

Occupations and economic labour activities of nineteenth century Dutch women: limits and possibilities

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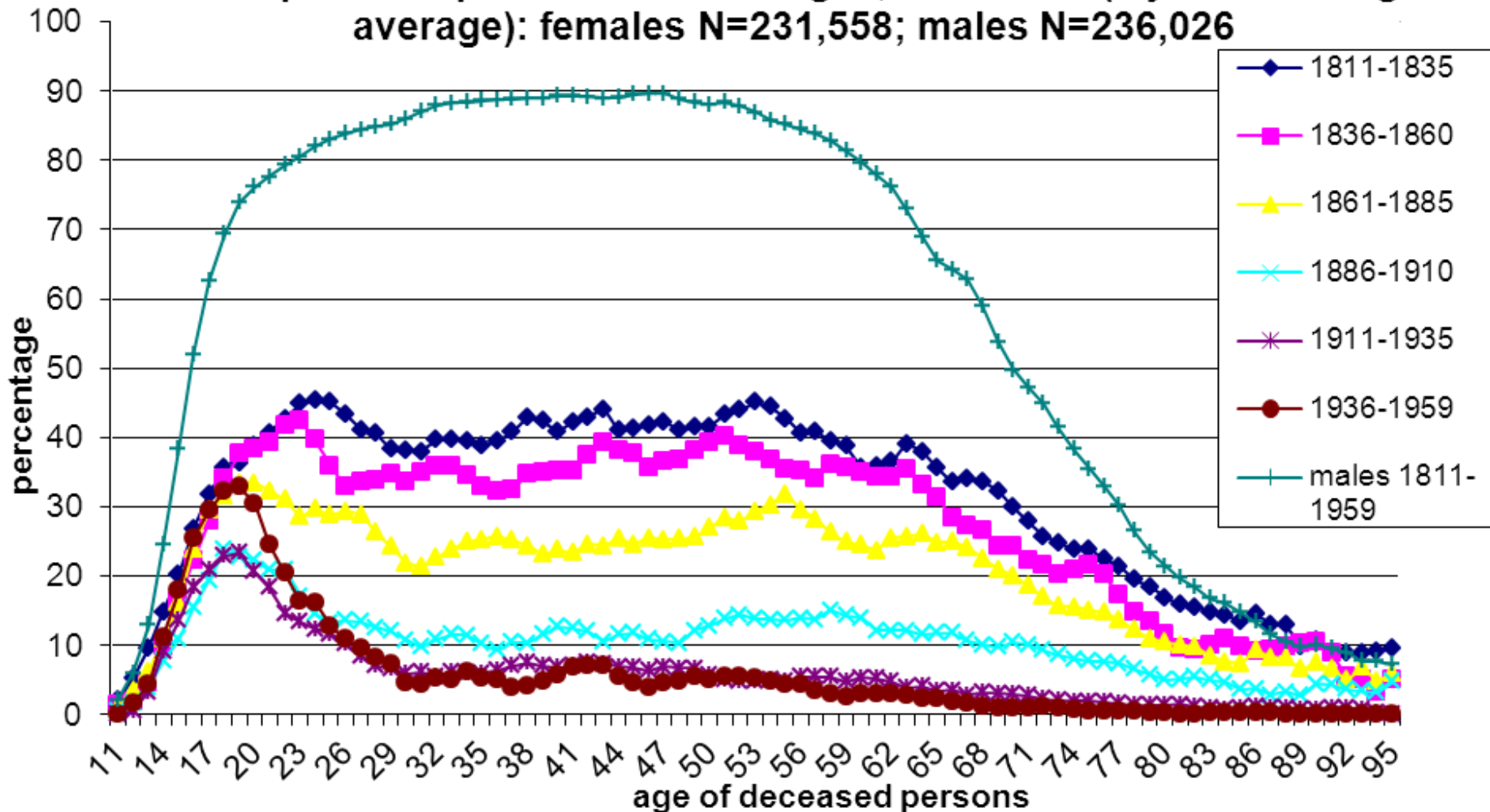
*“Women in changing labour markets”, Utrecht 22-23
November 2012*

Introduction

- What is the meaning of a female occupation in 19th and early 20th century Dutch population sources.
- To what extent are the occupations mentioned an indication of females economic activities (including unpaid work within the family enterprise, excluding unpaid caring and cleaning activities in one's own household)?
- Case-study province of Groningen
- Critically looking at Civil Registration (deaths, births and marriages) and Censuses
- An alternative measuring method of female labour participation
- Developments of live-in farm maids and female farm labourers until beginning 20th century

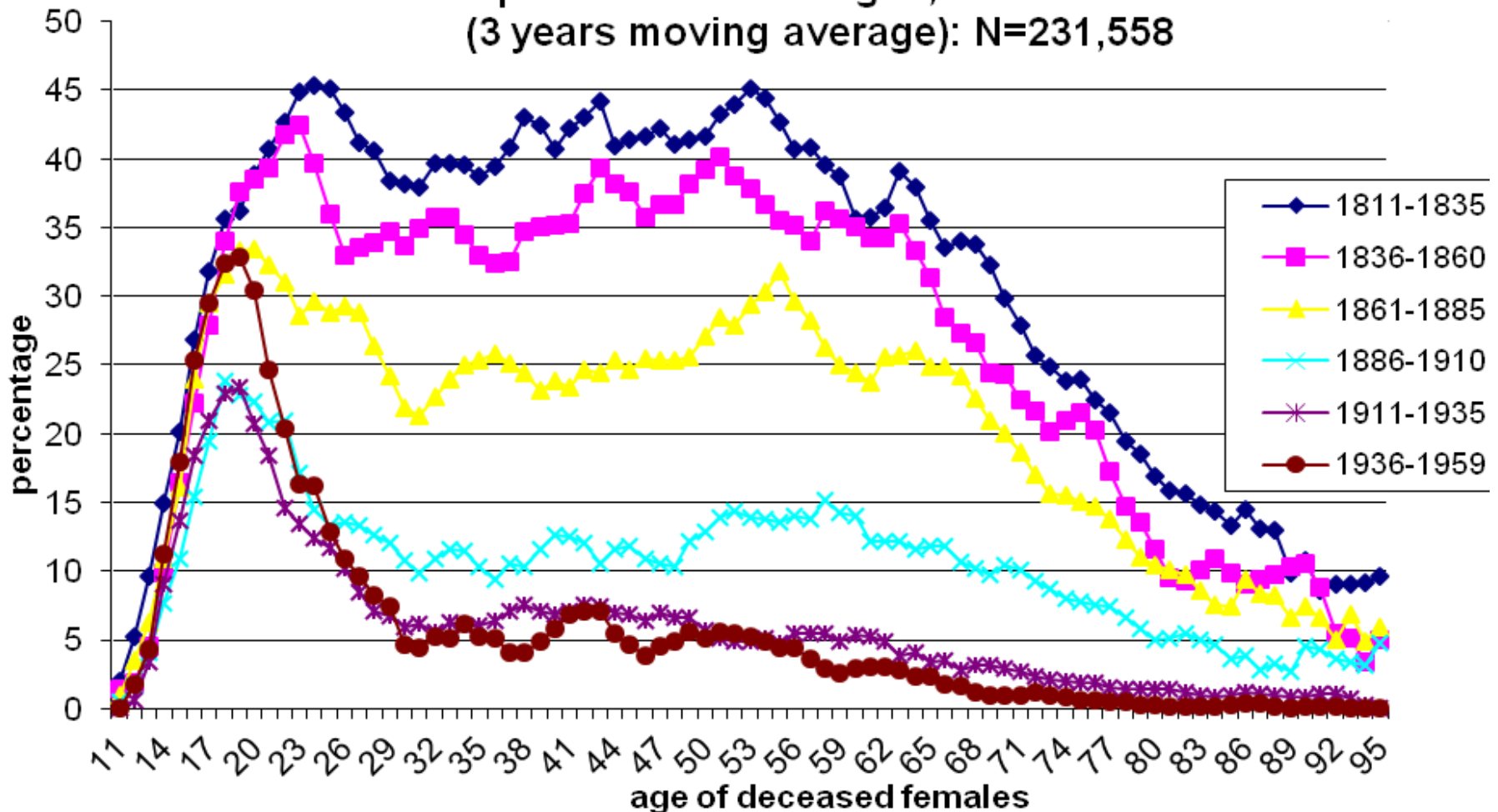
Mortality I: Genlias database 1811-1959

Graph 1: Share of deceased females and males with an occupation in province of Groningen, 1811-1959 (3 years moving average): females N=231,558; males N=236,026



Mortality II: Genlias database 1811-1959

Graph 2: Share of deceased females with an occupation in province of Groningen, 1811-1959
(3 years moving average): N=231,558



Measuring clustering in official registration

- Investigating if the mentioning of a female occupation is related to registration policies by civil servants writing down the official certificates in the death, birth and marriage register.

Method:

- Is there a relation between 1. the chance on the registration of a female occupation in a certificate and 2. the same kind of registration in similar previous certificate by the same civil servant?
- The share in female occupations when the former certificate did not mention a female occupation is compared with the share if also a female occupation was mentioned.

Table 1: Clustering of occupations of deceased females in death registers in the province of Groningen (share of females with an occupation), 1811-1959

	Share female with occupation			Share female without occupation		
	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier
1811-1835	50.6%	49.9%	49.8%	24.5%	24.9%	25.0%
1836-1860	43.5%	44.2%	43.4%	22.6%	22.3%	22.6%
1861-1885	36.6%	35.7%	35.9%	17.7%	17.9%	17.9%
1886-1910	24.8%	23.4%	23.2%	8.7%	8.8%	8.9%
1911-1935	8.1%	6.8%	7.7%	4.4%	4.5%	4.4%
1936-1959	3.5%	2.9%	3.4%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%

NB: Only women above the age of 10.

Table 2: Comparison of higher chances (odds) of mentioning a female occupation of a deceased woman mother when the previous death certificate of a deceased woman also mentioned an occupation.

	Previous act	Two acts earlier	Three acts earlier
1811-1835	2.1	2.0	2.0
1836-1860	1.9	2.0	1.9
1861-1885	2.1	2.0	2.0
1886-1910	2.9	2.7	2.6
1911-1935	1.8	1.5	1.7
1936-1959	1.3	1.1	1.3

NB: Comparison with the chance that previous acts did not mention an occupation of the bride. Only women above the age of 10 included.

Table 3: clustering effects: share of females with an occupation related to the number of occupations of deceased mentioned in the three previous acts of females (percentages).

	0 occu- pations	1 occu- pation	2 occu- pations	3 occu- pations		Share of 2/3 previous occupations in total occupations
1811-1835	17%	32%	50%	67%		50%
1836-1860	16%	30%	47%	60%		43%
1861-1885	13%	26%	41%	50%		33%
1886-1910	7%	16%	32%	45%		19%
1911-1935	4%	7%	12%	*		3%
1936-1959	3%	3%	2%	*		0%

Births: Genlias database 1811-1909

Graph 3: Share of mothers with an occupation in birth certificates in the province of Groningen, 1811-1909 (N=694,885)

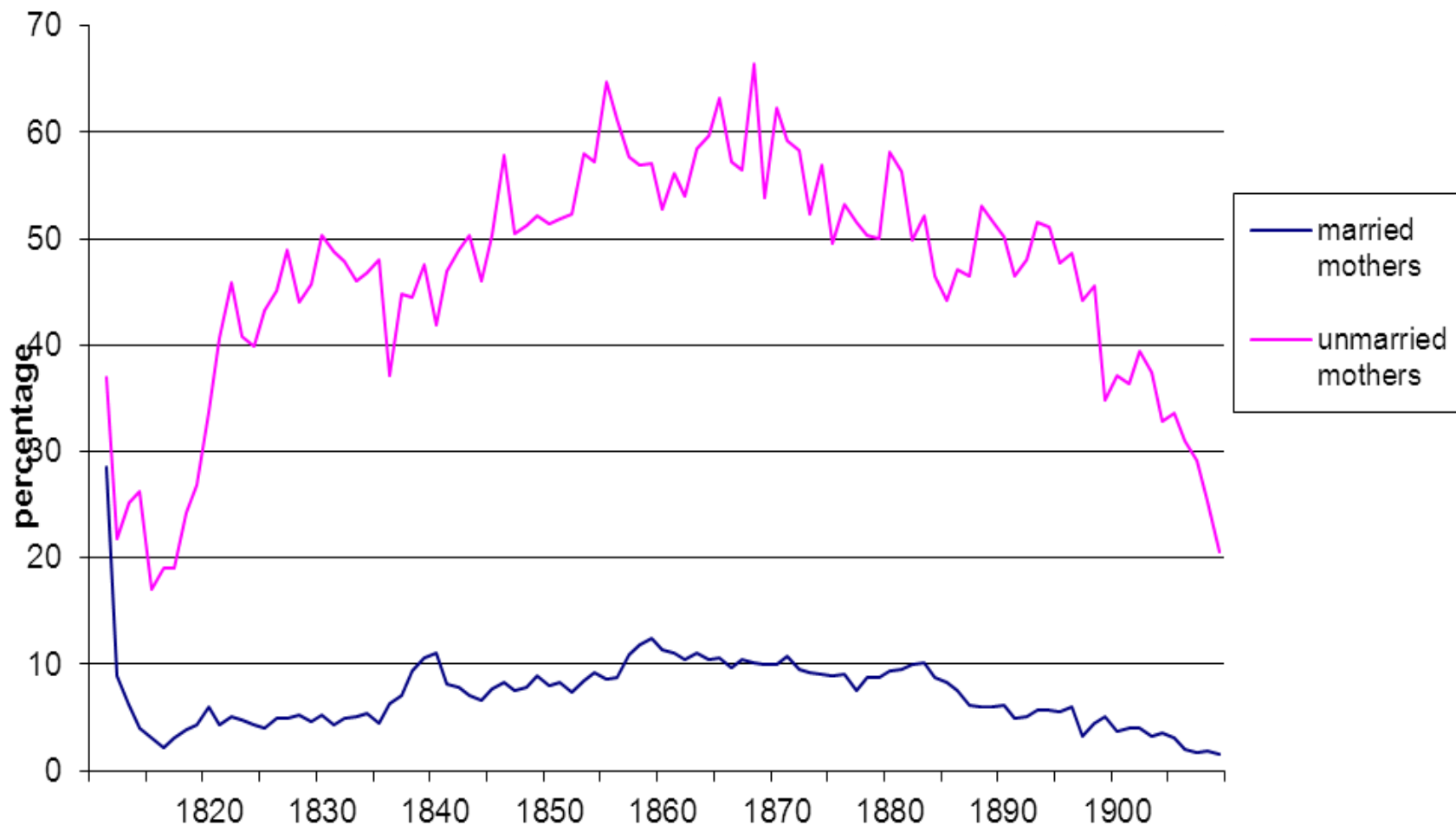


Table 4: Clustering of occupations of married mothers in birth registers in the province of Groningen (share of females with an occupation), 1811-1909

	Share female with occupation			Share female without occupation		
	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier
1811-1835	76.6%	75.9%	75.8%	1.5%	1.9%	1.5%
1836-1860	62.9%	61.9%	61.6%	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%
1861-1885	60.6%	59.7%	59.7%	4.2%	4.3%	4.3%
1886-1909	60.7%	59.4%	60.3%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%

Table 5: Comparison of higher chances (odds) of mentioning a female occupation of a married mother when the previous birth certificate with a married mother also mentioned an occupation

	Previous act	Two acts earlier	Three acts earlier
1811-1835	52.8	59.6	48.8
1836-1860	17.3	16.7	16.5
1861-1885	14.5	14.0	14.0
1886-1909	34.2	32.3	33.5

NB: comparison with the chance when previous acts did not mention an occupation of the married mother

Table 6: Clustering of occupations of unmarried mothers in birth registers in the province of Groningen (share of females with an occupation), 1811-1909

	Share female with occupation			Share female without occupation		
	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier
1811-1835	63.2%	62.0%	60.5%	23.1%	23.7%	24.5%
1836-1860	66.3%	65.1%	64.5%	36.1%	37.4%	38.0%
1861-1885	69.8%	68.5%	68.6%	37.1%	38.8%	38.6%
1886-1909	65.8%	63.3%	63.9%	24.6%	26.6%	26.5%

Table 7: Comparison of higher chances (odds) of mentioning a female occupation of an unmarried mother when the previous birth certificate with an unmarried mother also mentioned an occupation.

	Previous act	Two acts earlier	Three acts earlier
1811-1835	2.7	2.6	2.5
1836-1860	1.8	1.7	1.7
1861-1885	1.9	1.8	1.8
1886-1909	2.7	2.4	2.4

NB: comparison with the chance when previous acts did not mention an occupation of the unmarried mother

Marriages: Genlias database 1811-1909

Graph 4: Occupations of brides in marriage certificates in the province of Groningen, 1811-1934 (N =244,226)

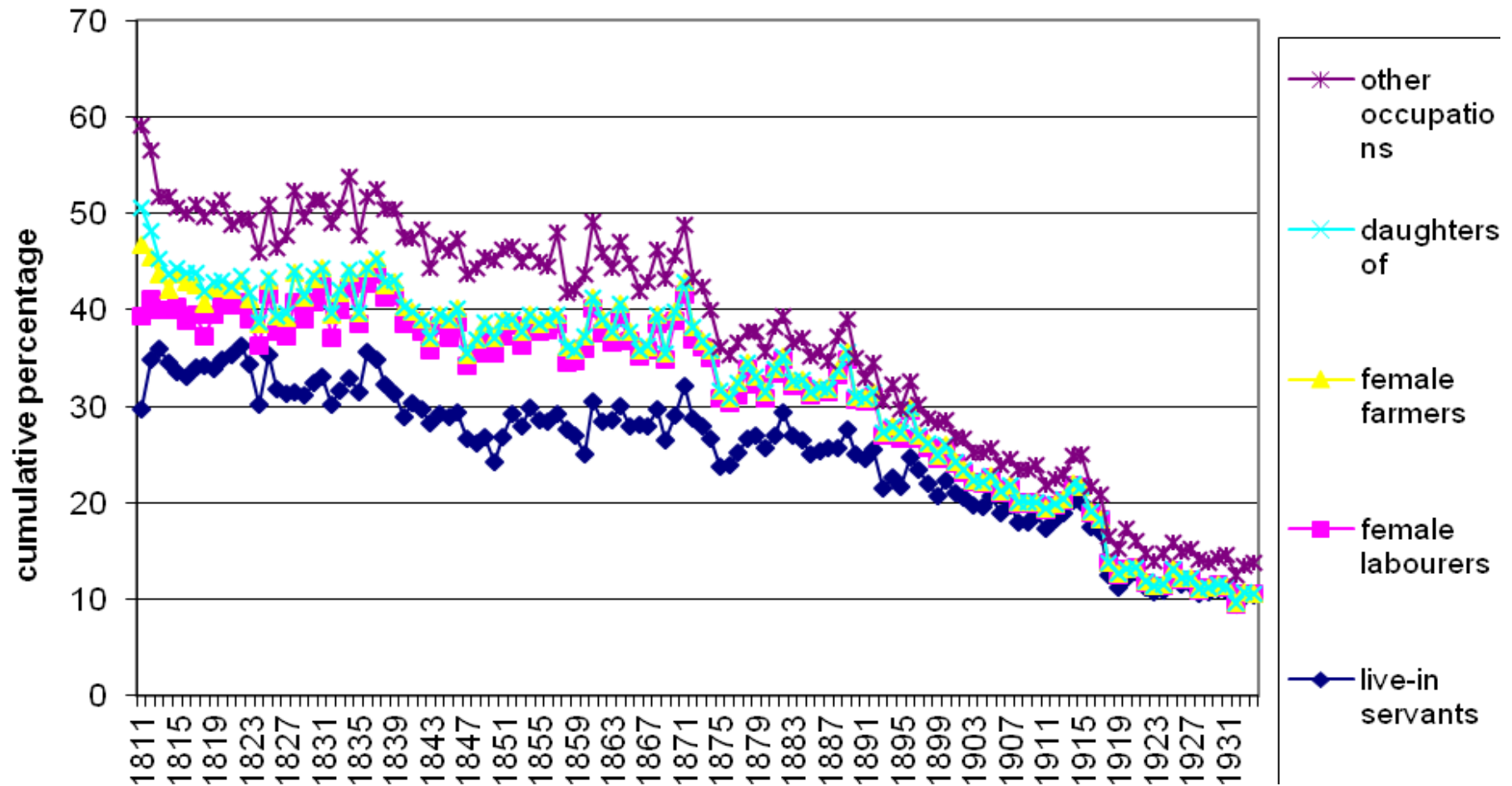


Table 8: Clustering of occupations of brides in marriage registers in the province of Groningen (share of females with an occupation), 1811-1934.

	Share female with occupation			Share female without occupation		
	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier	Female occupation in previous act	Female occupation two acts earlier	Female occupation three acts earlier
1811-1835	58.1%	56.8%	56.3%	42.8%	44.2%	44.7%
1836-1860	54.5%	52.9%	52.5%	39.3%	40.7%	40.9%
1861-1885	52.7%	51.4%	50.5%	33.1%	33.9%	34.6%
1886-1910	51.1%	49.0%	48.0%	20.1%	21.0%	21.4%
1911-1934	37.3%	35.1%	34.3%	12.7%	13.2%	13.4%

Table 9: Comparison of higher chances (odds) of mentioning an occupation of the bride when the previous marriage act also mentioned an occupation of a bride

	Previous act	Two acts earlier	Three acts earlier
1811-1835	1.4	1.3	1.3
1836-1860	1.4	1.3	1.3
1861-1885	1.6	1.5	1.5
1886-1910	2.6	2.3	2.2
1911-1934	2.9	2.7	2.6

NB: comparison with the chance when previous acts did not mention an occupation of the bride.

-Even for brides registering civil servants had a considerable influence on the mentioning of a female occupation (compare Van Leeuwen and Maas 2003 suggesting it to be a decision of those marrying)

-There were large differences in administrating policies between civil servants in a certain region: Midwolda 61%, whole of Groningen 33% brides with an occupation (compare Walhout and Van Poppel, 2003, using Midwolda)

Example farm of Van Cingel in Nieuw-Scheemda



- 44 unmarried girls working as live-in servants in the period 1869-1902, in the marriage certificates:
 - Only 45% were called maid
 - 41% were stated to be without occupation
 - 14% were called female labourers
- Conclusion: the occupations of brides on the one hand often do not give an accurate description of their former economic activities, while they also usually do not give any clue about their future economic activities

Table 10: Mentioning of occupations of married women in 1850 population registers, based upon the census data of end of 1849.

	Farmers	Labourers	Others	Total
Appingedam	0%	9%	1%	2%
Hoogkerk	0%	0%	0%	0%
Stedum	2%	35%	5%	18%
Uithuizen	25%	98%	42%	66%
Zuidhorn	95%	95%	25%	64%

Source: Paping, *Voor een handvol stuivers* (1995) 462.

Conclusion: the statistical results of the 1849 census for female labour are largely based on the registration policies of individual civil servants concerning married females.

Alternative method of estimating female labour participation (see also: Paping, 1995)

Step 1. Distinguish different female groups, taking into account civil status, living situation, and occupation (partly of the head of household)

	Live-in servant	Active in household enterprise	Doing wage work outside household	Having an independent business
Unmarried women	X	X	X	Seldom
Married women	-	X	X	Seldom
Widows	Very rare	-	X	X

Step 2. Estimate the size and developments of all these groups, using as many sources as possible.

-Nearly only take into account those aged 16 or above

-Only those groups are counted which were economically active on average at least 50 days a year.

-Wives and live-in daughters of heads of households active in societal services and most of the industry were seen as economically not active, unless stated otherwise.

Table 12: Comparison of female labour in the Groningen countryside (census data) and the Groningen clay region (reconstruction) age 16 and older.

	Census Groningen countryside 1849	Reconstruc. Groningen Clay region 1850	Census Groningen countryside 1859	Reconstruc. Groningen Clay region 1860
Industry	3.2%	3.8%	2.9%	3.8%
Services	8.6%	16.5%	6.3%	16.5%
Agriculture	11.6%	24.8%	11.8%	24.8%
Labourers	12.1%	25.1%	9.2%	25.9%
Without occupat.	64.5%	29.8%	69.8%	29.0%

Source: Paping, *Voor een handvol stuivers* (1995) 332-333.

Conclusion: effect is that female labour participation more than doubles compared to official statistics

Step 3: correct for limited working days of several female occupational groups.

Table 13: Tentative estimates of average female labour input in the Groningen clay region (in days a year)

	1820	1822/28	1840	1860
Live-in maids	285	285	285	285
Farmers wives and daughters	200	200	190	150
Female labourers	125	100	115	140
Female heads of households active in industry and services	285	270	282	285
Female family members working in industry and services	150	100	136	150
Average females	149	136	139	140
Average males	272	257	263	266

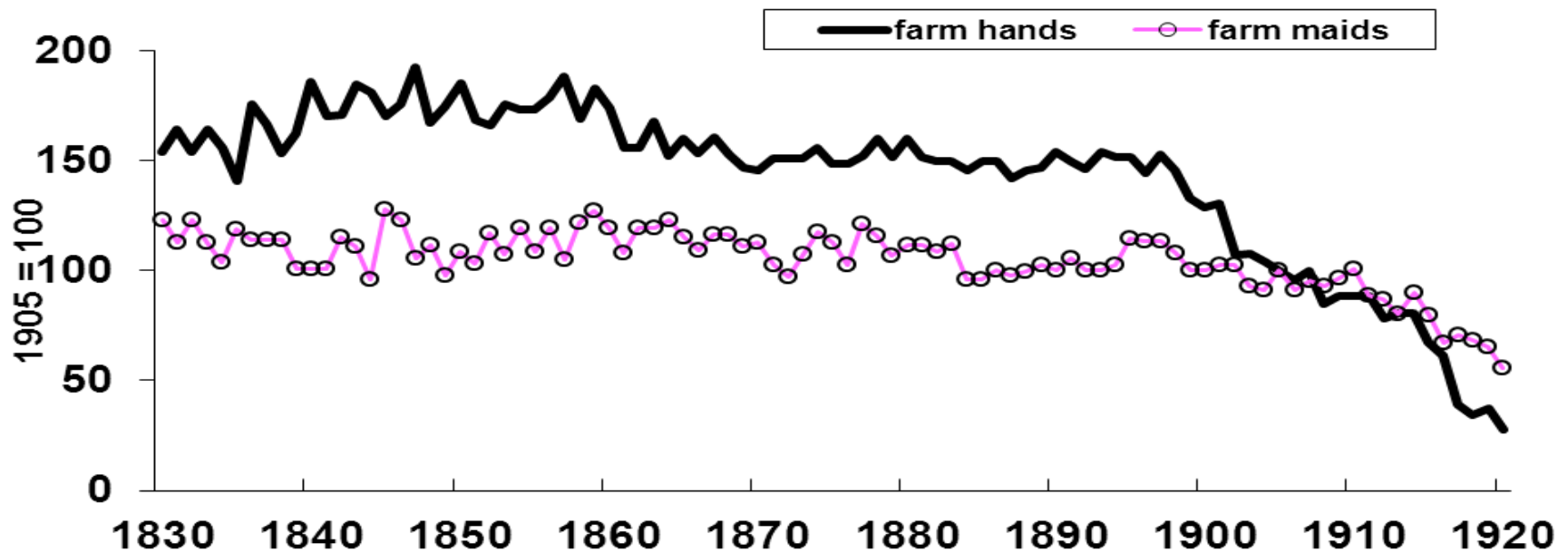
Paping, *Voor een handvol stuivers* (1995) 332-333.

Result: the calculated share of female labour participation was a little less than 50% around 1850, much higher than the 35% (1849) or 30% (1859) reported by census data

Table 14: Estimated number of live-in farm servants in the Groningen clay area, 1829-1909.

	1829	1849	1862	1869	1886/89	1909
Farm maids	3,200	3,500	4,211	3,500	3,100	1,800
Maids pro farm	1.1	1.2	1,3	1,0	0,8	0,5

Graph 5. Development of the number of live-in farm hands and maids per Groningen farm, 1830-1920 (only farms with surviving farm accounts)

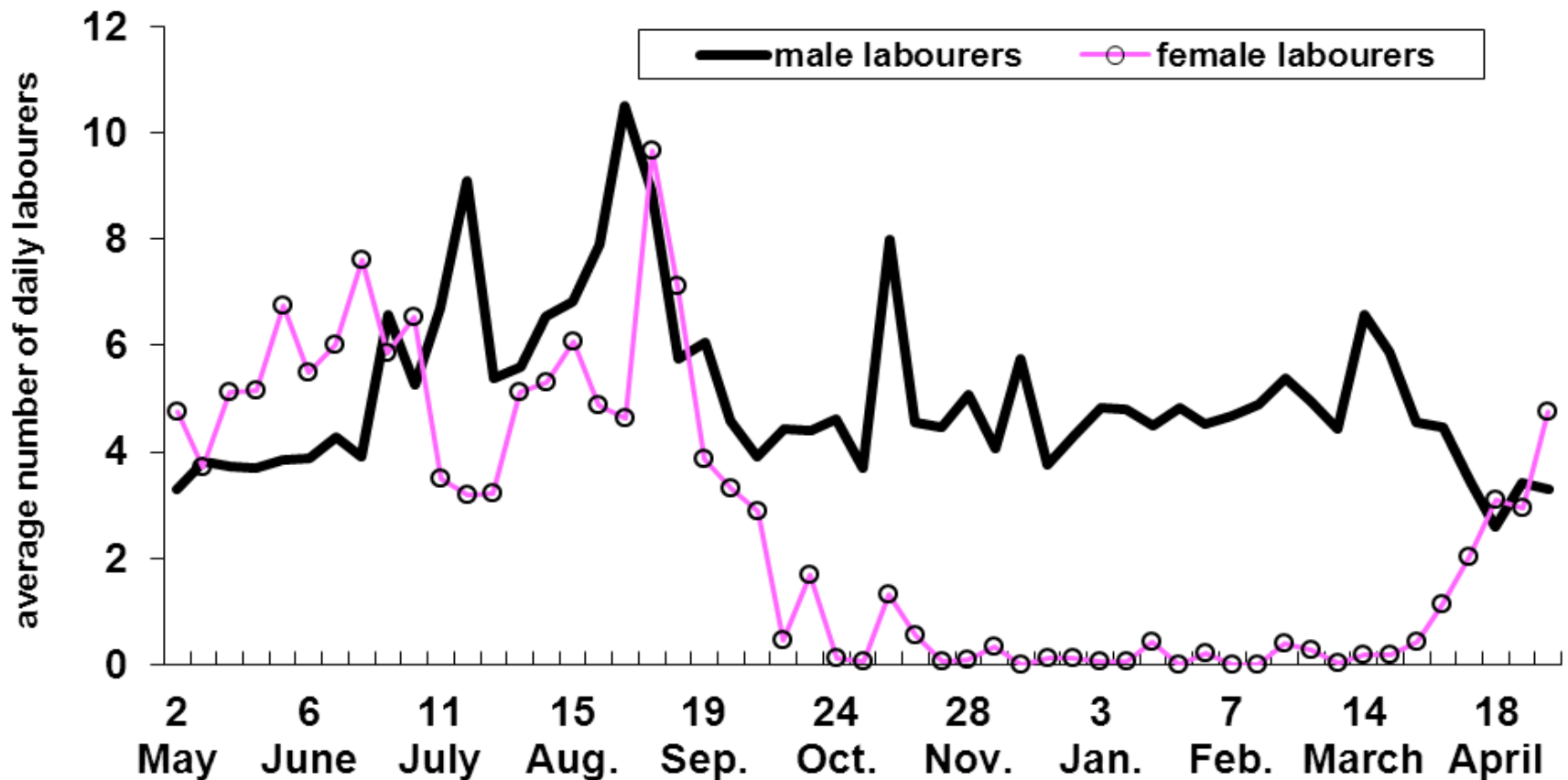


Source, Collenteur and Paping, 'De arbeidsmarkt voor inwonend personeel' (1997).

Parttime work of usually married female labourers in agriculture: only wage work from April to September



Graph 6: Average number of male and female daily labourers (not living in) working on a farm in Zuurdijk, 1835-1843 (weeks)



Dallinga-farm: a rise in male wage labour around 1900 is not accompanied by a similar rise in female labour (excluding live-in servants)

Graph 7: Average number of male and female labourers (not living in) working on the Dallinga farm in Nieuw-Scheemda, 1877-1905 (5-week moving average).



Table 15: Comparison of male and female wage work of labourers not living-in on some Groningen farms, 1816-1904

Years	Place	Description	Male days	Female days	Females as % of males
1816-1820	Beerta	Farm	1,890	660	32%
1835-1843	Zuurdijk	Farm	12,770	6,530	51%
1860-1863	N-Scheemda	Farm (Barlagen)	3,089	1,097	35%
1870-1874	N-Scheemda	Farm (Barlagen)	3,156	940	30%
1875-1879	N-Scheemda	Farm (Barlagen)	2,906	931	32%
1880-1881	N-Scheemda	Farm (Barlagen)	1,276	331	26%
1877-1879	N-Scheemda	Farm (Dallinga)	2,995	1,068	36%
1886-1889	N-Scheemda	Farm (Dallinga)	3,399	1,151	34%
1890-1894	N-Scheemda	Farm (Dallinga)	4,192	1,218	29%
1895-1899	N-Scheemda	Farm (Dallinga)	4,756	1,028	22%
1900-1904	N-Scheemda	Farm (Dallinga)	7,073	1,425	20%

These farm accounts suggest that the share of female labour in total wage labour (excluding live-in servants) showed a tendency to fall in the last decades of the nineteenth century. More research has to be done to confirm this development.

Origins of the fall in female labour participation from about 1860 onwards (hypothesis):

- 1. Positions of fulltime live-in servants for unmarried girls made way for parttime temporary work
- 2. Wage work for married women diminished in importance in agriculture (partly due to increasing mechanization, butter factories e.a.)
- 3. A decreasing share of heads of household which had an enterprise themselves, diminished the opportunities of married females and daughters living at home to do economic work outside the labour market
- 4. These developments were not of-set by a strong rise of wage work outside agriculture, as especially married females were nearly completely excluded from this labour market.
 - NB: the according to the marriage registers very low labour participation of unmarried females after 1900 suggest continuing under registration and asks for more detailed research using other sources.

Detailed investigation of the most important different female occupational groups, taking into account their civil status and not only using 'easy' source material is the only way to get a reliable picture of the development of the male-cost-winner model with very low female participation rates of the third quarter of the 20th century