv, abortion was often the only reliable measure for limiting family size, and it was perceived as solely a woman's responsibility. Kharkiv women did not consider themselves at an impasse when contemplating abortion as they exploited abortion as their natural and legal right. In practice, however, these women still tended to rely completely on their husbands in birth control matters, even though they commonly employed coital-dependent methods that tended to fail, as the region's high abortion levels indicate. The women made little effort to change this situation since discussions about birth control rarely occurred between spouses and most often these issues were discussed with female peers. As such, in getting an abortion, these women did not intend to resist their husbands' authority. Instead, they exercising their

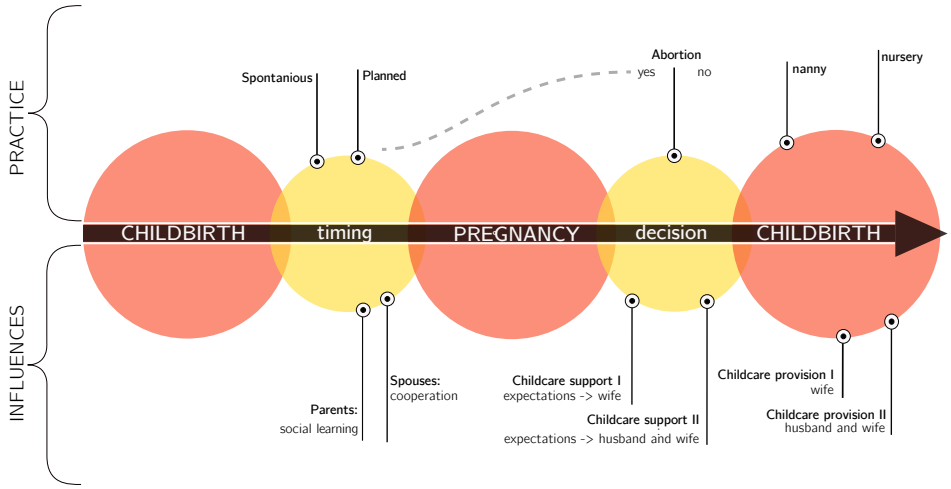


Figure 6.2: Family influences on transition to second birth in Lviv

agency to seek abortions to maintain the patriarchal gender system, while perhaps also aiming to fulfil not only their sexual needs but also those related to work and education. Therefore, the abortion practiced contrary to any pre-coital method did not question a man's ability to reproduce, which is essential in patriarchal society, while the actual decision whether to proceed with a pregnancy was left to the woman who was the main childcare provider. In conditions where women were carrying a double burden by being a working-woman and a full-time housewife/mother, abortion seems to have been a suitable life strategy for them.

Transition to second and later order births

These differences in practices of birth control and in how women exercised their agency within spousal relationships had consequences for the transition to second or later births, which is discussed in Chapter 5. Similar to the entrance into parenthood, transition to second birth was also characterised by two sub-transitions: the timing of and decision about second birth. Unlike the transition to first birth, the differences in family and other social influences were more pronounced between regions.

The sub-transition of timing was closely connected to the practices of birth control and abortion, as these were typically used after the transitions to first and second births. As Figure 6.2 shows, the timing of a second birth among the Lviv informants was often spontaneous since *coitus interruptus* or male condoms were not always effective. Abortion was an indication of planned second birth. The term 'planning' was rarely used with respect to childbearing; yet, the informants, primarily males, referred to it when they wanted to justify the decisions to termi-

nate the pregnancy. Overall, the informants were open about accepting a second and sometimes a third pregnancy, as the objections to having a single child were strong. The motives for having at least two children in Lviv were often embedded in the informant's own experiences of growing up in a family with siblings (social learning).

The spousal cooperation on the timing of a second birth among the Lviv informants also seems to have been one of the main situations where spouses would start to negotiate and to identify possible childrearing responsibilities and possibilities. As indicated in Figure 6.2 , expectations of support with childcare often coincided with the actual support provision between spouses. In arranging support, the Lviv informants often adopted a traditional male-breadwinning model at least at some stage of their reproductive careers. This model was based on a temporary practice of complementary gender relationships where the husband earned most of the income, while the wife either did not work or worked part-time while taking care of children. Some husbands also helped their wives with childcare or a couple would hire a nanny for these purposes. Grandparental help with childcare was also sometimes available, but it was not central unless the couple resided with the grandparents.

In this context of complementary gender relationships, material and emotional costs of birth control and childcare can be seen as a responsibility shared between the spouses. Negotiating these costs was often a reinforcing factor for many couples in Lviv in order to adopt a shorter birth spacing strategy, which also allowed a woman to return to work faster. Moreover, the transition to a second birth often coincided with the normative deadline for parenthood, especially for women.

Among the Kharkiv informants, the timing of second birth was also often spontaneous, and abortion was practiced more regularly given the frequent lack of spousal cooperation, as Figure 6.3 indicates.Strong intergenerational ties, however, often continued even when a family started to reside separately from the parents or in-laws, who, in turn, would continue living with another (married) child. As such, the dependency on and the expectations of receiving grandparental support with childcare was still high among the Kharkiv informants, particularly women, even despite a separate residence. However, if grandparents were not able to provide immediate help for one reason or another, such as they were taking care of other grandchildren, were having health issues, were far away, were still working, or were experiencing other constraints, this would consistently affect women, in particular, as they held the major responsibility for childcare and had the largest expectations of receiving this help. Subsequently, the lack of intergenerational support often increased uncertainty among women, who were

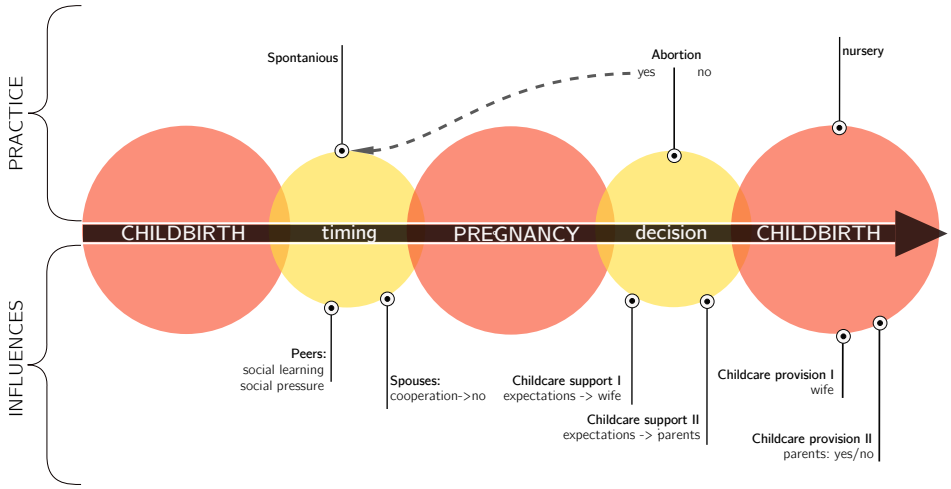


Figure 6.3: Family influences on transition to second birth in Kharkiv

already facing a double burden.

Under conditions of uncertainty stemming from both structural and family environments, women would start adopting a waiting strategy through a frequent abortion practice. They would also learn from each other about the benefits of this strategy. For many women in Kharkiv, the waiting strategy was practiced until reaching the social deadline for parenthood, typically in the mid-thirties. At this time, the second birth would likely take place. As such, adopting the waiting strategy seems to have resulted in a more prolonged interval between first and second births, sometimes 10 to 15 years, which in other studies is defined as postponement in contrast to spacing (Agadjanian, 2005). However, those women who did not meet the deadline for parenthood because they were still feeling too insecure to proceed with another birth never had a second child.

6.3 Continuity and change of intrafamilial dependencies and their role in fertility decline

My analysis of family and social relationships across individual reproductive careers illuminated that in early reproductive events, family relationships shaped individual reproductive careers to comply with conventional patterns of reproductive behaviour. This was similar in both regions. In later reproductive events, however, family relationships in the two contexts resulted in dissimilar responses to the uncertain economic conditions that eventually impacted individual repro-

ductive strategies around these events. I suggest that the similarities in conventional reproductive practices in the early life course and the dissimilarities in later reproductive decisions derived from patterns of intrafamilial power dynamics and social interdependencies. Specifically, the differences in intrafamilial power dynamics and social interdependencies in the two localities were characterised by the predominant importance of conjugal relationships in western Ukraine versus intergenerational relationships in eastern Ukraine, which conclusively could be defined as horizontal and vertical intrafamilial dependencies.

Horizontal intrafamilial dependency was observed to be more prevalent among the Lviv informants and occurred when spouses were the main unit of decision-making. In this context, economic uncertainties seemed to occur between and primarily affect a husband and wife. At the same time in the context of Lviv, spouses still depended on their parents in the early stage of a life course for social, material and emotional support, while the older they got, the more independent they became socially and materially. This close connection between generations during the early life course seems to have contributed to the maintenance of close intergenerational, sibling and kinship ties over the entire life course. Consequently, because the Lviv informants continued to emotionally depend on their family, they had less need to include non-family ties into their close personal network.

In contrast, *vertical intrafamilial dependency* was more predominant among the Kharkiv informants and primarily occurred between parents and children. In this respect, intergenerational ties were of primary importance and parents were equally, or sometimes even to a greater extent involved in their children's livelihood decisions than the parents of the Lviv informants. Subsequently, economic uncertainties would chiefly affect intergenerational relationships. In Kharkiv, economic uncertainty was indirectly associated with a lack of support between generations in later life. This lack of support was partially replaced by creating stronger ties with distant kin or even non-kin members, such as peers, colleagues, and friends.[2] In this respect, cooperative relationships and closer ties were also

[2]In the ethnographic literature on marriage celebrations and bridesmaid choice, I observed some relevant examples of such differences in close ties and relatedness with peers in the Kharkiv and with siblings in the Lviv regions. According to general Ukrainian tradition, during wedding celebrations in the 18th and 19th centuries, a bride had a certain number of bridesmaids, who were usually unmarried females of approximately the same age; they helped the bride before and during the wedding celebration and were referred to as her sacral sisters (Oxrymovych, 1892). In the Kharkiv region, all unmarried females present at the wedding were referred to either as sisters or as bridesmaids (Kalynovskyj, 1772). In the Lviv region, however, a bride had no more than two bridesmaids, who were referred to as 'the first bridesmaid' and 'the second bridesmaid', respectively, and these were often her unmarried sisters or cousins. All other unmarried females present at the wedding were referred to as 'girls' and they did not have any sacral connection to the bride (Oxrymovych, 1892). In a previous study on the Soviet period, these types of women's network configurations were described as peer-oriented in Kharkiv and family-oriented in Lviv (Hilevych and Rotering, 2013), which falls in line with the vertical and horizontal dependency distinction.

more likely to occur outside these groups.

The questions is now whether and if so how the abovementioned power dynamics and social interdependencies can help to understand fertility decline in Soviet Ukraine when they are placed in a historical perspective of local family systems? I shall review this question in the light of socio-economic conditions existing shortly before and during the post-war fertility decline.

As was observed in this study, economic uncertainty constantly surrounded individual reproductive careers from the 1950s to the1970s. However, the informants felt more secure when entering marriage and first parenthood than they did when proceeding to the second or third births. The reason for this seems to be that parental social control of their children's pre-marital sexuality formed certain expectations about receiving parental support during early life, such as material support and post-marital residence. Eventually, the social control exerted by parents and a feeling of security from the children's side, which I characterised as paternalistic intergenerational relationships, motivated young couples to submit to the dominant norm of early and universal marriage and first parenthood. I use the term dominant because here I clearly observe the continuity not only in the demographic pattern but also in the character of intergenerational relationships as practiced in the pre-transitional and later in the Soviet context.

The mixed nuclear-stem family system in Lviv and the joint family systems in Kharkiv also promoted paternalistic intergenerational relationships, as ethnographic studies suggest (Kis, 2012; Mayerchyk, 2011; Smolyar, 1998). The primary feature here was the dependency of the younger generation on their parents in the transition to marriage, as this is when the parental property could officially be passed to the next generation (Behey, 2003; Hrymych, 2013). In the context of inheritance, non-married individuals in both family systems were discriminated against as these individuals usually received a smaller share of their parents' inheritance than their married siblings or no inheritance at all.

Similar paternalistic and pronatalist premises were later adopted and reproduced by the Soviet state (Goldman, 1993; Kligman, 1998; Mezei, 1997), especially after the 1950s. At this time the state started to grant housing and job possibilities primarily to married couples with children, while those who did not have children often did not receive the aforementioned privileges and even had to pay a tax for childlessness. Moreover, women who gave birth but did so out of wedlock were socially stigmatised (Lapidus, 1978). Under these circumstances, the Soviet state partly recreated the need for parents to secure their children's livelihoods at least at the early stages of life. The continuity in intergenerational paternalistic relationships at early life also explains the earlier interpretations of the prevalence of early marriage and parenthood in this part of Europe (Gabriel, 2005; Perelli-

Harris, 2008a; Rotkirch and Kesseli, 2010). These interpretations suggest that when grandparents are still working and relatively young, they can provide some essential support to their children, which eventually facilitates early entrance into parenthood in many Eastern European countries even today.

An important question is why these intergenerational paternalistic relationships did not expand to the transition to second and later births? Answering this question is crucial to understand the specific trajectories of fertility decline in the two regions and the patterns that are associated with these, such as spacing, postponement, and stopping of birth, all of which started to appear when, for the first time, fertility declined to below-replacement level in the 1960s.

An important contextual factor here is that although the Soviet state promoted paternalistic values, the modernisation processes did not allow families to perform social exchange between kin over the entire life course in the way that it used to do in the pre-Soviet past, especially in the urban areas. Moreover, housing design began to focus on nuclear families (the so-called *khrushchyovkas*), and frequent migration and residence far from kin, among other factors, motivated families to develop new adaptation practices to secure their livelihoods. These adaptation practices combined with the attempts to at least partially maintain some conventions of social exchange between kin certainly shaped family ties and the influences they provided.

Every informant participating in this study acknowledged that for him/her the transition to second birth was characterised by a high degree of material uncertainty, such as difficulties to make ends meet and to cope with a double-burden of working and raising children, especially for women. These problems were discussed with respect to the timing and decision on having a second and third child. Here I started to observe attempts for different reproductive strategies between the informants in the two localities.

In Lviv, economic uncertainties seem to have partially stimulated spouses to practice complementary gender relationships over the life course. However, these spousal dynamics were already practiced before the Soviet regime was established.[3] The ethnographic literature indicates that in the pre-transitional context in western Ukraine, where Lviv is situated, couples typically became independent from their parents immediately after marriage and siblings were often equal with regard to inheritance share (Behey, 2003; Kis, 2012), which was a distinct feature of the nuclear-stem family system (Kaser, 1996, 2002, 2006). Moreover, while married children sometimes continued to reside with their parents and siblings for some time after marriage, they often had their own piece of land from

[3]Officially, western Ukraine became part of the Soviet Union in 1939. However, only after the Second World War did the Soviet-type modernisation start in the region.

which the new family would sustain itself.[4] This tradition obviously stimulated more negotiations between spouses, as the major decision-making unit, as well as between siblings. In short, the role of parents in their children's livelihoods in western Ukraine declined over the life course, and only the older married sons who stayed with their parents would share livelihood decision-making with them. As such, in most of the families under this type of family system, all the costs, including those related to children, were primarily shared between the spouses.

In the post-world war period, the practice of complementary gender relationships and the changes in this habit over time are also visible in the 1950s and the 1960s through the low percentage of female labour force participation at the onset of the Soviet industrialisation: 12.9% in 1950 (Hyk, 1987, p.193). However, this percentage more than tripled by 1960, reaching 42.3%. During the same decade, changes in the Soviet policy also started to occur and these were associated with the liberalisation of the regime that now started to promote the complementary gender relationship model. This mainly took place through encouraging women to occupy positions in education, health care and culture, where the working week was shorter (33-39 hours) (Vinokurova, 2007). This shorter working week also allowed women de facto to work part-time when needed (Lapidus, 1978).

Families in Soviet Lviv continued to practice the traditional couple-centred family relationships. However, this was not possible throughout the entire life course because women were sometimes obligated or pressured or they simply needed to return to the labour market. For this reason, alongside early entrance into parenthood, families in Lviv also started to adopt relatively short spacing intervals between the first and second child, and sometimes also between second and third births. In practice, short spacing meant that women first stayed at home with their children and later resumed working either part-time or at more flexible jobs to continue taking care of the children. Even when a husband or nanny assisted with childcare, a wife was still responsible for coordinating everything and therefore her presence in the household was essential. Subsequently, because the Soviet policy also partially discouraged traditional gender roles and because some women felt pressured to return to the labour market, many women stopped having children after the second or third child. This stopping moment also often

[4]It should be mentioned that that by the end of the 19th century, severe land fragmentation started in western Ukraine, including the Lviv region, and put many families into a crisis situation (Behey, 2003; Franko, 1888). To overcome this crisis, which could eventually lead to food shortages, the Austro-Hungarian government tried to impose an impartible single-heir inheritance system. However, this system was not socially accepted and peasants continued to equally split their lands between all the heirs (Franko, 1888). This economic constraint related to the lack of land could also have been one of the preconditions for the changes in the perceived costs of children, which under this inheritance rule subsequently could have facilitated the beginning of fertility decline in the region, which also started in the end of the 19th century (see Figure 1.4). This issue however needs more investigation.

coincided with the normative age deadline for parenthood, which also motivated some not to have a third child.

Overall, the practice of couple-centred and traditional male-breadwinning gender relationships seems to have helped prevent the fertility rate in Lviv from falling to below-replacement level from the 1950s to the1970s and to remain relatively stable and the highest in Ukraine. At the same time, the adaptation of this type of family relationship to Soviet modernisation, particularly female inclusion in the labour market, facilitated the establishment of a two-child family norm in the region. This norm is still accepted and practiced there today (Perelli-Harris, 2005).

In Kharkiv, the modernisation changes seem to have had a different impact on family relationships and hence on reproductive strategising in the post-war period. So what family ties were primarily challenged and how? Since the pre-transitional time, the major decision-making unit in the family was not only a couple but also the parents, who still headed the household even after their sons had gotten married and had brought their wives to the parental house. The inclusion of parents in the decision-making had to do with the succession rule that inheritance had to be divided between typically the male children at the father's death (Hrymych, 2013; Smolyar, 1998). This is typically seen as one of the primary characteristics of the joint family system in Eastern Europe (Czap, 1982; Kaser, 2002) including the eastern Ukrainian regions where Kharkiv is located. However, while all male children had the right to inherit, the father decided how to divide his inheritance. As such, this inheritance rule contributed to a prolonged dependency of married sons on their father who wanted to improve their inheritance by continuing to rely on their fathers' authority. However, this rule could also create conflicts between the siblings after their father's death, as the inheritance was not always equally divided (Hrymych, 2013; Smolyar, 1998).[5] Additionally, daughters-in-law were also dependent on their mothers-in-law in many household decisions, at least up until they acquired the same authority with age. Overall, and as mentioned earlier, the authority of the older generation did not mean only dependency and submissiveness but also protection (Kis, 2012). In short, while parents were still alive, they assisted their children in managing

[5]In the 19th century, in some families sons tried to separate from their fathers earlier than the expected norm, which scholars typically associate with the nuclearisation of complex families. However, the inheritance rule remained the same. When a married son wanted to separate earlier, provided that he had supported his father before, his father would give him his share of the inheritance based on the number of successors in the family. This split, however, implied that after the father's death, the inheritance would be re-divided between all the children, including those who were still not married and who remained under the protection of a married sibling. The re-division of inheritance typically caused many conflicts between siblings who now had the opportunity to claim a bigger share than they had first received from their father (Hrymych, 2013; Smolyar, 1998). Women could also inherit the so-called *'materyzna'*; however, this was only passed through the maternal line.

their everyday lives, but after their death they continued to help by having equally divided their inheritance among all their married male children.

Intergenerational ties also remained strong in both rural and urban areas after the communist rule was established in the Kharkiv region in 1919. In rural areas, intergenerational ties were reinforced through work and living on the collective farms that the new regime had introduced. In urban areas, both kin and non-kin ties were fortified by the communal housing that had also been established by the communists. Moreover, in the country, although collective farming abolished private property, the new regime still allowed traditional inheritance rules since parental housing and limited land property could still be inherited (Constitution, 1936, 1977). In both areas, thus, the intergenerational and non-kin patterns of co-residence still allowed individuals to secure their livelihoods by a mutual exchange of social support and, in some cases, material resources.[6]

It should be mentioned that the Soviet regime already began to challenge the traditional spousal relationship model in the 1920s, when compulsory female participation in the labor force was introduced, and divorce and abortion became legal. These moves, however, did not seem to have had much impact on fertility rates in the Kharkiv region, compared to Lviv, for example, as the crude birth rate remained high and stable during the inter-war period (Figure 1.4). In the city of Kharkiv, the crude birth rate was 26.2 in 1926, and it remained stable until the post-war period (Figure 5.1). The real decline in fertility in the Kharkiv region took place after the Second World War, when fertility declined to 13.3 in 1950 and continued to decline thereafter (Figure 5.1). Additionally, the rural-urban differences in birth rates in Kharkiv after the 1950s were significant, compared to Lviv, where they were almost the same.

Subsequently, the rapid decline of fertility in Kharkiv coincided with a challenge to both spousal and intergenerational and neighbourhood ties by several factors including the Soviet nuclear-family housing policies, which were linked to the rapid influx of migrants in the cities after the Second World War (Rachkov, 2011). That said, the new social housing, i.e., *khrushchyovkas*, neither allowed families to practice co-residence with kin over the entire life course nor did it allow kinship ties to be replaced by relations with neighbours. As such, the economic developments taking place after the 1950s seem to have strongly constrained the availability of parental protectiveness in the later life course. The grandparents – themselves still involved in the labour market, yet residing only with one of the married children – could not provide simultaneous childcare to all of their grand-

[6]Some authors also suggest that because the values surrounding communal farming and other Soviet regulations were already anchored in the joint family system, the new Soviet rule was better accepted in the areas where these types of families prevailed, such as Russia, but also eastern Ukraine (Heady, 2003; Todd, 1988).

children. Therefore, those married children residing with parents or in-laws would receive primary support with childcare, while those residing separately would receive either less or no support at all, which also seems to have caused inequalities between siblings.

Additionally, women in the Kharkiv families not only provided the majority of the childcare but also contributed the same amount as men to the household income. Therefore, women tended to take the maximum paid maternity leave (112 days), after which the grandmothers would step in with childcare arrangements, if they could. However, when a woman knew that her mother(in-law) would not be able to help, she would start to employ a waiting strategy that resulted in postponement of the transition to second birth and sometimes in having no second child at all. The appearance of the early stoppers seems to have contributed to the emerging one-child family norm that undoubtedly facilitated the rapid decline of fertility in the Kharkiv region after the 1950s. This strategy became even more widespread during the lowest-low fertility decline in the 1990s and early 2000s (Perelli-Harris, 2005; Sobotka, 2004b,a).

$\sim\sim\sim$

A similar link was also observed between conjugal-based and generations-based ties and their distinct impact on fertility behaviour in some other recent studies. For example, the results of the European Kinship and Social Security (KASS) study also suggest that close ties within versus outside family divides Northern and Western Europe, on the one hand, from Southern and Eastern Europe, on the other hand (Heady and Kohli, 2010). These findings seems to serve as a clarification and an empirical prove of the earlier argument by Reher (1998) about the predominance of weak family ties in the North-West of Europe and strong family ties in Southern and Eastern Europe.

Importantly, KASS findings showed that it is not only the strength of kin ties but also the strength of non-kin ties that matters in our everyday lives. Applying and developing further this idea, Heady (2016) recently suggested that in communities where conjugal autonomy is important, people are more likely to move away from their families of origin and make the links to friends and social class more important than kinships ties. In his study of the historical fertility decline in Britain, Szreter (1996, 2015) makes a similar observation. Subsequently, what Heady and Szreter suggest is that these loose connections to kinship likely facilitated the faster onset of fertility decline in the past but more stable fertility rates in the context of emerging uncertainties today. By contrast, when the connection to the kin and community in general is strong, the situation will be more complex as the response to the social change would not only derive from

the conjugal relationships, but it would also depend on the community and kin (Heady, 2016). In this respect, when a rapid social change from an agricultural to an industrial economy occurs, it leads to a decline in community collaboration and subsequently to a collapse in psychological support within the community and/or between kin members.

In my findings, I observed some similar processes happening in Ukraine at the ones of the transition from family-based agriculture to industrial and planned economy, which coincided with the fertility decline. Unlike Reher's, Kass's and Heady's study, however, my findings show that the distinction between the conjugal-based and kin-based ties is not as black and white as they may appear. Both conjugal-based and kin-based ties could characterise the societies where family relationships are of primary welfare-provision. In the context of Ukraine, the effects of the so-called strong family ties, which I observed in both localities, on reproductive strategies depended not only on the organisation of the kinships ties and their underlying values, but also on the life course stage that they surrounded. Additionally, the focus on interdependencies, rather than on ties or networks as neutral characteristics of the web of relationships, allows more sensitivity to different levels and degrees of intrafamilial inequalities over the life course.

To conclude, my findings continue the long-lasting debate on that some general societal processes, such as fertility declines across Europe, cannot be explained without considering the similarities underlying them as has been done in earlier theories and projects, such as the First and Second Demographic Transitions Theory (Davis, 1945; Lesthaeghe, 2010; Notestein, 1945; Van de Kaa, 1987), the Princeton Fertility project (Coale et al., 1979; Coale and Watkins, 1986), the 'Hajnal/Laslett model' (Hajnal, 1982; Laslett, 1988), Reher (1998) and the KASS project (Heady and Kohli, 2010; Heady and Schweitzer, 2010). Broadly speaking, it could be argued that these studies seem to derive their scholarly premises from the general assumption that 'while the actual structure changes, the general structural form may remain relatively constant over a longer or shorter period of time', which Radcliffe-Brown (1940, p. 40), suggested more than 75 years ago. Specifically, he suggested that by searching for underling structures, anthropology and presumably other social sciences could strive to be more systematic. Radcliffe-Brown was and is highly criticised for this. However, this argument of keeping in mind the importance of some main underlying principles and logic that keep general structure together, which Szreter (1996, 2011, 2015) suggests to define as 'communicating communities', is still valid today. That said, as scholars we need to apply and probe more critical and case-specific methodologies to identify what is actually important for the formation of a general social structure in a given context, whether it is social class, religion, ethnicity, kinship or yet something

else. This identification could primarily be done by studying the nature of social relationships – an approach that this study has tried to develop and undertake.

6.4 Reflections on the theoretical-methodological approach and the main empirical findings

This dissertation illustrates how to bring together the continuity and path-dependency of local family systems and the associated values in the past, on the one hand, and family influences on reproductive behaviour in more recent contexts, i.e. after changes in traditional household and inheritance patterns started to occur, on the other hand. In this respect, I treated both the individual social network and individual agency as two main agents of reproductive behaviour change. By doing so, I saw how individuals interpret and transformed cultural symbols though social interactions, practices, and conversations regarding reproductive events (Bernardi and Hutter, 2007; Kertzer, 2005) within a certain social structure that built a framework of opportunities for the individual and his/her network actions to take place.

In addition to this major theoretical contribution, this dissertation also illustrated the theoretical benefits of studying individual reproductive behaviour as a process (Gillis, 1992; Hobcraft, 2007; Johnson-Hanks, 2002; Townsend, 1997). This anthropological-demographic perspective on reproduction allowed me to study not only how vital events occur throughout individual life courses and the social influences around these, but also what the particular sub-transitions could be for a certain local context. For example, I identified for Ukraine the differences between timing and decision of parenthood, between an abortion as a back-up method and as proper means of contraception, and finally, between spacing and postponement of the second birth. As my analysis illustrated, the explanations for the changes in reproductive behaviour during fertility decline should be sought in these local level practices of reproductive behaviour that emerge as an interpretation or response to the rapid socio-economic changes.

This dissertation also showed the applicability of retrospectively studying social influences on individual reproductive careers. Overall, the retrospective approach to study reproductive behaviour has several downsides. Probably the largest one is that individuals tell their past experiences from the perspective of today. To cope with this methodological issue, I distinguished individual life stories from life histories by using the approach suggested by Rosenthal (1993, 2006). At the same time, I also observed that informants' present perspective on their behaviour and social relationships in the past served as an additional approach to reveal the continuity in family values.

The main benefit of a retrospective approach is, however, that it allows seeing a complex picture of how certain developments take place over the entire life course. In the context of this study, a retrospective perspective provides a better understanding of why certain actors of our individual personal networks can be more influential at one life course stage and less at another. This complex view on social influences also allowed me to disentangle an additional mechanism of social influences, namely social control.

6.5 Limitations and avenues for further research

The main findings of this dissertation suggested that in western and eastern Ukraine family relationships that were organised based on horizontal or vertical intrafamilial dependency were the primary locus of exchange, or 'communicating community' as Szreter (1996, 2011, 2015) would call it. Through these intrafamilial dynamics social changes, such as modernisation, urbanisation, and industrialisation and related material, economic, and social uncertainties, seemed to affect individual reproductive decisions and hence the course of fertility decline in the two regions at the end of the First Demographic Transition. Although I provided some hints on possible implications of these horizontal and vertical dependencies in family relationships at the onset of the fertility decline, more research should be done to understand how these regional dependencies within family relationships affected the beginning of the Demographic Transition in the two regions. Similarly, these intrafamily dependencies should be further examined to help us understand and to predict fertility behaviour and emerging health inequalities today as well to frame relevant family policies for the future. Additionally, these intrafamilial interdependencies could be a novel lens to grasp and to explain the persisting regional differences in elderly health and in longevity, especially between genders.

Another line of research that the findings of this dissertation brought to light is the study of paternalistic culture in Ukraine. This topic has previously been addressed from a political economy perspective and from the question of how the Soviet state contributed to forming this culture (Susak, 2007b,a). My study showed that continuity of paternalistic culture in Ukraine has deep historical roots and that family relationships are organised based on the paternalistic intergenerational values. While my study showed the connection between paternalistic intergenerational values and early entrance into marriage and parenthood, future research should address the implications of these values for the provision of elderly care. It could be that in the later life course, the paternalistic and protective behaviour would now derive from children towards their parents. In this respect,

protectiveness, which in contrast to solidarity does not necessarily imply emotional bonds, could also be one explanation for older adult loneliness common in Eastern Europe (Gierveld et al., 2012).

In addition to the areas of research that stem directly from my findings, there are also several aspects that this study could not address but that might be interesting to discuss in future research. One of these is the deeper investigation of the birth control culture in the Soviet Union and how it was connected to spousal and intergenerational relationships. While I here addressed more conventional birth control methods, I did not address abstinence as a means to regulate fertility, especially in later life. For example, the Soviet state-owned magazine *Zdorovie* (The Health) started to promote abstinence as a means of birth control in the mid-1960s (see *Zdorovie*, Issue 2, 1966). But to what extent abstinence was used in practice and what the roles of family and spousal relationships were in this the matter are questions yet to be answered.

Another methodological restriction of this study was that it did not provide a comparative view on differences and similarities between various ethnic and religious groups, or between the informants originating from rural and urban areas. Since throughout my analysis these categories were less pronounced than regional and gender differences and incorporating these lenses would require enlarging the sample as well as combining qualitative data with quantitative data analysis, I did not attempt to do it in this study. However, this certainly opens up new possibilities to identify alternative communication communities that mattered in fertility decline and reproductive health in Ukraine.

Another part of the population that I did not entirely cover in this study were single and/or childless. Although I interviewed several of them in both localities, I did not systematically compare them with those who had children and what role family relationships played in their lives. Throughout the analysis, however, I particularly addressed the issue of stigma attached to childlessness in Ukraine. In this respect, Ukraine constitutes a unique setting to also study the role of kin in assisted reproduction because, similar to what Inhorn and Birenbaum-Carmeli (2008) suggest, the issue of how infertility is handled is particularly relevant in societies where it is highly stigmatised and the role of the family can be very crucial here as well.

6.6 Societal relevance and policy implications of the study

> *"Ukraine has one of the most generous, but least effective family policies in the world."*
>
> Perelli-Harris 2008a, p. 1167

The findings of this study emphasised that ever since the first modern state regulations of family and reproductive life were enacted during the Soviet time in Ukraine, the necessity for regional, intergenerational and gender sensitivity of these policies has been essential. This PhD dissertation illustrated that the same Soviet family policy regulations, including the major ones of abortion legalisation, maternity leave, and state childcare arrangements, were differently practiced depending on the region, but not exclusively, and local family values played a large role in this process.

As this study observed the continuity and path-dependency in values underlying local family relationships, studies analysing family policies in Soviet and present-day Ukraine also indicate that clear path-dependency took place in this realm. Namely, the continuity on the policy level was realised through a constant adaptation of pronatalist programs that aimed to tackle the consequence of the problem, i.e., to boost fertility rather than to address the factors underlying this fertility change (see, for example, Frejka and Gietel-Basten 2016; Wesolowski 2015a.

During the Soviet time, these factors included state investments in maternity leave for mothers and in new kindergartens and nursery houses. In present day Ukraine, these measures mainly amount to increasing the birth allowance (Frejka and Gietel-Basten, 2016). At the same time, and as the above quote by Perelli-Harris (2008a) suggests, although these measures have often been generous, they were also the least effective. So, what could be done differently in the policy approach to family, fertility and reproductive health in Ukraine today based on what we have learned about the continuity of local patterns of family relationships and their effects on reproductive behaviour?

First of all, it should be recognised that changes in reproductive practices that took place in the course of fertility decline were accompanied by changes in family relationships. Soviet-type industrialisation and modernisation caused changes in how families arranged and secured their livelihoods. As such, nuclearisation of households in the course of modernisation and fertility decline did not imply the weakening of family ties. However, the lack of investment in helping to maintain these ties was visible, which certainly had its direct impact on reproductive behaviour. In this respect, the family policies in Ukraine must take into account

not just the direct practical needs of the individuals and the state itself, 'but also and maybe even more importantly the patterns of relationships underlying them' (Kohli and Heady 2010, p.407).

Subsequently, this implies that policy makers should consider not only the object that certain policies address, but also the impact it has on relationships between close kin. Thus, family and reproductive policies have to be articulated with the regional and national cultures of kinship to be effective (Kohli and Heady, 2010, p. 408). At the same time, these policies should be sensitive to how kinship patterns react to socio-economic change, and they should see kinship as an actor rather than only as a social environment.

Finally, the public policy in Ukraine should be designed through a relativist perspective to target and assist not only those in need of help but also those who support them in the Ukrainian context, mostly grandparents. In this respect, policy would make a contribution to provide better social security for society, especially in the later life course, which is particularly important in the context of the current political crisis in Ukraine, as well as for the long-run development connected to an ageing society.

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Appendices

A Transcribing guidelines

When first mentioned: full name (e.g. Inna Vasylivna)
Thereafter: initials (e.g. I.V.)
Pause: ...[sec] (three dots and number of seconds in brackets)
Sentence not finished: ...(three dots)
When correcting him or herself: / (slash)
When being interrupted by another person: // (double slash and start new paragraph)
When new person joins the interview:mark as Person 1, 2,3.
When word/phrase is not clear: [**not clear, t ' '**] (in bold and in brackets indicate 'not clear' and the exact time of the saying)

B Interview guide

Introduction: *Hello! My name is [Yuliya] and I currently work on my dissertation in the fields of ethnography and history. I study parenthood experiences and family relationships of people born before the war and who leaved in Lviv/Kharkiv in the 1950-1970s, meaning their adult lives started in either of these cities, but the place of birth doesn't matter for me. As we spoke about it previously, your life corresponds to these criteria, so we agreed to have this conversation today. I should mention that your name and other people's names you mention would be changed. Our conversation is anonymous. I however will record it for analysis purposes. Let's start.*'

First narrative question: *'Could you please tell me briefly in which family you were born? Who were your parents, in terms of occupation and educational backgrounds? When they were born and got married? With whom did you live*

during your childhood? You may also tell me briefly what happened to your family during WW II and other important things that happened with you before you got married/started your job/university/left parental home.'

Second narrative question: *'Now I would like to hear the story of your marital life.'*
(In the informant doesn't know from where to start, I add the follow-up questions)
'When did you get married? How many children do you have?'
OR
'Back to that time, tell me about the birth of your first child'

Reproductive careers (RC) events*

*[The order of the events should be set by the informant him/herself. An interviewer however should remember what issues should be discussed in the flow of the interview and they are stated below]
Questions to be asked discussed around each RC event (also in LHC):
Who were close to you during this time?
-Relationships within the household
-Relationships with the spouse
-Relationships with the in-laws
-Relationships with the kin of origin
-Relationships with any other kin members
-Relationships with non-kin (colleagues/friends/neighbours)
Attitudes towards childbearing
-The difference to have one, two, three children
Life priorities at this stage
-Avoiding pregnancy (When? Why? How?)
Gossip or negative experiences related to marital life and childbearing/-rearing

RC events
Courtship and premarital relationships
-Dating
-Spousal choice influences (Who? Why? How?)
-Views on marriage and childbearing
-Attitudes to childless people
-Ideal spouse/ marital life
-The role of parents and other kin in marital life and infant/childcare
-What did informants liked about his parents family relationships? What infor-

mant wanted to keep in his/her own family?
Wedding
-When?
-Church and state registration; people present; witnesses
-Organisational responsibilities (Who? Where?)
Cohabitation
-Where? How long?
-Personal attitude/ general attitude
-If not experienced personally: other people examples
Marital life/relationships
-Division of roles
-Degree of closeness (a husband/wife is a friend/partner)
-Family and friends gatherings
First/Second/ pregnancy
-Help of husband (duties & responsibilities) / help from other kin/non kin
-Timing
-Miscarriage or abortion prior pregnancy
-Duties and responsibilities
-Expectations of help/support
First/Second/childbearing
-Where? Who were present/ visited?
-If in the hospital, what were the general rues of hospitalisation/visits
-Medical patronage
Infant's care
-Knowledge on infants' care
-Help and support
-Difficulties
Baptising
-When?
-Choosing Godparents
-Who initiated baptising?
Childcare
-Notions on childcare (ideal)
-Notions on a child independency
Planning of further children
-Contraception use
-Attitudes towards having children
-Health issues
-Avoiding pregnancy

Divorce
-Reasons
-Support/help/consultations

Intimate topics
If an informant did not address any of these topics him/herself, I would start probing them after I feel the connection with the informant is well established (I feel that s/he is open)
Pre-marital sex
-Fear of getting pregnant before marriage and avoiding it
-General attitudes and peers experiences
-Personal attitude and experiences
-Where?
Miscarriage'
-When?
-With who discussed/got help
Abortion
-Abortion practice within the informant's environment
-Informant's notions of how is was practiced in the Ukrainian society in genera
-Awareness of abortion policy and other available contraception
-Personal experience
Contraception use
-Available methods
-Practice within the informant's environment
-Views on contraception use (Why? When? Who?)

Expectations from family relationships at the present life stage:
-Expectations from children: help, support, frequency of communication, co-residence
-Informant's role as a parent in his/her children lives
-Relationships with children
-What informant's parents expected from him/her
(These are usually the final questions to conclude an interview)

C Life History Calendar

Life history calendar _example

Name: Maria Date and place: July 12, 2013

Education	«x»- time period						
Year	19___45____	19___55____	19_____	19_____	19_____	19_____	19_____
School (mark with «x»)	x						
Where	Kharkiv						
Other___university_____		x					
Where		Kharkiv					
Other_____							
Where							

Work	«x»- time period				
Year	19__56_____	19_____	19_____	19_____	19_____
Position	teacher				
Full time («x»)	x				

Part-time («x»)					

Marital life	M=married, A= living AWAY from spouse, D= Divorced, W= Widowed						
Year!!!	19__56_____	19____57___	19__99_____	19_____	19_____	19_____	19_____
Month!!!	Jan	Mar					
1_____Oleh_____	M	A	W				
2_____							
3_____							
4_____							
5_____							

Children	(A= Adopted), B= Born, S= finished school, W= started to work, X=moved from parents						
Year!!!	19___57____	19___67____	19___67____	19__86_____	19_____	19_____	19_____
Month	Feb	May	Sep	Oct			
1___Katia_____	B	S	W	X			
2_____							
3_____							
4_____							

Brother/sisters	B=born (A= adopted), X= left home, M=married, C1/2/3/…=1/2/3/… child born, D= divorced								
Year (month)	1937 (Jun)	1947	1947	1948	1952				
1____Olia___	B	X	X	C1	C2				
Year (month)									
2_____									
Year (month)									
3_____									
Year (month)									
4_____									
Year (month)									
5_____									
Year (month)									
6_____									
Year (month)									
7_____									
Year (month)									
_____									

Year	19_39_-19_41___	19__41_-19___47_	19__47_-19__56__	19_56__-19__66__	19__66_-19__76__	19_87__-19__86__	19_86__-19_96___	19_96__-2006___	2006-2016__	19___-19____
Household composition (co-residence)	Mother, father, parental grandparents, older sister	Mother, grandmother, older sister	Mother	Husband In-laws, daughter	Husband In-laws, daughter	Husband	Husband, Daughter, Granddaughter	Husband (99), Daughter, Granddaughter	Daughter (2008), Granddaughter	

Work of the spouse (year of birth__1935__)	«x»- time period				
Year	19___50____	19__55_____	19_____	19_____	19_____
Position	Factory worker	Electrician (factory)			
Full time («x»)	x	x			
Part-time («x»)					

Religious views:
At birth: atheist
At marriage: atheist
Present: Orthodox

Nationality (subjective): Russian
Citizenship: Ukrainian
Sex: female
Date of birth: 10.09.1939
Place of birth: Kharkiv

Political views:
In the past: communist (party)
Today: communist
Political activism:
In the past: party
Today: no

D Codes sample from Atlas.ti

Report: 84 quotation(s) for 26 codes

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Codes falling under the scope of the research question regarding the timing of first birth:

BC (prior 1): contraception/termination->no

BC (prior 1): yes

BC (prior 1)_AT: was not acceptable

CB (1): planned->yes

CB (1)_AT: before->security (flat and job)

CB (1)_AT: when studying->no children

CB (1)_DECISION: postpone->husband is the away

CB (1)_DECISION: postpone->own accom

CB (1)_DECISION: postpone->time for herself

CB (1)_DECISION: postpone->wife's edu

CB (1)_DECISION: postpone->wife's work

CB (1)_STILLBIRTH_after: to have child soon

CB (1)_WHEN: before 25

CB (1)_WHEN: could not get pregnant after M

CB (1)_WHEN: during edu

CB (1)_WHEN: follows marriage in 1 year

CB (1)_WHEN: follows marriage in 2 years

CB (1)_WHEN: follows marriage in 3 years

CB (1)_WHEN: follows marriage in less than 1 year

MARRIAGE_AT: material independence/edu before marriage

MARRIAGE_CO-RES: at parents'/kin

MARRIAGE_CO-RES: own accom

MARRIAGE_CO-RES: rent accom

PAR.MODEL: confirm other d-in-l->timing

PAR.MODEL: M and CB1 should go together

PREGNANCY_AT: if late (>25), can be hard to deliver

E Informants

Name	Sex	year of birth	spouse year of birth	1st marriage year	2nd marriage	1st birth	2nd birth	3rd birth	number of children	abortions	mis-carriages /died under one	social status	education	origin (r/u)
Natalka (wife of Anrij)	f	1945	1937	1965	–	1967	1970	–	2	–	–	civil servant	medical university	rural
Andrij (husband of Natalka)	m	1937	1945	1965	–	1967	1970	–	2	–	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Vasyl (husnad of Nadia)	m	1934	1938	1966	–	1966	1974	–	2	–	–	civil servant	technical university	rural
Nadia (wife of Vasyl)	f	1938	1934	1966	–	1966	1974	–	2	–	–	civil servant	pedagogical college	urban
Sofia	f	1935	1935	1957	1969	1961	–	–	1	–	–	civil servant	college	urban
Halyna	f	1943	1933	1965	–	1966	1977	–	2	–	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Agafya	f	1936	1935	1958	1967	1960	–	–	1	–	–	civil servant	university	urban
Lydia	f	1938	1926	1964	–	1965	–	–	1	–	–	scientific elite	technical university	urban
Daryna	f	1939	1944	1964	–	1965	1972	–	2	1967, 1969	–	scientific elite	university	rural
Fedir	m	1934	1937	1957	–	1958	1964	1970	3	1958,1965, 1968	–	scientific elite	university	rural
Olena	f	1925	1918	1949	–	1952	1955	–	2	1951,1954, 1957	–	civil servant	medical uni	urban
Petro (husband of Maria)	m	1933	1936	1961	–	1962	1963	1968	2	1966	1963	working class	7 grades	rural
Maria (wife of Petro)	f	1936	1933	1961	–	1962	1963	1968	2	1966	1963	working class	college	rural
Oksana	f	1932	1932	1957	–	1958	1963	–	2	1961, 1966	–	working class	10 grades	rural
Bohdana	f	1933	1929	1954	–	1955	1956	1960	2	–	1955	civil servant	pedagogical school	rural
Lubov	f	1932	1928	1954	–	1955	–	–	1	–	–	civil servant	university	rural
Khrystyna	f	1931	1928	1966	–	1967	1968	–	2	–	–	working class	10 grades	rural
Varvara	f	1935	1932	1957	–	1958	1963	–	2	1967, 1971	–	working class	evening school	rural
Markian	m	1929	1932	1952	–	1954	1963	–	2	1955, 1957	–	working class	school (10 grades)	urban
Zoryana	f	1935	1935	1961	–	–	–	–	0	–	–	civil servant	university	rural

Yuliya	f	1929	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	–	–	civil servant	technical college / university	rural
Kateryna (wife of Mykola)	f	1942	1938	1966	–	1967	1967	–	1	–	1967	working class	technical college	urban
Mykola (husbandof Kateryna)	m	1938	1942	1966	–	1967	1967	–	1	–	1967	working class	art college	urban
Zoya (wife of Svyatoslav)	f	1938	1941	1964	–	1966	1973	–	2	1967, 1968, 1969	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Svyatoslav (husband of Zoya)	m	1941	1938	1964	–	1966	1973	–	2	–	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Daria	f	1932	1919	1950	–	1951	1954	1957	3	–	–	working class	6 grades	rural
Martha	f	1933	1928	1954	–	1957	1965	–	2	–	–	working class	10 grades	rural
Lidia	f	1929	1930	1958	–	1960	–	–	1	–	–	civil servant	medical university	rural
Anna	f	1930	1927	1952	–	1955	1960	–	2	1956,1957, 1961, 1963,1964	1953	working class	college	rural
Hruhoruy	m	1931	1930	1953	–	1955	1956	1959	3	–	–	civil servant	technical university	rural
Nina	f	1930	1928	1952	–	1953	1962	–	2	1965	–	working class	10 grades	urban
Oleh (husband of Vasylyna)	m	1929	1928	1954	–	1957	1962	–	2	–	–	civil servant	university	rural
Vasylyna(wife of Volodumur)	f	1928	1929	1954	–	1957	1962	–	2	–	–	civil servant	university	rural

Table 2: Lviv informants

Name	Sex	year of birth	spouse year of birth	1st marriage year	2nd marriage	1st birth	2nd birth	3rd birth	number of children	abortions	mis-carriages /died under one	social status	education	origin (r/u)
Naida	f	1936	1936	1959	–	1960	1966	–	2	1961, 1962, 1964, 1970	–	working class	school	rural
Natalija	f	1933	1928	1960	–	1961	1965	–	2	–	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Zoya	f	1931	1931	1954	–	1955	1961	–	2	1955, 1963	–	civil servant	university	rural
Svetlana	f	1941	1939	1965	–	1967	–	–	1	–	1966	civil servant	technical university	urban
Maria	f	1929	1928	1952	–	1955	1962	–	2	–	1952	working class	school	rural
Zinaida	f	1939	1939, 1943	1961	1970, 2001	1963	–	–	1	1975	–	working class	technical college	urban
Aglaia	f	1931	1914, 1927	1951	1974	1952	1954	–	2	around 18	–	working class	school	rural
Viktoija	f	1931	1924	1949	–	1950	1956	1962	3	around 15	–	civil servant	pedagogical university	urban
Toma	f	1931	1931	1965	–	1966	–	–	1	–	–	scientific elite	university	urban
Larisa	f	1939	1937	1966	–	1967	–	–	2 (twins)	–	–	scientific elite	university	urban
Viktor	m	1938	1939	1960	–	1965	1970	–	2	1969	1960	scientific elite	university	urban
Larisa (wife of Tolik)	f	1948	1938	1969	–	1969	1970	–	1	around 15	1969	working class	school	urban
Tolik (husband of Larisa)	m	1938	1948	1969	–	1969	1970	–	1	around 15	1969	working class	school	rural
Evgenija	f	1930	1933	1956	–	1957	1959	–	2	1961	–	civil servant	university	urban
Maksim	m	1935	1935	1958	–	1959	1962	–	2	–		civil servant	university	urban
Lida	f	1932	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	–	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Maria	f	1938	1929	1961	–	1962	–	–	1	1967, 1972	–	working class	technical college	urban
Rita	f	1926	1924	1945	–	1948	1959	–	2		–	civil servant	medical university	urban
Raisa (wife of Vasilij)	f	1934	1939	1959	–	1961	–	–	1	1964, 1967	–	working class	college	rural
Vasilij (husband of Raja)	m	1939	1934	1959	–	1961	–	–	1	1964, 1967	–	working class	technical college	urban

Varvara (wife of Vladimir)	f	1938	1937	1963	–	1964	1979	–	2	1959, 1961	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Vladimir (husband of Varvara)	m	1937	1938	1963	–	1964	1979	–	2	1959, 1961	–	scientific elite	technical university	urban
Yeva (wife of Ivan)	f	1935	1933	1958	–	1961	–	–	1	–		civil servant	technical university	urban
Ivan (husband of Yeva)	m	1933	1935	1958	–	1961	–	–	1	–		scientific elite	technical university	urban
Anya	f	1930	1930	1957	–	1959	1963	1964	3	1967	–	working class	school	rural
Galina	f	1934	1933	1956	–	1957	1969	–	2	around 4	–	working class	technical college	rural
Vera	f	1934	1930	1960	–	1962	–	–	1	–	–	scientific elite	technical university	urban
Maksim	m	1935	1936, 1947	1965	1973	1976	–	–	1	around 5	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Yelena	f	1938	1938	–	–	–	–	–	0	–	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Stalina	f	1941	1941	1961	–	1962	1973	–	2	–	–	working class	technical university	rural
Masha	f	1941	1941	1962	–	1962	1971	–	2	1967	–	working class	technical college	rural
Adelaida	f	1939	1937	1962	–	1965	1970	–	2	–	–	civil servant	technical university	urban
Andrei	m	1934	1938	1963	–	1965	–	–	1	–	–	scientific elite	technical university	urban

Table 3: Kharkiv informants

Word of thanks

Working on this dissertation was not only an exciting and challenging academic journey in conducting fieldwork, writing papers and presenting them at conferences, but it was also a journey in 'time and space' that became a life-learning event. Started as 'The Power of the Family' project on Europe a ground-breaking research aiming to challenge the dominate academic debates on reproductive life courses and social relationships, this project and my 5-year involvement in it have, in fact, tremendously shaped my own life course and social relationships.

For making this journey a unique life experience, I first of all wish to thank my academic advisors, Hilde Bras and Theo Engelen. Hilde, your enthusiasm and curiosity about my research, your patience with correcting my language, your attention to my fieldwork and your visit to Lviv, as well as your overall support during the project helped me to put this scientific puzzle into its current shape. Theo, from the moment I met you during the intake interview for this project, you have always been the one who has helped me to maintain confidence about my research. Our discussions stimulated me to push the initial boundaries of this research onto a higher level that eventually led to the birth of new research ideas. I also wish to thank Jan Kok: although you were not my official advisor, you helped me to situate many of my research ideas into relevant contexts, as well as to boost my passion for academic research both within my PhD project and beyond. Another person who also became my academic mentor and an instant friend during this journey is Chizu Sato: you have helped me to grow both as a researcher and as a person.

My gratitude also goes to my closest colleagues, paranymphs and 'siblings' in the project, Bastian and Paul: together we migrated from one scientific family to the other and I am sincerely happy that we've managed to maintain our 'strong ties' over the years. I hope we will keep doing so as we 'get older'. I also want to thank our closest cousin in the project, Nynke: you have been one of the most supportive and attentive people I have met during this academic journey. Finally, I wish to thank all my 'cousins', 'uncles' and 'aunts' in the project whom I got to know during my time at Radboud and Wageningen Universities. Among my

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I also want to thank all my actual family members in Ukraine, namely my father Oleh and parental grandparents Zoya and Slavik, my half-sister Lera, my cousins Nataila and Maxim, my aunt Olha and uncle Oleh, my step-father Oleh, and to my maternal family in Moscow for the support you have provided over the past decade(s). And, finally, I am especially grateful to my mother Larisa and my maternal grandmother Tatiana for your material and emotional support while pursuing my studies in Sociology in Lviv and for all your unconditional love and trust in me during my entire life. You cannot witness my defence in-person, but this book is dedicated to the two of you!

Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to the women and men from Lviv and Kharkiv who shared their intimate and personal experiences with me, and now also with you.

September 2016, Amsterdam

About the author

Yuliya Hilevych (1988, Khmelnitskiy) received her Bachelor's degree in 2010 and Master's degree in 2011 in Sociology from Lviv University, Ukraine. Her Master thesis (with distinction) was dedicated to children's practices and discourses of constructing gender spaces at school environment. Between February 2010 and September 2011, Yuliya also did an internship at the Centre for Urban History of East Central Europe in Lviv, Ukraine. In September 2011, she started her PhD within the VIDI-project 'The Power of the Family' at the Department of Economic, Social and Demographic History, at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands. In January 2014, together with the VIDI-project she moved to the Sociology of Consumption and Households Chairgroup at Wageningen University, the Netherlands, where she continued working on her PhD research. Yuliya's main research interests include the study of kinship and social relationships over the life course; reproductive behaviour and birth control in low- fertility contexts; history of infertility, childlessness and assisted reproduction, and contemporary practices; combining anthropological, evolutionary and critical methodologies; and (post-) Socialist societies. Yuliya has regularly presented and organised sessions at the international conferences, such as (European)Social Science History Conference, European Population Conference, Dutch Day of Demography, and Biennial Meeting of the European Society of Historical Demography, among others, and she has published in the international peer-reviewed journals, such as *Continuity and Change* and *The History of the Family.* She is also one of the invited guest editors in *The History of the Family* in 2015. Currently, Yuliya is affiliated as a guest researcher at Radboud Group of Historical Demography and Family History at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

Summary

This dissertation focuses on the role of family and social relationships in individuals' reproductive careers during the fertility decline in Soviet Ukraine from around 1950 to 1975. These three decades after the Second World War signified the end of the First Demographic Transition in Ukraine and other European republics of the Soviet Union, and some even define the period after the 1960s as the start of a latent depopulation in this part of Europe. However, this fertility decline that had already begun to manifest itself in the early 1920s gained speed within only a few generations as those who were born in families of six siblings in the 1920s and 1930s had only two children themselves in the 1950s, the 1960s and the 1970s.

Previous research has discussed these demographic changes on a macro-level for the Soviet and post-Soviet periods by typically linking these changes to the processes of modernisation and transformation. However, this singular focus on structural changes ignores the fact that relationships between people also adjust to politico-economic changes according to the social and family values that already exist in society. As a result, old and new social (in)equalities, both outside and within the household, (re-) emerge alongside the politico-economic modernisation, which, in tandem, contribute to the formation of different demographic realities on a micro-level and different fertility trends on a macro-level. In this respect, social relationships should be seen as playing an intermediary role in the interplay between the formation of interpersonal inequalities and the politico-economic reality. Because they surround our everyday lives and choices, social relationships form a coherent social structure that helps us to interpret, to understand and to adjust to everyday reality, including state legal regulations, political ideology, and economic crises. The primary aim of this dissertation is to study the effects of family relationships and their continuities on changes in reproductive behaviour through a comparative regional perspective in Ukraine during the post-war fertility decline.

The role of social relationships in reproductive behaviour is particularly important in the specific context of Ukraine as well as in the broader context of Eastern Europe, where family relationships have provided welfare in critical situations,

such as childbearing, childcare and elderly care, both in the past and today. Similar to Southern Europe, the prevalence of strong family ties in Eastern Europe is also often connected to the high fertility rates in the pre-transitional context and to the rapid fertility decline to the lowest-low level in the 1990s and 2000s. The lowest-low fertility phenomenon is often referred to as a paradox of strong family and low fertility. Moreover, in the context of Ukraine, where regional differences remain pronounced in many aspects of social life, regional variations in fertility could also be linked to local family values. Considering this, the main research questions that I address in this dissertation are the following: (1) How did family and social relationships influence individual reproductive careers in Soviet Ukraine from around the 1950s to the 1970s? (2) How can local family systems and their associated power dynamics and social interdependencies help to understand fertility decline in Soviet Ukraine? Focusing on these post-war decades is also relevant for our understanding of historical and contemporary fertility decline in this part of Europe because these three decades were significant for the beginning of the Cold War, general liberalisation of the regime and the introduction of some family policies that are still enacted today.

On the theoretical level, I frame the empirical analysis of family and social influences on individual reproductive careers in a broader framework of local continuities in family relationships and values, the so-called family systems. In this respect, individual reproductive careers are studied as processual characteristics of reproductive behaviour and long life experiences and include such life events as marriage, entrance into parenthood, abortion and birth control, and transition to second birth. By social influences I understand the 'process by which attitudes, values or behaviour of an individual are determined by the attitudes, values or behaviour of others with whom he or she interacts' (Bernardi, 2003, p. 535). I examine different patterns of social relationships, such as those between spouses, generations, siblings and peers. Based on the social influences stemming from family and social relationships, I try to characterise different power relationships and other social interdependencies underlying these relationships, which I then connect to the context of local family systems.

On the methodological level, this study is based on the analysis of various qualitative methods, such as in-depth biographical interviews, life history calendars (LHC) and family photographs. The interviews were collected in two Ukrainian borderland cities: Lviv in western Ukraine and Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine. These sites allowed me to compare how family relationships were historically organised in Ukraine and how they actually shaped the informants' reproductive decisions. This study also uses archival demographic data and secondary ethnographic materials as supplementary sources.

The empirical findings of this dissertation discuss different transitions of individual reproductive careers, namely marriage, entrance into parenthood, birth control and abortion, and transitions to second and later births, all of which I discuss in the context of family and peer relationships. In Soviet Ukraine, the transition to marriage was characterised by strong parental control over men's and women's pre-marital practices and sometimes also marital decisions. This strong parental control before marriage was not without consequences, as it seems to have created an imaginary dependency of children on their parents not only before but also after marriage, which I associate with the persistence of paternalistic intergenerational values in family relationships in the two localities.

Similarly, the entrance into parenthood was also surrounded by frequent parental assistance, particularly when a couple tried to postpone their entrance into parenthood. This pattern was also reinforced by the social learning from peers among the Kharkiv informants and social contagion from siblings(in-law) among the Lviv informants. That said, the actual decision to give birth was connected to the expectations of help with childcare in the future. In this respect, I observed that if after the marriage a couple resided separately from their parents, they would also take greater responsibility for childcare, and grandparental support became an additional and temporary option, as it often was in Lviv. However, when spouses resided with either set of parents, they also tended to rely more on the parents in terms of childcare, which I more often observed in Kharkiv and less in Lviv.

These differences in dynamics of spousal and intergenerational relationships between the two localities became even more pronounced around abortion and birth control decisions and their practices after first birth. Spousal cooperation in birth control decision-making played an important role in how women exercised their agency in these decisions and which birth control methods the couple used and how effectively they used them. In couples where spouses communicated about birth control and abortion decisions, the women had fewer abortions, as was often the case in Lviv. These women did not feel the need to exercise their agency, as the husbands took over the responsibility of both birth control and abortion. When abortion was practiced as a routine method to limit family size, spouses did not communicate about birth control and abortion, as was the case in Kharkiv. In this situation, birth control was the husband's responsibility and abortion was the wife's. These women sought abortions to fulfil their own goals and, at the same time, to maintain the dominant patriarchal order in marital relationships as they understood it.

These differences in spousal cooperation with regard to birth control seem to have had direct implications for the transition to second and later births in the two localities. In Lviv, spouses continued to negotiate the timing of second and third

births and the childcare arrangements, while still mainly relying on each other in these matters. In doing so, the Lviv informants often adopted a traditional male-breadwinning model, which allowed spouses to share the costs of childcare: husbands were responsible for material costs and wives for the emotional and instrumental costs. However, some women resumed working part-time or worked on jobs with more flexible working schedules after their child's birth, and then spouses divided the material and instrumental costs of childcare more equally and without a traditional gender bias. In either case, the accumulated costs of childcare were often shared between spouses. This strategy often allowed couples to combine childcare after their first and second/third child, which seems to have been reinforcing for many couples in Lviv to adopt a shorter birth spacing strategy.

In Kharkiv, in contrast, the timing of second and later births and childcare were mainly the women's responsibility. Some continued to rely on grandparental support even after starting to reside separately. However, this support was not always available due to different factors such as the few possibilities for multi-generational co-residence or parental health issues. When women received little intergenerational and spousal support, they tended to delay transition to second birth until they felt more secure. Additionally, women in Kharkiv seem to have learned from each other's experiences about the benefits of this strategy. As such, the adoption of the waiting strategy seems to have resulted in a more prolonged interval between first and second births, sometimes ten to fifteen years, which in other studies is defined as postponement as opposed to spacing. However, those women who did not meet the deadline for parenthood because they were still feeling too insecure to proceed with another birth never had a second child.

Overall, my findings illustrate that the ways in which family relationships were organised over the life course formulated different responses in the two localities to the emerging socio-economic conditions. Subsequently, these differences in responses were reflected in regional reproductive strategies. I suggest that these differences in responses have to do with the intrafamilial dependencies in the two localities: more couple-oriented (*horizontal intrafamilial interdependencies*) in Lviv and generations-oriented (*vertical intrafamilial interdependencies*) in Kharkiv. I also observe continuity in these two social interdependencies with the historical family systems and the intrafamilial (in)equalities produced within them in the past, namely a mix of nuclear-stem family system in Lviv and a joint family system in Kharkiv. In the early life, strong intergenerational connections characterising both family systems seem to have promoted early and universal entrance into marriage and parenthood in the past and during the Soviet time. Additionally, the Soviet family policy adopted many of these paternalistic and pronatalist values on the level of legal regulations, which meant that this re-

productive ideology was reinforced within and outside the family. In later life, however, the intrafamily interdependencies start to differ in the two contexts, and this aspect is crucial to understand regional patterns in fertility decline. During the Soviet time, even though socio-economic constraints created more or less similar structural uncertainties in the both localities, these structural factors did not equally challenge intrafamilial interdependencies between spouse and generations. Subsequently, these local intrafamilial interdependencies resulted in different reproductive strategies on the micro-level and in their reflection on the macro-level fertility trends.

Altogether, these findings provide a fruitful ground for formulating future hypotheses to be tested on larger and representative population samples. They also formulate important clues for policy makers by suggesting that a more relativist perspective that incorporates intrafamilial social inequalities and communication strategies is needed to regulate the issues of fertility decline and subsequently the process of population ageing, the latter of which may soon become a vital issue in this part of the world as well.

Yuliya Hilevych
Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS)
Completed Training and Supervision Plan

Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
A) Project related competences			
Atlas.ti voor begginers	ER&T	2011	0.5
Women's social networks at marriage and during first pregnancy in western and eastern Ukraine, 1950-1970	SSHA Conference, Vancouver, Canada	2012	1.0
Abortion Culture and Individuals' Personal Relationships in Ukraine, the Case of Kharkiv City, 1955-1968	SSHA Conference, Chicago, USA	2013	1.0
Family relationships and abortion in Ukraine, 1950-1975	ESSH Conference, Vienna, Austria	2014	1.0
Uncovering the persistence of early transition to first parenthood in Ukraine: the importance of family systems	Power of The Family Workshop, Wageningen University, the Netherlands	2015	1.0
Spacing or postponement? Transition to second birth and family influences in Ukraine	Dutch Day of Demography, Utrecht, the Netherlands	2015	1.0
Later, if Ever: Family Influences on the Transition from First to Second Birth in Ukraine, 1950-1975	ESSH Conference, Valencia, Spain	2016	1.0
Individual reproductive careers during fertility decline in Ukraine: situating social influences within kinship systems'	Invited talk, Summer School, Max Plank Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, Germany	2016	1.0
B) General research related competences			
Posthumus Basic Training&Individual assessment	Posthumus Institute	2012-2013	8.5
ESTER Research Design Course	Posthumus Institute	2012	8.0
Posthumus Masterclass with Pier Paolo Viazzo	Posthumus Institute	2013	0.3
Co-organised two sessions: 'Qualitative Approaches to Demographic Questions: Reproductive Decisions and Birth Control Practices, Part I ' & 'Qualitative Approaches to Demographic Questions: Reproductive Decisions and Birth Control Practices, Part II"	SSHA Conference, Chicago, USA	2013	2.0
Co-organised a session: Individuals' Reproductive Careers in Modern Europe	ESSH Conference, Vienna, Austria	2014	1.0
Guest edirot of a Special Section 'The History of the Family': 'Qualitative approaches to demograhic questions'	The History of The Family	2014-2015	1.0
Invited discussant for a session : 'State Control and Popular Practices. Perspectives from 20th Century Northern Europe'	ESSH Conference, Valencia, Spain	2016	0.5

C) Career related competences/personal development			
Presentation Skills	Radboud into Languages	2012	1,5
Advanced conversation	Radboud into Languages	2012	1.5
Academic writing	Radboud into Languages	2012	3.0
Poster presentation: Surviving microdata in eastern Ukraine, 18th and 19th centuaries	Mosaic Conference, Budapest, Hungary	2012	1.0
Nederlands B1	Radboud into languages	2012	8.0
Scientific Writing	Wageningen into languages	2015	1.3
Total			**45.1**

*One credit according to ECTS is on average equivalent to 28 hours of study load