The way in which people live together has changed within the last 60 years. Only after living together for several years do couples marry or they do not marry at all. This development implies a change in the way people look at relationship, marriage and if applicable the church wedding ritual. This dissertation explores how people think about church wedding rituals. Using social scientific methods within the methodology of empirical theology, the author measures and discusses notions about the goals, form and experience of these rituals from the perspective of the ritual participants. The main question is to what extend can these notions be explained by people’s religious socialisation and what role do their ideas about marriage play. The author studies the social and temporal goal of the church wedding ritual, its form and the extent to which participants are affected by it. The results are not just interesting for theologians, ritual scholars and social scientists, but are also instructive for pastors and volunteer workers active in the celebration of the wedding liturgy and marriage preparation.

Remco Robinson (1979) studied Theology at the Faculty of Theology of the Radboud University Nijmegen. In 2003, he graduated with honour in the field of Dogmatic Theology with a master thesis on the marriage theology of Edward Schillebeeckx within the context of the modern Dutch society. Besides his academic work, Robinson is a parish priest of the Old Catholic parish of St. Willibrord in Arnhem. He is married and has two daughters.
Celebrating unions
An empirical study of notions about church marriage rituals

Remco Robinson
Cover: Picture of the communion during the weddingmass of Ron Francis and Gerda Stellingwerf in the Old Catholic Church of Saint–Willibrord in Arnhem, the Netherlands enclosed by images of the wedding in Cana, the wedding night of Tobias and Sarah, Rebecca, Moses receiving the tables of the Covenant, Esther facing Ahasveros and finally Adam and Eve.
Celebrating unions
An empirical study of notions about church marriage rituals

Een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van Praktische theologie

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door
Remco Robinson,
geboren op 12 augustus 1979
te Apeldoorn
Promotores:
Prof. Dr. C.A.M. Hermans
Prof. Dr. P.L.H. Scheepers

Copromotor:
Dr. J.B.A.M. Schilderman

Leden van de manuscriptcommissie:
Prof. A.Th.M. de Jong
Prof. Dr. J.A.P.J. Janssen
Prof. Dr. P.G.J. Post, Universiteit van Tilburg
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Positioning the thesis

This thesis is the product of a liturgical study of notions about church marriage rituals. It is a component of the broader rites of passage research programme which, apart from the present study, comprises two comparable ones: infant baptism and church funerals. These three ecclesiastic rituals – infant baptism, marriage and burial – mark pivotal points in human life. Our study of the church marriage ritual investigates it from the angle of rites of passage, besides looking into some other pertinent questions. Hence the premise of our research is not so much the concept of rites of passage encountered in the literature of liturgical studies or anthropology, but changing practices in regard to marriage and cohabitation in the Netherlands and the rest of Western Europe since the late 1960s. These changing practices raise new questions for scholars of liturgy and ritual, including the extent to which the church’s marriage ritual can be classified as a rite of passage.

Scholars of liturgy have a broad spectrum of methods and research traditions at their disposal. Historical studies of liturgical objects and texts are nothing new, and naturally entail the use of archaeological and historical methods and research techniques. Liturgical texts are studied by means of literary research methods. More recently there have been attempts to study liturgical services per se. These are not concerned with texts or objects used in the service but concentrate on the actual liturgy. To this end scholars increasingly draw on the methods of ritual studies and cultural anthropology (Post, 2003, p. 12–20). Liturgical services are treated as rituals, the term 'liturgical service' connoting a particular type of rite: an institutionalised religious ritual.

In the liturgical research project on which this thesis is based we did not study either liturgical texts or objects, nor the service as such. Our focus was people’s notions about church marriage rituals, more particularly those of people who have recently (within the past year) attended a church marriage. The sampling method was designed so that the findings can be generalised to all participants in Roman Catholic church marriage rituals in the Netherlands (see below). Hence it is a liturgical study within the discipline of empirical theology.
1.2 Overview of chapter

The introductory chapter deals with the question researched in this thesis. First we describe the overall field of the problem under investigation. Then we identify the main concepts, namely four notions about church marriage rituals with reference to the problem area that we outlined. In this regard we adopt two perspectives: those of ritual studies and liturgical studies. In the fifth section we define the research questions. They concern, firstly, notions about church marriage rituals; secondly, the influence of religious socialisation on these notions; and thirdly, the influence of conceptions of marriage on notions about church marriage rituals. Section six deals with the heuristic model we used to organise the concepts, the sampling method and the analytical design. The chapter concludes with an outline of the rest of the thesis.

1.3 Research Issue

This section deals with the main issue investigated in this thesis. Proceeding from the question of why people still get married in church, we look at the broad social developments that influenced attitudes in this regard.

1.3.1 Cohabitation

Cohabitation patterns in the Netherlands have changed greatly. Until the 1960s marriage was the principal form of cohabitation. One started off by getting married, on the whole children were born only in wedlock, and the family resulting from this marriage was the cornerstone of society. Premarital or extramarital sex was taboo. Monogamous heterosexual relations were the norm. Divorce was disgraceful and rare (less than 10% of all couples per annum) (Garssen, 2001, p. 83–93).

A lot has changed in the past fifty years. People who do get married tend to do so at a later age. One does not get married first in order to cohabit, but does so after a period of cohabitation, which is regarded as a sort of trial marriage (Garssen, 2001, p. 9-16). More and more children are born out of wedlock. In 1960 1.3 children per 1000 inhabitants were born out of wedlock. By 2004 the figure had risen to 32.5 children per 1000 inhabitants (http://statline.cbs.nl). Couples have sexual relations earlier, long before cohabitation and marriage. Thus the direct connection between sex and marriage has weakened considerably (Garssen, 2001, p. 3-29). Homosexual couples can have their partnerships registered and same-sex marriage is permitted. The divorce rate has increased drastically from 5.7 per 1000 inhabitants in 1960 to 31.1 per 1000 inhabitants in 2004. Does all this make marriage a relic from the past, something that has become totally redundant, associated with ideas and values that no longer accord with modern society? Can marriage and the family still be called the cornerstone of society?

Yet there are still people who opt for marriage and even for a church marriage. Which people still feel a need to get married in church these days? Are they the last religious people in the Netherlands? What do they think about marriage and church marriage rites? What do they believe they will experience from that ritual? In this chapter we elaborate these questions into research questions for this thesis. But before we do so we need to describe two social processes.

\footnote{Data obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics, Voorburg/Heerlen, http://statline.cbs.nl}
that account for the sharp decline in church marriage rituals in the Netherlands: individualisation and secularisation.

### 1.3.2 Individualisation

Since the late 1960s society has changed greatly as a result of individualisation, a process in which individual freedom and development have become key values in a society marked by dramatic growth of the economy and increased affluence. Traditional social institutions are declining or losing their importance (de-institutionalisation). Traditional ideas and values have lost their appeal (de-traditionalisation). The influence of social groups or collectives on ideals and values has likewise declined\(^2\) (Felling, Peters, & Scheepers, 2000, p. 237, 238). This latter process, privatisation, is significant for our study. According to Emile Durkheim’s theory the religion of the group constitutes a kind of collective consciousness that acts as the mortar of that society. The more integrated people are in the community – that is, are members of all sorts of associations and groups within the broader context of the church – the more strongly they endorse the values and norms of that community as a result of greater contact with socialising actors (1912, p. 40, 41, 422–424, 1951, p. 159–170). According to Durkheim’s theory acceptance of norms and values is a result of social integration. Privatisation means that people are no longer members or under the influence of such groups and associations in an ecclesiastic context, implying that, in terms of Durkheim’s theory, they will be less closely integrated with the church and less inclined to endorse its views.

One result of individualisation is that the institution of marriage has lost its exclusive position as a societal form (Thatcher, 1999, p. 49). In the Netherlands, for instance, people can opt for partnership registration and cohabitation contracts as alternatives to marriage. In addition it has become increasingly common to cohabit temporarily or permanently out of wedlock without any institutional form. In the period from 1950 to 2000 the number of marriages in the Netherlands per 1000 males aged fifteen or older has dropped from 58.3 to 30.7\(^3\). Religious institutions, too, including church marriage, have been marginalised and have become a private decision by the couple. Thus the number of Catholic marriages that were solemnised in church has decreased from 35.9% in 1975 to 12.2% in 2000 (Michels, 2004, p. 23).

### 1.3.3 Secularisation

The drop in the number of church marriage rituals is not attributable solely to the consequences of individualisation. Individualisation also has implications for the religious domain of society at large. This element of individualisation is known as secularisation. According to De Graaf and Te Grotehuis the most commonly accepted view is that of Dobbelaere, who writes that secularisation implies decreased religiosity, adaptation of the contents of religion to social changes, and a decline in the influence of ecclesiastic institutions on society (Bruce, 2003 [2002], p. 2, 3, Dobbelaere, 2002, p. 17–43). Since the Industrial Revolution the ‘sacred canopy’ (Berger & Berger, 1974, p. 107), the uniform ‘spiritual umbrella’ that protected every member of society, has been whittled down by a pluriform, ‘disenchanted’ society. Berger distinguishes

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\(^2\)Felling et al. distinguish between five dimensions of individualisation: de-institutionalisation, de-traditionalisation, privatisation, fragmentation and heterogenisation. We confine ourselves to the first three, since they are pertinent to our research problem.

\(^3\)http://statline.cbs.nl
between subjective and objective secularisation. Subjective secularisation means that religious frameworks are used less and less to interpret the world and one’s personal life. Objective secularisation connotes the declining influence of the churches in society (Berger & Berger, 1974, p. 107, N. D. De Graaf & Te Grotenhuis, 2003, p. 47,48).

The church’s dwindling influence has meant that fewer and fewer civil marriages are solemnised in church. In addition Berger’s subjective secularisation implies that life—including cohabitation, family and marriage—is no longer interpreted in terms of religious categories. Living together in the sense of sharing a home with a partner) is not viewed in the same light, and accordingly practices have changed since the 1960s. Christianity no longer determines people’s ideas about marriage and the manner of cohabitation. The question is to what extent religion still influences religious people’s thinking on the subject.

The church marriage ritual has lost its key position in society and has become an individual, personal option. What are the notions that influence this decision? In the next section we look at some ideas about church marriage rites from the angle of the questions and problems outlined above.

1.4 Notions about church marriage ritual

This section deals with various concepts relating to notions about church marriage rites, more particularly concepts arising from and pertaining to the problems described in the previous section. Our research belongs to an area of liturgical studies which is seen as part of empirical theology. Our material object is Roman Catholic marriage rituals in the Netherlands. Its formal object is theological and socio-scientific. Since we interrelate the two scientific perspectives, our study could be classified as interdisciplinary. In the discussion below we clarify which concepts in our study derive from the social sciences (more specifically ritual studies, sociology and cognitive science of religion) and which derive from theology (more specifically sacramental theology and liturgical studies) ⁴. We interrelate the different scientific areas in order to interpret church marriage ritual. For instance, we use concepts from ritual studies to gain insight into the social purpose of rituals as rites of passage. But we also use concepts from liturgical studies to critically appraise the concept of rites of passage and its application to church marriage rites. In such a critical convergence liturgical studies introduces a hermeneutic (pre)conception of Christian marriage rites. In this way we take into account both the self-understanding of the marriage ritual over time (diachronic) and its meaning in the present-day context (synchronic).

In liturgical studies church marriage rites are classified in two ways: as rites of passage (e.g. Stevenson, 1987) and as an ecclesiastic liturgical service (e.g. Zieroff, 2002) This gives us a twofold perspective: that of ritual studies and that of liturgical studies.

1.4.1 Church marriage ritual from the perspective of ritual studies

Liturgical studies uses concepts from anthropology and ritual studies (Lukken, 1999, Post, 2003, Stevenson, 1987). The ritual studies classification of marriage rites as a rite of passage has been particularly influential. Rites of passage are a group of rituals. The author of this classification, Arnold van Gennep, categorises a great variety of rituals as rites of passage.

⁴The relation between theology and the social sciences could be described as critical convergence (Van der Ven, 1982, p. 161–175)
Their hallmark is that they accompany or effect a transition. According to Van Gennep major changes in the lives of individuals or groups are always accompanied by a confrontation with the sacred. The ritual eases the confrontation. It could be a change of location, for instance crossing a border, a transition from one social group to another, psychological transitions (also called crisis rituals), or religious transitions entailing crossing the boundary between the sacred and the profane (Snoek, 1987, p. 61, 62). The transition could be a one-off event, as when a tribe occupies new territory, or recurrent occasions such as the changing of the seasons. The change may affect the entire society, a particular social group, or individuals. Another feature of rites of passage is their threefold structure. As a rule one can discern rites of separation, an intermediate phase (liminality) and integration rites. Although the various rites are distinguishable in most instances, Van Gennep (1909, p. I–XIX, 1–13) does not claim that all three kinds necessarily occur. Following Van Gennep there have been many publications on rites of passage. Victor Turner (1969) concentrated on the intermediate (liminal) phase and its function in facilitating the change and re-stabilising society. Sometimes the term ‘rites of passage’ loses its classificatory quality and is applied to any rituals that accompany important moments in a human life (Grimes, 1995), (Grimes, 2000).

Although social rites of passage could be classified separately, virtually all transitions are characterised by individuals or a group crossing from one social category to another. In the case of marriage rites this is the most important dimension (Snoek, 1987, p. 66). According to Van Gennep (1960, p. 116–145) at least one marriage partner leaves one household and moves into a new home or that of the other partner. But does this apply to present-day bridal couples, since most of them have already started a home of their own when they started cohabiting? To what extent can church marriage rituals still be classified as a social transitional rite?

In ritual studies church marriage rituals can be characterised in another way. A marriage ritual is a feast. In major feasts time is a key dimension. Jan Assmann (1992, p. 50–53) calls it a temporal shift. The rite interrupts ordinary time with a mythical sense of time. It is no longer a matter of here and now but of genesis/origin and destiny. The focus is not simply on the bridal pair and their marriage ritual, but on the origin of marriage and the destiny of husband and wife until the end of time. This mythical sense of time makes the couple perceive themselves differently. That is why feasts create identity and, in that sense, meaning. At many marriage ceremonies there are references to how the couple got to know each other and there is much talk about future challenges and hopes for a happy life together. But according to Assman’s theory the main concern is about the mythical sense of time, in which foundational cultural stories and, even more important, images and metaphors from the stories are focal. In church marriage rituals these are stories and images from the Christian tradition, such as the creation story and the wedding at Cana. But to what extent do such images and stories from the Christian tradition still have a place in church marriage rituals? Rituals are increasingly attuned to the bridal pair. For instance, Bible readings are replaced by poems and lyrics. Moreover, are the Christian images and stories still sufficiently intelligible to the secularised participants in the ritual to create meaning? Is there still any relation between the past, present and future of the bridal couple and the origin and destiny of husband and wife according to Christian tradition? Are church marriage rituals able to break through mundane reality and make room for meaning in a religious temporal perspective? Hence in addition to our first question about the extent to which church marriage rites can be classified as rites of passage, we want to determine to what extent these rituals are able to break through the everyday perspective on time and introduce a religious temporal perspective.
But it is not self-evident in how far the participants understand the church marriage ritual as a rite of passage or an altered temporal perspective. As a result of individualisation marriage comes about in quite a different way and one could ask whether it still entails a transition. Secularisation could mean that Christian images and stories are no longer understood and that a mythical sense of time in no way breaks through ordinary reality in the course of the marriage rite. Hence we settle for a more generic term, namely the goal of the ritual. What is it aimed at – a transition, an altered temporal perspective, or something altogether different? Hence we investigate the social or temporal goal of church marriage rituals.

1.4.2 Church marriage ritual as a liturgical service

Liturgical studies examines church marriage rituals from perspectives other than that of ritual studies. They are not seen simply as rituals but more specifically as a liturgical service in an official ecclesiastic setting. A liturgical service has various aspects. We confine ourselves to two of these that relate to the problems associated with marriage and marriage rituals discussed above. Thus if we ask ourselves why people still opt for a church marriage if cohabitation practices have changed so much, that translates firstly into the question of the form they feel that ritual should assume. In other words: how should church marriage rituals be performed if liturgical services are grounded in the institutionally based Christian tradition on the one hand, and in practices that have changed radically over the past fifty years on the other? Secondly, the problem raises a question of people’s individual experience of church marriage rituals. If despite new cohabitation practices people still opt for this specific ritual, what experience do they hope to derive from it?

The first question about the form of church marriage rituals highlights a specific aspect of modernisation generally and individualisation in particular, namely the demise of self-evident frameworks (Berger, 1980), (Felling et al., 2000, p. 238). The result is that one is obliged to make choices. It is no longer possible simply to live according to religious (to Westerners, Christian) norms and values. Modern people have to clarify their position in confrontation with modernity. That applies particular to those who want to get married in church. They cannot (and don’t want to) simply subject themselves to the customary rites of a church marriage. Modernity (inter alia as a result of greater mobility and improved communications) means that people are aware of all sorts of alternatives to the once dominant tradition. Religious tradition is no longer taken for granted. The fact that people are individuals living in modern society requires them to choose and thus devise their own ritual. In so doing they must relate to modernity, in which, as mentioned in the first subsection, both the church and marriage have become problematic institutions as a result of individualisation and secularisation.

The question of the experience of liturgical rites relates closely to the observation that, despite the fact that marriage is no longer obligatory in terms of social norms and that the number of church marriage rituals has declined sharply (see above), there are still people who opt for a church marriage. Is this because of something that they think or expect they will experience during the ritual? The question links up with a debate in liturgical studies about the experience of church rituals since the liturgical reforms of Vatican II. On the basis of a new theology of the church and the sacraments the reformers sought to make church rituals more transparent to enable believers to participate actively and comprehendingly. This means that the sacraments are no longer actions performed by the clergy in persona Christi but by the church in the sense of a community of believers (clergy and lay people) (Schillebeeckx, 1959,
1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

p. 52,53,58,(Rahner, 1966, p. 49). Lorenzer (1981, p. 182–188), on the other hand, maintains that the liturgical reforms have replaced the sensory, symbolic interaction between officiant and believers with a discursive one, resulting in a loss of meaning. In the case of church marriage rituals this debate raises the question of the extent to which the ritual affects the participants.

Among the liturgical aspects of church marriage rituals, this thesis examines the form of the ritual and the way participants experience it. That brings us to four key concepts in our research:

1. the social goal of church marriage rituals
2. the temporal goal of church marriage rituals
3. the form of church marriage rituals
4. the experience of church marriage rituals

1.5 Research Questions

In section 1.1 we discussed problems regarding church marriage rituals. The main issue here is that, despite social changes as a result of individualisation and secularisation, which mean that the institution of marriage is no longer prerequisite for cohabitation and which have changed living together as such, there are still people who opt for marriage and for a church marriage to boot. Hence the research question in this thesis reads: What ideas do participants in church marriage rituals have about the ritual and to what extent do these ideas relate to their religiosity and their notions about marriage?. This umbrella question can be broken up into three sub-questions:

1. What concepts do participants in church marriage rituals discern in regard to
   (a) the social goal of church marriage rituals
   (b) the temporal goal of church marriage rituals
   (c) the form of church marriage rituals
   (d) the experience of church marriage rituals
2. To what extent do participants agree with these notions about church marriage rituals?
3. To what extent do discrepancies in participants’ notions about church marriage rituals relate to differences in their religious socialisation?
4. To what extent can the influence of features of participants’ religious socialisation on their notions about church marriage rituals be explained by their conception of marriage?

1.5.1 Religious socialisation

Our third research question concerns the possible influence of religious socialisation on notions about church marriage rituals. Our concepts of religious socialisation are based on the theory of Emile Durkheim, which we mentioned above. In his view a given groups’ religion constitutes a kind of collective consciousness that acts as mortar for that social community. The more closely people are integrated with the community, the more they endorse its values and norms, because
they have more contact with socialising actors (Durkheim, 1912, p. 40, 41, 422–424, Durkheim, 1951, p. 159–170). Hence according to Durkheim’s theory endorsement of norms and values is the result of integration with a community. That makes religious socialisation the independent variable and notions about church marriage rituals the dependent variable. In the course of their lives people encounter various socialising actors: parents, a socialising community to which the participants in church marriage rituals belong, and the participants’ partners (where applicable) (Te Grotenhuis & Scheepers, 2001, p. 598).

1.5.2 Conceptions of marriage

Religious socialisation may influence ideas about church marriage rituals. But in how far does this apply to religious socialisation generally or only to the conceptions of marriage that more or less derive from that socialisation? As a result of secularisation it is not clear to what extent religiously socialised people have taken over traditional Christian conceptions of marriage as well. In other words, what role do participants’ conceptions of marriage play in the relation between religious socialisation and notions about church marriage rituals? That is why our fourth research question deals with the influence of conceptions of marriage. There are many possible conceptions of marriage. We confine ourselves to ideas about marital values that could explain the relation between notions about marriage rites and religious socialisation. These ideas stem partly from Christian tradition, but are also influenced by an individualised and secularised society.

In West European countries conceptions of marriage are strongly influenced by Christianity, as the church has controlled the institution of marriage since the Middle Ages. Although since the separation of church and state the civil authority has resumed responsibility for marriage (in most countries), the churches’ influence on conceptions of marriage remained undiminished until the 1970s. The Christian ideal of marriage was a lifelong union between husband and wife in which sexual relations were permitted aimed at producing children. In the late 1960s and early 1970s this changed as a result of emancipation movements among various groups, including the feminist movement, the human rights movement and the gay movement (Aulette, 1994, p. 11–14). The outcome of these movements’ activities was that marriage and the family became mere variants of diverse forms of cohabitation. Many couples don’t get married at all, but opt for a cohabitation contract, partnership registration or simply live together. In addition marriage is no longer exclusively for heterosexuals. In a growing number of countries same-sex marriages are a fact of life. Whereas formerly marriage was for life and divorce was the exception, nowadays 25% (the Netherlands) to 50% (e.g. the United States and Britain) of marriages end in divorce. These developments indicate a change in the contractual value of marriage. The specifically legal agreements associated with marriage are subsumed in modified form in cohabitation contracts and partnership registration. In same-sex marriages the specific marriage contract is open to homosexual couples. Divorce, which terminates the marriage contract, is becoming increasingly frequent and easier.

Another value, closely related to this, is the reality of having children. Many couples start off cohabiting, then end up marrying after all. Often this is because of a desire to have children. On the other hand more and more children are born out of wedlock. The fact that homosexual couples can marry also makes the connection between marriage and procreation debatable\(^5\). Does marriage imply having or adopting children, or are the two issues unrelated?

\(^5\)It also raises the question of homosexual couples’ adoption rights.
A third value is sexuality. Prior to the sexual revolution the norm was that sexual relations are exclusively associated with marriage. Nowadays couples who wait to get married before having sex are a minority.

The final value is love. The position of love in relation to marriage has been subject to enormous change. It has only been relevant to marriage since the Industrial Revolution. The rise of modern industry and the concomitant introduction of wage labour meant that people were no longer dependent on their family for a livelihood, so that the choice of a partner became an individual affair. As a result physical and emotional attraction – that is to say, love – became an important, if not all-important, criterion. Nowadays the norm is that people enter into relationships and marry for love (Allan & Crow, 2001, p. 56–62).

To sum up: in Western society marriage (and relational life before marriage) has seen enormous shifts in values in such areas of marriage as the contract, having children, sexuality and love. Hence we identify four concepts for our study of conceptions of marriage:

1. Marriage was always regarded as a type of contract, an officially valid agreement stipulating the conditions and consequences of marriage. This contractual dimension is under pressure because extramarital cohabitation has become so popular. And in many cases a ‘marriage contract’ is not replaced by either a cohabitation contract or partnership registration at all.

2. For a long time the aim of marriage was to have children. In theology it was seen as the primary aim of marriage, and it still has a major place in the theology of marriage. This dimension is under pressure because of the growing number of children born out of wedlock and the fact that contraceptive measures allow people to choose whether or not to have children. In practice, however, having children remains a major reason for getting married (Garssen, 2001, p. 55–72).

3. Fundamentally marriage is the social regulation of sexual relations. In theology sexuality has always been regarded ambivalently (Lawler, 1987, p. 189) and was only permitted for married couples with a view to having children. It is questionable, however, in how far marriage still regulates people’s sex lives today, since sex and marriage are no longer exclusively linked.

4. A fairly recent development is that love plays a prominent role in marriage. Formerly economic, familial and status-related motives predominated. Nowadays love is the prime motive for embarking on a relationship or a marriage and to continue that relationship or marriage. Theologically, too, love has only come to be seen as the purpose of marriage since the 20th century and today mutual love is considered the primary goal of marriage.

1.6 Research Model

This section deals with our research model. We describe our conceptual, sampling and analytical models. As noted already, our research is interdisciplinary, which means that we use methods, techniques and concepts from both practical theology and the social sciences.

1.6.1 Conceptual model

The diagram below arranges the key concepts in our study in a heuristic model:
In section 5 we formulated four research questions. The first two concern the participants’ notions regarding church marriage rituals in that particular instance, and to what extent they subscribe to these ideas. The four concepts pertaining to ideas about church marriage rituals appear as dependent variables on the far right of the research model. The third research question relates to the measure in which discrepancies in the degree of endorsement of notions about church marriage rituals have to do with differences in religious socialisation. In other words, how do features of religious socialisation influence agreement with notions about church marriage rituals? Hence the religious socialisation concepts appear as independent variables on the left of the research model. The last research question concerns the extent to which agreement with conceptions of marriage explains the relation between religious socialisation and ideas about church marriage rituals. Hence the concepts of notions about marriage appear as an intervening variable in the middle (Davis, 1985, p. 20). The arrows in the model mean that we anticipate that religious socialisation will influence ideas about church marriage rituals. We also expect that this influence will be mediated, at least partly, by conceptions of marriage. Hence in addition to a direct arrow there is a second one running via conceptions of marriage to notions about church marriage rituals.

1.6.2 Sampling Design

To answer our research questions we decided on a survey design. On the basis of our concepts and the elaborations on these (see following chapters) we devised measuring instruments and compiled a questionnaire. The aim was to discover the views, not merely of pastors and bridal
1.6. RESEARCH MODEL

couples, but of all participants in Catholic wedding services. As noted already, secularisation has meant that not all the people participating in the ritual are church members. As a result our population extends beyond church members, Roman Catholics and even Christians. Our sample of 150 parishes was drawn randomly from a list of all Roman Catholic parishes in the Netherlands. In these parishes the first three couples married in the period January to July 2005 were approached to complete our questionnaire (most parishes had fewer than three weddings that whole year). Because we also wanted to learn the ideas of participants other than the couples themselves, the latter were asked to provide particulars of six wedding guests: three who are involved with a church and three who are not. This enabled us to measure the ideas of both people who are involved with a church and people who have no such involvement. As a result our research findings can be generalised to a population comprising all participants in Catholic marriage rituals in the year 2005.

1.6.3 Analysis design

Three types of statistical analyses were used in our study. To answer the question concerning notions about church marriage rituals and marriage we conducted a factor analysis. This enabled us to determine statistically to what extent our respondents shared the views we had identified. To determine the relation between features of religious socialisation and notions about church marriage rituals we used bivariate analyses. Finally, to establish in how far the relation between features of religious socialisation and notions about church marriage rituals can be explained by concepts of marriage we conducted multivariate regression analyses. These were based on four models. The four regression models each revealed the effect of the various characteristics of religious socialisation and concepts of marriage on the degree to which respondents agree with the relevant idea about church marriage rituals. As mentioned already, the characteristics of religiosity are the independent variables, notions about marital values are intervening variables and the measure of agreement with the notions about church marriage rituals is the dependent variable (Davis, 1985, p. 20).

The first regression model estimates the effect of religious socialisation by parents, seen as their church membership. The second model, in addition to socialisation by parents, also takes account of socialisation by the religious community as regards participation in religious life. Here we looked at the church membership of the respondent and her or his partner, the frequency of their church attendance and the importance the respondent attaches to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rites. The third model incorporates the impact of degree of conviction. First we examine religious salience, that is the relative importance of religious belief in the respondent’s life, followed by the strength of the person’s belief in God and an ultimate reality. The fourth model incorporates the effect of notions about the four marital values. These values are as follows:

1. Contract, variables being ecclesio-religious view, personal view, social view, exclusively legal view, and acceptability of other forms of cohabitation.

The method used is Principal Axis Factoring, applying an oblique rotation when the correlation between factors is .30 or higher. In other instances we used a varimax rotation. In one isolated case there was just one factor, hence no rotation was used.

The relations between the variables were expressed in etas for nominal variables and in Pearson’s r for metric variables.

We used theory-based Multiple Regression Analyses. To this end we applied the Enter method.
2. Having children, variables being religious task and social expectations.

3. Sexuality, variables being that premarital sex, homosexuality by nature and homosexual behaviour are acceptable.

4. Love, variables being self-effacing love, erotic love, love between friends and caring love.

Some features of religious socialisation were measured by way of nominal variables like church membership. For the regression analyses all nominal variables were dummified, that is, we chose a reference category such as that the respondent is a church member. Variables indicating that the respondent is not a member then obtain a beta coefficient expressing the difference from the reference category (respondent is a church member). All other variables were measured metrically, hence we were able to use standardised beta coefficients, which directly express the relative effect of the independent or intervening variable on the dependent variable.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The rest of this thesis is structured according to concepts relating to notions about church marriage rituals. Chapter 2 deals with the social goal of church marriage rituals, namely to what extent participants regard church marriage as a rite of passage or whether an alternative is needed. Chapter 3 looks into the temporal goal, namely to what extent the participants discern a change in the perspective on time: do they look at the relationship from an immanent conception of past and future, or from a transcendent position? Chapter 4 examines the form of church marriage rituals: its form, structure and attunement to participants in the ritual. Chapter 5 explores participants’ experience: the extent to which they feel affected by the various liturgical rites. The following questions are asked in each chapter:

1. What are participants’ notions about the concept under consideration?

2. In how far do participants agree with the concepts?

3. In how far do their ideas relate to religious socialisation?

4. In how far is this influence explicable in terms of participants’ conceptions of marriage?

The thesis ends with a synopsis of the conclusions, leading to a general discussion, questions for further research and some practical implications.
Chapter 2

Transition or confirmation: social goal of church marriage rituals

2.1 Introduction and research problem

Following Arnold van Gennep, a growing number of scholars of liturgy and ritual regard church marriage rituals as rites of passage (Michels, 2004), (Stevenson, 1987). In their view the couple makes a status transition in the course of the ritual. They are no longer members of the unmarried or single group. Bride and groom are detached from that group (separation rite), cross over to the married group (transitional rite) and are then incorporated into the married group (integration rite). However, as was pointed out in the first chapter, people’s ways of living together have changed dramatically since the 1960s. Following the sexual revolution, marriage is no longer the sole form of cohabitation: nowadays people can live together out of wedlock, with or without a cohabitation contract or partnership registration. Marriage has become just one way of regulating cohabitation (Thatcher, 1999, p.49). In addition people no longer get married right away. Usually marriage is preceded by a spell of cohabitation (Garssen, 2001, p. 9-16). In view of these changed practices, to what extent do church marriage rituals still effect and accompany a status transition?

This chapter deals with the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals still think that they make a status transition in the course of the ritual. First we consider Van Gennep’s classification of rites of passage with reference to some questions it raises. On the basis of these questions we formulate three research questions. In the third section we examine the research questions and elaborate them into hypotheses. Section four reports the measurements obtained from our sample in 2005. The fifth section gives the results of our statistical analysis of these measurements. First we determine in how far the concepts we identified are discernible in participants’ minds and to what extent they agree with them. This enables us to answer our first research question. Next we check which notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals correlate, and in the following subsection we look at correlations with characteristics of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage. In subsection five we determine which of these characteristics and concepts influence the degree of agreement with the various notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals. The section concludes with a comparison of notions of the social goal of church marriage rituals with characteristics of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage that influence those notions decisively. The final section contains tentative conclusions and proposals for further discussion and research.
2.2 Research questions

The anthropologist Arnold van Gennep studied various peoples, including the aboriginal population of Australia, the Toda in India and the Masai in Africa. He criticised the scholars of ritual of his time for studying rituals out of their original context. Van Gennep’s main contribution to anthropology and ritual studies was his classification of a particular kind of ritual (he uses the term ‘ceremonies’) on the basis of its patterns. These rituals mark status transitions in the lives of individuals and groups. He calls them rites of passage (Van Gennep, 1960, p. V–XIX).

According to Van Gennep people make various transitions in the course of their lives, such as geographical, social and psychological transitions. Geographical transitions entail crossing territorial boundaries; social transitions mean changing one’s social group; and psychological transitions have to do with existential crises (Snoek, 1987, p. 61). Most transitions can be classified in several categories. Van Gennep puts the accent on social transitions. In his view societies are characterised by stratification, that is division into different social groups. During their lifetimes people cross over from one social group to another.

Van Gennep maintains that modern Western society recognises only one social division: that between a profane group and a sacred group. These are subdivided into smaller groups. When people in the profane group change to a different subgroup, they have to meet certain economic and intellectual requirements. People in the sacred group can also change to another subgroup, but such changes are accompanied by special rituals. They make a status transition, which demands an intermediate phase because of the social division between sacred and profane. According to Van Gennep the sacred features far more prominently in what he calls less civilised societies. In these societies all transitions in human life entail interaction between sacred and profane, which requires special rituals to ensure a smooth transition from the point of view of both the individual and society. All these rituals follow the same pattern comprising rites of separation, rites of transition and rites of integration, albeit not to the same extent and with varying emphases. Separation rites sever people’s connection with their original group. Transitional rites are for those in an intermediate phase, expressing their ‘statuslessness’. Integration rites of accompany their incorporation into the new group (Van Gennep, 1960, p. 1–13), (Bell, 1997, p. 35–38).

As mentioned already, Van Gennep’s classification has been adopted and used by many researchers, not only in the field of anthropology but also in liturgical and ritual studies. Present-day rituals are classified as rites of passage, subdivided into separation rites, transitional rites and integration rites. However, it raises three problems. Firstly, it is not clear what is meant by the term ‘rite of passage’. Secondly, in how far is the term applicable to industrialised societies? Thirdly, to what extent does the sacred play the role that Van Gennep ascribes to it in secularised societies?

The first problem stems from Van Gennep’s ambivalent use of the term ‘rites of passage’. First he uses the term in two senses, sometimes referring to complete rituals, sometimes to their separate components (Snoek, 1987, p. 70–71). Secondly, it is not clear who is undergoing the ritual – the individual, the group or the bystanders. Thirdly, there could be diverse transitions involved: transitions in an individual life but also spatial transitions, for instance across national boundaries. It could be a temporal transition in a person’s life or seasonal changes. Finally, the structure of a rite of passage is unclear. Thus many scholars of liturgy and ritual claim that Van

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1Sacred is here used in the anthropological sense, that is as distinct from the mundane, often accompanied by a taboo
Gennep trichotomises these rites into separation rites, transition rites and integration rites. Van Gennep for his part does not insist that all three types of rites necessarily have to be included. Besides, each of the three types can in its turn be subdivided into separation, transition and integration rites. Because the term ‘rites of passage’ is not clearly explicated, it is questionable whether the concept is useful for liturgical studies.

The second problem concerns the applicability of Van Gennep’s classification to ritual in industrialised societies. Van Gennep maintains that rites of passage occur in present-day Western cultures as well. He believes that only one social division remains in ‘modern’ cultures, namely that between a sacred and a profane group (Van Gennep, 1960, p. 1). Does this social analysis of contemporary Western society hold water? Although there are signs that social stratification is declining in these societies, there is no proof that all stratification other than that between sacred and profane has vanished. But there is another difference between pre-industrial and industrialised societies, namely the nature of social mobility or status transitions. Status may be defined as the totality of rights and duties associated with a social position (Linton, 1936, p. 113). When people avail themselves of these rights or observe the duties, they assume a social role. One can distinguish between ascription and achievement of status. A status is ascribed to persons on the basis of attributes beyond their control, such as gender, skin colour and birth. People achieve status on the basis of attributes for which they are responsible, such as learnt knowledge and skills. All societies have social positions with ascribed status and social positions with status that can be achieved (Linton, 1936, p. 113–115, Schilderman, 2005). In pre-industrial societies most statuses are ascribed, that is to say, social mobility is low. Industrialised societies, on the other hand, are characterised by much higher social mobility and a concomitant increase in achieved social status. As modernisation proceeds, the incidence of achieved statuses will increase (P. M. De Graaf & Luijkx, 1992, p. 412–414). There are even authors who classify Western society as postmodern and claim that there are no longer any ascribed statuses at all. There is no such thing as social position. People assume different social roles depending on their needs and shed them as easily. Everything is contingent, which does not mean that they no longer have a say in their lives but rather that they are able to switch roles as they please and make choices or reverse them (Bauman, 1996, p. 49–58).

Because Van Gennep’s social analysis of present-day Western society is rejected by the aforementioned literature, we shall not dwell on it. Our question in relation to marriage is whether couples in industrialised societies still make a status transition. Are they ascribed a new social position, or do they achieve it in various phases (by entering into a relationship and living together) (Kuschel, 1993, p. 107–109)? Are they in a new position vis-à-vis one another or also vis-à-vis their social environment? And if there is no status transition, we could ask to what extent marriage rituals in present-day Western society are to be considered rites of passage, that is rituals effecting and accompanying a status transition. If church marriage rituals do not accompany a status transition, what is their social goal?

A third problem attached to Van Gennep’s classification is the role of the sacred. According to him every major transition entails interaction between the sacred and the profane. The sacred should be understood in an anthropological sense, an existential dimension fraught with taboos. The sacred is a different world, separate from day-to-day reality. According to Assmann, (1991, p. 13–30) mundane reality is the sphere of contingency, imperfection, meaninglessness and routine. Its antithesis is the feast. Feasts are not chance events but are stage-managed according to a script. They entail rituals and are characterised by exuberance and abundant meaning and emotion. During feasts the mundane is disrupted and there is scope for the other world, the
sacred, the source of meaning. A marriage ritual is such a feast, in which, in Assman’s view, the ordinary temporal perspective makes way for a mythical one\(^2\). But do people in present-day Western society, secularised as it is, experience the sacred? With each new generation the number of church members decreases (Felling et al., 2000, p. 67–69). Fewer people participate in religious practices like church services and personal prayer (Voas, 2004) and faith in a personal God or an ultimate reality is declining (N. D. De Graaf & Te Grotenhuis, 2003, p. 52–57). Over the past fifty years the number of people in Western society who had a religious upbringing, are members of religious institutions, participate in religious feasts and celebrations or believe in a religious reality has decreased sharply. Within the Christian group, too, religious awareness has changed. Against this background the question arises whether participants in church marriage rituals experience an irruption of the sacred in mundane reality. To what extent is their conception of marriage rituals influenced by whether or not they were brought up religiously, are members of religious institutions, participate in religious feasts and services, and believe in a religious reality? In short, is there a connection between notions about the experience of a transcendent world in relation to status transitions and the extent to which people have been religiously socialised?

Religious socialisation can also influence conceptions of marriage as such. Christianity, for instance, assigns marriage a more or less exclusive position. Officially the Roman Catholic Church considers it to be the only institution in which a man and a woman can live together, exercise their sexuality and have children. If people assign marriage an exclusive position, they are more likely to believe that bridal couples make a status transition. After all, in terms of Christian tradition they are making a great change. The moment they get married they may live together, have sexual relations and have children. Hence we need to take a look at people’s conceptions of marriage per se.

In this chapter we deal with all these questions from the perspective of participants in marriage rituals. They include everybody attending the ritual, bridal couples and wedding guests alike. We confine ourselves to marriage rituals of the Roman Catholic Church. To sum up, we explore the following four questions:

1. What notions do participants in church marriage rituals have about the social goal of the ritual?
2. To what extent do they agree with these notions?
3. To what extent do different notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals relate to differences in religious socialisation?
4. To what extent can a relation to religious socialisation be explained by different conceptions of marriage?

### 2.3 Theories and hypotheses

To answer our four research questions we first have to identify the relevant concepts. First we look into our conceptualisation of the goal of marriage rites. Here we distinguish between the marriage ritual as a transitional ritual, following Van Gennep, and as a confirmatory ritual. Then

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\(^2\)See chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of Assmann’s ideas on the everyday and mythical temporal perspectives.
we turn to the way religious socialisation can influence people’s ideas about the goal of church marriage rituals. Finally we consider our conceptualisation of ideas about marriage and how we expect different conceptions of marriage to explain the relation between religious socialisation and notions of the social goal of church marriage rituals.

2.3.1 Social goal of church marriage rituals

The marriage ritual as a transitional ritual

According to Van Gennep the bridal couple make a status transition during the marriage ritual. He maintains that when they get married at least one of the partners changes her or his family, home and environment and often the couple set up house on their own. The ritual could cover a lengthy period, since marriage greatly influences many people, hence the status transition is quite radical. In pre-industrial cultures the ritual process does not take just one day but can continue for several months or even years (Van Gennep, 1960, p. 116–145).

In this chapter we confine ourselves to Roman Catholic marriage rituals. The term ‘rites of passage’ derives from ritual studies. How relevant is it to present-day liturgical studies? Van Gennep’s classification of rites of passage has been adopted and applied to church marriage rituals by many liturgical scholars. In addition Catholic theological discourse on marriage includes the notion of a status transition. Until well into the 20th century Catholic marriage theology interpreted marriage as the creation of an ontological bond between the partners. Two elements are important: marriage is a sacrament, and it is indissoluble. We shall examine these two elements below.

In theology the interpretation of marriage as a sacrament evolved gradually. It stems from Augustine’s rendering of the Greek mysterion in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians (5:32) with the Latin word sacramentum. Until the 12th century the word ‘sacrament’ had no strictly defined meaning. All kinds of rituals were called sacraments. Still, there was a difference between baptism and the eucharist on the one hand, and other rituals. In due course other special rituals were singled out. In the case of marriage there was no uniform theory. To the church fathers and early scholastics marriage did have special status, but it could not be a sacrament like baptism and the eucharist because of its explicit connection with sexuality. In the 12th century theologians set out to define the concept ‘sacrament’. On the basis of Ephesians 5:32 marriage could be regarded as a sign of Christ’s love for the church. In addition seven sacraments were considered preferable to six, since seven was a sacred number. For both these reasons marriage was included among sacraments in the strict sense (Brink, 1977, p. 89–98). Even after theologians had reached consensus on this most of them (e.g. Alexander of Hales and Hugh of St Victor) still felt that marriage was only a sign of grace, not the cause of it. Hence marriage did not confer grace. It was Albertus Magnus and his pupil Thomas Aquinas who held that marriage was a sacrament that conferred grace on the partners to live a virtuous and fruitful married life. In the 13th century the Council of Lyon (1245) declared marriage one of the seven sacraments (Schillebeeckx, 1963, p. 229–233), (Lawler, 1987, p. 187–196). Since by that time the marriage vows had come to occupy such a prominent place in liturgy, this is taken to be the date when marriage became a sacrament. Through the exchange of vows marriage became the sacrament in which God grants the couple grace for a holy and fruitful married life.

Closely linked to the notion that marriage was a sign and a cause of grace was the idea of

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3 See e.g. *To join together* (Stevenson, 1987)
its indissolubility. In the synoptic gospels (Mt 19:3-12/Mark 10:1-12/Luke 16:18) divorce is condemned, although Matthew 19:3-12 makes an exception in the case of divorce because of adultery. The fathers of the Western and Eastern church always interpreted this as an imperative: marriage may not be dissolved. Following Thomas Aquinas, Western theologians held that outwardly (accidens) a sacrament was a sign, but inwardly (substans) it had a distinct effect. Outwardly the fact that two people were married was not apparent, apart from the wedding rings. Yet at a deeper level they were one. That is called an ontological bond. Nothing on earth can dissolve that bond once bride and groom have given their assent and had sexual intercourse. By celebrating the sacrament of marriage the couple are indissolubly joined.

Theoretically the notion of the wedding ceremony as the creation of an ontological bond may be considered a transcendent interpretation of the marriage ritual as a status transition. The couple acquire a new status in that henceforth they can no longer be separated from each other.

Apart from this notion of a status transition through divine agency, there are ritual scholars who hold that another (non-divine) agency can effect a transition via the marriage ritual. These scholars maintain that rituals have a social function. They base this on Emile Durkheim’s idea that religion is a system of ideas and practices that sacralise the social structure and community ties. Rituals cause the community to gather and project sacred symbols which represent that community. The transcendent in effect symbolises society (Bell, 1997, p. 24). Religion legitimises social cohesion. Rituals, including marriage rituals, can have such a socialising function. It could well be that they do fulfil that function for many participants in marriage rituals, seen in the context of the highly secularised Dutch society (see chapter 1). Many people attending Catholic marriage rituals probably do so primarily because they have ties with the marriage partners and not, or only secondarily, because it is a church marriage ritual. Hence for some participants in Catholic marriage rituals the social goal of the ritual may well be immanent rather than transcendent. In that case the status transition is not effected by the transcendent but by the social environment. It is an immanent status transition, not a transcendent one. God does not transform the couple’s relationship into an ontological bond, but something in their relationship changes because they are making their vows in the presence of their social environment. A private promise between the partners can be broken fairly easily, but when one pledges fidelity in front of one’s circle of relatives and friends it becomes more difficult. Hence the presence of the social environment at church marriage rituals imparts permanence to the relationship.

The difference between a transcendent and an immanent transition lies in the fact that in the first case God transforms the relationship and in the second this is done by the people around the couple. We call the first concept a transcendent transition and the second an immanent transition. In both cases the relationship changes into something ‘bigger’, in that it acquires permanence by virtue of something extrinsic to the partners, namely God or the social environment. Hence we distinguish between two dimensions of participants’ notions about church marriage rituals as transitional rituals:

1. transcendent transitional ritual: in the church marriage ritual God transforms the partners’ relationship into an ontological bond

2. immanent transitional ritual: the presence of the couple’s social environment at the church marriage ritual transforms their relationship into a lasting union
Marriage rituals as confirmatory rituals

In section 2 we explained the difference between achieved status and ascribed status. This also applies to marriage. The Industrial Revolution changed society enormously. In agrarian society several generations of a family lived together in order to jointly earn a livelihood. Marriage was pre-eminently an agreement between two families that influenced the entire clan. The Industrial Revolution not only meant that the majority of the population moved to the cities to work in factories, but as a result of the wage labour system they were no longer economically dependent on the extended family. The latter was broken up and made way for a family comprising two adults and a number of children. Marriage was no longer an agreement between two families regarding a man and a woman. People could decide for themselves whom to marry. This gave rise to the nuclear family (Kaa & Lesthaege, 1986, p. 9–12).

Nowadays people choose their own partners and decide what kind of relationship they will have with the person. As a rule there is a period of dating and getting to know each other. Then they have sex for the first time, and spend nights and go on holiday together. If the relationship lasts, they live together and in the end they may get married. Marriage is often seen as stabilising the relationship and a condition for having children (Garssen, 2001, p. 3–43). During the period that the marriage is evolving the partners proceed to work out their rights and duties towards each other and their environment. The social environment does not ascribe married status to the partners Ð they achieve it in their own way and at their own pace.

Can this evolutionary process still be interpreted as a status transition? Are modern marriage rituals still rites of passage? If there is a status transition, does it occur during the marriage ritual or does it start well before that? In addition the demarcation of social status has blurred. Societies are no longer divided into married and single people. Can a couple living together be regarded as two single people? Hence we must ask whether the marriage ritual still effects a status transition implying a change of social position. If many people marry because they see marriage as a way of stabilising their relationship, it means that the ritual does not change anything but in fact confirms something: the permanent cohabitation of the partners. If so, the marriage ritual is not to be regarded as a status transition but rather as a confirmation of the couple’s status. First we discuss a theological view of marriage as the confirmation of an existing, divinely established love relationship between the partners. Then we consider marriage as a confirmation of the partners’ love relationship by the social environment.

Can church marriage rituals be regarded as a confirmation of status in Catholic theology? Until the 1960s it was interpreted as the creation of an ontological bond. Since the age of scholasticism this was never questioned in Catholic discourse, although theologians occupied themselves with the conditions for the origin of that indissoluble bond. Ever since the end of the Roman empire it had not been clear when husband and wife were actually married. Theologians worked hard to define these conditions more exactly so as to reduce the possibility of clandestine marriages and marriages whose validity was questionable. This triggered a lengthy process of legalising marriage (Lawler, 1993, p. 62–65, Lawler, 2005, p. 76–78, 80–81, Schillebeeckx, 1963, p. 246–255). The process came to an end with pope Pius XI’s encyclical Casti Conubii in 1930. In this encyclical Pius XI affirmed the legal framework of marriage as a contract for the purpose of procreating and raising children, mutual assistance by spouses and a remedy for concupiscence (remedium concupiscientiae). To this the pope added that the crux of marriage was love and intimacy between spouses. Essentially it was a deep emotional commitment that seeks to express itself in deeds (Lawler, 1993, p. 67–68).

Two German theologians pursued this approach further: Dietrich von Hildebrand and Her-
bert Doms. Von Hildebrand argued that love was the real point and primary goal of marriage. Marriage was a relationship based on mutual love, in which the other is the object of total love to whom you give yourself unconditionally. That makes marriage the most intimate form of human fellowship. It has three basic elements: love, persons and sexuality. The three elements are expressive of the human person: the *imago Dei*, a complete human being, intentional and transcendent by virtue of her rationality and freedom. Via their rationality and freedom, human beings can transcend themselves and give themselves to another/Another who is valued in his own right. The human being is always either male or female, hence a sexual person. Sexuality is the intimate side that the person can reveal to the other. That happens in conjugal love (Arjonillo Jr., 1998, p. 62–110).

Herbert Doms also stressed the importance of conjugal love for marriage, but he disagreed fundamentally with Von Hildebrand. In his view theologians like Von Hildebrand misunderstood the church’s tradition: conjugal love had always been the core of marriage. His claim rested on his concept of conjugal love as living in communion. To him this included mutual assistance between partners, which had been regarded as the purpose of marriage ever since Tertullian’s day. To Doms it was a matter of communion between two persons. He defined a human person as a physical and spiritual being that is always embodied in the form of one of the two genders: male or female. A human being is a soul that has a body as its tool, and is able to understand the values of the world and discern and respect its laws. Hence the communion of husband and wife is based on their sexuality, in which they give themselves to each other totally. The sexual aspect of husband and wife permeates their whole being and demands that they commit and attune their lives wholly to each other. Together husband and wife form an image of the triune God: husband as Father and Son, wife as Holy Spirit. Hence the meaning of marriage is not love (in itself), nor procreation nor mutual help, but being two-in-one, the existential fellowship of two people that constitute a union (Arjonillo Jr., 1998, p. 134–165), (Ratzinger, 1969, p. 103–108).

As a result of these developments the one-sided approach to marriage from a purely legal perspective was augmented with a personal perspective⁴ In his *Huwelijk. Aardse werkelijkheid en heils mysterie* (Marriage. Earthly reality and salvific mystery) (1963) and his lectures Schillebeeckx adopts the personal perspective. In his view industrialisation and urbanisation have so changed the form of marriage and family life that marriage has lost all its functions and is thrown back on itself. Hence marriage as such raises the question of the personal ‘inside’ of conjugal life (1963, p. 16–20). In his second series of lectures in 1966 Schillebeeckx proposed an anthropological basis for the sacrament of marriage, which he assigned priority over the legal conditions for a valid marriage. According to Schillebeeckx God has been graciously present in the world ever since creation. Celebrating the sacrament makes that grace explicit. In the sacra-

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⁴ Although Von Hildebrand and Doms largely dispensed with this judicial approach, the council fathers of Vatican II tried to reach a compromise between the two perspectives in *Gaudium et Spes* (Arjonillo Jr., 1998, p. 257–336). It is a moot point whether the compromise was effective, however, since the two perspectives were simply juxtaposed without interrelating them, which created and still creates interpretive problems. On the one hand the council heeds the theological summons to stress the personal aspect of marriage as a covenant that establishes an intimate existential union of conjugal love, primarily aimed at the well-being of the spouses. On the other hand this covenant is viewed in traditional terms, since its second purpose is to have and raise children, and its third focus is the community. Marriage and conjugal love are naturally ordered with a view to creating a family, in which it reaches its consummation. The marital covenant makes the partners one flesh. Through their intimate union and cooperation husband and wife help each other. Ultimately marriage is not aimed exclusively at procreation, but also at mutual love between the spouses (*Gaudium et Spes*, Nr. 48–50)
ment the God-given grace, which has been implicitly present in the world since its creation, is consciously celebrated and confessed. In that sacrament the love between the marriage partners becomes a sign of God’s love. Here human and divine love intermingle (Schillebeeckx, 1966, 1967).

This anthropological perspective on sacraments generally and marriage in particular has had a major influence on modern sacramental theology and liturgical studies. In the 1980s Louis-Marie Chauvet also broke away from extreme judicial and instrumental sacramental theology. In his Symbole et Sacrement: une Relecture Sacramentelle de l’Existence (1987) he calls existing sacramental theology onto-theology. He believes that traditional sacramental theology instrumentalises God in that the ritual enforces grace. In Chauvet’s view grace should be construed differently. God-given grace is like giving and receiving a gift. A gift symbolises the giver to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the nature of the relationship. Presenting a gift is a beautiful moment in interpersonal relations, which are already marked by ambivalence. In human interaction people experience both what they have in common and ways in which they differ, together with the distance that creates. The beauty that the gift brings about Chauvet calls its gratuitous aspect. Sacraments, too, have the character of a gift. However, they are characterised not only by gratuitousness but also by gratuity. As a rule gifts entail an obligation, require a counter-gift. The gratuity of sacraments means that they are gifts of grace. They are completely free from obligation and wholly unexpected (Chauvet, 1995, p. 446), (Scheer, 1996, p.133). Sacraments celebrate God’s grace as his disinterested, free coming to human beings, which invites them to surrender themselves to God. God’s coming is not the result of a liturgical act but has been happening from the start of creation, signified by his acts in the history of Israel and his incarnation in Jesus Christ. It is a free, non-obligatory mutual give and take, in which God’s gift does not crush or silence us but invites us to respond through our actions. God’s free, gratuitous coming, his grace, is symbolically expressed in the sacraments (Chauvet, 1995, p. 490–492), (Scheer, 1996, p. 123–127).

Applied to the sacrament of marriage, Chauvet’s approach implies that it does not create an ontological bond as a result of observing the prescribed rituals. Celebration of the sacrament of marriage has no effect but is expressive of God’s gratuitous coming to human beings. Chauvet bases this on the notion of the God of the covenant. God entered into a covenant with Israel out of grace. That covenant is expressed in marriage. The New Covenant or Testament signifies God’s gratuitous coming in his Son Jesus Christ. Christ’s love for the church is expressed in the bond between husband and wife, a bond God established in the beginning when he created human beings (Chauvet, 1976, p. 99–100).

Schillebeeckx’s and Chauvet’s theology makes it possible to interpret the marriage ritual as a transcendent confirmation of status. God does not alter the couple’s relationship but confirms it as a bond of love. Chauvet sees marriage as a bond between husband and wife that God instituted at the time of creation. In the marriage ritual of this man and this woman he confirms that he has destined them for each other since the time of creation. Thus the ritual refers to a transcendent reality, which transposes the origin and destiny of marriage to a time other than the present.

As in the case of status transitions, we can distinguish between a transcendent and an immanent variant of status confirmation. Because of secularisation we can no longer expect all participants to assign the marriage ritual transcendent meaning. Quite possibly it is given primarily immanent significance. Immanent status confirmation implies confirmation by the social community. In the case of marriage rituals that community comprises the couple’s friends and
relatives. The partners see the marriage ritual as a confirmation of their relationship by the people around them. Hence the marriage ritual is the social environment’s confirmation of their relationship. That means the origin and destiny of the relationship is confined to present social reality.

Hence there are two conceptions of church marriage rituals: as a transcendent and as an immanent confirmation. We treat participants’ notions about church marriage rituals as confirmatory rituals in terms of these two dimensions:

1. transcendent confirmatory ritual: in church marriage rituals God confirms that he created man and woman for each other

2. immanent status confirmation: in church marriage rituals the couple’s social environment confirms their relationship

2.3.2 Religious socialisation

We have now discussed two dimensions of church marriage rituals as transitional rituals and two dimensions of church marriage rituals as confirmatory rituals. To what extent can differences in people’s ideas about the social goal of church marriage rituals be attributed to differences in religious socialisation? According to Emile Durkheim all social groups and societies make a distinction between sacred and profane. The sacred is the ideal, protected and isolated by prohibitions. The profane encompasses everything that is declared taboo and has to be kept away from the sacred (1912, p. 40, 41). The group’s religion is a sort of collective consciousness, a body of ideas, images and moral obligations pertaining to the sacred shared by all members of the community by way of communal rituals (1912, p. 422–424). The collective consciousness is the mortar of the social community. Individual members do not share this consciousness to the same degree, but the more integrated they are with the community, the more strongly they subscribe to its norms and values. That is because such people have more frequent contact with fellow members of the community who share the relevant collective consciousness. Community members function as socialising actors to each other and the more contact they have, the more thorough the socialisation and the degree to which they endorse the various ideas, images and moral duties (1951, p. 159, 160, 169, 170). People encounter various socialising actors in the course of their lives. Here we confine ourselves to religious socialisation by parents, the socialising community to which the participants belong, and the one to which their partners (where applicable) belong. Durkheim conceives of religious socialisation as a linear process. This notion of socialisation has come under fire and it now tends to be interpreted as an interactive process (Bouw & Kruithof, 1993, Hurrelmann, 1986). At all events, our research is confined to these actors’ influence on our respondents.

1. Respondent’s parents as socialising actors:

   The first socialising actors are parents. Their ideas may concur with those of church leaders, more specifically the notion that church marriage rituals involve a transcendent status transition or confirmation. Children whose parents don’t regard themselves as members of a church or religious community will have less exposure to this idea than those whose parents are church members. The effect of religious socialisation will also be less pronounced if only one parent belongs to a church or religious community. Hence our hypotheses regarding notions about marriage rituals and religious socialisation read as follows:
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(a) Children from homes where both parents belong to a church or religious community agree more strongly with the idea that marriage rituals involve a transcendent status transition or confirmation than those who come from homes where one or both parents are non-members.

(b) Children from homes where one parent belongs to a church or religious community subscribe to this idea more strongly than those from homes whether neither parent is a member.

(c) Children from homes where neither parent belongs to a church or religious community agree more strongly with the notion that marriage rituals involve an immanent status transition or confirmation than those from homes where one or both parents are members.

The second socialising actor is the religious community as a social network. Three aspects are pertinent: the respondent’s church membership, integration with the religious community in the form of participation in religious life, and integration in the form of the strength of the respondent’s faith. Indicators of integration in the form of participation in religious life are frequency of church attendance, church involvement and importance attached to participation in transitional church rituals. Indicators of integration in the form of strength of belief are religious salience (the importance of religion in the respondent’s life) and the respondent’s certainty of the existence of God or an ultimate reality.

2. Respondent’s church membership:
People who are members of a religious community will have greater exposure to the values and ideas of that community than non-members. Hence our hypothesis is people who regard themselves as members of a church or religious community will agree more strongly with the idea that church marriage rituals are transcendent transitional or confirmatory rituals than those who are non-members.

3. Integration in the form of participation in religious life:
Membership of a church or religious community is not the only factor influencing people’s values and views. The degree of integration with that community is another major influence. We have indicated two forms of integration that we use as yardsticks of degree of integration. Below are the characteristics of integration in the form of participation in religious life and the concomitant hypotheses:

(a) Frequency of church attendance:
The more frequently people attend church, the more strongly they will endorse the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual. The greater their involvement with their church or religious community, the more they will agree with the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual.

(b) Church involvement:
The greater the involvement of the person’s partner with a church or religious community, the more he or she will agree with the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual.
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(c) Importance attached to participation in church transitional rituals:

The more importance people attach to participation in church transitional rituals, the more strongly they will endorse the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual.

4. Integration in the form of strength of faith:

We have dealt with degree of integration with the religious community in the form of participation in religious life. Integration with the religious community can also be assessed in terms of strength of belief. Here we have two hypotheses:

(a) Religious salience:

The greater the role of religion or worldview in a person’s life, the more strongly he or she will endorse the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual.

(b) Certainty of the existence of God or an ultimate reality:

The more certain a person is of the existence of an ultimate reality, the more strongly he or she will endorse the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual.

5. Partner’s church membership:

The greater the number of people in the person’s social network that belong to the same church or religious community, the more plausible the church or religious community’s ideas become. This is because they are confronted with those beliefs and values more often. In that social network the partner is a key character (Te Grotenhuis & Scheepers, 2001, p. 598). Hence we hypothesise that someone whose partner is a member of a church or religious community will agree more strongly with the view that the church marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual than a person whose partner is a non-member.

2.3.3 Four conceptions of marriage

Introduction

In the first chapter we explained briefly how religious socialisation can have both a direct and an indirect effect on people’s ideas about church marriage rituals. In subsection 2.3.2 we looked more closely at our expectations regarding the direct relation between religious socialisation and notions about church marriage rituals. The more thorough people’s religious socialisation, the more they will agree with the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent transitional or confirmatory ritual. But religious socialisation may affect people’s ideas about church marriage rituals indirectly. In that case the influence would not emanate from the person’s religious socialisation generally but more specifically from her or his conception of marriage. Notions about marriage in Western Europe are very much determined by Christianity. The specifically Christian view of marriage is that it is an institution in which husband and wife live together, realise their sexuality and have children. The more people subscribe to this view, the more they will be inclined to ascribe a different status to married people and to regard church marriage rituals as transitional rites. The more thorough their Christian socialisation, the more they may be expected to endorse the Christian conception of marriage, which could greatly influence their views of church marriage rituals.
Because of secularisation and individualisation, however, this expectation is open to question. Secularisation has meant that fewer and fewer people are religiously socialised with the result that fewer and fewer people share the traditional Christian conception of marriage. In addition individualisation, more especially privatisation, has led to a multiplicity of notions about cohabitation and marriage irrespective of the degree of religious socialisation. So even within the group of people who have had a Christian socialisation diverse conceptions of marriage may coexist. Accordingly our study also seeks to determine in how far the relation between religious socialisation generally and notions about marriage rituals is explained by conceptions of marriage. In chapter 1 we briefly introduced four conceptions of marriage. They are: a contract, having children, sexuality and love. Below we elaborate on them and show that these four matrimonial values are tied up with the Christian conception of marriage. In Western Europe, we have said, notions about marriage are very much influenced by Christianity, since the church has progressively taken charge of the institution of marriage ever since the Middle Ages. The Christian ideal for marriage is a lifelong union between husband and wife, in which sexual intercourse is permitted with a view to having children. In the first centuries of the Christian era there was no distinction between Christian and non-Christian marriage. Only after the separation of church and state did marriage again become the responsibility of the civil authority (in most countries). But until the 1970s the churches’ moral influence continued unabated.

The late 1960s and early 1970s, however, saw massive social changes as a result of emancipation movements by various groups such as feminists, human rights activists and the gay movement (Aulette, 1994, p. 11–14). Marriage and the family appeared to be a straitjacket, in which these groups felt oppressed and marginalised. Through their activities marriage and the family have become merely variant forms of cohabitation. Developments since the late 1960s are manifest in four notions. Whereas formerly marriage was for life and divorce was the exception, nowadays 25% to 50% of marriages end in divorce. Many couples end up not marrying at all but settle for a cohabitation contract, partnership registration or simply living together. Neither is marriage reserved for heterosexual couples only. Same-sex marriage is a fact of life in a growing number of countries. These developments indicate a changed interpretation of the contractual dimension of marriage. People may have a different view of this dimension than that propounded by Christian tradition.

A second matrimonial value relates closely to the first. Christian marriage is aimed (inter alia) at having children and it is the institution in which procreation is permitted. In practice many couples first live together and end up marrying all the same. In many cases this relates to a desire for children (Garssen, 2001, p. 55–72). At the same time more and more children are

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5This applies particularly to present-day socialisation by the religious community and the partner; religious socialisation by parents has declined less markedly.

6We use the term ‘values’ because they relate to a Christian conception of the good life.

7Brink .(1977, p. 70–75) discerns four phases. In the first phase, until the 2nd century, marriage was a secular affair, although the church was involved in the actual marriage ceremony and especially the betrothal. In the second phase, until the early 5th century, it became customary to proceed from the home marriage ceremony to the church. There the newlyweds take their first communion as a married couple, the marriage features in the intercessions and at the end of the service the couple receive a blessing. In the third phase, until the 9th century, both clergy and secular officials attended the betrothal as witnesses and on the wedding day there was a special service, the wedding mass. In the fourth phase the actual marriage ceremony was conducted by the church. It became mandatory to have the marriage blessed, mainly to prevent elopements. The Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals played a major role in this. Once the marriage ceremony was conducted by the church, it paved the way for a sacramental interpretation.

8The Roman Catholic and some Reformed churches still adhere to this.
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born out of wedlock. The fact that gay couples can also marry makes the connection between marriage and procreation even more debatable. Does marriage imply that one has to have or may adopt children or are they separate issues?

The third value is sexuality. In Christianity there has been a long discourse on the purpose of marriage, with the church fathers prioritising procreation. In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul writes that, although celibacy is preferable, marriage is permissible to prevent immorality (1 Cor. 7:1-7). Although Christian theologians have always refrained from explicit condemnation of corporeality and sexuality (mainly in reaction to Gnosticism), their attitude towards sexuality remained ambivalent until the 20th century because of the connection with lust (Lawler, 1987, p. 187–191). Hence one goal of marriage was to control lustfulness (remedium concupiscientiae) and sexual intercourse was restricted to marriage. Until the sexual revolution the social norm was that sexual relations were associated exclusively with marriage. Nowadays couples who wait to get married before they have sex are a minority.

The fourth value is love. Although Christianity in general assigned love an important, if not all-important, place it was not relevant to marriage for a long time. Conjugal love did not become a goal of marriage until the early 20th century (Arjonillo Jr., 1998, p. 62–110, 134–165). In society it was only related to marriage after the Industrial Revolution. Before that people relied on familial cooperation for their livelihood, with the result that the family had a say in the choice of the partner. After all, it could directly affect the entire family’s quality of life. With the rise of modern industry wage labour became the main source of income and people no longer depended on the family to earn their keep. As a result individuals could pick their partners without making it a family issue. This meant that physical and emotional attraction – that is to say, love – became an important, if not overriding, criterion. In Western society the dominant norm is to have relationships and marry for love (Allan & Crow, 2001, p. 56–62).

To sum up: in Western society relational life and marriage have changed enormously in regard to marriage as a contract, having children, sexuality and love. When it comes to notions about these four values, we expect the contract, having children and sexuality to have an explanatory effect on the relation between views of the social goal of church marriage rituals and religious socialisation.

A contract

The contractual dimension of marriage has changed greatly in that various alternative forms of cohabitation other than marriage have become customary. Since the 1970s it has become acceptable to live together out of wedlock (Kaa & Lesthaege, 1986, p. 12–24). In many countries (including the Netherlands) the civil authorities have introduced legal measures to protect unmarried couples and give them the same rights as married people. The fact that the civil authorities have legalised these alternative forms of cohabitation relates to the aforementioned new development of love as a factor in marriage. When economic necessity is no longer a mo-
tive for marriage and love becomes the prime reason, the overseers of the marriage vows also change. In the first place one gets married to a partner. The choice of a partner is the focus of marriage rituals (Allan & Crow, 2001, p. 56–62, Kaa & Lesthaege, 1986, p. 9–12). The history of marriage records various marriage vow overseers. The earliest one was the social environment, the family, that decided who married whom and with which family they will be connected. The civil authority was another important overseer, since it stipulated the conditions and consequences of marriage. But that was not always the case. Since the Middle Ages the Catholic Church has claimed authority over marriage, since it was a sacrament and therefore a ‘divine matter’. The Roman Catholic Church still has its own matrimonial law, which can even decree that a union that has been dissolved by a civil court remains in force. Following from the church as a marriage vow overseer, one could also regard God as an overseer. A church marriage is always in facie Dei et Ecclesiae⁴. Couples make their vows before God and ask for his blessing. We have already mentioned the partner, who nowadays is the person one primarily marries. Although government creates the legal framework and the church is where one marries before God and all one’s relatives and friends, one could nonetheless regard marriage as primarily an affair between the two partners. Their marriage vows are addressed to each other, no external overseer is necessary (Witte, 1997, p. 5–10).

To sum up: we distinguish between the following five overseers of the marriage vows for the contractual aspect of marriage, which we use as dimensions to assess people’s notions in this regard:

1. Personal: marriage is primarily a matter between the partners.
2. Civil/judicial: marriage is primarily a matter for the civil authorities.
3. Religious: one gets married primarily before God.
4. Social: one gets married primarily before one’s social environment.
5. Ecclesiastic/judicial: one gets married primarily before the church.

The relative value that people attach to the different marriage vow overseers may influence their notions about the goal of marriage rituals. Our hypotheses are as follows:

6. (a) People who attach greater value to marriage before God or the church will agree more strongly with the view that the marriage ritual is a transcendent status transition or confirmation.
(b) When couples regard their marriage primarily as something between themselves they will be more inclined to see the marriage ritual as an immanent status transition or confirmation.
(c) When people regard their marriage primarily as something between them and their social environment they will be more inclined to see the marriage ritual as an immanent status transition or confirmation.
(d) When people regard their marriage primarily as something between them and the civil authority they will be more inclined to see the marriage ritual as an immanent status transition or confirmation.

⁴English: before God and the church
Apart from the five overseers there is another issue attached to the contractual side of marriage. After all, marriage is no longer the only way to live together. People can cohabit out of wedlock, with a partner of the same sex or in a commune. Here we distinguish between the following options:

(a) Cohabiting out of wedlock without children
(b) Deliberately becoming a single mother
(c) Cohabiting with a permanent partner of the same sex
(d) Cohabiting out of wedlock with their own children
(e) Living in a commune
(f) Cohabiting in or out of wedlock with a partner from a different ethnic group

The degree of acceptability of the alternative forms of cohabitation can also influence people’s notions about the goal of church marriage rituals. The less acceptable the alternatives to marriage, the more exclusive people will consider marriage to be and the more they will see the marriage ritual as a transitional ritual. Hence we hypothesise as follows:

7. (a) The less acceptable people consider alternative forms of cohabitation to be, the more they will subscribe to the view that church marriage rituals are transitional rituals.
(b) The more acceptable people consider alternative forms of cohabitation to be, the more they will subscribe to the view that church marriage rituals are confirmatory rituals.

**Having children**

As noted already, until the 1970s procreation was associated exclusively with marriage. Children born out of wedlock were a disgrace. Not only did married couples have an exclusive prerogative to have children; it was also expected of them. Since the early days of Christianity (Tertullian) marriage was aimed at having children (Thatcher, 1999, p. 132–142). But having many children was not a hallmark of Christian marriages only. Large families were also found in other settings. Demographers refer to the Malthusian fertility pattern, a lifestyle in which every fertile period in the wife’s cycle was utilised to conceive more children (Kaa & Lesthaege, 1986, p.9–12). The Industrial Revolution and the concomitant increase in wealth led to a decline in birth rates, but the real change came with the sexual revolution of the 1970s, especially when more and more women started taking contraceptive pills (Kaa & Lesthaege, 1986, p. 12–24). Since contraceptives are now widely used, pregnancy has become a matter of choice.

Many people still marry before or immediately after having a child. Apparently marriage is an important social and legal basis for safely starting a family (Garssen, 2001, p. 55-72). To what extent do people still believe that having children is part of marriage? Here we distinguish between a religious task and social expectation. Christian marriage, after all, was aimed at procreation. Although Vatican II prioritised mutual love between spouses (Gaudium et Spes, nos. 48-50), the next priority was still to have children. As mentioned already, Christians were not, and are not, the only ones to link procreation with marriage. In non-Christian environments, too, couples are expected to have children within a few years of getting married. Hence we examine notions about having children with reference to the following dimensions:
2.3. THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

1. Religious task: married couples are commanded by God to try and have children

2. Social expectation: the couple’s environment expects them to have children

We also expect people who associate procreation exclusively with marriage to be more inclined to regard the marriage ritual as a status transition, since it marks a major change. Once married, the couple have the task of trying to conceive children. Thus people who view procreation as a divine injunction are more likely to see the marriage ritual as a transcendent status transition, since the injunction comes from God. Hence our hypotheses read as follows:

8. (a) The more people believe that God has given married people a task to try and have children, the more they will tend to see the marriage ritual as a transcendent status transition.

(b) The more people feel that the social environment expects married people to try to have children, the more they will tend to see the marriage ritual as an immanent status transition.

Sexuality

As pointed out already, sexuality was treated with mistrust in theological discourse. Its connection with concupiscence and corporeality made it suspect. Marriage was the institution in which sexual activity was permitted, hence it became the remedium concupiscientiae, the way to curb sexual desire (Hill, 1993, p. 4). Hence sexuality and marriage were exclusively linked, though there were historical eras when betrothal was considered sufficient (see footnote 9). Since the sexual revolution of the 1970s sexual relations are no longer the prerogative of married people only. Yet free sex, in the sense of sleeping with whoever comes along, is not acceptable. As a rule people practise serial monogamy, that is, an exclusive relationship with just one partner. Then sex is permissible without having to get married. Only once that relationship has ended can they start a new one and resume sexual relations (Garssen, 2001, p. 3–29). The question is to what extent premarital and extramarital sex is acceptable. Hence we explore notions about sexuality in terms of the following dimensions:

1. Premarital sex is unacceptable
2. Premarital sex is acceptable.
3. Extramarital sex is unacceptable
4. Extramarital sex is acceptable.

If people believe they can only have sex after marriage, they will be more inclined to see marriage as a transition than otherwise. Hence our hypothesis reads:

9. The more people believe that they cannot have premarital or extramarital sex, the more likely they are to see the marriage ritual as a transcendent or immanent status transition.

In addition homosexuality has become more public. As part of the sexual revolution the gay movement has actively promoted the emancipation of homosexuals. Hence apart from the acceptability of premarital and extramarital sex, we also investigate the acceptability of homosexuality, male or female. Here it should be noted that many churches, including the
Roman Catholic Church, officially condemn male homosexuality and lesbianism in the sense of homosexual practices (Roman Catholic Church) or in toto (some Protestant churches). When people feel strongly that homosexuality is unacceptable, they probably have a more religious and exclusive image of marriage as well, which will have repercussions for their notions about church marriage rituals. Hence our hypothesis reads:

10. The more strongly people feel that homosexuality is unacceptable, the more strongly they will endorse the view that church marriage rituals are transcendent transitional or confirmatory rites.

Love

We have said that love has only recently come to be a factor in marriage. Since people gained the freedom to choose their own partners, however, it has become the prime motivation for contracting or continuing a marriage. There are different conceptions of love: friendship, care (e.g. parental love), erotic love, love of the neighbour and love of God. The different conceptions of love can be classified according to two criteria, namely the relationship between the two people, and their distance from each other. The relationship between the two people may be reciprocal or non-reciprocal. As for the distance between the two, they may seek to reduce it to a minimum to the point of self-effacement, or they may try to maintain sufficient distance to preserve the self.

When two people have a reciprocal relationship in which they want minimum distance, we speak of erotic love, which can be physical or spiritual. The parties try to achieve union, in which the self is abrogated and they become one. Because this form of love is reciprocal, the other is assumed to want the same. Reciprocal love that does not include a desire to become one with the other is friendship: mutual affection with varying degrees of distance between the friends, but where neither strives for union. In non-reciprocal forms of love where distance is kept to a minimum we speak of self-effacing love. There is no aspiration to union because the love is not reciprocal. One partner gives his or her all to the other without expecting the beloved to do the same. It could lead to total self-sacrifice in the sense of self-effacement. This sort of love characterises God’s love for humankind, as when Jesus gave his life on the cross, but it can also refer to Christians’ love of God in certain cases, especially those who were subsequently declared martyrs. When the distance between the partners remains sufficient to preserve the self, we speak of caring love. There is no reciprocity, but both selves are preserved. Here one thinks of parents’ care for their children, or children’s care for elderly parents.

The four forms of love were analysed by C. S. Lewis. In his own words, he made the fourfold distinction on the basis of Christian tradition: agapè (selfless love), eros (impassioned yearning for union with the other), philia (reciprocal love between equals, friendship) and storgè (caring love, mainly of parents for their children) (Lewis, 1963, Wright, 1999).

Hence we assess notions about the matrimonial value of love in terms of the following four dimensions:

1. Agapè: self-forgetful love

2. Eros: longing for union with the other

\[\text{For a survey of psychological research into love, see e.g. The status of theory and research on love and commitment by Beverley Fehr (2001).}\]
3. Philia: reciprocal love
4. Storgè caring love

We do not expect these notions of love to have an explanatory effect on the relation between notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals and religiosity, although we will examine whether love does have some explanatory effect.

2.4 Data and measuring instruments

The preceding section outlined our theoretical framework and the concomitant hypotheses. In this section we describe our data collection and the measuring instruments we constructed on the basis of the foregoing theories.

2.4.1 Data collection

To answer our research questions and test our hypotheses we used the data we collected in the period January to June 2005 (see chapter 1). From the total number of Roman Catholic parishes in the Netherlands we drew a random sample of 150 parishes. The pastors or pastoral volunteers involved in marriage services in these parishes were requested to ask prospective bridal couples to take part in the study. A maximum of three couples per parish participated. Shortly after the wedding they completed a questionnaire, in which they supplied the particulars of six guests. Because we wanted sufficient respondents who were not church members, three of the six guests had to be people who had been, or planned to, get married in church, and three of them people who did not have or want a church marriage. These six people were also asked to complete a questionnaire. Thus the population from which we drew our sample consisted of participants in Catholic marriage rituals and our findings can be generalised to that population.

Not all parishes had weddings in the research period. Especially (according to the pastors) aging parishes had no weddings at all. In the end we had a list of 131 bridal couples and 169 of their guests. Of the 300 questionnaires circulated 216 were completed and returned (71%). Of these 81 were from couples (74%) and 55 from wedding guests (25%). Among the respondents 162 (75%) were church members: 151 Roman Catholics (70%) and 11 members of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (5%). Fifty-four respondents were not church members (25%).

2.4.2 Measuring instruments

To answer our research questions we used some measuring instruments from other studies (SOCON 2000); others were adapted to our project (Quartier, Hermans, & Scheer, 2004, Quartier, Hermans, & Scheer, 2006) for the rest we devised new instruments. First we describe the measuring instruments we used.

Because ours is what is known as a stratified sample, we conducted a variance analysis of notions about the goal of church marriage rituals before we proceeded with the other analyses. In this prior analysis we compared the variance of individual respondents with that of respondents grouped according to a specific wedding, with a view to possible clustering of wedding guests with the bridal couple concerned. At a significance level of 5% the difference between the two variances was significant. At a significance level of 1% it no longer was.
Social goal of church marriage rituals

The measuring instrument for assessing views of the social goal of church marriage rituals was prefaced by the following instruction: *Some people feel that a church marriage genuinely changes the couple’s life. Others do not experience any change. Please indicate in how far you agree with the following statements.* We then listed sixteen items, in which respondents indicated the extent of their agreement\(^{13}\). The items were based on indicators corresponding with the dimensions of our conceptualisation. They identify the actor, the act and the object in regard to which the couple’s relationship is changed or confirmed. The items appear in the next section under the description of the factor analysis. Table 2.1 shows the dimensions and the corresponding indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Act</th>
<th>Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent transition</td>
<td>God</td>
<td>changes</td>
<td>indissoluble bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immanent transition</td>
<td>People around couple</td>
<td>recognise</td>
<td>permanent bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent confirmation</td>
<td>God</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>man and woman created destined for each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immanent confirmation</td>
<td>People around couple</td>
<td>confirm</td>
<td>couple’s relationship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In ‘transcendent transition’ the actor is God\(^{14}\). He changes the couple’s relationship into an indissoluble bond. In ‘immanent transition’ the actor is the people around the couple, who recognise their relationship as a permanent bond. In ‘transcendent confirmation’ God is again the actor. He does not simply confirm their relationship: his act happens not only in time as experienced by human beings but embraces the origin and destiny of the whole of human existence (McCaulay & Lawson, 2002, p. 8–35). In the ritual he confirms that he created and destined man and woman for each other. In ‘immanent confirmation’, finally, the actors are the people around the couple, who confirm their relationship.

### 2.4.3 Religious socialisation

We measured religiosity by means of existing measuring instruments from a longitudinal study of church involvement and belief entitled ‘Socio-cultural developments in the Netherlands’ (SOCON 2000), conducted by the faculty of social sciences at Radboud University Nijmegen. In the case of parents as socialising actors we inquired into the church membership of both parents. Regarding the church or religious community as socialising actor, we wanted to know about the church membership of both the respondent and the person’s partner. Secondly, we inquired about the degree of integration with the religious community. For integration in the form of participation the criterion was frequency of church attendance. In addition we measured church involvement by asking about tasks, functions and membership of church associations and groups. A third measure of participation was the value the respondent attached to participation in church rituals associated with birth, marriage and death. Finally we measured integration

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\(^{13}\)Scores range from 1 to 5, 1 indicating ‘disagree totally’ and 5 ‘totally agree’.

\(^{14}\)The indicator is not meant to determine whether the respondents believe that the couple administer the sacrament to each other. It concerns God’s grace, which is transcendent.
in the form of strength of belief by inquiring into the role of religion or worldview (for church members and non-members respectively) in the respondent’s life and the certainty of her or his belief in God or an ultimate reality.

**Conceptions of marriage**

To what extent is the relation between ideas about the social goal of church marriage rituals and features of religious socialisation explained by different conceptions of marriage? We expected to find an explanatory effect in regard to three values: contract, having children and sexuality. For the sake of completeness we included a fourth value, love, which we did not expect to have any explanatory effect in regard to the social goal of marriage rituals. For these four values we constructed measuring instruments comprising a closed question with a number of items, in respect of which respondents indicated the extent of their agreement or disagreement. These items were based on indicators deriving from the dimensions discussed in the previous section. Some items, however, correspond with nominal categories, which the items reflect. The tables for each matrimonial value give the dimensions and the corresponding indicators or nominal categories. Measurement of the matrimonial value, ‘contract’, is prefaced by the following instruction: *The next question is meant to gauge your perception of marriage. Opposite each of the following statements, please indicate to what extent it applies to you.* On the basis of the five dimensions we constructed twenty items. For each item there is only one indicator, namely the overseer of the marriage vows in the first instance. The table below gives the indicators opposite each dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Overseeer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>the couple themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil/judicial</td>
<td>civil authority/government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>the people around you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecclesiastic/judicial</td>
<td>the church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The question about the acceptability of alternative forms of cohabitation reads: *Nowadays there are other ways of living together apart from marriage and the family. A number of these are listed below. If you had a child living in one of these ways, how acceptable would you find it?* Here we did not use indicators but nominal categories. The items reflect these categories.

The instruction pertaining to the matrimonial value of having children reads: *To many people marriage is also concerned with having children. There are different perceptions of having children and raising them. Please indicate in how far you agree with the following statements.* The indicators include the actor and the act.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious task</td>
<td>God</td>
<td>commands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>People around you</td>
<td>expect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15Scores range from 1 to 5, 1 indicating ‘totally disagree’ or ‘highly unacceptable’ and 5 ‘agree totally’ or ‘highly acceptable’.
Measurement of the matrimonial value ‘sexuality’ is prefaced by the following instruction: *Some people feel that one should only have sex if one is married. Others believe that marriage is not essential for having sexual relations with someone. Please indicate in how far you agree with the following statements.* The items are based on two nominal categories, premarital and extramarital sex.

We also inquired into the acceptability of male and female homosexuality. The instruction reads: *For some time now homosexuals have been permitted to get married in the Netherlands. Below are a number of statements about lesbians and male homosexuals. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements.* The indicators reflect whether it pertains to male or female homosexuality, and whether this is considered acceptable or unacceptable. The items derive from the nominal categories, male and female homosexuality.

The instruction for the matrimonial value ‘love’ reads: *In this question we present a few notions about love. Please indicate whether you feel that they should play a role in marriage.* The indicators reflect the type of love at issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agapé: self-effacing love</td>
<td>efface yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros: erotic love</td>
<td>become one/lose yourself in the other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia: friendship</td>
<td>being equals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storgè: caring love</td>
<td>care for the other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.5 Results

The previous section dealt with the new measuring instruments that we constructed to collect the data to answer our research questions. In this section we look at the results of our measurement and the analyses of these. First we determine to what extent our respondents identify the same dimensions as we do. Then we examine the extent of agreement with the various ideas. Thirdly, we deal with the relation between the various notions and the social goal of church marriage rituals. The fourth subsection explores the dimensions and agreement with the various conceptions of marriage. Subsection five discusses the bivariate relations. Finally we turn to the multivariate relations. Here we also determine which features of religious socialisation and which conceptions of marriage decisively influence notions about social goal of church marriage rituals.

#### 2.5.1 Dimensions of notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals

In the second section we described four notions about marriage rituals. We also indicated different dimensions of four matrimonial values. But are the four notions about the marriage ritual and the dimensions of the four matrimonial values that we discerned also recognised by participants in marriage rituals? To find this out we conducted five factor analyses. Below we indicate the dimensions that we distinguish theoretically (theoretical domain) and which of these factors we traced in the respondents’ answers, together with the corresponding communality coeffi-
cients and factor loadings\textsuperscript{16}. On the basis of the factor analyses we constructed scales. The frequency distribution for each scale appears after the relevant factor analysis\textsuperscript{17}. Scores on these scales were used to answer our research questions and in further analyses.

\textsuperscript{16}For the sake of clarity factor loadings below .20 were omitted from the table.
\textsuperscript{17}Scale scores were calculated by summing each respondent’s scores on each factor and dividing the total by the number of valid scores.
### Table 2.5: Factor analysis of notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony God confirms that man and woman are destined for each other</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony God turns the relationship between the man and the woman into a lifelong bond</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony God confirms that man and woman are destined for each other</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony God makes the couple’s relationship indissoluble</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony God confirms that man and woman were created for each other</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony God does not confirm that man and woman were created for each other</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>-.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a marriage ceremony God changes the couple’s relationship into an indissoluble bond</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When two people get married before the church God does not change their relationship at all</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>-.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A church marriage makes the couple’s relationship permanent because of the recognition of the people around them</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony the recognition of the people around the couple makes their relationship a permanent bond</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a marriage ceremony the couple’s relationship is confirmed mainly by the people around them</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The crux of the marriage ceremony is confirmation of the couple’s relationship by the people around them</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the marriage ceremony the couple’s relationship changes into a lifelong bond because of the recognition of the people around them</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When two people get married their relationship is confirmed primarily by the environment</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a marriage ceremony the couple’s relationship is not confirmed by their environment at all</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>-.53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| R-square        | .35 | .25 |
| Cronbach’s Alpha| .92 | .83 |
Ultimately the factor analysis\textsuperscript{18} yields two factors. All transcendent items \(D\) both transcendent transition and transcendent confirmation \(D\) load on the first factor, and all immanent items \(D\) both immanent transition and immanent confirmation, load on the second. It seems the respondents make no distinction between transition and confirmation, although they do distinguish between transcendent and immanent. That means the labels of the dimensions are not applicable to the factors. Transition connotes change, whereas in confirmation everything remains the same. Apparently the respondents do not feel that the couple’s status changes, but neither does it remain altogether the same. This seems contradictory and illogical. Yet our findings concur with Schilderman’s conclusion (Schilderman, 2005) that in modern society we can no longer speak of status ascription by the social environment but of the achievement of social status by the couple themselves. Church marriage rituals do not function as confirmatory rituals either because they assume ascribed status. As a result they cannot function as either transitional or confirmatory rites.

Despite this we can interpret our research findings by positing a combination of change and sameness. The combination should not be understood as a status transition in the sense of Van Gennep’s notion of a rite of passage, which rests on a binary logic: the couple either has or does not have married status. Classical Catholic marriage theology assumes that there is no ontological bond between the couple before marriage \(D\) that bond is effected by the ritual. However, our combination of change and sameness can be interpreted in terms of narrative identity. Hermans (2001) speaks of a polyphonic self, in which he incorporates the distinction between I and me and the narrative concept of I in a dialogic concept of self. This self is characterised by a dynamic set of relatively autonomous I-positions that can assume different positions in accordance with temporal and spatial change. Each ‘I’ can articulate a position, giving rise to a dialogue between positions like that between characters in a story. This dialogic self-concept results in a complex polyphony that should not be interpreted as (binary) logical relations, since A and non-A can occur simultaneously. Via this internal dialogue between diverse I-positions the ‘other’ is present within the self. Essentially the self is social, also in internal dialogue. The other to whom the life story is narrated is not necessarily external but could be imaginary. Internal and external dialogue are always interconnected. When one engages in external dialogue with somebody, the external other is given an I-position within the self, with which one simultaneously conducts an internal dialogue. One’s context also speaks inside oneself. The images and motifs in one’s auto-narrative are taken from one’s social group (peer group, socio-cultural group, church, subculture, professional group). The embodied self moreover incorporates certain cultural tools that feature in the auto-narrative. As a result self-identity is embodied in cultural tools representing certain values. This is known as the distributed self. Finally the self engages in an ongoing process of choosing new positions, of organising and reorganising. The opposing poles of identity construction may be seen as voices of various I-positions that not only relate intersubjectively but also differ in their dominance over the others (H. J. M. Hermans, 1996, p. 22).

Ricoeur (1992) describes the self in terms of narrative identity rather than binary logic. He speaks of a continuous discontinuity and a discontinuous continuity. On the basis of ritual participants’ notions we cannot assert that church marriage rituals effect and accompany a status transition. What happens is that the couple’s identity is reconstructed. Identity reconstruction in Ricoeur’s sense may be seen as analogous to plotting. Separate events in our lives are reconfigured to form a meaningful whole, a dynamic process that is needed at various times in

\textsuperscript{18}PAF, Varimax, Minimal eigenvalue 1
our lives. This plotting process has a threefold structure based on a continuum marked by continuous discontinuity and discontinuous continuity. Hence there is no clear-cut transition from an old to a new identity. Although identity is reconstructed, the old identity persists to some extent. First there is a prefiguration of identity, that is the identity before plotting occurs. The person has a given background, events and actions occurred in a given context, and in the process they fitted into an existing symbol system. In configuration they are constituted in a meaningful whole and thus acquire a plot. In refiguration the person draws conclusions for further action on the basis of the new plot that life has acquired (Ricoeur, 1984, 54–87, Zuidgeest, 2001, p. 40–41).

When a couple gets married both bride and groom already have an identity based on their lives and interaction with each other and the social environment. Their love already exists. They are (probably) already living together and officialdom and the social environment regard them as a couple. Hence cohabitation already has social and legal implications. That is the prefiguration of their identity. Then, in the ritual, their life is reassessed. New elements, more particularly those associated with the life they have built up together, are integrated with their entire past, which gives their life a new plot and the couple acquires a new identity. That is the configuration. Next one considers their future as a married couple, people who have pledged to be true to one another. Their future conduct will be greatly influenced by these vows. That is the refiguration.

The crux of the refiguration of identity is the marriage vows, in which the partners pledge to remain constant towards each other on this score, regardless of vicissitudes, flux and developments. Keeping their vows in the face of change makes them find their identity. In fact, it is in their keeping of the vows that the moral aspect of that identity surfaces. Ricoeur makes a distinction between idem and ipse identity. On the one hand identity entails continuity of traits, recognition of sameness. This is most apparent in character, which consists in continuity of attributes. But one cannot speak of someone’s identity exclusively in terms of sameness, since circumstances and human beings themselves are changeable. Only by virtue of self-constancy, the moral aspect of ipse identity, is identity conceivable despite change. In the face of every change the subject can still say: “This is what I stand for, here I am.” Spouses cannot guarantee to remain the same for ever, but bride and groom promise to remain unchanged in their commitment at any rate. However variable their identities, their mutual faithfulness remains intact. Irrespective of other circumstances – ritually expressed as poverty and wealth, sickness and health, et cetera – both partners are expected to stick to their vows. Notwithstanding other proclivities, desires and interests, they are expected to perpetuate the self over time. Hence after the church marriage ritual they have to honour their vows.

The identity reconstruction during church marriage rituals is where a key aspect of Ricoeur’s concept of identity emerges. My identity is not self-contained but relational. Only in the other am I confronted with myself. In this regard Ricoeur distinguishes between three forms of alterity: one’s own body, the other and conscience. Regarding the body one can say that one has a body and one is one’s body. It mediates every contact and is also the first link with anybody other than oneself. The other as a separate person is intersubjective alterity. I encounter this other when I take responsibility for her or she takes responsibility for me. Finally there is conscience, in the sense of another that is most intimate with the self. These three forms of alterity are essential for the morality of identity. The moral self that manifests self-constancy in the

19Thus cohabiting couples in the Netherlands can be fiscal partners and both incomes are taken into account by local authorities when awarding subsidies and benefits.
midst of change is unable to do so in the absence of another that compels it to be moral. A vow becomes a vow only if it is authentically made and kept out of concern for the other.

A church marriage ritual can probably be regarded as a moment of narrative identity construction by the two partners. Respondents do distinguish between transcendent and immanent items. Transcendent identity reconstruction represents reconstruction of the couple’s identity as a result of making their vows before God. While the vows in themselves transform the relationship into a lasting union, its permanence is reinforced by the fact that they are made before God. Keeping these vows then become a religious summons (Zuidgeest, 2001, p. 48), so permanence acquires a religious dimension. Immanent reconstruction of the partners’ identity likewise reinforces permanence. After all, a promise made to the partner privately is easier to break than one made publicly before friends and family. Their presence gives the couple a social duty to keep the promise, so the social environment lends permanence to their relationship.

Since the fact that all transcendent items load on the same factor and all immanent items on another can be interpreted with the aid of Paul Ricoeur’s concept of identity, we label the first factor transcendent reconstruction and the second immanent reconstruction.

2.5.2 Agreement with notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals

The tables below reflect the extent to which participants’ in church marriage rituals agree with the two forms of reconstruction.

### Table 2.6: Agreement with transcendent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>216</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 28.7% of the respondents reject the notion that the social goal of church marriage rituals is transcendent reconstruction, while 34.3% neither accept nor reject it; 37.0% subscribe to a transcendent reconstruction.

### Table 2.7: Agreement with immanent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>98.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>216</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the case of the notion that the social goal of church marriage rituals is immanent reconstruction, 25.9% of the respondents disagree, 50.9% neither agree nor disagree and 27.8% agree. This notion, then, meets with almost equal agreement and disagreement, by far the largest group of respondents being noncommittal.

We can now answer our first research question: Participants in church marriage rituals distinguish between transcendent and immanent reconstruction of the couple’s identity. Some respondents subscribe to transcendent reconstruction (37%), others opt for immanent reconstruction (28.7%). This is not a question of a change or simply a confirmation of the relationship, but of reconstruction of the couple’s identity. The marriage vows give the relationship the permanence of marriage. This permanence transcends the partners in that the vows are made before God and in the midst of their social environment. Thus the partners’ moral duty to keep their vows turns into a religious summons and a social duty. As a result it is more difficult to break the vows, because they are made before God or before friends and relatives.

2.5.3 Relation between transcendent and immanent reconstruction

We have seen that items on the social goal of church marriage rituals form two scales: transcendent and immanent reconstruction. We also saw that respectively 37% and 28.7% of the respondents subscribe to these two notions. The interrelationship of the two scales can be expressed in terms of Pearson’s correlation coefficient as .12.

2.5.4 Dimensions and agreement with conceptions of marriage

Our factor analyses were not confined to notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals. We did the same in respect of conceptions of marriage. Below we present the factor analysis for each conception of marriage together with the measure of agreement with each conception

Contractual dimension

The contractual aspect of marriage comprehends the five dimensions that we identified. We reproduce the factor analysis below20.

---

20Factor loadings below .20 are omitted.
Table 2.8: Factor analysis of notions about the contractual aspect of marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>Ecclesiastic/religious</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Exclusively judicial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The big thing about marriage is that you make your vows before God</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a marriage ceremony you bring your relationship to God</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the first place one gets married before God</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main thing about a marriage is that your relationship is recognised by the church</td>
<td>Ecclesiastic/judicial</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t get married before the people around you</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only after the church marriage ceremony are you truly married</td>
<td>Ecclesiastic/judicial</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When two people get married it is primarily something between the two of them</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage is primarily the couple’s affair</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting married is primarily the marriage partners’ affair</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The couple’s relationship only becomes official to the people around them after the marriage ceremony</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main thing about a marriage ceremony is that your relationship becomes official to the people around you</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main thing about a marriage ceremony is the civil part</td>
<td>Civil/judicial</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage is mainly a civil ceremony before a magistrate</td>
<td>Civil/judicial</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most important part of a marriage is the civil ceremony</td>
<td>Civil/judicial</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage has nothing to do with the church</td>
<td>Ecclesiastic/judicial</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage has nothing to do with God</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you get married the civil ceremony is totally unimportant</td>
<td>Civil/judicial</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s Alpha

|                           | .73 | .78 | .54 | .86 |
The factor analysis shows that participants in the ritual do not recognise the theoretical dimensions. Although they distinguish between a personal and a social dimension, there is no distinction between a religious and an ecclesiastic/judicial dimension: these combine into a single factor, which we label ‘ecclesiastic/religious’. Remarkably, the negatively formulated social item also loads on this factor, but that does not affect its label. The institutional church is linked with religion. The fourth factor comprises mainly civil/judicial items, but the negatively formulated religious and ecclesiastic/judicial items also load on this factor, indicating that civil/judicial has an a-religious, non-ecclesiastic connotation. Accordingly we label this factor ‘exclusively judicial’.

Agreement with notions about a contract

Below we show the measure of agreement with the various notions about the contractual side of marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large proportion of the respondents (41.2%) disagree with the notion that one marries primarily before God and the church. Only a tiny group of respondents (12.0%) agree. Nearly half the respondents neither agree nor disagree (46.8%). This frequency distribution could be indicative of de-institutionalisation and secularisation: church and religion play only a peripheral role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nobody disagrees with the notion that one marries primarily before the other partner. Only 6.9% neither agree nor disagree with this notion. An overwhelming majority (93%) subscribe to the notion that marriage is primarily an affair between the two partners. This is probably indicative of individualisation: marriage has become mainly a matter between the two individuals involved.

\(^{21}\)PAF, Oblimin, Minimal eigenvalue 1
2.5. RESULTS

Table 2.11: Agreement with social notion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>39.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>216</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A fairly large proportion of the respondents (39.9%) disagree with the notion that one gets married primarily before the social environment. Almost as many respondents neither agree nor disagree with this notion (39.4%). A lesser proportion (20.9%) agree. This, too, could be indicative of individualisation: the social environment matters less than the two partners.

Table 2.12: Agreement with exclusively judicial notion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>216</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents (52.7%) disagree with the notion that one marries primarily before the civil authority. Another 40.3 neither agree nor disagree with this notion. Only 6.9% of the respondents endorse this idea. Thus the exclusively judicial aspect of marriage is assigned only a marginal role in marriage. This accords with the image reflected by the other frequency distributions.

Correlation between the various scales

How do the various scales for the contractual aspect of marriage correlate? Table 2.13 gives the Pearson correlation coefficient.

Table 2.13: Correlation between contract scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious/ecclesiastic</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Exclusively judicial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correlation</strong></td>
<td><strong>.26</strong></td>
<td><strong>.33</strong></td>
<td><strong>-.57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%

*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

From the table it is evident that the religious/ecclesiastic notion correlates positively\(^2\) with

\(^2\)Correlation higher than .30.
the social notion and negatively with the personal and the exclusively judicial notion. The other correlations are not significant. Hence the notion that one marries primarily before God and the church correlates positively with the notion that one marries primarily before the social environment. The antithesis of the view that one marries primarily before God and the church is that one marries primarily before the other partner and before the secular,\textsuperscript{23} civil authority.

**Dimensions of acceptability of alternative forms of cohabitation**

Although we did not identify any dimensions for other forms of cohabitation, we did control for them by way of factor analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Empirical Domain (Communalitity)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohabiting with fixed partner of the same gender</td>
<td>Acceptible</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberate single motherhood</td>
<td>Acceptible</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwedded cohabitation with own children</td>
<td>Acceptible</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabiting with or marrying a partner from a different ethnic group</td>
<td>Acceptible</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in a commune</td>
<td>Acceptible</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwedded cohabitation without children</td>
<td>Acceptible</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cronbach’s Alpha**

.85

**Variance Explained**

57%

Again the respondents make no distinction between the various notions. The scale based on this factor analysis\textsuperscript{24} is reliable with Cronbach’s alpha at .85.

**Agreement with alternative forms of cohabitation**

Below we indicate the extent to which respondents find alternative forms of cohabitation acceptable.

\textsuperscript{23}The factor analysis shows that negative items of the religious and ecclesiastic/judicial dimensions correlate positively with the civil/judicial dimension, which we therefore labelled secular, hence nonreligious and non-ecclesiastic.

\textsuperscript{24}PAF, No rotation, Minimal eigenvalue 1
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Table 2.15: Acceptability of alternative forms of cohabitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly unacceptable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither acceptable nor unacceptable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly acceptable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>99.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only a small fraction of the respondents find the alternative forms of cohabitation unacceptable (1%); 28.7% find them neither acceptable nor unacceptable, and 69.9% find them acceptable.
Dimensions of having children

In the case of notions about having children we again determined in how far our various dimensions were recognised by the respondents. The factor loadings appear in table 2.16\textsuperscript{25}.

Table 2.16: Factor analysis of notions about having children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical domain</th>
<th>Communalitiyt</th>
<th>Religious command</th>
<th>Social expectation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God has commanded married people to try and produce progeny</td>
<td>Religious command</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married people are given a task by God to try and have children</td>
<td>Religious command</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to have children is God’s command to married people</td>
<td>Religious command</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are married, God wants you to try and have children</td>
<td>Religious command</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of marriage is that you are expected to try to have children</td>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are married, you also ought to try and have children</td>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are married, you are also expected to have children</td>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are married, the people around you expect you to have children</td>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s Alpha

| .92 | .77 |

The factor analysis\textsuperscript{26} shows that the dimensions discerned by us (having children as a religious injunction and as a social expectation) are also recognised by participants in marriage rituals, although not all items loaded on the factors in the way we had anticipated. Two items from the social expectation dimension load on items from the religious command dimension. These items are characterised by the indicator ‘ought’, whereas the other two items of the social expectation dimension contain the indicator ‘expect’. Apparently their normative nature is associated with a religious norm, which is not subject to human choice or influence because it

\textsuperscript{25}Factor loadings below .20 were omitted.
\textsuperscript{26}PAF, Oblimin, Minimal eigenvalue 1
is authorised by God. Expectation is a social norm, which may be disregarded. Nonetheless the labels ‘religious command’ and ‘social expectation’ remain applicable to both factors.

**Agreement with having children**

We determined to what extent respondents agreed with these notions as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than half of the respondents (61.1%) disagree with the notion that married people have a religious command to have children; 30.6% neither agree nor disagree; and only 8.3% subscribe to the notion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A third of the respondents (33.8%) reject the notion that the social environment expects married couples to have children. A slightly smaller proportion (31.%) neither agree nor disagree with the notion; and 35.2% subscribe to it.

**Correlation between scales**

Scales for having children correlate significantly. Pearson’s correlation coefficient is .43.

**Dimensions of the acceptability of premarital sex**

Table 2.19 reflects the factor analysis\(^{27}\) of notions about the acceptability of premarital sex.

\(^{27}\)Factor loadings below .20 were omitted.
Table 2.19: Factor analysis of notions about premarital sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>Unacceptability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having sex with a person is only permissible once you have married that person</td>
<td>Unacceptability</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You may only have sex with someone if you are married to the person</td>
<td>Unacceptability</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex is unacceptable</td>
<td>Unacceptability</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is quite unnecessary to get married in order to be allowed to have sex with somebody</td>
<td>Acceptability</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>-.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need not be married to a person first to have sex with her or him</td>
<td>Acceptability</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>-.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s Alpha: .89

Variance explained: 60%

Our theoretical distinctions are not discernible in the factor analysis. The item, “You may only have sex with someone if you are married to the person,” was probably interpreted as a prohibition of premarital sex rather than of extramarital sex. The other item for this dimension fails to form a factor; it does not load significantly and had to be removed. That left us with just one factor: unacceptability of premarital sex. Accordingly it was given that label and comprised positive and negative items with corresponding positive and negative factor loadings.

Agreement with unacceptability of premarital sex

Table 2.20 indicates the extent to which respondents recognise the various dimensions of the acceptability of premarital sex.

Table 2.20: Agreement with acceptability of premarital sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly unacceptable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither acceptable nor unacceptable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptible</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly acceptable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only a tiny minority (1.4%) reject the notion that premarital sex is acceptable and a mere 6.5% find it neither acceptable nor unacceptable. A large majority (92.1%) subscribe to the notion. Thus the link between sexuality and marriage has clearly been broken.

---

28 PAF, No rotation, Minimal eigenvalue 1
29 Factor loading is below .30.
30 The scores were recoded so that a higher score implies greater agreement with the acceptability of premarital sex.
Dimensions of the unacceptability of homosexuality

Below we give the results of the factor analysis\textsuperscript{31} of the extent to which respondents concur with our theoretical distinction between male and female homosexuality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>By nature</th>
<th>In public behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex between two men is plain wrong</td>
<td>Male homosexuality</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian sexuality is out of place in our society</td>
<td>Female homosexuality</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I disapprove of male homosexuality</td>
<td>Male homosexuality</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbians are abnormal</td>
<td>Female homosexuality</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex between two women is unnatural</td>
<td>Female homosexuality</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual men are not real men</td>
<td>Male homosexuality</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no problem with lesbian sexuality</td>
<td>Female homosexuality</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find sex between lesbian women disgusting</td>
<td>Female homosexuality</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male homosexuality is counter to human nature</td>
<td>Male homosexuality</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male homosexuality is a natural form of sexuality among men</td>
<td>Male homosexuality</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it objectionable when two women kiss in public</td>
<td>Female homosexuality</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it objectionable when two men kiss in public</td>
<td>Male homosexuality</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Cronbach’s Alpha} \hspace{3cm} .76 \hspace{3cm} .87

The factor analysis\textsuperscript{32} reveals two factors, but the items do not correspond with the distinction between male and lesbian homosexuality. Most items of both male and female homosexuality load on the same factor. Items on two men or two women kissing in public load on the second factor. The difference between the first and the second factor is that the latter includes the words ‘in public’. Apparently respondents make no distinction between male and female homosexuality, but they do distinguish between being homosexual and practising it \textit{publicly}. Hence we label the first factor ‘Homosexuality by nature’ and the other ‘Public homosexual behaviour’. The items for the factors produce two reliable scales with Cronbach’s alphas of respectively .76 and .87.

\textsuperscript{31} Factor loadings below .20 were omitted.
\textsuperscript{32} PAF, Oblimin, Minimal eigenvalue 1
Agreement with unacceptability of homosexuality

The next two tables indicate in how far respondents find homosexuality by nature and in practice acceptable.

Table 2.22: Agreement with unacceptability of homosexuality by nature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly unacceptable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>68.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither acceptable nor unacceptable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly acceptable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No less than 68.5% of the respondents find homosexuality by nature unacceptable; 30.5% find it neither acceptable nor unacceptable. Less than 1% find homosexuality by nature acceptable.

Table 2.23: Unacceptability of public homosexual behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly unacceptable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither acceptable nor unacceptable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>72.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>96.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly acceptable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the respondents 40.7% find homosexual behaviour unacceptable; 31.9% find it neither acceptable nor unacceptable; and 26.4% find homosexual behaviour acceptable.

The disparity in degree of acceptability between homosexuality by nature and in behaviour seems illogical, since the former is rejected by more people than the latter. The reason could be that homosexuality by nature pertains to human nature, hence it is seen as unnatural. Possibly more people find public homosexual behaviour acceptable because of the tolerance they display towards others.
2.5. **RESULTS**

**Correlation between scales**

The scales for unacceptability of homosexuality correlate significantly. Pearson’s correlation coefficient is .47.

**Dimensions of love**

Table 2.24 reflects the factor analysis\(^{33}\) for notions about love.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>Agapè</th>
<th>Philia</th>
<th>Storgè</th>
<th>Eros</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you truly love somebody you efface yourself completely</td>
<td>Agapè, self-effacing love</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In true love you efface yourself completely</td>
<td>Agapè, self-effacing love</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In love you forget yourself completely for the other’s sake</td>
<td>Agapè, self-effacing love</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True love only exists in a relationship between equals</td>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True love is only possible between equal partners</td>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you love somebody you should always regard each other as equals</td>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you love someone, you, need not regard each other as equals</td>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>-.53</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True love has nothing to do with self-effacement</td>
<td>Agapè, self-effacing love</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True love is primarily caring for the other</td>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True love is mainly caring for the other</td>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you genuinely love you should mainly take care of the person</td>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you genuinely love someone you want to become one with the person</td>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>-.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True love is primarily wanting to become one with the other</td>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>-.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love is a longing to become one with the other</td>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True love has nothing to do with becoming one with the other</td>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cronbach’s Alpha**

|                     | .82 | .63 | .72 | .73 |

\(^{33}\)Factor loadings below .20 were omitted.
The factor analysis shows that participants in marriage rituals identify the same dimensions as we do. One storgè item had to be removed because it failed to load significantly on any factor. The negatively formulated item from the agapè dimension loaded on the philia factor, which is understandable because agapè implies self-effacing love, hence asymmetry, whereas philia implies reciprocity, hence symmetry. The factors were labelled after the dimensions.

Agreement with forms of love

Below we indicate the measure of agreement with the different forms of love.

Table 2.25: Agreement with agapè, self-effacing love

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>98.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By and large respondents do not feel that self-effacing love plays a major role in marriage. More than half of them (51.4%) reject the notion; 37% neither agree nor disagree; and 11.1% feel that it plays an important role.

Table 2.26: Agreement with eros, erotic love

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>95.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Few (6.5%) respondents deny the importance of erotic love in marriage; 37.5% neither reject nor endorse it; its importance is strongly endorsed (55.5%).

---

[34] PAF, Oblimin, Minimal eigenvalue 1
2.5. RESULTS

Table 2.27: Agreement with philia, reciprocal love

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A mere 6.9% of the respondents disagree with the importance of friendship in marriage; 34.7% neither agree nor disagree. Its importance is strongly endorsed (57.4%).

Table 2.28: Agreement with storgè, caring love

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few respondents disagree with the importance of caring love in marriage (13.4%); 36.6% neither agree nor disagree; and 49.5% endorse the notion. Hence even if only a few people assign self-effacing love an important place in marriage, that does not exclude caring love. Reciprocity, desire and care are the principal forms of married love.

Correlation between notions about love

We determined the correlation between scales for love as well, as reflected in the following Pearson’s coefficients.

Table 2.29: Correlation between notions about love

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love</th>
<th>Eros</th>
<th>Philia</th>
<th>Storgè</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agapè</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td>.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

At a reliability interval of 99% the correlations between agapè and eros, agapè and storgè, and eros and storgè are significant. The correlation between agapè and philia is significant at a reliability interval of 95%. All the correlations are positive.
2.5.5 Bivariate relations

The various hypotheses that we formulated concern several relations: between notions about marriage rituals and religious socialisation, and between notions about marriage rituals and matrimonial values (contract, sexuality, having children). In the case of relations with love we had no expectations. To clarify these relations we conducted a number of bivariate analyses. First we examined the relation between religious socialisation and notions about the goal of marriage rituals. Then we looked at the relation between each of the four matrimonial values and notions about the goal of marriage rituals. Where both variables were metric, we give the Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r). Otherwise we indicate the measure of association (eta).

Religious socialisation and notions about the social goal of marriage rituals

Table 2.30: Relation between religious socialisation by parents and transcendent and immanent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership father</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership mother</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

Parents’ current church membership correlates significantly with the view that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction. We found no significant correlation between parental church membership and the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at immanent reconstruction.

Table 2.31: Relation between integration with the religious community by way of participation in religious life and transcendent and immanent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership respondent</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.47**(r)</td>
<td>.12*(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations/groups</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in rituals</td>
<td>.48**(r)</td>
<td>.13(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant relations between the notion that church marriage rituals seek to effect transcendent reconstruction and the various forms of participation in church or religious community life: church membership, frequency of church attendance, tasks and functions undertaken by the respondent, and respondent’s participation in transition rituals. That conforms to our expectations. In addition there is a significant positive correlation between frequency of
church attendance and the notion that church marriage rituals are meant to effect immanent reconstruction. It seems that the more often people attend church or religious community services, the more they endorse the notion that the goal of church marriage rituals is both transcendent and immanent reconstruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td>.29**(r)</td>
<td>-.02(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>.48**(r)</td>
<td>.04(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in an ultimate reality</td>
<td>.16* (r)</td>
<td>.01(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

We found significant correlations between strength of belief and agreement with the view that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction. This, too, conformed to our expectation. As for the notion that the social goal of church marriage rituals is immanent reconstruction, there was no correlation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner’s church membership</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner’s tasks/functions</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner’s associations/groups</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant, positive correlations between the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction and the church membership of the respondent’s partner, as well as the extent to which he or she takes on tasks and functions in the church. This correlation accords with our expectations. There are no significant correlations with the extent to which the partner belongs to church associations and groups.

**Relation between conceptions of marriage and notions about the social goal of marriage rituals**

We also conducted bivariate analyses to determine the relation between notions about matrimonial values and about the goal of church marriage rituals. Since all variables are metrical, we consistently use Pearson’s correlation coefficients.
Table 2.34: Correlation between contract and transcendent and immanent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious/ecclesiastic</td>
<td>.73**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other forms of cohabitation</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant positive correlations between the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction of the relationship and religious/ecclesiastic factors. The notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at immanent reconstruction of the relationship also correlates positively at a significant level with the religious/ecclesiastic and the social factor. In addition there are significant negative correlations between the view that the goal of church marriage rituals is transcendent reconstruction on the one hand and the personal and exclusively judicial factors and the idea that other forms of cohabitation are acceptable on the other. Thus people who attach most importance to religious/ecclesiastic and social overseers of marriage vows agree more strongly with the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent and immanent reconstruction of the relationship. This could be because transcendent and immanent reconstruction relate to these overseers: it implies reconstruction of the relationship as a marriage before God and established by him, or a marriage before the social environment. Those who attach greater value to the personal and exclusively judicial overseers, on the other hand, reject the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction of the relationship.

Table 2.35: Correlation between having children and transcendent and immanent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rel. command</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc. expectation</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There is a significant positive correlation between the notion that the goal of church marriage rituals is transcendent reconstruction of the relationship and the interpretation of procreation as both a religious command and a social expectation. The correlation with having children as a religious command is self-evident, but the correlation between procreation as a social expectation is not. There is no correlation between the notion of having children as a social expectation and the ideal that church marriage rituals are aimed at immanent reconstruction of the relationship. We were unable to test our hypothesis that people who tend to experience having children as a command will be more inclined to view church marriage rituals as transitional rituals, since factor analysis indicates that respondents make no distinction between transitional and confirmatory rituals.
Table 2.36: Correlation between sexuality and transcendent and immanent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex</td>
<td>-.26*</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality by nature</td>
<td>-.24**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual behaviour</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There is a significant negative correlation between the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction of the relationship and the notions that premarital sex, homosexuality by nature and homosexual behaviour are acceptable. Since respondents make no distinction between marriage rituals as transitional and confirmatory rites, we were unable to determine whether there is a correlation between measure of agreement with the acceptability of premarital sex and measure of agreement with church marriage rituals as transitional rites.

Table 2.37: Correlation between love and transcendent and immanent reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent reconstruction</th>
<th>Immanent reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agapè, self-effacing love</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia, friendship</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

Despite our expectation that the various love factors would not correlate with notions about the goal of church marriage rituals, we did find some significant correlations. There is a significant positive correlation between the notion of church marriage rituals as aimed at transcendent reconstruction of the relationship on the one hand and agapè, philia and storgè on the other. Apparently respondents who strongly agree that the goal of church marriage rituals is transcendent reconstruction of the relationship also agree with the view that matrimonial love is predominantly self-effacing, reciprocal and caring.

Conclusion about correlations

Many of the correlations that were found accorded with our expectations. There were many correlations between the notion that marriage rites are aimed at transcendent reconstruction and attributes of religiosity and matrimonial values. However, there were hardly any significant correlations between these attributes and values and the notion that the goal of church marriage rituals is immanent reconstruction. The only significant correlation was between the frequency of church attendance variable and the ecclesiastic/religious and social factor of the contract value. Remarkably, all these correlations are positive. The more frequently people go to church and the more they regard marriage as a religious and ecclesiastic issue, the more they endorse
the notion that the goal of church marriage rituals is not only transcendent but also immanent reconstruction.

But these analyses did not enable us to answer our second and third research questions about the extent to which notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals are explicable in terms of features of religious socialisation or conceptions of marriage. The bivariate relations did not tell us much about decisive correlations between notions about the goal of church marriage rituals on the one hand and religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the other. That calls for multivariate analyses. For the purpose of this study we opted for multiple regression analysis to determine to what extent conceptions of marriage explain the relation between attributes of religious socialisation and notions about the social goal of church marriage rituals. It will also show which attributes of religious socialisation and which conceptions of marriage influence notions about the goal of these rituals. But the significant negative correlations we found between frequency of church attendance and the view that couples primarily marry before God and the church or before their social environment on the one hand and respondents’ notions about immanent reconstruction on the other were too weak to estimate a regression model with significant parameters. Hence the further analyses are confined to transcendent reconstruction.

2.5.6 Multivariate analyses

We have noted quite a number of significant correlations between measure of agreement with the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction on the one hand and features of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the other. But we are not merely interested in the existence of such significant relations. We also want to know which characteristics and notions of the respondents decisively influence the measure of their agreement. Hence we want to use a regression model to find out which attributes of religious socialisation and what conceptions of marriage decisively influence the measure of agreement with the notion that the goal of church marriage rituals is transcendent reconstruction of relational identity. Being aware that there are many significant relations, we proceeded step by step with four regression models. Each successive model includes more variables than the previous one, step by step revealing the effects of the various attributes of religious socialisation and views on matrimonial values (also see exposition in chapter 1). The first model analyses the effect of religious socialisation by parents according to hypotheses 1a to 1c. In the second model we augment the effect of socialisation by parents with variables pertaining to integration in the religious community by way of participation in religious life (hypotheses 2 to 3c, 5). In the third model the preceding variables are further supplemented by participation in religious life in the form of strength of belief (hypotheses 4a and 4b). The fourth model, finally, incorporates the variables of notions about matrimonial values (hypotheses 6 to 10). But in constructing the four regression models we could not use all variables in the form that they were measured. Some attributes of religious socialisation correlate quite strongly with each other, which could corrupt the analyses of the regression models. On the basis of interrelationships between variables of religiosity we combined a number of them in the form of a new variable. If the correlation between two variables is significant at .70 or more, we form a new variable. All other variables have to be omitted from the analysis. The following tables reflect the interrelationship between variables of religious socialisation. For metric variables we give Pearson’s correlation coefficients and for dichotomous variables the measure of association (eta).
Table 2.38: Bivariate relations between attributes of religious socialisation 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current church membership father</th>
<th>Current church membership mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current church member father</td>
<td>.78**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current church member mother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>.55**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.41**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks and functions</td>
<td>.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of groups and associations</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional participation in transition rituals</td>
<td>.49**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td>.45*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in God</td>
<td>.49**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership partner</td>
<td>.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions partner</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of groups/associations partner</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%
Table 2.39: Bivariate relations religious socialisation 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Church membership respondent</th>
<th>Church attendance</th>
<th>Tasks and functions</th>
<th>Membership of groups and associations</th>
<th>Intentional participation in transition rituals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current church membership father</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.48**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current church membership mother</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.50**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership respondent</td>
<td></td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.64**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks and functions</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of groups and associations</td>
<td></td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional participation in transition rituals</td>
<td>.64**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td></td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.49*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in God</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.46**(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td></td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of groups/associations partner</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%
Table 2.40: Bivariate relations religious socialisation 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rel. salience</th>
<th>Certainty belief in God</th>
<th>Certainty belief in ultimate reality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current church membership father</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current church membership mother</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>.02(r)</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.46**(r)</td>
<td>.12(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks and functions</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership groups and associations</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional participation transition rituals</td>
<td>.01(r)</td>
<td>.46**(r)</td>
<td>.12(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in God</td>
<td>.18(r)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.66**(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.04(r)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.66**(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership partner</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions partner</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership groups/associations partner</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%
CHAPTER 2. TRANSITION OR CONFIRMATION

Table 2.41: Bivariate relations religious socialisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Church membership partner</th>
<th>Tasks/ functions partner</th>
<th>Membership groups/ associations partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current church membership father</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current church membership mother</td>
<td>41**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>63**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks and functions</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership groups and associations</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.59**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional participation</td>
<td>.63**</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transition rituals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.50*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in God</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the church membership of the two parents correlate strongly, we do not analyse them separately. Instead we determine to what extent both parents, only one of them or neither of them are members of a church or a religious community. Responses regarding respondents’ tasks and functions and their membership of associations and groups were not answered satisfactorily. The same applies to these variables in the case of the partner. Hence there are a lot of missing values. Since regression analyses operate by way of list-wise deletion, we omitted these variables, otherwise they would have reduced the sample size excessively. Thus we circumvented excessively high correlations between variables, retained as large a sample as we could, and were able to incorporate a maximum number of attributes in the regression models.

Four regression models

The four regression models show the effect of diverse attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on respondents’ agreement with the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction of the relationship. The attributes of religiosity are the independent variables, the notions about matrimonial values are intervening variables and the measure of agreement with transcendent reconstruction as the goal of church marriage rituals is the dependent variable (Davis, 1985, p. 20) (also see chapter 1).

The first regression model estimates the effect of religious socialisation by parents. The variables of father’s and mother’s church membership were combined. Since this was a nominal
variable, we dummified it. This gave us three dummy variables: both parents are members of a church or religious community, only one parent is a member, and neither parent is a member. The first dummy variable (both parents are members) is the reference category. This means that the regression coefficients are B coefficients, indicating their difference from the variable where both parents are members.

The second model augments religious socialisation by parents with socialisation by the religious community through participation in religious life. Here we examine the church membership of the respondent and her or his partner, frequency of respondent’s church attendance and the importance the respondent attached to participation in ecclesiastic transition rites. Frequency of church attendance and importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transition rites are metric variables, which permits the use of standardised coefficient betas that indicate the independent and intervening variables’ effect on the dependent variable directly. The other two variables were nominal, so we dummified them. Hence the reference categories were that either the respondent or her/his partner is a member of a church or religious community. As in the preceding model, we used B coefficients indicating difference from the reference categories.

The third model adds the effect of strength of belief. First we look at religious salience, that is the importance of religion in the respondent’s life, then at the strength of the respondent’s belief in God, followed by belief in an ultimate reality. Since all these variables are metric, we use standardised beta coefficients.

The fourth model incorporates the effect of notions about the following four matrimonial values:

1. Contract, the variables being the ecclesiastic/religious, personal, social and exclusively judicial notions, plus acceptability of other forms of cohabitation

2. Having children, the variables being religious command and social expectation

3. Sexuality, variables being the notions that premarital sex, homosexuality by nature and homosexual behaviour are acceptable

4. Love, the variables being agapè, eros, philia and storgè

De variabelen zijn allemaal metrisch gemeten, dus we kunnen gebruik maken van de gestandaardiseerde beta-coëfficiënten.

Finally we provide the explained variance for each model by way of the R–square and adjusted R–square. The adjusted R–square takes into account the number of independent or intervening variables.
Table 2.42: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of Trancendental Reconstruction
p.-values larger than .05 in bold, n=173

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–1c</th>
<th>2–3c,5</th>
<th>4a–4b</th>
<th>6–10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kerklidmaatschap Ouders:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership parents</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither parent</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>.09</td>
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<td>Church membership respondent</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Non-member</td>
<td>-.47</td>
<td>-.54</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional participation transition rituals</td>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>-.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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<td>Belief in God</td>
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<td>Belief in ultimate reality</td>
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<td>-.03</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Contract</td>
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<td>Social</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
<td>-.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative forms of cohabitation</td>
<td>-.02</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
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The regression coefficients for model 1 confirm hypotheses 1a to 1c, namely that respondents from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community will agree more strongly with the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction. If only one parent is a member, the respondent is less inclined to agree than when both parents are members. If both parents are non-members there is a significant difference in agreement with the transcendent reconstruction goal (.90). In hypotheses 2 to 3c and 5 we expect
the respondent’s church membership, that of the person’s partner and the measure of integration by way of participation in church life to have a greater effect on their notions about transcendent reconstruction than religious socialisation by parents. This was confirmed. The significant difference in agreement in the case of parental church membership becomes insignificant (.03) when church or religious community as socialising actor is included in the analysis (model 2). But among attributes of participation in religious life only frequency of respondent’s church attendance has a significant effect (.35), and even that effect vanishes when integration features like strength of respondent’s belief are incorporated in the analysis (model 3). Certainty of belief in God and religious salience have a significant effect (respectively .18 and .26), but the addition of these predictors does not neutralise the significant effect of frequency of church attendance (.22). Inclusion of the predictors of strength of faith have a suppressor effect (Scheepers, Gijsberts, & Hello, 2001, p. 256, Davis, 1985, p. 33). That is they inversely affect measure of agreement with transcendent reconstruction and, in this instance, respondent’s church membership: non-membership of a church now makes a significant difference. Finally we incorporate conceptions of marriage into the analysis (model 4). In hypothesis 6a we anticipated a positive effect of the religious and ecclesiastic/judicial conception of marriage on the notion that church marriage rituals bring about a transcendent status transition. A religious/ecclesiastic notion about the contractual dimension of church marriage rituals does in fact have a significant effect (.35). The effect of certainty of belief in God, too, remains significant (.25), but the effects of frequency of church attendance and religious salience are neutralised. In addition the significant difference made by respondent’s church membership becomes insignificant.

The four models indicate that both religious socialisation by parents and by the religious community by way of participation in religious life, and strength of belief affect the extent to which respondents regard the goal of church marriage rituals as transcendent reconstruction. The influence of socialisation by parents is explicable in terms of the influence of participation in religious life. Incorporation of these predictors increases explained variance by .20. But strength of belief only partially explains the influence of participation in religious life. Frequency of church attendance continues its influence. In addition inclusion of the predictors of strength of belief causes the difference between church membership and non-membership to become significant. Explained variance increases by a mere .09. Finally conceptions of marriage only partially explain the influence of strength of belief, since the effect of certainty of belief in God remains decisive. Explained variance increases by .13. However, the influence of respondent’s church membership, frequency of church attendance and religious salience is neutralised. Hence in regard to these three predictors we conclude that just one conception of marriage explains the influence of religious socialisation, namely the view that couples primarily marry before God and the church. That answers the last research question in this chapter.

2.6 Conclusion and discussion

The previous section presented the results of our measurement and the analysis of these, which enabled us to answer our research questions. In this section we draw some tentative conclusions and raise some questions for further research and discussion.
2.6.1 Conclusion

In this chapter we first tried to establish to what extent participants in church marriage rituals still perceive these as a status transition. To this end we wanted to know what notions they have about the social goal of these rites. The answer is that participants make no distinction between status transition and status confirmation. Instead they combine the two, which, on the basis of Paul Ricoeur’s philosophy, we call reconstruction of the couple’s identity and their relationship. Their identity is marked by discontinuous continuity and continuous discontinuity. Thus the social goal of church marriage rituals may be defined as reconstruction of the identity of partners who have made their vows before God and in the midst of their social environment. These vows make the relationship permanent. The fact that they are made before God and in the midst of family and friends gives the relationship a special permanence. In transcendent reconstruction the vows are made before God, which means that the couple are religiously called to keep their marriage vows. In immanent reconstruction the vows are made before the social environment, hence they have a social duty not to break their promises.

We found that 37% of the respondents agree with the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction of the relationship and 27.8% see the goal as immanent reconstruction. In the case of transcendent reconstruction 28.7% reject the notion, while 25.9% reject the notion of immanent reconstruction. Hence the notion of a status transition is not supported by this study. There is no transition in the sense of a change in the couple’s social position. It is a matter of reconstruction. Here the couple’s social environment is important (especially in the case of immanent reconstruction), but it is not a matter of their position in relation to that environment. As noted already, it concerns a reconstruction of the couple’s identity, not just a change. Only a minority of respondents agree with the notion of transcendent and immanent reconstruction.

Our third research question concerns the extent to which differing notions about this status transition are explicable in terms of differences in religious socialisation. Our research shows that differences in agreement with the notion that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction are partly explicable by differences in religious socialisation. Religious socialisation by parents, integration with the religious community through participation in religious life and strength of belief play a role, with differences in participation in religious life neutralising the influence of differences in religious socialisation by parents. But differences regarding strength of belief do not explain differences in participation in religious life. We found hardly any correlation between religiosity and the view that church marriage rituals are aimed at an immanent reconstruction of relational identity. The only correlation we established was between frequency of church attendance and immanent reconstruction, but it ceased to be significant when we included the other attributes.

Our research question also concerns the role of notions about matrimonial values. It seems that the contractual dimension, more particularly the notion that couples marry primarily before God and the church, partially explains the influence of religious socialisation on the view that church marriage rituals are aimed at transcendent reconstruction. The influence of frequency of church attendance, respondent’s church membership and religious salience is neutralised. The effect of certainty of belief in God remains unexplained. In respect of immanent reconstruction we found only a few significant correlations (the ecclesiastic/religious and social notions about

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36 As may be seen from the discussion of the measuring instruments, agreement with transcendent reconstruction does not automatically imply rejection of immanent reconstruction, and vice versa.
the contractual dimension of marriage), but these became insignificant when incorporated in the analysis along with the other matrimonial values.

2.6.2 Discussion

This chapter proceeded from the question of the social goal of church marriage rituals: are they meant to effect and accompany a social status transition or something else? Our research provides no grounds for regarding church marriage rituals as rites of passage in the sense of rituals accompanying a status transition as defined by Van Gennep. They are neither exclusively transitional nor purely confirmatory. As mentioned already, they entail discontinuous continuity or continuous discontinuity, which we call a narrative reconstruction of the couple’s identity. An important task for further research is to explore the combination of change and confirmation and to determine whether respondents in fact regard this combination as a reconstruction of their identity in respect of each other and their relationship. Is reconstruction the appropriate concept to explain this empirically observed phenomenon?

Transcendent reconstruction of the couple’s identity relates to the view that marriage vows are made before God. This gives the couple a religious command to keep their vows. In effect not only are the partners’ life stories united, but the two stories are also linked with God’s story, that is to say, with religious tradition. Thus configuration of narrative identity involves the integration of religious images and symbols, which could cause the plot of the life stories to be religious. Refiguration concerns future behaviour based on the new plot, implying that religious images and symbols from God’s story will feature in the couple’s life stories. If that happens, Ricoeur refers to attestation, a belief expressed in the person’s actions. Through the interplay of their personal life stories and God’s story the couple may discover a new intrinsic value. It is not so much that they recognise meanings in texts from the outside, but that religious images only acquire the power and truth to turn their future life into an attestation of that life story to the extent that the religious story is integrated with their own. It would be interesting to investigate to what extent religious images and symbols can be intrinsically integrated with the couple’s life story in this manner. Such a study would also have to establish how meaningful the religious images and symbols are to couples that have been married for some time. That would afford greater insight into the operation of religious images and symbols in liturgy.

This chapter dealt with the notions of participants in church marriage rituals regarding the social goal of these rites. The next chapter deals with the temporal goal. In this chapter the problem of the couple’s past, present and future arose in terms of the concept of narrative identity. In the next chapter we shall probe that problem more deeply.
Chapter 3

Your big wedding day: temporal goal of church marriage rituals

3.1 Introduction and research problem

The previous chapter dealt with the social goal of church marriage rituals. One of the conclusions was that participants perceive it as reconstruction of the couple’s identity, a combination of transition and confirmation, not of their social status but of their identity. In this chapter we explore the temporal goal of church marriage rituals. After all, rituals have not merely a social dimension but also a temporal one. We shall see that reconstruction of the couple’s identity in church marriage rituals likewise has a temporal dimension. When a random number of bridal couples are asked what they consider important in the form and content of their marriage ceremony, they usually answer that it must be personal and they must be able to recognise themselves in it. A cardinal problem faced by pastors and liturgists is how major liturgical services can be tailored to suit the main participants while still remaining true to Christian tradition. In his research Michels (2004, p. 196–201) found that nowadays couples feel they need a personalised marriage ritual that deviates from the standard pattern. Civil marriage officers and pastors, too, tend to provide ‘customised’ rituals. Where does this need for a personalised ritual come from? It stems from the structure of liturgies that accompany pivotal moments in people’s lives, such as baptism, marriage and burial. These occasions are experienced as merging with the great mystery of life (Lukken, 1999, p. 262). In ritual studies they are considered to be rites of passage (Van Gennep, 1909), (Turner, 1969).

Marriage rites, then, are seen as marking a major change in the lives of the bridal couple and their social environment. In the previous chapter we dealt with this on the basis of our empirical study. Although ritual scholars are currently debating whether one can still speak of a status transition in modern society, marriage represents a focal ritual in people’s lives. It marks a major change, possibly a confirmation of a number of gradual changes, or maybe a combination of all of these, as we saw in chapter 2. At all events, it remains a big moment. These changes have not only a social but also a temporal dimension. Through church marriage rituals couples demonstrate that a particular phase of their lives is over and a new one has begun.

1The questionnaire of the research on which this thesis is based includes the following open questions: ‘What do you consider important in the content of a marriage ceremony?’ and ‘What do you consider important in the form of a marriage ceremony?’

2Lukken (1999, p. 260,261), for example, maintains that people still experience marriage as a transition.
At pivotal moments such as the marriage ritual people in a sense reconstruct their lives. From that decisive vantagepoint they review their past and take a look at their future. In their sermons pastors often describe how bride and groom first met each other. The selection of hymns and texts, too, tends to incorporate biographical elements. There may be references to deceased (grand)parents. Besides looking at the past, there are glimpses into the future. The ‘journey ahead together’ is a recurring theme. Attention is drawn to troubled times that the couple are bound to experience. The origin of the relationship is sought in the past (how did they come to meet each other?). Its destiny is sought in the future (will they still be together?). But the couple’s lives are not reconstructed in a personal, immanent perspective only. The past/origin and future/destiny are also viewed in a Christian, transcendent perspective Ð that of the origin and destiny of all Christian marriages. Points of reference are the creation story, the marriages of the patriarchs and the metaphor of the couple as a sign of Christ’s love for the church.

Because marriage rituals are in a process of being personalised and are increasingly ‘customised’, the focus on the immanent aspect of the origin and destiny of the relationship may sharpen at the expense of its transcendent aspect. When it comes to the couple themselves, to what extent do they still adopt a transcendent perspective on their origin and destiny? The question is even more pressing for other participants in the marriage ceremony, the couple’s relatives and friends. After all, the couple chose to have a Christian marriage ritual; the wedding guests did not. In this chapter we explore notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship from the angle of participants in church marriage rituals. In the next section we elaborate our research problem into research questions. In the third section we discuss various views of the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship on the basis of the Halbwachs’s and Assmann’s theories. Section 4 describes the new measuring instrument we devised for these views, and in the next section we deal with the results of the measurement and analysis. First we determine to what extent respondents discern the various dimensions that we identified. Then we look at agreement with these notions and the correlations between them. In the fourth place we discuss bivariate relations between notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship on the one hand and features of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the other. In the fifth subsection we present multivariate correlations that indicate which features of religious socialisation and which conceptions of marriage are decisive. The subsection concludes with a comparison between the various regression analyses. The final section presents some tentative conclusions based on our answers to the research questions and certain issues for further discussion and research.

3.2 Research questions

The preceding section outlines the problem that an immanent notion about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship is superseding the transcendent view, despite the fact that the existing liturgy highlights the transcendent view and the immanent notion received too little attention in the past. In this section we work out this problem in the form of research questions.

Because bridal couples increasingly want to, and can, tailor church marriage rituals to their own needs and desires, there is risk that interest in a transcendent conception of the origin and

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3The study by Michels (2004, p. 173,174) indicates that present-day bridal couples describe the marriage ceremony as exuberant rather than as traditional and impersonal. Preparations also take much longer.
destiny of the relationship will decline. One hears about how bride and groom came to meet each other, how they reached their decision to get married and how exciting their future will be. There is less and less mention of man and woman being created for each other, of the way God blessed marriage, and his command to bridal couples for their future life, namely to be an image of his love for humankind.

But the problem goes beyond couples’ dwindling interest in the transcendent view. They may choose to pay less attention to the transcendent aspect, but they do opt for a church marriage ritual. The wedding guests do not. They may not have any church affiliation and may not even have had a Christian upbringing. Nowadays one cannot take it for granted that participants in church marriage rituals are practising Christians. Since the late 1960s the secularisation process has deeply eroded the religiosity of people in the Netherlands. Individuals are less and less inclined to interpret the world and life in terms of religious categories. The influence of religious institutions has also declined sharply (N. D. De Graaf & Te Grotenhuis, 2003, p. 47, 48). As a result participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals has dropped drastically along with attendance of Sunday services. A major factor here is that post–1970 generations had less and less exposure to Christian and ecclesiastic socialisation. Hence it is perfectly possible that some participants in church marriage rituals have had little or no contact with church rituals and do not believe in God. Obviously people who are unfamiliar with church rituals and who are unbelievers will have other notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship than practising Christians. That raises the following question: to what extent do differences in religious socialisation influence the way people view the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship? Is it true that people with a more thorough religious socialisation (not only were their parents church members but they themselves are still actively involved with a church or religious community) will be more inclined to adopt a religious perspective on the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship? Does this apply equally to all forms of religious socialisation, or do some forms have a greater impact than others?

A further question is whether religious socialisation per se determines notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship. Religion, too, has something to say about marriage. It could be that religiosity only influences people’s notions about the origin and destiny of a couple’s relationship inasmuch as it determines their conception of marriage. In the previous chapter we noted that Christianity has a highly specific conception of marriage as a lifelong commitment of love, in which sexuality and having children have an exclusive position. In how far do conceptions of marriage as such influence notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship?

These questions, too, are approached from the angle of participants in the marriage ritual (both bridal couples and wedding guests). Again we confine ourselves to Roman Catholic marriage rituals. The foregoing problems crystallise in the following research questions:

1. To what extent do participants in church marriage rituals distinguish between a transcendent and an immanent conception of the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship?

2. To what extent do participants in church marriage rituals agree with these conceptions of the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship?

3. To what extent do different conceptions of the origin and destiny of the relationship correlate with differences in religious socialisation?

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4This refers to pivotal moments in human life rather than the broad definition of Van Gennep and his disciples.
4. To what extent are these correlations explicable in terms of conceptions of marriage?

3.3 Theories and hypotheses

In the previous section we broke up our research problem into four research questions. In this section we present our conceptualisation of the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship, which distinguishes between an immanent and a transcendent temporal perspective. We then formulate hypotheses about the influence of religious socialisation on the two temporal perspectives, following our description of religious socialisation in the preceding chapter. Finally we formulate hypotheses about the influence of conceptions of marriage on notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship.

3.3.1 Two conceptions of time

This subsection first describes a general theory of Halbwachs and Assmann on collective memory and how that determines the way people regard the present and the future. We also explore how collective memory operates in feasts. We then apply this general theory to church marriage rituals.

Communicative and cultural memory and images of the future generally

We have said that a marriage ceremony represents a pivotal moment in a person’s life. It is at such moments that people take a look at their lives. The ordinary course of day-to-day life breaks down and time assumes a different aspect. Memory plays a major role in all this. In this subsection we consider two perspectives on time in relation to memory and their implications for the present and the future. They are communicative memory and cultural memory. We also examine the way cultural memory cuts across communicative memory during feasts.

Memory is not just individual but also collective. The reason why certain details are remembered and others are not is that the individual whose memory it is belongs to a social group, a collective. The collective provides the person with a frame of reference for reconstructing her memories. It entails certain points of reference that are shared and discussed by the collective. Because individuals belong to various collectives, their recollections of the same event differ (Halbwachs, 1991, p. 7–9,13–15). Memory is always a social reconstruction of the past, but not every look at the past is a memory. There is a distinction between history and memory. History begins where memory stops. At the point where a social group ceases to be interested in a particular era historiography starts. Historiography has its own perspective. The focus is on events that demarcate different eras. Collective memory, by contrast, hinges on continuity, because it is what joins the group together and shapes its identity. Thirdly, history adopts just one perspective. Although historiography can never be objective, it has a reputation for objectivity. Memory is basically manifold, because it belongs to different individuals, each with his own frame of reference comprising contact with diverse groups (Assmann, 1992, p. 42–45, Halbwachs, 1991, p. 17–34).

Collective memory can assume various forms. We distinguish between two of these. The first is communicative memory. It comprises the group’s collective experience, hence it dates back at most eighty to one hundred years. It is based entirely on oral transmission and represents an everyday perspective on time. Then there is cultural memory, which focuses on certain
fixed points in history that determine the group’s collective identity. It includes not only his-
torical moments but myths and legends as well. The two forms of memory are transmitted in
different ways. Communicative memory is handed down to a greater or lesser extent by all
group members, mainly orally. Cultural memory is transmitted officially in special forms and
sign systems. This gives them a sacred character and they impart – mostly transcendent – mean-
ing. All group members share their communicative memory. This does not apply to cultural
memory. There are special occasions for sharing cultural memory (Assmann, 1992, p. 50–53).
A major medium is feasts. They could be calendar or seasonal feasts like Christmas and Easter,
but also feasts to mark special occasions in a person’s life. A church wedding clearly falls in
the second category.

Feasts are relevant to the way the two forms of memory coexist. In day-to-day living people
operate in ordinary time. Daily life is subject to chance; it is contingent. On the whole life is
organised functionally. In the affluent Western world transcendent meaning hardly features in
everyday life. Finally, a lot of daily life is spent on automatic actions and habits that are quite
banal, in the sense that they have no deeper meaning and are not pondered in any depth. The
temporal perspective of such mundane things is that of communicative memory. The things peo-
ple do show strong continuity with what people have always done. Ordinary life is governed by
what group members still remember and tell each other. But feasts cut across everyday life. In
contrast to the contingency of ordinary life, feasts are orchestrated: most feasts proceed accord-
ing to a more or less rigid score or script. Actions are governed by a fixed structure according to
criteria other than functionality, such as aesthetics. In contrast to the lack of meaningfulness of
everyday life, feasts abound in meaning. They can trigger reflection but also euphoria, breaking
down the restraint and reserve of ordinary life. Finally, feasts are also marked by repetition, but
not that of mindless, banal routine. Actions have deeper meaning than just the self-evident (Ass-
mann, 1991, p. 14–17). Inasmuch as feasts cut across everyday reality, cultural memory will
supersede communicative memory. The myths, rituals and symbols that are centre stage give
the world new meaning that extends beyond the age of the present generation. This meaning is
governed by primeval stories that are not set in ordinary time. The collective from which the
individual derives her identity is extended to a broader community dating back to (primordial)
beginnings. During the feast everything acquires fresh meaning that transcends ordinary time.
Myths, rites and symbols effect some sort of renewal of collective identity with its concomitant

Communicative and cultural memory and images of the future in church marriage rituals

So far we have dealt with the distinction between communicative and cultural memory and
images of the future generally and their interplay during feasts. We shall now apply it concretely
to church marriage rituals. Through their images and metaphors rituals evoke notions about
the origin and destiny of the relationship. Liturgical language (words, gestures, objects) does
something to people. It functions as symbolic language that links humans with God’s grace, and
only to a lesser extent as descriptive language, an exposition of what is happening (Chauvet,

In the case of church marriage rituals we find, as noted already, a sharper focus on commu-
nicative memory and images of the couple’s future. Their lives before they met each other are
reviewed, how they came to know each other and reached a decision to get married. Then the
problems and challenges they will face in the future are considered and the couple are wished a
happy life together, sometimes accompanied by sound advice (Michels, 2004, Scheer, 1979). If we examine the variants of church marriage rituals discussed and prescribed in the literature, we find that the ordinary temporal perspective is augmented with a different one that accords with cultural memory. In that perspective the origin is Christian salvation history, the history of the God of Israel and Jesus of Nazareth, a God who concerned himself with his people since creation and was incarnated as a human being in Jesus of Nazareth. That salvation history was recorded in the Bible as well as in other Christian texts. It still makes itself felt in the present and must/can influence the lives of Christians, who conduct themselves as children of God and disciples of Jesus. Christian salvation history also has implications for the future, since God has a purpose for his creation: its consummation in the end-time, the dawn of his kingdom. Just as cultural memory cuts across communicative memory during feasts, so liturgical services generally are marked by a different temporal perspective. It entails remembering what God has meant to the human race in the past (anamnesis), seeks to effect a re-enactment and actualisation of that salvation history in the ritual, and on the basis of that new salvific perspective reaches out to the future (Thurian 1963, p. 29-35). Church marriage rituals locate the origin of marriage in God’s creation of man and woman as helpmeets for each other (Gn 2:18-25; Mt 19:3-12; Mk 10:1-12; Lk 16:18). The destiny of the couple is expressed in the nuptial blessing. God’s blessing on marriages is recounted, for example, in the case of the patriarch Isaac (Gn 24:60) and in the story of Tobit (Tobit 7, 8). Marriage is also an image of God’s bond with humankind (e.g. Hos 1-3, Jr 2:3, 13:20-27, 31:3-5; Ezek 16, 23; Is 49:14-50:3, 54:4-5, 62; Eph 5:22-33), more especially Christ’s love for the church. Hence the couple’s destiny is to be a sign of God’s love for humankind or Christ’s love for his church. In church marriage rituals these biblical meanings of marriage are applied to the couple. The texts are read, reverberate in the hymns and the sermon, and recur in specific liturgical texts like the addresses of the officiant and the nuptial blessing. The marriage of the couple here and now is assimilated into the series of biblical and Christian marriages in the past and thus acquires historical meaning. The couple are marrying because God destined man and woman for each other. They are commanded to be a sign of Christ’s love for the church and of God’s covenant with his people. Finally they can rely on God’s blessing on their future, because God blesses their marriage just as he blessed the marriages of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Rachel. God is present at their wedding just as Jesus was present at the wedding at Cana.

Just as two temporal perspectives converge in feasts generally in the form of communicative and cultural memory, so the past and future of the couple’s relationship are viewed both immanently and transcendentally in church marriage rituals. Accordingly we approach ritual participants’ notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship in terms of four dimensions:

1. transcendent origin: the couple’s relationship originates from the fact that God created man and woman for each other
2. immanent origin: the couple’s relationship originates from the fact that bride and groom met each other and together built up their relationship
3. transcendent destiny: the destiny of the couple’s relationship consists in the love between God and human beings
4. immanent destiny: the destiny of the couple’s relationship is in their own hands
3.3.2 Religious socialisation

On the basis of Halbwachs’s and Assmann’s work we have identified four dimensions of notions about origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. As noted in section 2, church marriage rituals are increasingly attuned to the couple’s personal needs. This results in greater concern with immanent views of the origin and destiny of their relationship at the expense of transcendent views. In addition secularisation has meant that the average church involvement of bridal couples has declined and the majority of wedding guests, being the other participants in the ritual, are ecclesiastically uninvolved. Hence we must consider how open they will be to transcendent notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. We expect the degree of openness to the transcendent view to relate closely to the religious socialisation of participants in church marriage rituals. Not only do we expect ecclesiastically involved couples to be more receptive to images and metaphors of marriage from Christian tradition. We expect the same of ecclesiastically involved participants as a whole. That is essential for mythical time to irrupt in ordinary time, as Assmann would have it. In other words, because, as noted already, liturgical symbols influence people’s ideas, we expect them to agree more strongly with the transcendent view of the origin and destiny of the relationship.

For the theoretical basis and conceptualisation of the various attributes of religious socialisation you are referred to chapter 2. Here we confine ourselves to the hypotheses, the underlying idea being that the more thorough people’s religious socialisation, the more strongly they will agree with the transcendent view of the origin and destiny of the relationship. Such strong agreement does not, however, imply less agreement with the immanent view.

Our hypotheses read as follows:

1. Socialisation by parents:

   (a) People from homes where both parents are church members agree more strongly with the view that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny than people from homes where one or both parents are non-members.

   (b) People from homes where one parent is a member of a church or religious community agree more strongly with this view than people from homes where neither parent is a member.

2. Socialisation by the religious community:

   (a) Church membership:

      i. People who regard themselves as church members agree more strongly with the notion that the couple’s relationship has a religious origin and destiny than those who are non-members.

      ii. People whose partners regard themselves as church members agree more strongly with the notion that the couple’s relationship has a religious origin and destiny than those whose partners are non-members

   (b) Integration with community through ritual participation:

      i. The more frequently people go to church, the more they will agree that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny.
ii. The more closely people are involved with their church or religious community,  
the more they will agree that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin  
and destiny.

iii. The more importance people attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional  
rituals, the more they will agree that the couple’s relationship has a transcen-  
dent origin and destiny.

(c) Integration with community through strength of belief:

i. The greater the role of religious belief in a person’s life, the more she or he will  
agree that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny.

ii. Naarmate iemand mThe more certain a person’s belief in God or an ultimate  
reality, the more strongly he or she will agree that the couple’s relationship has  
a transcendent origin and destiny.

3.3.3 Four conceptions of marriage

The previous subsection indicates how religious socialisation may influence notions about the  
origin and destiny of the relationship. From this we inferred certain hypotheses. But, as noted  
in section 2, we need to determine in how far religious socialisation as such determines notions  
about that origin and destiny, or whether people’s conceptions of marriage are to a greater  
or lesser extent influenced by their religious socialisation. In other words, to what extent do  
people’s conceptions of marriage explain the influence of religious socialisation on their notions  
about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship?

For conceptions of marriage you are referred to chapter 2. Here we confine ourselves to the  
hypotheses.

3. Contract:

(a) The more people agree with the religious or ecclesiastic dimension, the more they  
will agree that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny.

(b) The more people agree with the personal, social or civil/judicial dimension, the  
more they will agree that the couple’s relationship has an immanent origin and  
destiny.

4. Having children:

(a) People who agree with the notion that having children is a religious task will agree  
more strongly with the transcendent origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship.

(b) People who agree strongly with the notion that the social environment expects cou-  
ples to (try to) have children will agree more strongly with the social origin and  
destiny of the couple’s relationship.

5. Sexuality: We have no immediate hypotheses about this matrimonial value.

6. Love:

(a) People who agree strongly with self-effacing love will agree more strongly with the  
transcendent origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship.

In Christianity agapè, self-effacing love, has always been emphasised.
3.4. Measuring instrument

The previous subsection dealt with notions and dimensions of the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship and we formulated hypotheses about the influence of religious socialisation on notions regarding the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. In addition we formulated hypotheses about the influence of conceptions of marriage on these notions. In this subsection we describe the measuring instrument we constructed on the basis of our conceptualisation in the previous subsection so as to measure our respondents’ notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship.

3.4.1 Origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship

We measured notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship by presenting respondents with a measuring instrument comprising a closed question and sixteen items. The question reads: When two people get married one often thinks about the origin of their relationship and their future. Thinking back on the wedding ceremony, could you indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements? The十六 items are based on the conceptualisation described in section 2 and respondents had to indicate in how far they agreed with each. The items are based on indicators corresponding with the dimensions of the conceptualisation. Indicators give the actor and the time. Items appear in the next subsection where we describe the factor analysis. The following table presents the dimensions and the corresponding indicators. There are indicators for actor and temporal perspective.

In the items for the transcendent origin dimension the actor is God. He created man and woman for each other. The temporal perspective is origin. For immanent origin the couple themselves are the actors. Their union is based on a relationship they themselves built up. In the items for transcendent destiny God is again the actor. His act is to love humankind and the

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6Eroticism and passion, on the other hand, were always suspect because of the link with sexuality.
7Being in love and passion are the principal motives for present-day relationships and marriages, but they are a shaky basis for marriage since they are shortlived. Hence people who find eroticism and passion important will be less interested in a long-term relationship (Allan & Crow, 2001, p. 56–62)
8Particularly when the spouses grow older care becomes important. Hence people who attach great value to caring love will find long-term relationships important.
9Friendship is the cardinal form of love for lasting relationships and hence for a long-term union.
10Scores range from 1 to 5, 1 representing ‘totally disagree’ and 5 ‘agree totally’.
couple are the sign of that love. The destiny of the couple’s relationship lies in God’s love for humans, so it has a future. In the items for immanent destiny the actors are the couples themselves. The future of their relationship is in their own hands. Hence the temporal perspective is their future life together inasmuch as they themselves are able to continue their relationship.

For the other measuring instruments you are referred to chapter 2.

3.5 Results

3.5.1 Dimensions

In section 2 we described four notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. But are these four notions also discernible in the minds of participants in marriage rituals? To answer this question we conducted a factor analysis. Below we indicate the dimensions we identified theoretically for each item (theoretical domain) and which factors we found in the respondents’ answers, together with the communality coefficients and factor loadings\(^{11}\). On the basis of the factor analysis we constructed scales. The frequency distribution of the scores on each scale appears below the factor analysis\(^{12}\). We used the scores on these scales to answer our research questions and for further analyses.

\(^{11}\)Factor loadings below .20 are omitted.

\(^{12}\)Scale scores are calculated by summing respondents’ scores on the items for each factor and dividing the total by the number of valid scores.
## 3.5. RESULTS

Table 3.2: Factor analysis of notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The creation of man and woman is the origin of the bond between the bridal couple</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bond between the couple originates in the fact that God destined man and woman for each other</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The origin of the marriage bond lies in the fact that God created man and woman for each other</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The origin of the marriage bond lies in the fact that God made man and woman for each other</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relationship that grew between the partners is the basis of their marriage bond</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The marriage of bride and groom is grounded in the bond that formed between them</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The marriage bond between bride and groom is the relationship that grew between them</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The marriage bond is based on the bond that formed between a man and a woman</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The future of a marriage is entirely in the partners’ hands</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The marriage partners hold the future of their marriage in their own hands</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The future of this marriage bond lies entirely in the marriage partners’ hands</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The future of a marriage bond lies in God’s love for humankind</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The marriage bond between man and woman has a future because of God’s love for humankind</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through God’s love for humankind the couple’s relationship has a future</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In God’s love there is a future for the bond between the bridal couple</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s Alpha

|                        | .93 | .77 | .89 | .87 |


The factor analysis\(^{13}\) of items in the scale for the origin and destiny of the relationship yields four factors, the items loading exactly as we had anticipated theoretically. Only one item has a high loading on two factors: “The marriage of a man and a woman has a future only because of the partners’ input.” This item has a high loading on both the social origin and the social destiny factor. But the factor loading on social destiny is the higher of the two, which conforms to our theoretical expectation. Hence the analysis confirms our theoretical distinctions and we can label the factors in accordance with the dimensions that we discern.

Our research question concerns the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals distinguish between a transcendent and an immanent perspective on the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. Our factor analysis permits the conclusion that they do make such a distinction.

### 3.5.2 Agreement

#### Table 3.3: Agreement with transcendent origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents’ views on the transcendent origin of the couple’s relationship are very divided. About a third of them (35.2%) reject the notion; another third (28.7%) neither agree nor disagree; one third (36.1%) subscribe to it.

#### Table 3.4: Agreement with immanent origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nobody rejects the notion that the origin of the couple’s relationship is the relationship they have built up. A mere 1.9% neither agree nor disagree. The immanent origin of the relationship is accepted almost unanimously (98.1%).

\(^{13}\)Oblimin, Minimal Eigenvalue 1
3.5. RESULTS

Table 3.5: Agreement with transcendent destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Less than a quarter of the respondents (23.8%) reject the notion that the future of the couple’s relationship lies in God’s love for humankind; 36.9% are ambivalent, and a slightly larger proportion (38.9%) agree with the notion.

Table 3.6: Agreement with immanent destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree totally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree totally</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The notion that the future of the relationship rests entirely in the couple’s hands is rejected by 4.6% of the respondents; 20.4% neither accept nor reject it, and 75% agree.

Our second research question concerns the extent to which the transcendent and immanent notions about the origin or destiny of the relationship are endorsed by participants in church marriage rituals. We have described the frequency distribution of the four notions. As regards origin, we found that whereas the notion of a transcendent origin is endorsed by only one third of the respondents, virtually all of them agree with an immanent perspective. Immanent destiny, too, is almost universally accepted, while a good third subscribe to the transcendent variant. It seems the immanent view is more acceptable to respondents. The striking thing is that one third of them find a transcendent origin acceptable, while almost all of them agree with an immanent origin. That means that to some extent the same people endorse both a transcendent and an immanent notion about the origin and future of the relationship. To these people the two notions are not mutually exclusive, since they agree with both. Yet factor analysis shows that they are indeed seen as separate dimensions. It seems likely that bivariate and multivariate analyses will clarify the picture.

3.5.3 Interrelationship of notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship

We explored the correlation between the four variables construed on the basis of factor analysis, namely transcendent origin, immanent origin, transcendent destiny and immanent destiny. The table below gives the correlation coefficients.
Table 3.7: Correlations between transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent origin</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immanent origin</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent destiny</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

The table shows three significant correlations: between transcendent origin and transcendent destiny (.54), between immanent origin and immanent destiny (.33), and between transcendent destiny and immanent destiny (-.26). As may be expected, the transcendent notions correlate positively and significantly. The same applies to the immanent notions. Remarkably, transcendent origin does not correlate significantly with immanent origin, whereas the same two notions about destiny do show a significant negative correlation. That implies that the two notions on the couple’s future are mutually exclusive, since the more respondents agree with the transcendent notion, the less they agree with the immanent one.

3.5.4 Bivariate relations

The hypotheses posited above anticipate various relations between notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship on the one hand and religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the other. To cast light on these relations we conducted a number of bivariate analyses. First we explored the relation between religious socialisation and notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. Then we examined the relation between the four matrimonial values and notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. When dealing with two metric variables we give Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r). In other cases we give the measure of association (eta).

Relation between religiosity and notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship

Table 3.8: Relation between religious socialisation by parents and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership father</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership mother</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

The parents’ current church membership correlates significantly with the notion that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny. There is a slightly less significant correlation between father’s church membership and the notion that the relationship has an immanent destiny.
### 3.5. RESULTS

Table 3.9: Relation between integration with the religious community through participation in religious life and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.38**(r)</td>
<td>-.07(r)</td>
<td>.44**(r)</td>
<td>-.20**(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations/groups</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation transition rituals</td>
<td>.39**(r)</td>
<td>.03(r)</td>
<td>.45**(r)</td>
<td>-.19**(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant positive correlations between the notions that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny on the one hand and frequency of church attendance and participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals on the other. There is also a significant negative correlation between frequency of church attendance and the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals on the one hand and the notion that the couple’s relationship has an immanent destiny on the other. In addition the importance attached to participation in transitional rituals correlates significantly and positively with immanent origin. There are also significant correlations between the respondent’s church membership, performance of tasks and functions and membership of church associations and groups on the one hand and the notion that the couple’s relationship has both a transcendent and an immanent destiny. Respondents’ church membership moreover correlates significantly with transcendent origin.

Table 3.10: Relation between integration with religious community through strength of belief and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rel. salience</td>
<td>.23**(r)</td>
<td>-.078(r)</td>
<td>.28**(r)</td>
<td>-.19**(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>.35**(r)</td>
<td>-.02(r)</td>
<td>.49**(r)</td>
<td>-.15(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.13(r)</td>
<td>-.06(r)</td>
<td>.16(r)</td>
<td>-.06(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

We found significant positive correlations between religious salience and the certainty of the respondent’s belief in God on the one hand and the notion that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny. Religious salience correlates significantly and negatively with immanent destiny. Remarkably, there are no significant correlations between the notion that the relationship has an immanent origin and the certainty of the respondent’s belief in an ultimate reality.
Table 3.11: Relation between partner as socialising actor and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership partner</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions partner</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations/groups partner</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

The church membership of the respondent’s partner and the partner’s membership of church associations and groups correlate significantly with transcendent origin and destiny of the relationship. In addition partner’s membership of associations and groups correlates significantly with immanent destiny. The extent to which the partner performs tasks or functions in the church correlates significantly with immanent origin and destiny. The partner’s performance of tasks and functions appears to have a very different correlation from the person’s membership of church groups and associations.

Relation between matrimonial values and notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship

We also conducted bivariate analyses of the relation between notions about matrimonial values and about the goal of church marriage rituals. Because all the variables involved are metric we give Pearson’s correlation coefficients throughout.

Table 3.12: Relation between contract and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious/ecclesiastic</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.45**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other forms of cohabitation</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant positive correlations between the notion that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin on the one hand and religious/ecclesiastic and social notions about the contractual side of marriage on the other. There is a significant negative correlation with the exclusively judicial view and acceptability of other forms of cohabitation. The notion that the couple’s relationship has an immanent origin correlates significantly and positively with the personal view and acceptability of other forms of cohabitation. The notion that the relationship has a transcendent destiny correlates significantly and positively with the religious/ecclesiastic and social notions about the contractual side of marriage. There are negative significant correlations with the personal and exclusively judicial notions and the acceptability of other forms
of cohabitation. There is a significant positive correlation between the notion that the couple’s relationship has an immanent destiny and the personal and exclusively judicial notions. Finally there is a significant negative correlation between the notion that the couple’s relationship has an immanent destiny and the religious/ecclesiastic notion of the contractual side of marriage.

Table 3.13: Relation between having children and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rel. task</td>
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<td>-.01</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc. expectation</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%  
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

The notion that having children is a religious task correlates significantly and positively with the notion that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny. The notion that the couple’s social environment expects them to try and have children correlates significantly and positively with the view that the relationship has a transcendent destiny. Apparently even the social expectation that they will have children is associated with the transcendent destiny of the relationship.

Table 3.14: Relation between sexuality and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
<th>Immanent destiny</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.24**</td>
<td>.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality by nature</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual behaviour</td>
<td>-.17*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>-.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%  
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

As anticipated, there are significant positive correlations between the notion that premarital sex is acceptable and the view that the couple’s relationship has an immanent origin and destiny. There are also significant negative correlations between the notion that premarital sex is acceptable and the view that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny. Acceptability of homosexuality Ð both by nature and behavioural Ð correlates significantly and negatively with transcendent origin and destiny. Acceptability of homosexuality does not correlate with immanent origin and destiny at all.
### Table 3.15: Relation between love and transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transcendent origin</th>
<th>Immanent origin</th>
<th>Transcendent destiny</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agapè</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storgè</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%  
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant positive correlations between the notion that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and the view that self-effacing love, erotic love and caring love play an important role in marriage. There is a significant negative correlation between the notion that the relationship has an immanent origin and the importance attached to self-effacing love. Finally there are significant positive correlations between the view that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent destiny and the notion that self-effacing love and erotic love are important in marriage. There were no significant correlations with immanent destiny at all. The significant positive correlations between erotic love and transcendent origin and destiny are surprising, since in Christianity eroticism was viewed with suspicion for a long time.

**Conclusion about the relations**

We have established quite a number of significant correlations between attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the one hand and agreement with the notion that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny on the other. To a slightly lesser extent there are also significant correlations with the view that the relationship has an immanent origin and destiny. We also examined the correlations between the various notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. But, as in the previous chapter, we are not interested in significant correlations only. We also want to know which attributes and notions of participants have the greatest impact on their notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship. Hence we use a regression model to estimate which attributes of respondents’ religious socialisation and which matrimonial values decisively influence their views of the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. We proceed in the same way as in chapter 2, with the aid of four models for religious socialisation by parents, integration with religious community through participation in religious life, integration through strength of belief, and conceptions of marriage. We conduct analyses in respect of all dependent variables, namely transcendent origin, immanent origin, transcendent destiny and immanent destiny.

#### 3.5.5 Multivariate analyses

We have established quite a number of significant correlations between attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the one hand and agreement with the notion that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny on the other. To a slightly lesser extent there are also significant correlations with the view that the relationship has an immanent origin and destiny. We also examined the correlations between the various notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. But, as in the previous chapter, we are not
interested in significant correlations only. We also want to know which attributes and notions
of participants have the greatest impact on their notions about the origin and destiny of the
relationship. Hence we use a regression model to estimate which attributes of respondents’
religious socialisation and which matrimonial values decisively influence their views of the
origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. We proceed in the same way as in chapter 2,
with the aid of four models for religious socialisation by parents, integration with religious
community through participation in religious life, integration through strength of belief, and
conceptions of marriage. We conduct analyses in respect of all dependent variables, namely
transcendent origin, immanent origin, transcendent destiny and immanent destiny.
CHAPTER 3. YOUR BIG WEDDING DAY

Transcendent origin

Table 3.16: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of transcendent origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–1b</th>
<th>2a–2b</th>
<th>2c</th>
<th>3a–6e</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Intentional participation transitional rituals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Contract:</strong></td>
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<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.20</td>
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</table>

The third regression coefficient of model 1 (-0.94) confirms our hypothesis that people from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community will agree more strongly with the view that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin than those from
homes where neither parent is a member. This coefficient is significant. In hypotheses 2a and 2b we anticipate that integration via participation in church life has a greater impact on respondents’ notions about the transcendent origin of the marriage ritual than religious socialisation by parents. This was confirmed. The significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community and those from homes where neither parent is a member becomes non-significant (-.30) when integration with church or religious community is included in the analysis (model 2). Among attributes of participation, frequency of the respondent’s church attendance and importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals have a significant effect (respectively .22 and .21). Yet both effects are neutralised when strength of the respondent’s belief is incorporated into the analysis (model 3). Hypothesis 2c anticipates that strength of belief as a form of integration will have an effect. Only certainty of belief in God has a significant effect (.36), which remains significant when conceptions of marriage are included in the analysis (model 4). Among conceptions of marriage, the notion that couples primarily marry before God and that homosexuality by nature is acceptable have a significant effect (respectively .30 and -.20). The latter is remarkable. The less unacceptable homosexuality by nature, the stronger the agreement that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent origin. One would have expected an opposite effect, since a transcendent origin of the relationship refers to the fact that man and woman were created for each other. Possibly this is explicable if one assumes that the acceptability of homosexuality by nature does not mean acceptance of homosexual marriages. It does not imply acceptance of their behaviour, nor does it answer the question about the acceptability of homosexual marriages. In addition the negative correlation between agreement with unacceptability and transcendent origin (i.e. the greater the acceptability of homosexuality by nature, the stronger the agreement with the transcendent origin of the couple’s relationship) is hard to explain.

From this we conclude that religious socialisation by parents influences agreement with the transcendent origin of the couple’s relationship. Respondents whose parents are not members of a church or religious community are less in agreement with a transcendent origin than those from homes where both parents are members. The influence of such religious socialisation is explicable in terms of participation in religious life by way of frequent church attendance and the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. The greater the frequency of church attendance and the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, the greater the agreement with a transcendent origin. However, the influence of participation in religious life is cancelled by integration with the religious community through strength of belief. Here certainty of belief in God has an effect. That answers our third research question regarding transcendent origin. Religious socialisation explains the measure of agreement with the transcendent origin of the couple’s relationship.

The influence of certainty of belief in God turns out to be decisive, for the impact of conceptions of marriage does not neutralise that of certainty of belief in God. Among conceptions of marriage the notions that couples primarily marry before God and that homosexuality by nature is acceptable are decisive. The first notion has a positive effect. The stronger the agreement that marriage takes place primarily before God, the greater the agreement with a transcendent origin of the couple’s relationship. The effect of unacceptability of homosexuality by nature is negative. The more unacceptable homosexuality by nature, the lower the agreement with a transcendent origin of the couple’s relationship. Hence the answer to our fourth research question is that conceptions of marriage explain the influence of religiosity to a minor extent only. The influence of certainty of belief in God remains significant, merely declining from .36 to .32.
Explained variance increases from .32 to .43. Hence the influence of religious socialisation is not neutralised to any appreciable extent; the various notions go a long way to explaining it.

Immanent origin

Table 3.17: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of immanent origin  
\[ p\text{-values } .05 \text{ in bold, } n=173 \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
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</table>
Our first model indicates that religious socialisation by parents influences agreement with an immanent origin of the couple’s relationship. We did not expect this. There is a significant negative difference between respondents from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community and those from homes where only one parent is a member (-.34). People from homes where one parent is a member of a church or religious community agree less with an immanent origin than those whose parents are both church members. If we incorporate the predictors of integration with the religious community through participation in religious life (model 2), the difference remains significant (-.42). Of these predictors frequency of church attendance has a negative effect (-.21). In the third model both influences remain significant (respectively -.43 and -.18). Inclusion of the predictors of strength of the respondent’s belief does not neutralise the influence of parents’ church membership and frequency of respondent’s church attendance, although certainty of belief in God has a significant negative impact (-.26). When conceptions of marriage are included in the fourth model, the negative influence of parental church membership remains significant (-.31), but the effect of frequency of church attendance is neutralised (-.15). The predictors of conceptions of marriage have a suppressor effect on respondent’s church membership, resulting in a negative significant difference between respondents who are church members and those who are not (-.33). The latter agree less with the notion of an immanent origin. The significant effect of certainty of belief in God is neutralised. Among conceptions of marriage the following views have significant positive effects: marriage takes place primarily before the other partner (.32); the social environment expects the couple to try to have children (.16); and premarital sex is acceptable (.19). The notion that self-effacing love is important in marriage has a significant negative effect (.21). People who strongly endorse agapè agree less with immanent origin.

Religious socialisation by parents decisively influences agreement with an immanent origin of the relationship. Those from homes where only one parent is a church member agree less with immanent origin than those from homes where both parents are members. This could be because consideration of the biographical origin of the relationship occurs in the course of the liturgical service as a whole, so that it becomes to some extent a religious act, even though essentially it is purely immanent. Respondents who had no religious socialisation in their parental home would be less inclined to adopt this approach than those who did receive some religious socialisation from their parents. The influence of participation in religious life is also decisive. Although the effect of frequency of church attendance is neutralised, the influence of church membership becomes decisive. Non-members of a church or religious community agree less with an immanent origin. Strength of belief has no decisive impact, nor does it neutralise the impact of the other forms of religious socialisation, although it does increase explained variance from .08 to .34. Hence although several predictors of religious socialisation by parents and participation in religious life have a decisive effect, they clarify variance in agreement with immanent origin to a very limited extent. Predictors of strength of belief have no decisive influence but do explain a lot of the variance. In regard to an immanent origin of the couple’s relationship, then, the answer to our third research question reads as follows: The measure of agreement by participants in church marriage rituals with the notion that the couple’s relationship has an immanent origin is explicable in terms of their religious socialisation.

Conceptions of marriage do not neutralise the influence of parental socialisation, but participation in religious life and strength of belief do. However, they have a suppressor effect, as a result of which respondent’s church membership becomes decisive. These predictors moreover increase explained variance to .43 and there are many decisive effects. Hence our answer
to our fourth research question regarding an immanent origin reads as follows: *Predictors of conceptions of marriage partly explain the influence of religious socialisation on variance in participants’ agreement with an immanent origin of the couple’s relationship. The effects of frequency of church attendance and strength of belief (certainty of belief in God) in particular are explained.*

Among conceptions of marriage immanent notions have a clear positive influence (the notions that marriage is primarily a matter between the two partners and the social expectation that they should try to have children). The notion that premarital sex is acceptable is likewise non-transcendent, nonreligious and mostly non-ecclesiastic and thus has a positive effect. The negative effect of agapè is explained, since this form of love is strongly associated with the Christian faith, hence conducive to agreement with a transcendent origin. ¹⁴

¹⁴Although this correlation is not strong enough to have a positive effect on transcendent origin of the relationship (see table 3.16).
3.5. RESULTS

Transcendent destiny

Table 3.18: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of Transcendent destiny p.-values .05 in bold, n=172

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–1b</th>
<th>2a–2b</th>
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<td>Agapè, self–effacing love</td>
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The first model confirms our expectation that respondents from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community will agree more with the view that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent destiny than those from homes where neither parent is a mem-
There is a significant difference (-.97) between respondents whose parents are both church members and those whose parents are non-members. But when we include integration with the church or religious community in the analysis (model 2) the difference ceases to be significant. The effect of frequency of church attendance (.26) is significant, as is the effect of the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals (.25). Both effects remain significant in model 3, which includes predictors of participants’ strength of belief, although they decline somewhat (to respectively .17 and .22). Among predictors of strength of belief, religious salience has a significant effect (.20). However, inclusion of conceptions of marriage in model 4 neutralises all these effects. The decisive effect derives from the notion that marriage takes place primarily before God and the church (.32).

Religious socialisation by parents, then, influences the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals subscribe to a transcendent destiny of the couple’s relationship. Respondents whose parents are not church members agree less than those whose parents are members. Considering the small number of predictors, explained variance is quite high (.14). The effect of religious socialisation by parents is neutralised, however, by integration with the religious community through participation in religious life. Explained variance increases to .27. The more frequent respondents’ church attendance and the more importance they attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, the more they agree with a transcendent destiny of the couple’s relationship. This influence is not neutralised by participants’ strength of belief. Religious salience does have an influence. Explained variance increases to .34. Hence the answer to our third research question regarding a transcendent destiny of the couple’s relationship reads as follows: The influence of religious socialisation explains the measure of agreement with the view that the couple’s relationship has a transcendent destiny.

The most decisive conception of marriage is that marriage takes place primarily before God and the church. This view completely neutralises the influence of religious socialisation and explained variance rises substantially to .49. That enables us to answer the fourth research question regarding the transcendent destiny of the couple’s relationship: Conceptions of marriage fully explain the measure of agreement with a transcendent destiny of the couple’s relationship. The fact that the notion that people primarily marry before God and the church is decisive indicates that the more importance is attached to the overseer, the more the couple’s future is viewed from a transcendent perspective.
### Immanent destiny

Table 3.19: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of immanent destiny

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
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The first model, which includes only predictors of religious socialisation by parents, has no significant predictor. Religious socialisation by parents does not influence agreement with the immanent destiny of the couple’s relationship. The second model, which incorporates predictors
of integration with the religious community through participation in religious life, shows only one significant difference between respondents whose partners are church members and those whose partners are non-members (-.47). Respondents whose partners do not belong to a church or religious community are less in agreement with immanent destiny. When we introduce the predictors of strength of belief in model 3, the significant difference between respondents whose partners are members of a church or religious community and those whose partners are non-members does not disappear but actually increases (-.52). In addition the difference between respondents who are church members and those who are not becomes significant (.57). Non-members agree more strongly with immanent destiny than members. Remarkably, respondent’s own church membership has an opposite effect from partner’s church membership: personal church membership results in greater agreement, whereas partner’s church membership reduces agreement. Probably respondent’s church membership has a suppressor effect and should not be assigned much substantive significance. Yet the influence of partner’s church membership remains constant (see below), hence highly significant. In addition religious salience has a significant negative effect (-.19). The less important the role of belief in the respondent’s life, the more she will subscribe to an immanent destiny. In the fourth model this effect is neutralised by the addition of the predictors of conceptions of marriage. The difference between respondents whose partners are church members and those whose partners are non-members remains significant, albeit slightly lower (-.42). Among conceptions of marriage the notions that one marries primarily before the other partner and that homosexuality by nature is unacceptable have a significant effect (respectively .28 and -.21). The stronger the belief that marriage is a matter between the marriage partners, the more strongly they endorse an immanent destiny. The greater the agreement with the unacceptability of homosexuality by nature, the lower the agreement with immanent destiny. The fact that people who regard marriage as primarily a matter between the couple themselves agree more strongly with immanent destiny is understandable. Their future, too, is in their own hands. The negative influence of unacceptability of homosexuality may relate to the fact that non-acceptance of homosexuality is often substantiated by arguments extraneous to the partners (order of creation, natural order). Those who agree strongly with such a view will be less inclined to ascribe the destiny to the couple themselves but will look for an extraneous destiny.

Our first regression model offers little explanation for variance in agreement with immanent destiny (R-square: .02). Religious socialisation by parents has no impact. Integration with the religious community through participation in religious life has slightly more explanatory power (R-square: .08), hence it does have some effect. Partner’s church membership actually has a decisive influence. Inclusion of the predictors of integration with the religious community through strength of belief hardly increases the explanatory power of the model at all (R-square: .12). Although it has some impact, it is not decisive. Thus our answer to the third research question concerning immanent destiny reads: The religious socialisation of participants in church marriage rituals explains their agreement with the immanent destiny of the couple’s relationship to a very limited extent (12%).

Inclusion of the predictors of conceptions of marriage in the fourth model results in a fair increase in explanatory power (R-square: .26). The effect of religious salience is neutralised, but the influence of partner’s church membership remains intact. Among conceptions of marriage, the notions that one marries primarily before the other partner and unacceptability of homosexuality by nature are decisive. Thus our answer to the fourth research question regarding the immanent destiny of the couple’s relationship reads: The relation between the religious social-
isation of participants in church marriage rituals and the strength of agreement with an immanent destiny of the couple’s relationship is only partially explained by conceptions of marriage. The influence of religious salience is explained, but not that of partner’s church membership. Finally, the decisive influence of the notion that one marries primarily before the other partner indicates that the more one agrees with this notion, the more one perceives the couple’s future from an immanent perspective. The decisive effect of unacceptability of homosexuality by nature shows that the more this notion is endorsed, the lower the agreement with the immanent destiny of the couple’s relationship.

3.5.6 Comparison of regression analyses of transcendent and immanent origin and destiny

When we look for decisive predictors among the dependent variables, we find, as may be expected, clear parallels between transcendent origin and transcendent destiny and between immanent origin and immanent destiny. Transcendent origin and destiny are both predicted by the notion that one marries primarily before God and the church. In the case of both variables, greater agreement with marriage before God and the church correlates with greater endorsement of a transcendent origin and destiny. The common factor in immanent origin and destiny is respondent’s church membership and the notion that one marries primarily before the other partner: the more respondents agree with this notion, the more they agree with immanent origin and destiny. There are no parallels between the two perspectives on origin, nor between the two perspectives on destiny.

Another remarkable finding is the positive correlation between an immanent perspective on the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship and the church membership of the respondent, his parents or partner. Other attributes of religious socialisation, church membership and religious salience, have a negative effect. Hence when it comes to an immanent perspective church membership differs from other forms of integration with the community. If one compares the proportion of explained variance (R-square), the two perspectives on the origin of the couple’s relationship have equal explanatory power (.43). The regression model has most power in regard to transcendent destiny (.49) and least in regard to immanent destiny (.26). This suggests that in the case of immanent destiny explanation of variance in agreement requires other variables that were not measured in this analysis. Conceptions of marriage do most to increase the explained variance in both perspectives on destiny (transcendent from .34 to .49, immanent from .12 to .26).

3.6 Conclusion and discussion

In the preceding section we answered our third and fourth research questions by means of four regression analyses, which we compared. In this section we draw some tentative conclusions from our study of the temporal goal of church marriage rituals. We then propose some issues for further discussion and research.

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*15 As noted above, the positive difference between church members and non-members is a suppressor effect, which ultimately is not decisive. It has little substantive meaning.*


3.6.1 Conclusion

In this chapter we sought to determine to what extent participants in church marriage rituals have a Christian or transcendent perspective on the origin and destiny of the relationship in addition to a personal or immanent one. We did so on the basis of a theory of communicative and cultural memory, derived from Halbwachs and Assmann, that feasts such as weddings are occasions when our day-to-day perspective on time makes way for a mythical perspective, which includes cultural memory. As a result the present is reinterpreted and we gain a new perspective on the future. In other words, the present is interpreted in terms of cultural narratives, leading to a new vista on the future. For church marriage rituals this implies that the couple’s wedding is interpreted in terms of Christian salvation history, with the focus on God’s creation of man and woman for each other, and on the fact that he destines the couple to be a sign of his love for humankind.

By combining the distinction between an everyday perspective and a perspective based on Christian salvation history with the distinction between notions about the origin and destiny of the conjugal relationship we arrived at four dimensions: a transcendent notion about the origin of the couple’s relationship, an immanent notion about its origin, a transcendent notion about its destiny and an immanent notion about its destiny. Factor analysis showed that our respondents in fact make a distinction between these four dimensions. They agreed almost unanimously that the couple’s relationship has an immanent origin. More than 80% agreed that it also has an immanent destiny. One third subscribed to a transcendent origin and a slightly larger proportion to a transcendent destiny. Thus the immanent variants are clearly preferred. Yet one can posit that a third of participants in church marriage rituals have a transcendent or Christian conception of the origin and destiny of the relationship.

To determine which attributes of religious socialisation decisively affect notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship we made four regression analyses in four phases. From these we gathered that the measure of agreement with a transcendent origin of the couple’s relationship is explained by religious socialisation. Conceptions of marriage explained very little of the agreement with transcendent origin. In the case of an immanent origin, too, religious socialisation accounted for the measure of agreement. The correlation between religious socialisation and measure of agreement with an immanent origin of the relationship partly explained the conceptions of marriage, besides increasing the explanatory power of the model. The measure of agreement with transcendent destiny could also be explained on the basis of religious socialisation, but the influence of religious socialisation was completely neutralised by conceptions of marriage, which likewise greatly increased the explanatory power of the model. Finally, religious socialisation hardly explains agreement with the immanent destiny of the relationship at all. Conceptions of marriage do strengthen the model’s explanatory power (explained variance doubles), but some influence from religious socialisation remains. A remarkable aspect of the immanent origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship was that the church membership of the respondent, her parents and partner have a positive effect, whereas attributes like frequency of church attendance and religious salience have a negative effect. Church membership might indicate a form of integration with the church other than frequency of attendance and religious salience. After all, church membership implies that one has had some (however little) religious upbringing, whereas frequency of church attendance and religious salience indicate that religion and the church play a prominent role in the person’s present life.
3.6.2 Discussion

At the end of chapter 2 we expressed the expectation that the temporal dimension of church marriage rituals would shed more light on the reconstruction of the couple’s identity as described in that chapter. During the ritual identity is reconstructed in the sense that the past is reinterpreted in an attempt to find continuity with the present. This reconstruction is evaluative, in that the self determines which choices and opportunities accord with the person’s identity, enabling him to state: “This is what I stand for.”

This chapter in effect works out that reconstruction. Elements of looking back and looking ahead are indeed discernible in the practice of church marriage rituals. The couple reconstruct their identity, especially in relation to each other, by looking back on their own past, especially the start of the relationship (how did they come to meet each other?) and how they jointly reached the decision to get married.

Halbwachs and Assmann’s theory led us to conclude that church marriage rituals have both an immanent and a transcendent perspective on the origin and destiny of the relationship. Hence reconstruction of the couple’s identity could be based on both their own history and Christian salvation history. It is not just a matter of their individual identity but also their religious identity as people who have had a Christian baptism. This reconstruction has implications for the couple’s present and their picture of their future destiny. The nature of the ritual should permit such a reconstruction of identity as well. This concurs with Chauvet’s view of the effect of sacraments, conceived of as symbols. Sacraments join (Greek: sumballein) Christ to the church or, more broadly, God with humankind, and within the church they join people together as children of God and brothers and sisters in Christ. In other words, they create or strengthen Christian identity (Chauvet, 2001, p. 17,85–89). Our study confirms Chauvet’s view. Our research into the social goal of marriage rites led to Ricoeur’s concept of identity construction and our study of their temporal goal showed that it comprehends a religious – in the case of church marriage rituals, a Christian – identity.

A large majority of participants in church marriage rituals subscribe to the immanent origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. This accords with the finding of other studies that bridal couples increasingly want a customised, personal ritual. It is increasingly becoming their ritual and has less and less to do with religious tradition. Only one third of participants agree that the relationship has a transcendent origin and destiny. If we put the accent on the introduction of a different temporal perspective, informed by a reinterpretation of the present in terms of cultural history and a new perspective on the future, we may feel that this development impoverishes ritual. To what extent do participants in church marriage rituals still find these rites transcendentally meaningful if for most of them they offer no more than a biographical perspective on the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship? Pastors and liturgists, too, should consider how meaningful the church’s rituals are and whether reinforcing their personal dimension does not diminish their transcendent meaningfulness. Personal relevance is essential. Couples must feel that the ritual relates to them. The origin of their relationship and their future life together may be focal. On the other hand it is not desirable that the ritual should centre entirely on the two of them. In fact, participants in the ceremony should experience the assimilation of their personal biography into salvation history, in the sense that this specific couple share in the salvation that God has destined for bridal couples.

An important issue for future research, then, is to gain more insight into the transcendentally meaningful element of the ritual and how that element should determine ritual practice. We examine this in greater depth from a different perspective in the next chapter when we explore
participants’ notions about the extent to which the ritual should follow a prescribed, ecclesiastically sanctioned order and in how far customised rituals should be accommodated. We also look into the normative composition of the participant group and to what extent one should allow for participants who are not church members.
Chapter 4

Liturgical Order: marking differences

4.1 Introduction and research problem

These days marriage rituals assume many forms and are performed in many different ways. One can opt for a civil marriage only, a civil marriage and a church marriage ritual, or a civil marriage plus a personal ritual that conveys religious or spiritual meaning. Research shows that couples’ wishes regarding the form of their marriage ceremony are diverging more and more. Civil marriage officers have recently been called to order, because they accommodate the wishes of bridal couples to such an extent that it affects the very essence of civil marriage (Michels, 2004, p.52–53). If we confine ourselves to church marriage rituals, there are signs that both bridal couples and pastors feel a great need for customised rituals, resulting in a wide spectrum of marriage rites. Michels’s study reveals changes in couples’ definition of church marriage rituals. Terms like ‘traditional’ and ‘solemn’ have made way for qualifications like ‘festive’ and ‘exuberant’. The time investment by pastor and couple in preparing for the ritual has also increased, as has appreciation for the preparation and the pastor (Michels, 2004, p. 173–175). A clear sign of the greater diversity of rituals on offer is that ecclesiastic guidelines for marriage rituals, such as those of the Roman Catholic Church, permit more flexibility. There is a ritual for marriages between two Catholics, marriages between a Catholic and a Christian from another denomination, and marriages between a Catholic and an unbaptised partner. Each ritual presents many alternative readings and prayers, from which pastor and couple may choose. In addition to the official possibilities there are even more alternatives available in liturgical practice (Scheer, 1979). But, one may ask, in how far can one accommodate couples’ wishes regarding the form of the marriage service? When can one still speak of a church marriage ritual and when is the ritual tailored to the two people to a point where it no longer links up with church’s tradition?

It is not just the substance of church marriage rituals that raises questions. The composition of participants in the service, and especially how liturgists should take that into account, are no less problematic. Currently only a minority of the Dutch population are practising church members. As in the case of other major rituals like funerals and baptism, the assembly\(^1\) comprises not just church members, but predominantly relatives and friends of the bride and groom. The extent to which their social environment consists of churchgoers often depends on their own church involvement. The Catholic marriage ritual offers the option of a prayer service rather than a wedding mass in instances where the congregation consists mainly of non-members of the church and in the case of mixed marriages. Yet the composition of the participants in church

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\(^1\)By this I mean the group of participants in that particular church ritual.
marriage rituals remains problematic. Can one perform a ritual with non-members or are they observers rather than participants? To what extent should liturgists take the heterogeneous composition into account? Should officiants accommodate non-members by enabling them to participate maximally in the ritual, or should they preserve the distinctive nature of the ritual in conformity with the church’s guidelines?

In other words, what are the limits and scope for accommodating couples’ wishes in regard to the form of the service and the composition of the participants? When is it still a church marriage ritual and when does it become a wedding held in a church building? To what extent should the ritual be tailored to the persons and the situation and in how far should it accord with the broad Christian tradition? In this chapter we consider in how far the form of the Christian marriage ritual should conform to Christian tradition and how one should deal with the mixed composition of participants in the ritual from their own perspective. First we break down the problem into research questions. In section 3 we discuss theories about the form of church marriage rituals and the composition of, and adaptation to, participants in such rituals. Then we formulate hypotheses about the relation between religious socialisation and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and the participants. In the fourth section we describe the new measuring instruments and in the fifth we deal with the results. First we determine in how far the dimensions we discerned are recognised by the respondents. Then we examine the measure of agreement with these. This is followed by bivariate analyses of relations between notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them on the one hand and attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the other. Finally we discuss the multivariate analyses with reference to the attributes of religious socialisation and views that decisively influence notions about the form of church marriage rituals and the participants. The chapter ends with some conclusions and a discussion.

4.2 Research questions

This chapter then, is about how participants in church marriage rituals perceive themselves and the ritual. Their response no doubt relates to the value they attach to the church and the Christian tradition. After all, if religious tradition means a lot to them, they will probably adhere to it more closely and will feel more strongly that only active church members should participate in the ritual. This view may depend largely on their religious socialisation.

But participants’ notions about the substance of the ritual and who should participate are not determined only by their general religiosity. Conceptions of marriage in Western Europe and the United States are very much influenced by Christianity. For centuries the church was where people got married. Individualisation and secularisation have greatly changed popular views of marriage and cohabitation. The Christian ideal of lifelong marriage, in which sexuality and procreation occupy an exclusive position, is no longer the dominant form of living together. Hence it could well be that notions about church marriage rituals are not so much influenced by religious socialisation generally as by specific conceptions of marriage. That leads to the following questions:

1. What notions do participants in Catholic marriage rituals have about the form of the ritual and participants in it?

2. In how far do participants in church marriage rituals agree with these notions?
4.3. THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

3. In how far do differences in religious socialisation account for the different notions?

4. In how far can the influence of religious socialisation be explained in terms of different conceptions of marriage?

4.3 Theories and hypotheses

In this section we look at theories about the form of church marriage rituals (4.3.1) and the participants (4.3.2). First we consider Berger and Luckmann’s model, which distinguishes two dimensions of the various ways in which modern people deal with tradition: a deductive and an inductive dimension. Next we examine two aspects of form on the basis of Rappaport’s definition of ritual. The two options regarding tradition and the two aspects of form provide four dimensions for our conceptualisation of the form of church marriage rituals. Then we use the distinction between sacred and profane to explore notions about participants in ritual — that is, their composition and the extent to which the ritual should be adapted to that. These notions again offer four dimensions for the structure of the participants and how to deal with the ritual.

4.3.1 Form of the marriage ritual

Couples’ outlook on their faith and their church has changed greatly over the past hundred years. Whereas once it was taken for granted that people got married as Catholics or Protestants, present-day couples have several options. They can have a purely civil marriage, which may be followed by a church marriage, or they may devise a personal ritual (or have one devised), which is then performed. In his thesis, *Daarom hebben wij stenen ringen* (That is why we have stone rings), Michels (2004) appraises some variations. Modern society is no longer a monoculture based on given traditions. According to Berger (1980, p. 10–29) modern people are obliged to choose from a varied range. A church marriage is no longer the only form of living together, because the influence of church institutions (of which marriage is one) on society has declined. Participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals generally has become the exception rather than the rule (N. D. De Graaf & Te Grotenhuis, 2003, p. 61), (Felling et al., 2000, p. 41, 238, 239).

Over the past three decades the proportion of church marriages in the Netherlands has dropped from 35.9% of all marriages in 1975 to 12.2% in 2000 (Michels, 2004, p. 22, 23). This illustrates the marginalisation of church marriage rituals.

Berger and Luckman (1966, p. 70–85, 110–146) clarify the marginalisation. Church marriages combine two institutions, both of which are under pressure. In Berger and Luckmann’s theory institutions are patterns of rules for human behaviour that are essential for everyday life. But these institutions need to be legitimised in the sense that they are explicated and justified. As the institutional order in a society expands, it gives rise to a ‘canopy’ of legitimations. The transmission of institutional legitimations from one generation to the next creates a symbolic universe, in which all the meanings of the institutions are incorporated. Symbolic universes, too, are essential for everyday life. They constitute the pre-reflective framework for people’s daily lives. Legitimations not only constitute the symbolic universe, they also maintain it. When technological, scientific and societal developments make aspects of the symbolic universe controversial they need to be supported by legitimations. If these prove inadequate, the symbolic universe and the institutions concerned come under pressure. Since the 1960s this has been the fate of the institutional church and marriage.
The 1960s saw the start of secularisation in most countries, a decline in religiosity accompanied by adaptation of religious contents to social change, and in the influence of ecclesiastic institutions on society (Bruce, 2003 [2002], p. 2,3,Dobbelaere, 2002, p. 17–43, Dobbelaere, 1981, p. 5-8, 11-12, N. D. De Graaf & Te Grotenhuis, 2003, p. 61). In addition social movements like feminism and the gay movement made the plausibility of marriage as an institution to regulate cohabitation debatable. Today there are various alternatives to the two institutions, as a result of which the monoculture of civil society, where church marriage used to occupy a prominent position, has broken down.

According to Berger (1980) the collapse of the Christian monoculture is a result of modernisation. The truths of the dominant tradition are no longer taken for granted, so people are obliged to choose. They can no longer adhere blindly to religious (in the Western world, Christian) norms and values. Modern people have to clarify their position vis-à-vis modernity. That applies particularly to people who want to marry in church. They cannot (and do not want to) simply submit to the customary church marriage ritual. In modern society people are constantly aware of choice.

In Berger’s (1980) view the confrontation with religious tradition and modernity offers modern people three options for their religious thinking and conduct: a deductive, an inductive and a reductive option. The deductive option affirms the authority of religious tradition in confrontation with the modern, secularised world. This reaffirmation of its authority makes it possible to deduce norms and values from religion. The inductive option bases religious actions on personal experience in relation to experience emerging from religious tradition. The reductive option subjects religious tradition to the criteria of secular modernity, which is necessary for sharing the modern worldview. The authority is no longer religious institutions but the minds of modern people.

The reductive option differs fundamentally from the deductive and inductive options. In the deductive option religious tradition is authoritative. In the inductive option religious experience serves as a basis for an attempt to translate tradition into a modern idiom. In the reductive option modernity is authoritative and religious tradition no longer has a say. The question is whether one can still call it religion which mediates God’s words and deeds for human beings (Gerwen, 1990, p. 28–31). Hence we do not consider this option in relation to the enactment of church marriage rituals.

Berger’s deductive and inductive options can be applied to the form of church marriage rituals. Form is an essential aspect of all rituals. Rappaport (Rappaport, 1999, p. 24) defines ritual as “the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers”. This definition incorporates two aspects of form: more or less invariant sequence, and acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers. The first aspect concerns the structure or components of the ritual, which Rappaport considers to be more or less invariant. In addition they antedate the participants in the ritual. I call this aspect guidelines that determine how a ritual is to be performed. In Rappaport’s view participation in a ritual implies acceptance of its order. That does not mean that every participant fully subscribes to the contents of the ritual, but it does mean that at a minimal level the participants endorse it (Rappaport, 1999, p. 119–124). People who prefer the deductive option in this regard will

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2In actual fact the very word ‘tradition’ implies some sort of attempt at translation, because it has to do with handing down a religious heritage from one generation to the next. This necessarily entails a modicum of translation or reinterpretation, since frames of reference are always changing for different generations and within the same generation (also see C. Hermans (2003, p. 23,24))
be more inclined to observe the guidelines laid down by the church or some other religious institution. If they take the inductive option, they will try to apply the prescribed guidelines to the specific situation or context, which might result in non-observance (or not literal observance) of these guidelines.

The second aspect concerns the language of the ritual. Rituals include all sorts of utterances, both words, actions and objects. This language is said to be not entirely encoded by the performers, implying that the form of the language, too, antedates the participants. Some of the codes they themselves incorporate into the ritual, but a great many codes were there already. This brings us face to face with the dilemma of the inductive and deductive options, since the pre-existence of some of the codes could mean that participants do not (or no longer) understand them. The question is to what extent such incomprehension calls for recoding in order to communicate with participants. Those who settle for a deductive option will be minimally inclined or totally disinclined to recode anything. They will try to solve the problem of incomprehension in some other way, for instance through guidance or liturgical catechesis. Supporters of the inductive option will be more inclined to recode so as to ensure that the meaning of old codes are intelligible to present-day participants.

Berger’s deductive and inductive options and the aforementioned two aspects of form – language and guidelines – enable us to clarify participants’ notions about the form of the ritual. We anticipate that their notions about the form of church marriage rituals can be approached in terms of four dimensions:

1. an inductive notion about the language of the marriage ritual
2. a deductive notion about the language of the marriage ritual
3. an inductive notion about the guidelines for the marriage ritual
4. a deductive notion about the guidelines for the marriage ritual.

4.3.2 Participants in church marriage rituals

Apart from the form we should also look at the participants in church marriage rituals. One could say that the participants are those who have gathered at the appointed time and place. But one can also view participation in a normative perspective: who may take part in church marriage rituals? The question is pertinent, since we are dealing with a religious ritual. Rituals mark and indicate a distinction from everyday reality (Grimes, 1999, p. 267), in the case of religious rituals a distinction between sacred and profane. In the eucharist, for instance, one can make a distinction between bread (before the consecration/eucharistic prayer) and the host (after the consecration/eucharistic prayer). Religious and profane life cannot coexist side by side in the same space, because the sacred is always ambivalent. People want to get in touch with the sacred, but sacred and profane cannot simply be mingled. After the eucharist the remainder of the host is kept in a tabernacle and is not stored with the unconsecrated wafers. Religious life demands a special place, from which the profane (at least up to a point) is excluded. Note in this regard Chauvet’s view on the symbolic break in liturgical language and rites. Liturgy symbolises or represents a religious reality. In itself it is not that reality but represents it symbolically. Hence there is a break between rite and reality. The symbolic break must be handled with pastoral prudence, since excessive symbolisation destroys the link with reality and results in a hieratic liturgy. Underplaying the symbolic representation leads to banalisation and the liturgical rites represent no more than what is objectively happening. In that case
must sacred and profane be kept apart, but everything directly or indirectly connected with the
profane should not penetrate the religious. Thus a cyborium is not just a bread bin but a specially
designed, chalice-shaped vessel. In effect, getting in touch with the sacred means letting go of
the profane (Durkheim, 1995;1912, p. 310–312). The religious place is the first demarcation
point. By designating a special place for religious life sacred and profane are at once separated.
Religious rituals performed in the sacred place signify the sacred and people can get in touch
with it in the appropriate way. To this end religious rituals include all sorts of prohibitions and
restrictions regarding the sacred, also known as taboos (Durkheim, 1995;1912, p. 304). In this
way the place functions as a focussing lens which permits people and god(s) to encounter each
other ritually (Grimes, 1999, p. 261). Besides place there are other aspects that may be essential
to encounter the sacred, such as certain actions, times (absolute or points in the course of human
life), objects, groups, figures and roles, qualities and quantities, language, sounds, and religious
ideas, concepts, intentions and emotions (Grimes, 1999, p. 267). All these elements constitute
religious rituals to a greater or lesser extent.

Because contact with the sacred requires separation from the profane, accompanied by all
kinds of prohibitions and restrictions, it follows that not anyone can participate in a ritual. Can
everybody enter the holy place, pronounce the sacred texts and touch the sacred objects? In
this way rituals position people (Chauvet, 2001, p. 110–111). In the early church up to the 4th
century the unbaptised had to leave the church after the sermon, when the actual eucharist was
about to begin. The same applied to those under church discipline, the excommunicated. Hence
one can distinguish between two parts of the mass or eucharist: the catechumen mass, in which
the unbaptised may participate, and the mass for the faithful, in which only baptised believers
may take part (Eisenhofer, 1933, p. 66–68). On the basis of the distinction between sacred and
profane one could just as well ask whether unbaptised people may attend the solemn moments
of church marriage rituals. When the couple administer the sacrament of marriage to each other
by exchanging vows it is a sacred moment. One could say the same about the nuptial blessing.
Hence one could take a restrictive view of participation in church marriage rituals, for instance
that they are only open to baptised people, or even to Roman Catholics of good standing in
the church (hence not under explicit or implicit discipline, living in accordance with church
doctrine).

The Roman Catholic Church adopts such a restrictive view when it comes to communion.
The Rituale Matrimonium advises that a wedding mass should not be celebrated if many of the
relatives and friends do not belong to the church or when it is a mixed marriage. These people
are officially excluded from communion. There are no official restrictions on participation in the
other rites. Hence one could say that with the exception of receiving the sacraments the Roman
Catholic Church has an open view of the composition of participants in its rituals. As long as
non-members do not receive the sacraments they may participate in the service. Chauvet (1995,
p. 38) calls the assembly “the chief concrete mediation”. God is encountered via the encounter
with other human beings. The church, and above all the assembly, is the concrete expression of
that principle. It is an assembly of men, women and children, most of whom differ from each
other. If one assumes the assembly to comprise a heterogeneous group, one cannot but have an
open mind about the composition of participants in church marriage rituals. Hence we explore
two notions about the composition of participants in church marriage rituals:

1. een restrictieve opvatting: alleen leden van de kerk die in geloof en gedrag de leer van de

the eucharist is no more than a sharing of bread and wine (Chauvet, 1995, p. 101–106) Hence in Christian rituals
sacred and profane can never be fully separated.
4.3. THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

kark volgen, mogen deelnemen aan het kerkelijke huwelijkssritueel

2. een open opvatting: iedereen, ongeacht zijn of haar opvattingen en gedrag mag deelnemen aan het kerkelijke huwelijkssritueel.

Een tweede vraag volgt op die naar de samenstelling van de deelnemers aan het kerkelijke huwelijkssritueel. In feite is zij alleen relevant, wanneer we uitgaan van een open opvatting over de samenstelling van de deelnemers. Wanneer de verzamelde gemeente namelijk een divers geheel mag zijn, dan volgt de vraag hoe de liturg hiermee dient om te gaan. Moet hij de diversiteit negeren en uitgaan van de door de traditie voorgeschreven liturgie, ongeacht de mate waarin de minder of niet kerkbetrokken deelnemers hieraan kunnen participeren? Of moet hij de liturgie dusdanig aanpassen dat ook zij volledig of zo volledig mogelijk kunnen deelnemen? Hierbij valt te denken aan de door Chauvet benadrukte pastorale prudentie (zie voetnoot 3) ter voorkoming van het over- of onderbenadrukken van de symbolic break tussen liturgische symbolen en de religieuze realiteit. Wanneer de breuk te groot wordt, kunnen de deelnemers niet meer meedoen. Wordt zij te klein, dan gaat de diepte van de liturgie verloren. Deze vraag naar de mate van aanpassing is alleen relevant bij een open opvatting over de samenstelling van de deelnemers, omdat bij een restrictieve opvatting men altijd kan uitgaan van een ritueel zoals deze is voorgeschreven door de kerkelijke traditie. Naast het hierboven genoemde onderscheid tussen een open en restrictieve opvatting ten aanzien van de deelnemers aan het kerkelijke huwelijkssritueel, onderscheiden we ook twee opvattingen ten aanzien van de mate, waarin het ritueel wordt afgestemd op de deelnemers:

1. a closed notion: the ritual is designed only for church members

2. an open notion: the ritual is adapted to the mixed composition of the participants

We believe that these four notions offer an approach to views about the composition of participants and the measure of adaptation to them.

4.3.3 Religious socialisation

We have now described the various dimensions of the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them. Here we consider in how far the notions about form and participants relate to religious socialisation. For the theoretical basis and conceptualisation of the various attributes of religious socialisation we refer to chapter 1. Here we confine ourselves to the hypotheses, based on the assumption that the more thorough people’s religious socialisation, the more value they will attach to the liturgical order prescribed by their tradition, hence the more they will agree with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about the participants. Those with a lesser degree of religious socialisation are expected to agree more with the inductive notion about form and an open notion about the composition of participants and the measure of adaptation to them.

1. Socialisation by parents:

(a) People from homes where both parents belong to a religious denomination will agree more strongly with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about the participants than those from homes where one or both parents are not church members.
(b) People from homes where one parent is a church member will endorse these notions more strongly than those from homes where neither parent is a member.

(c) People from homes where one or both parents are non-members of a church or religious community will favour an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and measure of adaptation more than people from homes where both parents are church members.

(d) People from homes where neither parent belongs to a church or religious community will agree more strongly with an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and measure of adaptation to them that those from homes where one of the parents belongs to a religious denomination.

2. Socialisation by the religious community:

(a) Church membership:

i. People who consider themselves to be church members will agree more strongly than non-members with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about participants.

ii. People who do not consider themselves to be church members will agree more strongly than church members with an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to them.

iii. People whose partners consider themselves to be church members will agree more than the partners of non-members with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about the participants in these.

iv. People whose partners do not regard themselves as church members will agree more strongly than the partners of church members with an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

(b) Integration in the community through ritual participation:

i. The more often people go to church, the more strongly they will endorse a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about participants in these.

ii. The less often people go to church, the more strongly they will endorse an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

iii. The more involved people are with their church or religious community, the more strongly they will agree with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about the participants in these.

iv. The less involved people are with their church or religious community, the more strongly they will subscribe to an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.
v. The more importance people attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, the more they will endorse a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about participants in these.

vi. The less importance people attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, the more they will endorse an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about participants in these.

(c) Integration with the community through strength of belief:

i. The bigger the role of belief in people’s lives, the more strongly they will subscribe to a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about the participants in these.

ii. The smaller the role of belief in people’s lives, the more strongly they will subscribe to an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

iii. The more certain people’s belief in God or an ultimate reality, the more strongly they will subscribe to a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about participants in these.

iv. The less certain people’s belief in God or an ultimate reality, the more strongly they will endorse an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

4.3.4 Conceptions of marriage

In addition to the relation between notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in these we also want to explore the relation to conceptions of marriage. For the conceptualisation of these we again refer to chapter 1 and confine ourselves to the hypotheses.

3. Contract:

(a) The more strongly people subscribe to the notion that they marry primarily before God or the church, the more they will agree with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about participants in these.

(b) The more strongly people believe that they marry primarily before their partner or their social environment, the more they will agree with an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

(c) The less acceptable people find alternative forms of cohabitation, the more strongly they will agree with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about the participants in these.

(d) The more acceptable people find alternative forms of cohabitation, the more they will subscribe to an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.
4. Having children

(a) The more people believe that married couples have a God-given task to try and have children, the more strongly they will agree with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about the participants in these.

(b) The less people believe that married couples have a God-given task to try and have children, the more strongly they will agree with an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

5. Sexuality

(a) The more people believe that premarital and extramarital sex is not allowed, the more strongly they will subscribe to a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about participants in these.

(b) The more people believe that premarital and extramarital sex is allowed, the more strongly they will subscribe to an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

(c) The more unacceptable people find homosexuality, the more strongly they will agree with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive notion about participants in these.

(d) The more acceptable people find homosexuality, the more strongly they will agree with an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and an open notion about the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to these.

6. Love

(a) People who assign greater importance to the dimensions of love generally will subscribe more strongly to an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals.

4.4 Measuring instruments

The preceding section dealt with the hypotheses about the relation between the form of church marriage rituals and participants in these on the one hand, and attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the other. In this section we look at the instrument we used to measure notions about form and participants. To measure respondents’ notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in these we presented them with an instrument comprising a closed question and 24 items. The question reads:A marriage ceremony may have

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4When people assign a greater role to some form of love, they will consider it important for that love to feature in the ritual, which would call for greater adaptation to the couple’s experiential world. However, we have no expectations regarding the relation between the role people assign love in general and notions about participants in church marriage rituals, nor about the relation between individual dimensions of love and notions about the form of the ritual and the participants in it.
very different aims and its nature may vary greatly. Could you indicate the measure of your agreement with each of the following statements if you cast your mind back to the marriage ritual? The 24 items are based on the conceptualisation described in section 2 and respondents had to indicate the level of their agreement with each. The items have indicators corresponding with the dimensions identified in the conceptualisation. Each indicator mentions the aspect of the ritual at issue and whether it involves an inductive or a deductive option. The items appear in the next section along with the description of the factor analysis. The table below reflects the dimensions and the concomitant indicators.

Table 4.1: Indicators of inductive/deductive measuring instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Notion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ritual form/language/deductive</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual form/language/inductive</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual form/guidelines/deductive</td>
<td>Guidelines</td>
<td>Tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual form/guidelines/inductive</td>
<td>Needs</td>
<td>Attune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants/composition/restrictive</td>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>Shared belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants/composition/open</td>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>Different beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants/adaptation/closed</td>
<td>Focus on</td>
<td>Faithful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants/adaptation/closed</td>
<td>Adapt to</td>
<td>Non-believers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the other measuring instruments, see chapter 2.

4.5 Results

The previous section dealt with the new measuring instrument for notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in these. We now turn to the results of our measurements and analyses. First we determine to what extent our respondents discern the same dimensions that we identified and how they relate to the various notions. Then we look at the measure of agreement with the various notions. Thirdly, we examine the bivariate relations and finally the multivariate relations, which indicate the attributes of religious socialisation that decisively influence notions about the form of church marriage rituals and the participants in these.

4.5.1 Dimensions

Our first research question concerns respondents’ notions about the form of church marriage rituals and the participants in these. Here we first determine to what extent respondents discern the same dimensions as we do. In section 2 we described four notions about the form of church marriage rituals and four about the participants. To find out whether the four theoretical notions about form and the four about the participants, plus the corresponding dimensions, are discernible in the notions of participants in church marriage rituals we conducted two factor analyses. Below we indicate which theoretical dimensions we identified for each item (theoretical domain) and which factors feature in respondents’ responses, together with the relevant

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5 Scores range from 1 to 5, 1 indicating ‘totally disagree’ and 5 ‘agree totally’.
communality coefficients and factor loadings\textsuperscript{6}. On the basis of the factor analyses we constructed scales. The frequency distribution of the scores on each scale appears after each factor analysis\textsuperscript{7}. The scores on these scales are used to answer our research questions and for further analyses.

\textsuperscript{6}Factor loadings below .20 are omitted.

\textsuperscript{7}Scale scores are calculated by summing each respondent’s scores on each factor and dividing it by the number of valid scores.
**4.5. RESULTS**

Notions about the form of church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A marriage ceremony must adhere to the prescriptions of church tradition</td>
<td>Guidelines dductive</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texts should link up with church tradition</td>
<td>Language dductive</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If people ask for a church marriage it should be conducted according to the requirements of church tradition</td>
<td>Guidelines dductive</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A marriage ceremony should articulate church tradition</td>
<td>Language dductive</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A marriage ceremony should convey what church tradition professes</td>
<td>Language dductive</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The form of a marriage ceremony should conform to the church’s guidelines</td>
<td>Guidelines dductive</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A marriage ceremony should be attuned to the participants’ needs</td>
<td>Guidelines inductive</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a marriage ceremony people should be addressed in language that they understand</td>
<td>Language inductive</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The language of a marriage ceremony should be attuned to the participants</td>
<td>Language inductive</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The marriage ceremony should speak the language of the people</td>
<td>Language inductive</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The form of the marriage ceremony should be determined by participants’ experience</td>
<td>Guidelines inductive</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cronbach’s Alpha* 

| Variance Explained | 36% | 25% |

In the event factor analysis\(^8\) yields two factors. All deductive items load on the first factor and all inductive items on the second. The analysis fails to support our theoretical distinction

\(^8\)Varimax,Minimal Eigenvalue 1
between language and guidelines. Apparently participants in church marriage rituals do not distinguish between the two when it comes to the form of the ritual. We label the first factor ‘deductive form’ and the second ‘inductive form’. The scales are reliable (Cronbach’s alpha .88 and .80).
### 4.5. RESULTS

#### Notions about participants in church marriage rituals

Table 4.3: Factor analysis of notions about participants in church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Communality</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The marriage ceremony should be aimed at church members</td>
<td>Adaptation closed</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a marriage ceremony participants should be addressed as church members</td>
<td>Adaptation closed</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a marriage ceremony people should gather who share the beliefs of the church</td>
<td>Composition restrictive</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants in a marriage must share the same religious beliefs</td>
<td>Composition restrictive</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants in a marriage ceremony should be confirmed in the religious beliefs that they were brought up in</td>
<td>Adaptation closed</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The assembly attending a marriage ceremony may differ greatly on the issue of religion</td>
<td>Composition-open</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The marriage ceremony should be accessible to people with highly divergent views</td>
<td>Composition-open</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officiants should take non-religious participants into account</td>
<td>Adaptation-open</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If there are non-Christian wedding guests, the ceremony should be adapted to them</td>
<td>Adaptation-open</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Cronbach’s Alpha | .55 | .68 | .52 |
| Variance Explained | 28% | 15% | 15% |

**Factor 1:** Restrictive notion about composition of participants and adaptation to them  
**Factor 2:** Open notion about composition of participants  
**Factor 3:** Open notion about adaptation to participants

The factor analysis\(^9\) shows that respondents distinguish between a restrictive or closed notion and an open notion about participants in church marriage rituals. All restrictive, closed notions

---

\(^9\)Varimax, Minimal Eigenvalue 1
load on the first factor. Open items are divided between the second and third factors. Items for the open notion about the composition of the participants load on the second factor and those for the open notion about adaptation to participants load on the third factor. As anticipated, a restrictive notion about composition of the participants and a closed notion about adaptation to them go together. This is understandable, since the question of adaptation is not really pertinent. It only features in the open notion about the composition of the participants in the ritual. One can have an open notion about composition of participants without being equally open about adaptation to them. The first factor is labelled ‘restrictive notion about composition of participants (in church marriage rituals) and adaptation to them’. The second factor is called ‘open notion about composition (of participants in church marriage rituals)’. The third factor is labelled ‘open notion about adaptation (to participants in church marriage rituals)’. The scales produced by the three factors barely qualify as reliable (Cronbach’s alphas of .55, .68 and .52).

### 4.5.2 Agreement

Above we determined respondents’ notions about the form of marriage rituals and the participants in these. Our second research question concerns the measure of agreement with these notions. The following tables reflect the measure of agreement with the various notions about the form of church marriage rituals and the participants, as perceived by the participants themselves.

**Table 4.4: Deductive form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that only a small fraction (11.6%) of the respondents reject the notion that the form of church marriage rituals should be determined by church tradition (scores 1 and 2), 38.9% neither agree nor disagree, and nearly half of them (49.5%) subscribe to it.

**Table 4.5: Inductive form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10These are calculated by taking the mean of all valid scores for each respondent on the relevant items.
The table shows that only 0.9% of the respondents reject the notion that the form of church marriage rituals should be determined by participants’ needs (scores 1 and 2), 5.7% neither agree nor disagree, and 83.3% agree. Although nearly half the respondents feel that the form of church marriage rituals should be determined by church tradition, almost three quarters of them believe it should be determined by participants’ needs. Hence although respondents distinguish between the deductive and discussion options, the two are not mutually exclusive.

Table 4.6: Restrictive notion about composition of participants and adaptation to them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 32.4% of the respondents reject the notion that all participants in church marriage rituals have to be church members, hence the ritual does not have to be adapted (scores 1 and 2); more than half (57.4%) neither agree nor disagree, and only 10.1% agree. Thus there is no clear opinion, although the tendency is to reject a restrictive, closed notion about participants.

Table 4.7: Open notion about composition of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that none of the respondents rejects the notion that not all participants in church marriage rituals need to be church members (scores 1 and 2 do not occur), 8.3% neither agree nor disagree, and the majority (91.7%) subscribe to it.

Table 4.8: Open notion about adaptation to participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4. LITURGICAL ORDER

The table shows that more than one fifth of the respondents (21.9%) reject the notion. Almost half the participants (48.1%) neither agree nor disagree that the ritual should be adapted to non-Christian participants in church marriage rituals, and 29.6% agree.

Hence notions about the composition of participants and adaptation to them diverge. On the one hand the vast majority feels that not all participants have to be church members. On the other hand they do not flatly reject the notion that participants should be church members and should be treated as such. Hence we again have the typical phenomenon that in the case of a restrictive, closed notion no distinction is made between composition of participants and adaptation to them, whereas in the case of an open notion the distinction applies. The notion that the ritual should be adapted for non-Christian participants likewise evokes an ambivalent response. Although it is generally felt that everybody may participate in the ritual, membership of the community is too important a requirement to be rejected out of hand and respondents do not want the ritual to be adapted for the benefit of non-members.

This account of agreement with the various notions answers our first research question.

4.5.3 Relation between the various notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

We have now determined the extent to which respondents distinguish between the dimensions we identified and in how far they subscribe to these notions. But we are also interested in the correlation between the various views on form and participants. Below we give the correlations between scale scores on the deductive and inductive notions about the form of church marriage rituals and the restrictive/closed and open notions about the composition of participants and adaptation to them.

Table 4.9: Correlations of deductive and inductive options regarding form, composition and dealings with participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/closed participants</th>
<th>Open composition</th>
<th>Open adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deductive form</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductive form</td>
<td></td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictive/closed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>composition</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.28**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictive/closed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>restriction/closed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participants</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.25**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%

There are significant positive correlations between the deductive notion about form and the restrictive/closed notion about the participants; the inductive notion about form and the open notion about composition and adaptation to participants; and the open notions about composition and about adaptation to participants. In addition there are significant negative correlations between a deductive notion about form and an open notion about adaptation to participants, and between a restrictive/closed notion and an open notion about the composition of participants. As may be expected, a deductive notion correlates positively with a restrictive/closed notion and an inductive notion with an open notion. Interestingly, the deductive notion about form does not correlate negatively with an open notion about composition of participants. The restrictive/closed notion about participants does not correlate significantly with an open notion about
adaptation to participants, nor does an inductive notion about form correlate significantly with a restrictive/closed notion about the participants. Deductive notions about form do not correlate negatively with notions about the composition of participants, but there is a negative correlation with adaptation to participants. After all, adaptation of the ritual has implications for its form.

4.5.4 Bivariate relations

We have now answered our first research question regarding the measure of agreement with notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in these. Next we consider the influence of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on these notions.

Our hypotheses refer to various relations between notions about form and participants and religious socialisation, and between notions about form and participants and the matrimonial values of contract, having children, sexuality and love. To clarify these relations we conducted a number of bivariate analyses. First we examined the relation between religious socialisation and notions about the marriage ritual. Then we looked at the relation between the four matrimonial values and notions about the marriage ritual. In the case of two metric variables we give Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r). For the rest we give the measure of association (eta).

Relation between religious socialisation and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

Table 4.10: Relation between religious socialisation by parents and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/closed participants</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%  
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

Parents’ current church membership correlates significantly with a deductive notion about form and a restrictive/closed notion about participants in church marriage rituals. We did not find any other significant correlations.
Table 4.11: Relation between integration with religious community through participation in religious life and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/ closed participants</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church membership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondent</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church attendance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions</td>
<td>.33**(r)</td>
<td>-.01(r)</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.08(r)</td>
<td>-.09(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations/groups</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional participation in rituals</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.51**(r)</td>
<td>.03(r)</td>
<td>.30**(r)</td>
<td>-.08(r)</td>
<td>.03(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant correlations between a deductive notion about form on the one hand and respondent’s church membership and frequency of church attendance and importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals on the other. This also applies to a restrictive/closed notion about participants in church marriage rituals on the one hand and respondents’ church membership and frequency of church attendance, importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals on the other. We found no other significant correlations.

Table 4.12: Relation between integration with religious community through strength of belief and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/ closed participants</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious salience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>.10(r)</td>
<td>.10(r)</td>
<td>.09(r)</td>
<td>-.03(r)</td>
<td>.07(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.29**(r)</td>
<td>-.02(r)</td>
<td>.22**(r)</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.08(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.05(r)</td>
<td>-.03(r)</td>
<td>-.00(r)</td>
<td>-.06(r)</td>
<td>-.06(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

We found significant correlations between the certainty of participants’ belief in God and a deductive notion about form and a restrictive/closed notion about participants in church marriage rituals. There are no other significant correlations.
4.5. RESULTS

Table 4.13: Relation between respondent’s partner as socialising actor and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/ closed participants</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/Functions partner</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations/groups</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a significant correlation between the church membership of the respondent’s partner on the one hand and a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and a restrictive/closed notion about participants in them on the other. There are no other significant correlations.

Relation between matrimonial values and notions about the form of marriage rituals and participants in them

We also conducted bivariate analyses of relations between notions about matrimonial values and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them. Since all these are metrical values, we give only Pearson’s correlation coefficient.

Table 4.14: Correlation between contract and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/ closed participants</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious/ ecclesiastic</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
<td>-.35**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other cohabitation</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99% |
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95% |

There is a significant, positive correlation between a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals and the view that one marries primarily before God and the church. There are significant, negative correlations between a deductive notion about form on the one hand and the view that one marries primarily before the civil authority and that other forms
of cohabitation are acceptable on the other. An inductive notion about form correlates positively with the notions that one marries primarily before the other partner and that other forms of cohabitation are acceptable. Thirdly, there are significant, positive correlations between a restrictive/closed notion about participants on the one hand and the notions that one marries primarily before God and the church and primarily before the social environment on the other. There is a significant negative correlation with the view that other forms of cohabitation are acceptable. Finally there is a significant positive correlation between an open notion about the composition of participants and the notion that other forms of cohabitation are acceptable. The number of significant correlations with other forms of cohabitation is remarkable.

Table 4.15: Correlations between having children and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/closed composition</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious task</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant positive correlations between a deductive notion about form and a restrictive/closed notion about participants in church marriage rituals on the one hand and the notion that having children is a religious task on the other. We found no other correlations.

Table 4.16: Correlation between sexuality and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/closed composition</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex</td>
<td>-.24**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.32**</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality in public</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant negative correlations between a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals on the one hand and the notions that premarital sex and homosexuality in general are acceptable on the other. The same applies to a restrictive/closed notion about participants. Finally there is a significant positive correlation between an open notion about the composition of participants and the notion that premarital sex is acceptable.
Table 4.17: Correlation between love and notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deductive form</th>
<th>Inductive form</th>
<th>Restrictive/closed participants</th>
<th>Open composition participants</th>
<th>Open adaptation participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agapè, self-effacing love</strong></td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eros, erotic love</strong></td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philia, reciprocal love</strong></td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Storgè, caring love</strong></td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

The are significant positive correlations between a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals on the one hand and self-effacing and caring love on the other. There is also a significant positive correlation between an inductive notion about form and reciprocal love. In addition there are significant positive correlations between a restrictive/closed notion about participants on the one hand and self-effacing, erotic and caring love on the other. The positive correlation with erotic love is surprising, since the Christian tradition has always regarded erotic love as suspect. Self-effacement and care obviously accord with the Christian conception of love.

**Conclusion about correlations**

Many of the correlations that were found accorded with our expectations. What is remarkable is the preponderance of significant correlations with the deductive and restrictive/closed notions. The many significant correlations with other forms of cohabitation and acceptability of premarital sex are also noteworthy. As we expected, religious socialisation correlates significantly with the deductive and restrictive/closed notions, whereas the matrimonial values concerning acceptability of premarital sex, homosexuality and other forms of cohabitation correlate negatively with these notions and sometimes positively with the inductive and open notions. The religious variants of matrimonial values likewise correlate positively with the deductive and restrictive/closed notions. In fact, only the aforementioned matrimonial values correlate positively with the inductive and open notions about form and the composition of participants. We found no significant correlations with the open notion about adaptation to the participants.

Thus we established many significant correlations. But apart from these we need to know which of the respondents’ attributes and notions have most influence on their notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them. Below we report on regression analyses to determine which of these relations are decisive. Because the inductive notion about adaptation to participants yielded no significant correlations, it is not subjected to multivariate analysis.
4.5.5 Multivariate analyses

We found quite a number of significant correlations between measure of agreement with the deductive and inductive notions about form and open and restrictive/closed notions about participants in church marriage rituals. We also examined the relations between various notions about the form and participants in the ritual. But besides significant correlations we also want to know which attributes of participants most strongly influence the extent of their agreement. Hence we use a regression model to estimate respondents’ attributes regarding religious socialisation and matrimonial values that decisively influence agreement with the deductive, inductive, restrictive/closed and open notions. Because we found so many significant correlations, the analyses were conducted in phases in the manner described in the second chapter (i.e. using four models for religious socialisation by parents, integration with religious community through participation in religious life and through strength of belief, and conceptions of marriage). The analyses are made in respect of four dependent variables: the deductive and inductive notions about form, the restrictive/closed notion about composition of and adaptation to participants, and the open notion about composition of participants. We found no significant correlations with an open notion about adaptation to participants, hence there was no point subjecting this variable to regression analysis.
Deductive notion about form

The following table gives the estimated regression coefficients for the deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals.

Table 4.18: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of deductive form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOHESSES and Models</th>
<th>1a–d</th>
<th>2a–b</th>
<th>2c</th>
<th>3–6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither parent</td>
<td>-.92</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>-.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency church attendance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lid</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geen Lid</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerklidmaatschap Partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>-.29</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional participationtransitional rituals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious/ecclesiastic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative cohabitation forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious task</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Sexuality</td>
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<td>Premarital sex</td>
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<td>.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homosexuality by nature</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual behaviour</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agapè, self–effacing love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-Square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-Square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The regression coefficients for model 1 confirm hypotheses 1a to 1d regarding greater support
for a deductive notion about form by people from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community. Agreement is lower if only one parent is a member than if both parents are members, and even lower if neither parent is a member. This latter difference is significant (-.92). In hypotheses 2a and 2b we anticipate that integration through participation in religious life will have a greater effect on respondents’ deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals. This was not confirmed. While the significant difference as a result of parents’ church membership is not neutralised, it declines (to -.41) when predictors of integration with church or religious community through participation in religious life are incorporated into the analysis (model 2). Among the attributes of such participation only the value that respondents attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals has a significant effect (.25). When we include the predictors of integration through strength of belief (model 3), the significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and those from homes where neither parent is a member disappears. The significant effect of importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals remains significant and actually increases. Probably the predictors of strength of belief have a suppressor effect (see chapter 2), but they have no significant effect in themselves. In the fourth model inclusion of predictors of matrimonial values neutralises the significant effect of importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, although the difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and those where neither parent is a member is again significant (-.60). This, too, is probably a suppressor effect. Predictors of strength of belief still have no significant effect. Among predictors of conceptions of marriage only storgÃ®, caring love, has a significant effect (.25). If we look at the explained variance (R-square) of the four models, we find that the predictors of strength of belief have hardly any explanatory power. The predictors of participation in religious life and those of conceptions of marriage do boost the explained variance. Hence parental socialisation has a decisive influence on the measure of agreement with a deductive form of church marriage ritual. This influence is partly explained by participation in religious life, especially the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. Integration through strength of belief adds little to explained variance, except in the form of a suppressor effect.

This enables us to answer the third research question regarding the deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals: Religious socialisation largely explains the measure of agreement with a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals. The decisive predictors are socialisation by parents and integration with the religious community through participation in religious life. Although strength of belief has no explanatory power in its own right, it enhances the effect of the other forms of religious socialisation.

Conceptions of marriage reinforce the influence of parental religious socialisation. They neutralise the influence of participation in religious life. Here the influence of caring love is decisive. This enables us to answer our fourth research question regarding a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals: Conceptions of marriage partially explain the influence of religious socialisation on agreement with a deductive notion about church marriage rituals. The influence of participation in religious life is completely neutralised, but not that of religious socialisation by parents. Indeed, the latter is actually strengthened by including conceptions of marriage.
### 4.5. RESULTS

Inductive notion about form

The following tables give estimated regression coefficients for an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals.

Table 4.19: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of inductive form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–d</th>
<th>2a–b</th>
<th>2c</th>
<th>3–6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church membership parents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent</td>
<td>-.34</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td>-.36</td>
<td>-.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neither parent</td>
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<td>.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency church attendance</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.07</td>
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<td><strong>Church membership respondent</strong></td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intentional participation/transitional rituals</strong></td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious salience</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td>-.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<td><strong>Contract</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious/ecclesiastic</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative cohabitation forms</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Having children</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Religious task</td>
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<td><strong>Sexuality</strong></td>
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<td>Premarital sex</td>
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<td>Homosexual behaviour</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Love</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agapè, self–effacing love</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R-Square</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-Square</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parental socialisation has a significant impact on an inductive notion about church marriage rituals as well. There is a significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and those where only one parent is a member (-.34). Remarkably, there is no difference when neither parent is a church member. The predictors of participation in religious life included in model 2 have no decisive influence, but they increase the significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and those where only one parent is a member (-.37). In the third model this difference is slightly smaller, though it remains significant (-.36). Certainty of belief in God has a significant negative effect (-.26), which remains significant and is even strengthened (-.28) by the inclusion of predictors of conceptions of marriage in model 4. These predictors moreover neutralise the significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and those where only one parent is a member. Among the predictors of conceptions of marriage the following notions have a significant positive effect: the notion that one primarily marries before the other partner (.19), the notion that homosexuality by nature is acceptable (.19), and the notion that reciprocal love (philia) plays a major role in marriage (.21).

The four models do little to explain the variance in agreement with the inductive form. Inclusion of the predictors of conceptions of marriage makes the biggest difference. The fact that in three of the models having one parent who is a church member has a decisive negative impact is remarkable, but the explained variance is so negligible that it has little theoretical relevance. The decisive negative effect of certainty of belief in God may be explained by the fact that the surer people are about their faith, the less need they feel to express it in their own words. They probably attach greater importance to the fixed, liturgical form of the ritual. The decisive positive influence of the three conceptions of marriage indicates that when people regard marriage as primarily an affair between the partners, they want to shape the accompanying ritual more individually, hence more inductively. This also accords with the importance attached to reciprocal love: it is something between two equal partners in a reciprocal love relationship. A permissive attitude towards homosexuals appears to go with this approach, although it should be noted that this does not necessarily imply permissiveness about homosexual behaviour. Hence conceptions of marriage, while explaining the effect of religious socialisation by parents, do not explain integration with the community through shared ideas. Participation in religious life explains nothing.

Thus the answer to our third and fourth research questions regarding the inductive form of church marriage rituals reads as follows: Religious socialisation does little to explain the measure of agreement with an inductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals. It is explained by conceptions of marriage, although the slight (negative) impact of religious socialisation is not neutralised.
Restrictive/closed notion about participants

The following table gives the estimated regression coefficients for the restrictive/closed notion about participants in church marriage rituals.

Table 4.20: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of restrictive/closed attitudes towards participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–d</th>
<th>2a–b</th>
<th>2c</th>
<th>3–6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church membership parents</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>One parent</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neither parent</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td>-.13</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency church attendance</strong></td>
<td>.12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Church membership respondent</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
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<td><strong>Church membership partner</strong></td>
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<td>Non-member</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
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<td><strong>Participation transitional rituals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Religious salience</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Belief in God</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Belief in ultimate reality</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Contract</strong></td>
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<td>Religious/ecclesiastic</td>
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<td>Personal</td>
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<td>Social</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative cohabitation forms</td>
<td>-.01</td>
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<td><strong>Having children</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious task</td>
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<td>Social expectation</td>
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<td><strong>Sexuality</strong></td>
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<td>Premarital sex</td>
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<td>Homosexuality by nature</td>
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<td>Homosexual behaviour</td>
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<td><strong>Love</strong></td>
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<td>Agapè, self–effacing love</td>
<td>-.08</td>
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<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>R-Square</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adjusted R-Square</strong></td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>.18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Once again the regression analysis for the first model indicates a significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and those where neither parent is a member (-.40). When the predictors of participation in religious life are included in the analysis in model 2 this difference becomes insignificant. There is no new significant difference or effect. Inclusion of the predictors of strength of belief in the third model does not result in any significant effects either. Only when the predictors of matrimonial values are included in the fourth model do we see some significant effects, albeit only from the predictors of matrimonial values. The notion that one marries primarily before the civil authority has a positive effect (.21), the notion that premarital sex is acceptable has a negative effect (-.23) and erotic love has a positive effect (.18).

When it comes to explained variance we again find that the first three models have virtually no explanatory power, and that it only increases in the fourth model (to .29). Hence the answer to our third and fourth research questions regarding the restrictive/closed notion about participants in church marriage rituals reads as follows: Religious socialisation does little to explain the measure of agreement with a restrictive/closed notion about participants in church marriage rituals, but conceptions of marriage have a decisive influence. The positive effect of the notion that one marries primarily before the civil authority is remarkable. Possibly respondents who attach greater value to a civil marriage feel that this is the actual marriage ceremony with a profane, public character. The church marriage ritual with its specifically ecclesiastic/religious character, by contrast, belongs to the private sphere. Hence church marriage rituals are oriented to religious people and church members. The negative influence of the notion that premarital sex is acceptable appears to relate to its permissive nature, which does not accord with a notion that puts the accent on religious tradition with its explicit condemnation of premarital sex. The positive influence of erotic love, too, is surprising, since Christianity for a long time rejected erotic love and it is therefore not readily associated with a restrictive/closed notion. Indeed, we are unable to explain this positive influence.
Open composition of participants

The following table gives the estimated regression coefficients for the open notion about the composition of participants in church marriage rituals.

Table 4.21: Parameter estimates for the regression analysis of open composition of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–d</th>
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<td><strong>Church membership parents</strong></td>
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<td>Both parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>One parent</td>
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<td>-.42</td>
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<td>Neither parent</td>
<td>-.07</td>
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<td><strong>Frequency church attendance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Adjusted R-Square</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the first model there is a significant difference between respondents from homes where
both parents are church members and those where only one parent is a member (-.39). The negative effect is remarkable, since one would expect that when religious socialisation is provided by only one parent respondents would be less inclined to reject this option. The impact of parental religious socialisation remains significant and even increases slightly when predictors of participation in religious life are included in the analysis in model 2 (-.44). The added predictors themselves have no significant effect. Inclusion of the predictors of strength of belief in the third model slightly reduces the significant difference (-.42), certainty of belief in an ultimate reality having a significant effect (.21). This effect remains significant when the predictors of conceptions of marriage are incorporated in the fourth model, but the significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and those where only one parent is a member is neutralised. Among the predictors of conceptions of marriage the notion that homosexuality by nature is acceptable has a significant influence (.20).

When it comes to explained variance we find that religious socialisation has very little explanatory power. Although conceptions of marriage double the figure (.18), explained variance remains low. Hence the answer to our third and fourth research questions regarding the open notion about the composition of participants reads as follows: Religious socialisation does little to explain participants’ agreement with an open notion about the composition of participants in church marriage rituals. The slight impact of religious socialisation is not explained by conceptions of marriage.

The positive effect of certainty of belief in an ultimate reality may indicate that the more people believe in an ultimate reality, the more religious they are, albeit less tied to a confession or church. Hence by definition such people would not want to limit participants to church members only. The positive influence of the notion that homosexuality by nature is acceptable can be explained as permissiveness, which accords with the general openness reflected in an open notion about composition.

4.5.6 Comparison of regression analyses

We have now described the regression analyses of the deductive and inductive notions about form and the restrictive/closed and open notions about participants (both their composition and adaptation to them, or only their composition). We shall now compare these regression analyses.

The regression model for the deductive notion about form has the greatest explanatory power (.41), followed by those for a restrictive/closed notion about participants (.29) and an inductive notion about form (.23) in that order; the model for an open notion about the composition of the participants (.18) explains least of the variance. Love often has a decisive influence. In the case of the deductive notion about form it is caring love, in that of the inductive notion it is reciprocal love, and in that of the deductive notion about participants it is erotic love. When it comes to the inductive notion about form and the open notion about the composition of participants, the notion that homosexuality by nature is unacceptable has a positive effect. In regard to the inductive notion about form certainty of belief in God has a negative effect and in the case of an open notion about the composition of participants certainty of belief in an ultimate reality has a positive effect. Although not decisive in the fourth model, it is noteworthy that in the case of the inductive and open variables the first three models indicate a significant difference between participants from homes where both parents are church members and those where only one parent is a member. Apparently religious socialisation by parents of differing religiosity has a negative effect on agreement with the inductive and open notions. It seems people are less
willing to translate the religious tradition and apply it to a situation if they have been religiously socialised by parents of differing religious persuasions. Probably such a hybrid upbringing in a secularised society means that the distance from the religious tradition has grown so great that it has become quite valueless and such people feel no need to engage in a hermeneutic process. After all, parents’ church membership clearly correlates positively with the deductive and restrictive/closed notions (also see tables 4.9 and 4.10). There is no indication that people who have had a hybrid upbringing agree more strongly with deductive notions.

4.6 Conclusion and discussion

Section 3 dealt with the results of our measurements and the analyses of these, thus enabling us to answer our research questions. In this section we present some tentative conclusions and raise questions for further research and discussion.

4.6.1 Conclusion

This chapter looked into the notions of participants in church marriage rituals regarding the form of these rituals and participants in them. In regard to form we make a theoretical distinction between language and guidelines. On the basis of Berger’s theory we distinguish between an inductive and a deductive conception of each aspect. In the case of the participants we look at their composition in terms of a restrictive and an open notion. We also examine notions about adaptation of the ritual to the participants, again distinguishing between an open and a closed notion. Factor analyses of notions about form show that, whereas participants make a distinction between inductive and deductive notions about form, they do not distinguish between the aspects of language and guidelines. Factor analyses of notions about composition reveal that although respondents do identify an open notion about both the composition of participants and adaptation to them, a restrictive notion about composition coincides with a closed notion about adaptation. This was to be expected since, as noted already, the distinction between composition and adaptation is only pertinent if one has an open notion about composition. In the case of a restrictive notion there is no need to adapt anything.

Almost half of the respondents subscribe to a deductive notion about form and more than 80% subscribe to an inductive notion about form. As for adapting to participants and their composition, only 10% subscribe to the restrictive/closed notion, whereas over 50% endorse an open notion about composition and as much as 30% favour adaptation to the participants. In the case of form it would seem that some respondents agree with both the deductive and the inductive notions. In the case of the participants a clear majority feels that people of different beliefs can be included, but they are by no means so sure that these diverse views should be taken into account liturgically.

Our second question concerns the correlation between these notions. The deductive and inductive notions about form clearly do not correlate (respondents partially agree with both notions), but there is a correlation between a deductive notion about form and a restrictive/closed notion about participants. A similar correlation is apparent between an inductive notion about form and an open notion about the composition of participants and adaptation to them. Another noteworthy feature is that, whereas the restrictive/closed notion about participants is opposed to an open notion about the composition of the participants (negative correlation), this does not apply to an open notion about adaptation to participants: here there is no significant correlation.
This could relate to the fact that a restrictive/closed notion about participants concerns both the composition of participants and adaptation to them, while an open notion about composition does not necessarily imply adaptation to participants. Some people do feel that everyone is allowed to participate in the ritual, but do not think that it has to be attuned to participants who are not church members.

Our third research question concerns the extent to which agreement with the inductive and deductive notions about form and the restrictive/closed and open notions about participants is explained by differences in religious socialisation. In the case of a deductive notion about the form of church marriage rituals religious socialisation largely accounts for the measure of agreement. This does not apply in the case of the inductive notion about form, the restrictive/closed notion about participants and the open notion about the composition of the participants.

Our fourth research question concerns the extent to which the influence of religious socialisation on the various notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them is explained by conceptions of marriage. In the case of deductive form conceptions of marriage neutralise the effect of attachment to ecclesiastic transitional rituals, but the influence of religious socialisation by parents is decisive. In the case of inductive form the effect of religious socialisation by parents is neutralised, but that of certainty of belief in God remains decisive. Religious socialisation has no decisive impact on a restrictive/closed notion about participants. In the case of an open notion about the composition of the participants the influence of religious socialisation by parents is neutralised, but the effect of certainty of belief in an ultimate reality remains decisive. The proportion of explained variance increases substantially. Hence conceptions of marriage clearly influence notions about the form of church marriage rituals and participants in them.

### 4.6.2 Discussion

To what extent should church marriage rituals be tailored to the wishes of the bridal couple and in how far must they accord with church tradition? Participants’ notions about the form of these rituals do not provide a definite answer. Although (according to factor analyses) respondents distinguish between an inductive and a deductive notion, some of them agree with both notions. Thus there is some overlapping. The deductive notion is rejected by a mere 12% of the respondents, the inductive option by less than 1%. This amounts to a zero correlation (see table 4.9). The two notions are not mutually exclusive but coexist. Empirically we are up against the value of hermeneutics (Schillebeeckx 1977), which partly adheres to church tradition but also seeks to translate it into a contemporary idiom. The respondents still consider Christian traditional forms important, but feel that they should be attuned to the participants.

In the case of the participants we have a different picture. Respondents clearly do not feel that participants should comprise church members only, but they disagree about adapting the ritual to non-members.

When participants in ecclesiastic marriage rituals are asked who may participate, they say that everyone is permitted to join. Thus orthodoxy or orthopraxis is not a criterion of participation. They also think that the ritual should be attuned to the participants. Yet while they feel that ritual should be adapted to participants who are not church members, they insist that the form should derive from church tradition. It seems that further research is needed to fathom this ambivalence, possibly by way of in-depth interviews to clarify the inductive and deductive notions about form or restrictive/closed and open notions about participants, and the extent to
which hermeneutics can act as a mediator between the various notions. Officiants cannot simply assume that participants attach no value to the ritual forms of church tradition. The challenge is to harmonise rituals with that tradition without losing sight of the language and needs of the participants, and vice versa. This suggests a need for a hermeneutic process in respect of each and every marriage ritual Ð an ongoing challenge to churches, officiants and scholars of liturgy.
Chapter 5

Affected by ritual

5.1 Introduction and research problem

Our question in this section is why people want to have a church marriage ritual. First we describe two major social processes that have turned the institutions of marriage and the church into a private affair, an option rather than a necessity. Then we examine church marriage rituals as life rituals, which brings us to our research questions.

5.1.1 Declining number of church marriage ceremonies

As noted in the introduction to this thesis, since the 1960s there has been a sharp drop in the number of church marriage ceremonies as a result of individualisation and especially secularisation. Individualisation has greatly changed the way couples live together. The institution of marriage is no longer the exclusive means of organising cohabitation. In the Netherlands there are the options of partnership registration and a cohabitation contract. There is also a growing tendency to live together temporarily without any institutional formalisation. And if people do get married, it is by no means always for life. The number of divorces has escalated dramatically from 5.7 per 1000 inhabitants in 1960 to 31.1 per 1000 inhabitants in 2004¹. Finally, marriage is no longer the privilege of heterosexuals only. For some years now homosexual couples can have their partnerships registered and, even more recently, enter into same-sex marriages. This last development has loosened the connection between marriage and a family (specifically, having children).

Cohabitation, too, has changed. If people do marry, it is at an increasingly later age. They no longer get married from their parental homes in order to live together but do so after a spell of cohabitation, which may be seen as a trial marriage of sorts (http://statline.cbs.nl). More and more children are born out of wedlock, from 1.3 per 1000 inhabitants in 1960 to 32.5 per 1000 inhabitants in 2004 (http://statline.cbs.nl). Couples have sexual relations at an ever earlier age, long before they start living together or get married. The direct link between sexuality and marriage has become much more tenuous (Garssen, 2001, p. 3-29). All this has led to a sharp decline in the number of marriages, including church marriage ceremonies. This is partly a result of the decline in the number of marriages generally, but the decrease in the number of church marriages is also attributable to a second process D secularisation.

¹http://statline.cbs.nl
Secularisation is a consequence of individualisation in the religious domain of society. It has contributed greatly to the dwindling number of church marriages. The proportion of marriages that are followed by a Catholic marriage ritual, for example, has dropped from 35.9% in 1975 to 12.2% in 2000 (Michels, 2004, p. 23).

Within the secularisation process one can distinguish between de-institutionalisation, de-traditionalisation and privatisation. Marriage is a religious institution but, like church membership, it has become a matter of personal choice. And people who are church members may also choose not to marry in church. Church membership has declined sharply, and with it the number of church marriages. After all, people who have no church affiliation seldom if ever opt for a church marriage ritual. There is also less agreement with the church’s conception of marriage and matrimonial values, and by no means all church members subscribe to these. Thus there are couples who have children before they get married and those who choose to remain childless after marriage. Church members, moreover, get divorced. Finally, individual church members are much less influenced by their co-religionists. The church community as a social group determines people’s lifestyle to a very limited extent. Hence there is little social pressure to get married in church and live according to its views and values.

There has been a marked decline, then, in the number of church marriages, agreement with the church’s notions about marriage and living according to its matrimonial values.

5.1.2 A church marriage ritual nonetheless

Yet there are still people who opt for marriage, and for a church marriage to boot. What does it mean to them? Are they the last of the devout Dutch? Have they refused to embrace present-day individualised notions and value orientations?

Probably their reason for wanting a church marriage pertains to the nature of the ritual. Church marriage rituals are defined variously as life ritual (Boeve, Bossche, Immink, & Post, 2003, p. 7), rites of passage (Stevenson, 1987) and a key ritual in the human lifespan (Michels, 2003, p. 131). These rituals can be associated with various phases of life, but in any event with birth, marriage and death. Although religious institutions and their rites are increasingly marginalised, rituals at these pivotal moments in life appear to be fairly stable compared with those of the Sunday liturgy. The number of participants in the latter has been decimated. The number of baptisms in the Netherlands has declined by 39.5% in the past 25 years, whereas the number of church burials has dropped by a mere 5%. Participants in these rituals are known as occasional Christians, that is they attend church on special occasions only. Life rituals occupy a special place in the church’s ritual repertoire. They occur less frequently (for the same participants usually only once) and their form and content are distinctive. They are specific rites, comprising a wealth of symbols and metaphors.

But church marriage rituals do not share this stability. Over the same 25-year period the number of church marriages has dropped by 66% (Michels, 2004, p. 18–23). Possibly these rituals, compared to other rites of passage, have ‘suffered’ doubly from the aforementioned social processes. All church rituals are less well attended because of dwindling church involvement and church membership as such, but the dramatic decrease in the number of church marriages probably relates to the overall decline in the number of marriages. Hence church marriage rituals not only suffer from the effects of secularisation and individualisation on churches.

\[2\] In his thesis Michels (2004, p. 117–126) discusses the way non-members of churches devise their own religious rituals.
Individualisation has led to a decline in the number of marriages generally. Fewer people experience this pivotal moment in life and therefore have less need for the church’s ritualisation of the event. Those who still opt for a church marriage may do so because it is a special ritual, rich in symbols and metaphors, which in principle can happen to them only once.

5.1.3 Ritual form

In the previous chapter we inquired into notions about the form of church marriage rituals. This issue is part of a broader debate in liturgical studies, which we want to consider in the context of ritual experience. In the late 1960s the Roman Catholic Church (followed by many other churches) embarked on ritual reform. A new marriage ritual was introduced in 1969, which was revised in 1990 (Bisschoppenconferentie, 1996, p. 4,7,8). The aim of the liturgical reforms was to enable believers to participate in liturgy actively, comprehendingly and fruitfully (Fortmann, 1967, p. 6).

The liturgical movement welcomed the liturgical reforms proposed in Sacrosanctum Concilium, although in their view they were not always sufficiently thoroughgoing. Many of the innovations had already been permitted by way of experiment or on special occasions (Schmidt, 1965). There were also those who opposed the reforms, such as the then archbishop of Tulle, Lefebvre, who was eventually suspended and excommunicated.

Lorenzer (1981) considers the liturgical reforms vandalistic, destroying the unity of sensory symbols. He adopts Susanne Langer’s (1949) distinction between discursive and ‘presentative’ (German: präsentativen) symbols. Discursive symbols are verbal, separable into distinct elements that remain meaningful on their own. Presentative symbols, by contrast, are integral and are not divisible into meaningful parts. Lorenzer explains this by analogy with a painting, that essentially comprises planes which may be darker or lighter and have different colours. But the planes on their own are meaningless: the meaning of the painting only emerges from the whole (Lorenzer, 1981, p. 28–32). In his view the liturgy ³ comprises a totality of presentative symbols, which permit sensory, symbolic interaction between officiant and congregation. The old ritual combines all symbolic levels in a sacred space. Lorenzer identifies a personal focus, represented by the officiant and acolytes in their vestments, executing the various gestures and postures and using the sacred instruments. They present a spectacle that combines all these forms of cultural and artistic expression into a whole. In addition the ritual is the historical nucleus of a great artwork, comprising buildings and objects from the past, and restores all these cultural forms to the present. Finally, the ritual unifies and mediates various forms of figurative and textual signifiers. This unifying, mediatory effect of ritual was forfeited when presentative symbolism made way for discursive symbolism, turning the liturgy into some sort of ideological catechesis (Lorenzer, 1981, p. 182–188). Hence the sensory, symbolic interaction of the old liturgy was replaced by discursive interaction, entailing a loss of meaning.

The background to the reforms, however, was a reinterpretation of the church and the sacraments. As mentioned in chapter 1, in the 19th and early 20th century neo-scholasticism was the dominant theological trend in the Roman Catholic Church, and the salvific effect of the sacraments was seen as a result of a properly performed ritual. Proper administration of the sacrament, legitimised by the fact that it was instituted by Christ himself, brings salvation to the individual recipient. The church was the hierarchic institution of legitimately ordained ministers who mediated salvation. The theology of Vatican II, on the other hand, sees the church

³Lorenzer is referring specifically to the eucharist, but also to the liturgical renewal as a whole.
as the primordial sacrament. In his life and death Jesus gathered a community that had to represent God’s redeemed people. This community is the church, the historical manifestation of God’s salvation. The hierarchical church is not the sole sign of that salvation; it is conveyed by the entire people of God. The church’s sacraments express its sacramental nature as a salvific community. The sacraments mediate encounter with Christ, because the ministerial acts of the church are the body of Christ (Schillebeeckx, 1959, p. 52,53,58). Salvation, which the church signifies, is particularly effective when the church actualises its essence to the full, that is in the definitive attestation of its faith in the sacraments (Rahner, 1966, p. 49). According to this new interpretation sacraments are ministerial acts by the church, comprising clergy and believers. Hence all believers have to participate in the liturgy actively and comprehendingly, implying that it has to be lucid and transparent.

That gives us two points of view on liturgy. On the one hand we have the view of the reformers of Vatican II, who see the sacraments as ministerial acts by the church as the overall community of believers. Hence all believers must be able to participate actively and comprehendingly. On the other hand there is Lorenzer’s view that the liturgical reforms of Vatican II replace sensory, symbolic interaction with a discursive symbolism, resulting in loss of meaning.

5.1.4 Research questions

In view of the debate about the result of the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, one may wonder how church marriage rituals affect human beings. Have the reformed marriage rites become transparent so people can participate actively, or have they turned into ritual catechesis as Lorenzer (Lorenzer, 1981, p. 186) avers? If church marriage rituals move the participants, it would explain why couples opt for a church marriage.

Church marriage rituals differ from other church rituals in respect of a number of rites, symbols and metaphors that do not occur in any other ritual. People who grew up in the Christian tradition may understand these rites, symbols and metaphors better and may be more deeply affected by the ritual. Thus participants’ religious socialisation could influence the extent to which they are moved by the ritual.

But religious socialisation is not the only factor. Conceptions of marriage in Western Europe and the United States are heavily influenced by Christianity. For centuries the church was the institution where people got married. Secularisation and individualisation have changed people’s perception of marriage and cohabitation. The Christian ideal of marriage as a lifelong union, in which sexuality and having children are accommodated in an exclusive way, is no longer the dominant form of cohabitation. Hence it could well be that it is not so much religiosity generally that determines the extent to which people are affected by church marriage rituals. Maybe it is more a matter of changed conceptions of marriage.

That brings us to our research questions:

1. In how far do participants in church marriages feel moved by these rituals?

2. To what extent does the participants’ religiosity correlate with the extent to which they are affected by church marriage rituals?

3. To what extent is the correlation between religiosity and the extent to which participants feel affected by church marriage rituals explained by their conceptions of marriage?
5.2 Theories and hypotheses

This section first presents a theory from cognitive science of religion on the way rituals may affect people. Then we discuss our hypotheses about the relation between religious socialisation and the impact church marriage rituals have on them. Finally we formulate hypotheses about the explanatory role of conceptions of marriage in the relation between religious socialisation and the extent to which people are affected by church marriage rituals.

5.2.1 Affected by church marriage rituals

Two modes of religiosity

Being affected by a ritual is a highly generalised concept that says little more than that the ritual affects one’s state of mind. One ritual may affect it more than another, and the impact may relate to all sorts of attributes of participants. For the purpose of this thesis we confine ourselves to only one attribute: cognitive structure. To this end we use a theory from cognitive science of religion. From that perspective rituals may be classified according to two criteria: frequency of performance (daily, weekly or once in each generation) and number of sensory stimuli provided (beautiful vestments, candles, music, incense, etc.). Often the two features are interrelated. High frequency rituals offer little sensory stimulation, whereas low frequency ones usually provide many stimuli. The rituals that Van Gennep described as rites of passage have a low frequency (in the sense that they occur only once in a person’s lifetime).

Whitehouse (2000, 1–17) explains this relation in terms of a psychological distinction between semantic and episodic memory. Rituals are a major medium for handing down religious and cultural traditions, hence remembering their form and content is important. Episodic memory concerns mental representations of personally experienced events that are conceptualised as unique episodes in the person’s life. Semantic memory refers to mental representations of a general, propositional nature. New experiences are stored in episodic memory. If the experience keeps recurring, it gives rise to a kind of scheme of the event in semantic memory. When you take a child to a church service for the first time it is able to reproduce diverse moments in the service. If you ask a regular churchgoer, she can explain the general course of the ritual in detail, but hardly any specific moments are recorded in memory unless the scheme is disrupted to the extent that it becomes a new experience in episodic memory. Whitehouse maintains that this requires a powerful affective stimulus. When someone has a special experience that does not fit into the existing schemes it gives rise to a powerful affective stimulus. That intensifies brain activity and the person remembers the event in vivid detail, known as flashbulb memory.

On the basis of semantic and episodic memory Whitehouse distinguishes between two modes of religiosity. The first focuses on doctrine and intensive repetition of both rituals and doctrines, so that the form and contents of religiosity are schematically recorded in semantic memory. The second mode is imagistic. Some religious rituals such as initiation rites occur rarely. Certain tribes are known to initiate entire cohorts at a time, so that the initiation ritual occurs only once every ten year (McCauley & Lawson, 2002, p. 65). Because of their low frequency these rituals are not ‘stored’ in semantic memory, since they do not give rise to schemes. But because people still want to remember their form and contents, they make use of many sensory stimuli to produce the necessary affective stimulus that will record a sufficiently detailed flashbulb memory in episodic memory. Many initiation rituals among pre-industrialised peoples entail powerful positive stimuli, such as striking apparel and dances, but also highly negative
stimuli such as traumatic experiences (e.g. mutilation, starvation and torture). Finally it should be noted that these modes of religiosity occur to a greater or lesser extent in all religions, with extremes both ways (Whitehouse, 2000, p. 9–12).

McCauley and Lawson (2002) use Whitehouse’s notion about mental processes, but they link it with the form of the ritual rather than its frequency. Whitehouse holds that the difference between the modes lies in the frequency of the experience. If a ritual happens regularly, it contains fewer stimuli and is stored in semantic memory. By the same token rituals that occur rarely include many sensory stimuli to enable the person to remember them vividly. McCauley and Lawson, by contrast, explain the two modes of religiosity in terms of their form, on the basis of two principles: the principle of superhuman agency (PSA) and the principle of superhuman immediacy (PSI). These principles assume that in the participants’ perception a deity (culturally postulated superhuman agent, CPS agent) enters their reality at a given moment. The first principle, PSA, pertains to the way the CPS accomplishes this entry: via the officiant (special agent ritual), the instrument (special instrument ritual) and others undergoing the same ritual (special patient ritual). The second principle, PSI, relates to the moment when the CPS first enters the participants’ reality. This often requires various enabling rituals. The officiant must be ordained/consecrated, the instrument must be blessed and the patient must be ritually purified.

McCauley and Lawson distinguish between two types of rituals: odd and even-numbered rituals. The two principles PSA and PSI make it possible to classify rituals into a scheme. Special agent rituals are usually odd-numbered and normally require fewer enabling rituals than special instrument and special patient rituals. These authors maintain that in the eucharist contact with the CPS agent is established by means of the instruments of bread and wine. However, the ritual requires, firstly, an ordained priest (rite 1), who must then officiate in consecrating the elements (rite 2). Thus two enabling rituals are needed. When a priest is ordained, by contrast, the ritual is conducted by a bishop in terms of the apostolic succession, thus establishing contact with the CPS agent. Hence only one enabling ritual is required. The fewer enabling rituals are required, the more direct the presence of the CPS, which has implications for the perceived effect of the ritual. The more direct the presence of the CPS in the ritual, the more lasting its effect. Special agent rituals often have a lifelong effect, whereas special patient or special instrument rituals are repeatable or need to be repeated regularly. The eucharist can be celebrated daily, whereas ordination occurs only once in the priest’s life. The more direct the CPS’s presence in the ritual, the more sensory stimuli it will contain to convey that presence. Hence special agent rituals usually occur less frequently and provide more sensory stimuli because of the more direct presence of the CPS (McCauley & Lawson, 2002, p. 8–35,50,51).

**Church marriage rituals as special agent rituals**

Marriage rituals are complex, comprising a mixture of marriage rites and rites from the Sunday service Ð either a eucharist or a prayer and communion service. In McCauley and Lawson’s theory (McCauley & Lawson, 2002, p. 29), marriage rituals are special agent rituals, because the presence of the priest makes the ceremony a sacramental marriage. Because the CPS is

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4 From the perspective of present-day sacramental theology and liturgical studies this can be whittled down somewhat, but what we are looking at is the principle of McCauley and Lawson’s clarificatory model.

5 In terms of Roman Catholic marriage theology and canon law this is problematic, because it views the priest’s role as purely that of an attester? and it is the couple themselves who, as baptised people, perform the sacramental marriage. McCauley and Lawson, however, view if from a cognitive-scientific angle, that is as perceived by the
5.2. THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

present in the ritual via the ordained priest\(^6\), it acts very directly and the ritual has a lifelong effect. Hence marriage rituals have a low frequency: a person undergoes them once, at most twice. After all, the Roman Catholic Church does not allow divorce. A great many sensory stimuli are offered. Bride and groom are beautifully dressed; the liturgical festive colour (white) is used; there are lovely flowers; special hymns are sung and special music is played. The marriage ritual itself is unique: giving the right hand, pronouncing the marriage vows, exchanging rings, and the solemn nuptial blessing.

The rites deriving from the Sunday service (here called simply eucharistic rite\(^7\)) cannot be classified as special agent rituals. If they are taken from a eucharistic or prayer and communion service\(^8\), that can be performed daily. If they come from a prayer service one could say that the CPS agent is present in the proclaimed word, making it a special instrument ritual as well\(^9\). This means they are high frequency rituals. Although the eucharist may contain a lot of stimuli, their effect is usually slight because of the high frequency. This is known as the tedium effect (McCauley & Lawson, 2002, p. 50, 51, 98–123). In the Dutch Roman Catholic Church, moreover, the Sunday mass has become more austere since the 1970s, hence the amount of sensory stimulation is confined to a minimum. In any case eucharistic rites contain fewer sensory stimuli than marriage rites. Thus church marriage rituals comprise a combination of special, powerfully stimulating rites and ordinary, simple rites. Below we deal with the various rites in greater detail.

**Rites of church marriage rituals**

There are various rituals for both civil and church marriages. We have said that in this thesis we confine ourselves to Catholic marriage rituals that have a long history, in the course of which diverse rites were added. The ritual started off as a blessing of the bride, the bridal veil or the bridal chamber. This was expanded into a ritual in the church vestibule, followed by a festive eucharistic service. Later it was conducted in the course of a eucharistic service. Note that when the ritual was moved to the church vestibule the priest’s requests for bride and groom’s assent (the vows) were introduced. Since in Western Christianity the vows came to signify the administration of the marriage sacrament, it superseded the importance of the nuptial blessing. In the current ritual the nuptial blessing once again occupies a prominent place, and in the new Roman Catholic marriage ritual it has changed from a blessing of the bride to a blessing of the bridal couple. Hence the Catholic marriage ritual has two key elements: the marriage vows and the nuptial blessing.

Prior to the exchange of vows the couple are told what a Catholic marriage entails in the

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\(^6\) Hence only one enabling ritual

\(^7\) Since it is usually a wedding mass and the rites from the prayer and communion service and from the service actually derive from the eucharistic service, we use the term ‘eucharistic rites’ as an umbrella term.

\(^8\) It is via the host consecrated by an ordained priest that Christ’s presence is realised. That makes it an even-numbered ritual.

\(^9\) Although a prayer service does not demand the presence of a priest, the person leading the service is a deacon or pastoral worker. Deacons, like priests, are ordained and pastoral workers are introduced to the parish in the liturgy. Besides, the liturgical functions of pastoral workers are subject to profound ministrytheological debate, too complex to be analysed here.
pastor’s introduction. In addition they are questioned. There are three cardinal questions (Bischoppencollegie, 1996, p. 33, 34):

1. a question regarding the freedom of bride and groom
2. a question regarding their mutual fidelity
3. a question about their willingness to have and raise children

After the priest has obtained the couple’s assent, he confirms their vows. He then blesses the rings, which are duly exchanged. The exchange of rings has become a major symbol of marriage, although actually it is simply a duplication of the engagement ring. Engagement rings date back to a tradition in the East Roman empire, in which a ring was given as a pledge on betrothal. In Tertullian’s time (2nd century) this rite reached the West Roman empire as well (Schillebeeckx, 1963, p. 126). The ring symbolised or embodied the bride price, which recompensed the bride’s father for the financial loss incurred through her departure.

These five elements in chronological order – pastor’s introduction, questions, exchange of vows, blessing and exchange of rings, and the nuptial blessing – form the core of the church marriage ritual. In the course of history certain important elements were added that were not necessarily ecclesiastic or did not necessarily form part of the marriage ritual. A highly emotional moment in church marriage rituals is the giving away of the bride. The groom enters with the pastor, while the bride’s father walks up the aisle with the bride in a kind of procession and hands her to her bridegroom. Originally this rite indicated the transfer of the bride, who passes from her father’s care to her husband’s. It is a drastic abridgement of the Roman Domum–Ductio, when the bride was conducted to her husband’s home (Schillebeeckx, 1963, 166). This rite is not included in the Rituale Romanum, in which the priest fetches bride and groom from the church door, hence the bride is not given away. Liturgical commentaries reject the giving away of the bride as un-Christian, since the church wants to stress the equality between bride and groom, inter alia by replacing the blessing of the bride with the nuptial blessing (Stevenson, 1987, 125). The church’s rejection of the giving away of the bride has had little impact on liturgical practice – it remains a popular rite (Otnes & Peck, 2003, p. 112). It is noteworthy that the giving away of the bride mostly happens in church, not in the civil ceremony.

Three major rites that do not really form part of the marriage ritual as such are the communion of bride and groom, the presentation of a nuptial Bible or candle and veneration of Mary. The bride and groom’s communion is actually the start of the communion rite, but it is usually particularly solemn, partly because only a few of the participants in the marriage ritual take communion.

The presentation of the nuptial Bible or candle occurs, in accordance with Roman Catholic ritual, just before the final blessing and is optional.

In the ritual guidelines the veneration of Mary is known as a local custom (p. 73) and is devotional. The bride may identify with Mary as the mother, but it is also customary for bride and groom to venerate Mary together, thus involving the holy family rather than Mary alone.

That adds up to nine marriage rites:

1. Entrance of bridal couple

10Not all church marriage rituals include all nine rites. The bride and groom’s communion and veneration of Mary in particular may be omitted.
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2. Pastor’s introduction
3. Questioning by pastor
4. Exchange of vows
5. Exchange of rings
6. Nuptial blessing
7. Communion of bridal couple
8. Presentation of nuptial Bible or candle
9. Veneration of Mary

Because church marriage rituals often occur in the course of a eucharist (the preferred option in the ritual guidelines), they comprise more than the nine rites listed above. In all church marriage rituals there are Bible readings, often in conjunction with a poem or some other text of the couple’s choice. In a few instances it is confined to a poem or text written by the couple themselves. Such texts may accord to a greater or lesser extent with the occasion or the couple’s tastes and biography (Scheer, 1979).

The readings are usually followed by a sermon, contemplation or reflection. Often the pastor (or whoever is conducting the contemplation) tries to link the reading(s) with the couple’s life story. The focus is on their past and future Ð how they met and decided to get married and the prospects for their future life, together with all the joys and troubles that await them. (Also see chapter 3.)

At various moments in the liturgy there are prayers, in any event the prayer for the day or collect, as it is traditionally called. The ritual guidelines contain various alternatives, but often a special prayer is written for the particular day or the particular couple. In the case of a wedding mass there is also the prayer over the gifts and the post-communion prayer that is unique to the wedding mass. Again the ritual guidelines offer various options, but again they are often products of personal creativity. Finally there are intercessions or the prayer of the faithful. As in all church services special prayers are written associated with the present situation of the couple, the wedding guests, the church and the world. Music often features prominently in church marriage rituals. Not only do church hymnals contain special wedding hymns, but songs from other sources such as pop music may be sung. Often the latter include pop songs or compositions that cannot be sung by available choirs or cantors. The choice of music greatly influences the atmosphere of the liturgical service.

In the case of a wedding mass there are also specifically eucharistic rites, the eucharistic prayer climaxing in the consecration and the Our Father. In prayer and communion services there is a communion prayer that, according to to the guidelines, follows communion 11.

The ritual concludes with the final blessing and dismissal. The blessing is not directed to the bridal couple but to everyone in the church who, ‘spiritually strengthened’, must now resume ordinary life (Bisschoppenconferentie, 1996).

A final aspect that may affect the experience of the ritual is not a specific rite, but a quality of the ritual as a whole: the fellowship with others during the service. According to Chauvet (2001,

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11In the booklets of the couples who participated in this study the communion prayer usually replaced the eucharistic prayer.
the assembled, worshipping congregation is the church par excellence. He considers congregating a hallmark of Christianity. The assembly has taken part in a church ritual. That fellowship may be experienced as a contribution of the ritual.

Hence apart from the marriage rites we identify the following: 12:

1. readings from the Bible or some other source
2. sermon
3. prayers
4. hymns and songs
5. playing and listening to music
6. eucharistic prayer
7. consecration
8. Our Father
9. final blessing
10. fellowship

We take these liturgical rites as our point of departure in assessing the extent to which church marriage rituals affect the participants.

We have now distinguished between two types of rites in church marriage rituals generally: church marriage rites and eucharistic rites. Secondly, we interpreted these in terms of the theory of McCauley and Lawson, according to which marriage rites are a special agent ritual and eucharistic rites are a special instrument ritual. Hence we anticipate that participants’ notions about the extent to which they are affected by the various rites in church marriage rituals can be approached on the basis of two kinds of rites: church marriage rites and eucharistic rites. Since the latter represent a special instrument ritual that features in the Sunday liturgy as well and participants may therefore take part in them every week, whereas marriage rites as a special agent ritual occur less frequently, we expect participants to be affected more powerfully by the church marriage rites than by the eucharistic rites.

### 5.2.2 Religious socialisation

For the theoretical basis and conceptualisation of the various features of religious socialisation you are referred to chapter 1. Here we confine ourselves to the hypotheses. Note that we proceed from the foregoing distinction between church marriage rites and eucharistic rites. Our thinking about the effect of religious socialisation on notions about church marriage rituals is based on Durkheim’s theory that the more closely people are integrated with their religious community, the more they will subscribe to its values and norms. People who have had a more thorough religious socialisation will be more familiar with church rites. Church marriage rites are special agent, odd–numbered rituals. The CPS is directly present via the priest. Hence church marriage

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12 Again not all these rites actually have to be performed.
rituals offer many sensory stimuli and occur fairly infrequently. As a result the measure in which they affect participants is less dependent on religious socialisation. Those with a low level of religious socialisation will be no less affected than people with a high degree of religious socialisation. By and large we do not expect religious socialisation to have much influence on the extent to which people feel affected by the marriage rites. Eucharistic rites, as mentioned already, are special instrument, even–numbered rituals. The CPS is less directly present, so they provide fewer sensory stimuli (fewer, at any rate, than church marriage rites) and therefore affect participants less. In the case of people with a thorough religious socialisation, however, the schemes for these rites are located in semantic memory, hence they will be more affected by the rites than those with a lesser degree of religious socialisation. In this section, then, we confine ourselves to hypotheses on the relation between participants’ religious socialisation and the extent to which they feel affected by the eucharic rites. These hypotheses read as follows:

1. Socialisation by parent:
   
   (a) Children from homes where both parents are church members will be more deeply affected by the eucharistic rites than those from homes where one or both parents are non-members.

   (b) Children from homes where one parent is a member of a church or religious community will be more deeply affected by the eucharistic rites than those from homes where both parents are non-members.

   (c) Children from homes where neither parent belongs to a church or a religious community will be less affected by the eucharistic rites than those from homes where one or both parents are members of a church or religious community.

2. Socialisation by the religious community:

   (a) People who regard themselves as church members will be more deeply affected by the eucharistic rites than non-members.

   (b) People whose partners regard themselves as church members will be more deeply affected by the eucharistic rites than people whose partners regard themselves as non-members.

3. Integration with community through ritual participation:

   (a) The more regularly people go to church, the more they will be affected by the eucharistic rites.

   (b) The more closely people are integrated with their church or religious community, the more deeply they will be affected by the eucharistic rites.

   (c) The more closely the person or her partner is integrated with a church or religious community, the more she will be affected by the eucharistic rites.

   (d) The more importance people attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, the more deeply they will be affected by the eucharistic rites.

4. Integration with the community through strength of belief:
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(a) The greater the role of religion in a person’s life, the more deeply he will be affected by the eucharistic rites.

(b) The more certain people’s belief in God or an ultimate reality, the more deeply they will be affected by the eucharistic rites.

5.2.3 Conceptions of marriage

In the case of matrimonial values you are again referred to chapter 1; here we confine ourselves to the hypotheses. However, conceptions of marriage will have little effect on the extent to which people feel affected by eucharistic rites, since they do not relate to these rites. If there were any relation between participants’ conceptions of marriage and the extent to which they feel affected by church marriage rituals, it would apply to the church marriage rites. Hence our hypotheses are confined to the relation between participants’ conceptions of marriage and the extent to which they feel affected by the church marriage rites.

3. Contract: The more people subscribe to the religious and ecclesiastic judicial dimension, the more deeply they will be affected by church marriage rites\textsuperscript{13}.

4. Having children: The more strongly people agree with the notion that having children is a religious task, the more they will be affected by church marriage rites\textsuperscript{14}.

5. Sexuality: We have no hypothesis on this value, since sexuality does not feature in the symbols and metaphors of church marriage rites.

6. Love: The more people agree with notions about love, the more they will be affected by church marriage rites\textsuperscript{15}.

5.3 Measuring instruments

Liturgical rites

To measure the extent to which participants in marriage rituals are affected by the various rites, we presented the rites identified in section 2 to them, with the following question: There are moments in marriage ceremonies that one never experiences elsewhere and that can affect one. Thinking back on the marriage ceremony, could you indicate how intensely you experienced the following moments? We also presented them with the various eucharistic rites, with the following question: In the course of a church marriage ceremony you may have found various moments moving. Thinking back on the ceremony, could you indicate how intense each of these moments was? The marriage rites we submitted to the participants were the following:

1. When the couple/the bride enter the church

\textsuperscript{13}People who attach more value to marrying before the church and before God will be more affected by the church marriage rites, because that is when they are married, not in the magistrate’s court

\textsuperscript{14}People who believe that they have a God-given task to have children will be more affected by the church marriage rites, for that is when the couple are given that task.

\textsuperscript{15}Love is focal in the church marriage rites, especially self-effacing and caring love. People who set greater store by love or by one of its dimensions will be more deeply affected by church marriage rites.
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2. When the pastor officially addresses the couple
3. When the pastor questions the couple
4. When the couple pledge their faithfulness to each other
5. At the exchange of rings
6. When the couple receive the blessing
7. When the couple receive communion
8. When the couple are given a Bible or a candle
9. When the couple move to the Lady altar

The eucharistic rites we presented to them were the following:
1. During the Bible readings
2. During the sermon
3. During the prayers
4. During the hymn singing
5. While listening to the music
6. During the eucharistic prayer
7. During the Our Father
8. When the priest holds up the bread and wine
9. During the blessing at the end of the mass
10. The fellowship with others during the service

For the other measuring instruments, see chapter 2.

5.4 Results

5.4.1 Dimensions

In section 2 we described the various rites in the marriage ritual, both marriage rites and eucharistic rites. But are both kinds of rites recognised by the participants as distinct types? To determine this, we conducted a factor analysis. Below we indicate the dimensions of each item that we discerned theoretically (theoretical domain) and which factors featured in the respondents’ answers, with the concomitant communality coefficients and factor loadings\textsuperscript{16}. On the basis of the factor analyses we constructed scales. The frequency distribution of scores on each

\textsuperscript{16}Factor loadings below 0.20 are omitted.
scale appear below the factor analysis\textsuperscript{17}. Scores on these scales were used answer our research questions and for further analyses.

Table 5.1: Factor analysis of extent to which participants are affected by liturgical elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Theoretical Domain</th>
<th>Empirical (Communality)</th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During the eucharistic prayer</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the priest holds up the bread and wine</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the Our Father</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the Bible readings</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple received communion</td>
<td>Marital rites</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the sermon</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the prayers</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the final blessing</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple move to the Lady altar</td>
<td>Marital rites</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the music</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When singing the hymns</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple pledge their faithfulness to each other</td>
<td>Marital rites</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the exchange of rings</td>
<td>Marital rites</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple/the bride enter the church</td>
<td>Marital rites</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the pastor officially addresses the couple</td>
<td>Marital rites</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fellowship with others during the service</td>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s Alpha

The factor analysis\textsuperscript{18} yielded three factors. Most items on the eucharistic rites loaded on the first factor except for two items relating to music, which both loaded on the second factor.

\textsuperscript{17}Scale scores were calculated by summing each respondent’s score on the items for each factor and dividing by the number of valid scores.

\textsuperscript{18}Oblimin, Minimal Eigenvalue 1
Two items on marriage rites loaded on the first factor (couple’s communion and veneration of Mary). Hence the first factor was labelled ‘eucharistic rites’. The explanation of the fact that the couple’s communion also loaded on this factor could be that it is interpreted as the start and part of the communion of all participants, rather than as a solemn moment in the marriage ritual. The veneration of Mary is probably not regarded as a component of the marriage rites either, since the ordinary eucharist includes a hymn to Mary as well. Because two music-related items loaded on the second factor, we labelled it ‘musical rites’. The fact that these two items constitute a separate factor is probably because all participants listen to the music and sing together, whereas the marriage rites and eucharistic rites respectively focus on the couple and the priest. Music, especially singing, may strengthen the fellowship, because it stimulates participants to listen to each other and respond to changes in tone, melody and rhythm (Ford, 1999, p. 122). The other items on marriage rites loaded on the third factor, which was therefore labelled ‘marriage rites’. Thus the factor analysis confirmed our distinction between eucharistic rites and marriage rites, albeit with the addition of a further distinction, musical rites. The scales based on this factor analysis proved to be reliable (Cronbach’s alpha .88 and .80).

5.4.2 Agreement

Below we show in how far participants felt they were affected by the different types of rites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally unaffected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unaffected</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly affected</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>98.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply affected</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that almost a third (29.1%) of the respondents feel unaffected by these rites; 43.1% feel mildly affected, while a quarter of the participants (26.9%) feel that they are affected by the eucharistic rites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally unaffected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffected</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly affected</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply affected</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table shows that only a handful of respondents (10.8%) are unaffected by the musical rites; 36.6% feel mildly affected. The majority (62.5%) feel affected by the musical rites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally unaffected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffected</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly affected</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>76.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply affected</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>216</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that a mere 3.3% feel unaffected by the marriage rites, while 17.6% feel mildly affected. The majority of the respondents (80%) feel they are affected by the church marriage rites. Hence there is a manifest difference in the extent to which respondents feel affected by the various types of rites. Whereas a clear majority feel affected by the musical and marriage rites, only a quarter of the respondents feel the same about the eucharistic rites. It should be noted, however, that only a quarter of them feel unaffected by these rites.

Hence the answer to our first research question – In how far do participants in church marriages feel moved by these rituals? – is as follows: A large majority of participants feel affected mainly by the marriage and musical rites. The eucharistic rites (or, where applicable, the communion or prayer rites) affect them far less.

Because it is so informative, we also indicate to what extent respondents feel affected by each individual rite.
5.4. RESULTS

Table 5.5: Percentages of effect of the individual rites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Totally unaffected</th>
<th>Unaffected (Affected)</th>
<th>Mildly affected</th>
<th>Affected</th>
<th>Deeply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During the eucharistic prayer</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the priest holds up the bread and wine</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the Our Father</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the Bible readings</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple received communion</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the sermon</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the prayers</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the final blessing</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple move to the Lady altar</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the music</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While singing the hymns</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple pledge their faithfulness</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to each other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the exchange of rings</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the couple /the bride enter the church</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the pastor officially addresses the couple</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fellowship with others during the service</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table clarifies what we learned from the frequencies of the three rites. Respondents feel that the various marriage rites affected them far more than the eucharistic rites. Among the eucharistic rites they find the musical rites most affecting, and among the marriage rites the entrance of the bridal couple, the marriage vows and the exchange of rings. The vows top the list by a long way. The table also indicates that among the marriage rites the one that focuses on the institutional church (the pastor’s address) affects participants least. Among the eucharistic rites the one that is, theoretically, a marriage rite (the veneration of Mary) affects participants most. The same dynamics is evident in the various types of rites: those relating to the couple and to marriage affect people most. That corresponds with our second hypothesis, namely that church marriage rites, which are agent-centred\(^\text{19}\) are most affecting.

In the ensuing sections we look at the relation between the intensity of the effect of the

\(^{19}\) The label ‘agent–centred’ appears to contradict the claim that these same rites relate to the bridal couple. But in this case agent-centred refers to contact with the CPS agent, implying that although from the participants’ viewpoint the accent is on the couple, the priest is the one that mediates contact with God.
various types of rites to attributes of religiosity and conceptions of marriage.

5.4.3 Bivariate relations

The foregoing hypotheses mention various relations between the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals feel affected by the various kinds of rites and religiosity; between the extent to which they feel affected by the various kinds of rites and the matrimonial values of a contract, sexuality, and having children; and finally between the rites and the matrimonial value of love. To clarify these relations we conducted a number of bivariate analyses. First we examined the relation between religiosity and notions about marriage rituals. Then we looked into the relations between the four matrimonial values and participants’ notions about these rituals. In the case of two metric variables we give Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r). Otherwise we give the measure of association (eta).

Relation between religious socialisation and extent to which participants are affected by the various kinds of rites in church marriage rituals

Table 5.6: Relation between religious socialisation by parents and the various rites in church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership father</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership mother</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

Parents’ current church membership relates significantly with the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals feel affected by the eucharistic and musical rites. Only the father’s church membership relates significantly with the extent to which they feel affected by the marriage rites. The mother’s church membership does not relate significantly with the impact of these rites.

Table 5.7: Relation between integration with the religious community through participation in religious life and the various rites in church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership respondent</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.30**(r)</td>
<td>.25**(r)</td>
<td>.17*(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks/functions</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations/groups</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in rituals</td>
<td>.56**(r)</td>
<td>.47**(r)</td>
<td>.37**(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%
There are significant relations between respondent’s church membership and eucharistic, musical and marriage rites. There are also significant positive relations between the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals feel affected by the eucharistic, musical and marriage rites and frequency of church attendance on the one hand, and participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals on the other. There are no other significant relations.

Table 5.8: Relation between integration with religious community through strength of belief and the various rites in the church marriage ritual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td>.21**(r)</td>
<td>.11(r)</td>
<td>.13(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>.44**(r)</td>
<td>.31**(r)</td>
<td>.28**(r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in an ultimate reality</td>
<td>.05(r)</td>
<td>.17*(r)</td>
<td>.06(r)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%  
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

We found significant positive correlations between the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic, musical and marriage rites and the certainty of their belief in God. Another positive correlation is between the extent to which they feel affected by the eucharistic rites and religious salience. Finally there is a significant positive correlation between the extent to which they feel affected by musical rites and their belief in an ultimate reality. We found no other significant correlations.

Table 5.9: Relation between respondent’s partner as socialising actor and the various rites in church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner’s church membership</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner’s tasks/functions</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner’s associations/groups</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%  
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant relations between partner’s church membership and the eucharistic, musical and marriage rites. We found no other correlations.

Relation between matrimonial values and extent to which participants feel affected by the various types of rites in church marriage rituals

We conducted further bivariate analyses of the relation between notions about matrimonial values and about the form of church marriage rituals and the extent to which participants feel affected by the ritual. Since all the variables are metric, we give only Pearson’s correlation coefficient.

The extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic rites correlates significantly with the various factors of the contractual side of marriage. There is a positive correlation with
Table 5.10: Correlation between contract and the various rites in church marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious/ecclesiastic</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>-.07**</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-.38**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other cohabitation forms</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

the religious/ecclesiastic and social factors, and a negative correlation with the personal and exclusively judicial factors and with other forms of cohabitation. This was unexpected. Another significant correlation was between the extent to which participants feel affected by the musical rites and religious/ecclesiastic, personal and exclusively judicial factors. The correlation with the religious/ecclesiastic factor is positive, those with the exclusively judicial and personal factors are negative. Finally there are significant correlations between the extent to which participants feel affected by the marriage rites and religious/ecclesiastic, social and exclusively judicial factors. The correlation with the religious/ecclesiastic and personal factors is positive, that with the exclusively judicial factor is negative.

Table 5.11: Correlation between having children and the various rites in church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious task</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

The are significant positive correlations between the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals feel affected by the eucharistic, musical and marriage rites and the notion that having children is a religious task. That was as expected. We found no other significant correlations.

Table 5.12: Correlation between sexuality and the various rites in church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality by nature</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual behaviour</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant negative correlations between the extent to which participants in church
marriage rituals feel affected by the eucharistic rites and the notions that premarital sex, homosexuality by nature and homosexual behaviour are unacceptable. We did not expect these correlations. There were no other correlations.

Table 5.13: Correlation between love and the various rites in church marriage rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eucharistic rites</th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agapè, self-effacing love</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.21**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

There are significant positive correlations between the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic rites on the one hand and self-effacing and caring love on the other. There is also a significant positive correlation between the extent to which they feel affected by marriage rites on the one hand and self-effacing, erotic and caring love on the other. The positive correlations with self-effacing and caring love we anticipated, the others not. For the rest we found no correlations.

Conclusion about the relations

Many of the relations that were found accorded with our expectations. There is a strong relation between the extent to which participants feel affected by the three kinds of rites and the church membership of parents, respondent and the latter’s partner. Correlations with church involvement are far lower. There are several significant relations with frequency of church attendance and the value attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, as well as with belief in God. Also remarkable are the negative correlations between the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic and musical rites on the one hand and the personal and exclusively judicial factors and other forms of cohabitation on the other. The correlation between the impact of church marriage rites and the exclusively judicial factor is negative, as is the correlation between the impact of the eucharistic rites and the acceptability of premarital sex, the unacceptability of homosexuality by nature and of homosexual behaviour. The positive correlations with the various notions about love are between eucharistic rites and church marriage rites on the one hand and self-effacing, erotic and caring love on the other. Contrary to our expectations, there is a correlation between religious socialisation and the impact of church marriage rites.

But this does not answer our research questions fully. We still need to know which relations are decisive. For this we turn to our regression analyses.

5.4.4 Relation between the various types of rites

Also pertinent to our study is the extent to which the various rites influence each other, since ultimately we’re concerned with the ritual as a whole. Hence we also look at the correlations
between the different scale scores, in which we calculated to what extent each respondent felt affected by the respective types of rites. These correlations are reflected in the next table.

Table 5.14: Correlations between the various types of rites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Musical rites</th>
<th>Marital rites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical rites</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**: Significant at a reliability interval of 99%
*: Significant at a reliability interval of 95%

The coefficients indicate a strong correlation between the three types of rites. Correlations between the various scale scores are significant and fairly high. This suggests that the different rites reinforce their impact on participants.

5.4.5 Multivariate analyses

We have seen that there are quite a number of significant correlations between the extent to which participants in church marriage rituals feel affected by the various types of rites and their religious socialisation. We have also examined the interrelationship between the impact of the different types of rites. But we are not interested in significant relations only, but also in what attributes and notions of participants have the greatest influence on the extent to which they are affected. Consequently we use a regression model to estimate which attributes of respondents in regard to religious socialisation and notions about matrimonial values decisively influence the extent to which the various types of rites affect them. Since we know there are many significant relations, we proceed in phases following the pattern described in the previous chapter: we use four models for religious socialisation by parents, integration with the religious community via participation in religious life, integration through strength of belief, and conceptions of marriage. We apply the models to the dependent variables – eucharistic, musical and marriage rites.
5.4. RESULTS

Eucharistic rites

The following table reflects the regression coefficients for the eucharistic rites.

Table 5.15: Parameter Estimates for the regression analysis of eucharistic rites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church membership Parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent</td>
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<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.13</td>
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<td>Frequency of church attendance</td>
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<td>-.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership respondent</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
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<td>-.30</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerkdimaatschap Partner</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious salience</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious task</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social expectation</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Seksualiteit:</td>
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<td>Premarital sex</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Homosexuality by nature</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Liefde:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agapè, self-effacing</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
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<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.51</td>
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<td>Adjusted R-Square</td>
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<td>.32</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.43</td>
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</table>

The regression coefficients for model 1 confirm hypotheses 1a to 1d that there is a significant difference (-.86) between the impact of the eucharistic rites on people from homes where both
parents are members of a church or religious community and from homes where neither parent is a member. Hypotheses 2a and 2b anticipate that the extent of integration via participation in church life will have a greater effect on the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic rites than religious socialisation by parents. This was confirmed. The significant effect of parental church membership becomes insignificant (-.13) when predictors of integration with the church or religious community via participation in religious life is included in the analysis (model 2). The only significant effect is that of importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals (.53). When the predictors of strength of belief are incorporated (model 3) the effect of participation in transitional rituals remains intact (.52), but there is a new significant effect D that of religious salience (.20). The inclusion of conceptions of marriage in model 4 reveals a significant negative effect of frequency of church attendance (-.18). The effect of the importance attached to participation in transitional rites remains intact (.52), but that of belief in an ultimate reality becomes significant (.22). Among conceptions of marriage three predictors have a significant effect: the notion that one marries primarily before God and the church (.32), that one marries primarily before one’s partner (-.13) and that homosexual behaviour is unacceptable (-.15). Finally, conceptions of marriage have a suppressor effect (Scheepers et al. 2001, p. 256; Davis 1985, p. 33). The insignificant effect of frequency of church attendance becomes significant, in that matrimonial values have a neutralising effect on both frequency of church attendance and the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic rites. The same applies to belief in an ultimate reality. In the fourth model this effect becomes significant, whereas in model 3 it was not.

The four models show that religious socialisation by parents influences the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic rites, but this effect is neutralised by participation in religious life, more particularly the value attached to participation in transitional rites. In the subsequent models this effect remains significant D indeed, almost constant. Inclusion of the predictors of strength of belief does not neutralise anything, but adds the effect of religious salience. As for explained variance (R-square), the predictors of participation in religious life increase the explanatory power of the model considerably, although that applies to the other models as well. This enables us to answer our second research question about the eucharistic rites: Participant’ religious socialisation largely explains the extent to which they feel affected by the eucharistic rites.

Inclusion of the predictors of conceptions of marriage does not neutralise the influence of religious socialisation. More than that, its suppressor effect brings to light the decisive influence of frequency of church attendance and strength of belief in an ultimate reality. It does, however, neutralise the effect of religious salience, and the influence of importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals declines. This enables us to answer our third research question about the eucharistic rites: Conceptions of marriage only partly explain the influence of religious socialisation on the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic rites.

When we look for decisive attributes and notions, we observe the negative effect of frequency of church attendance. This we cannot explain. One would have expected an opposite effect, also in light of the other decisive attributes. Probably we are dealing with a statistical anomaly. In addition the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals and strength of belief in an ultimate reality play a major role. Among conceptions of marriage the notion that one marries primarily before God and the church has a positive effect and
the notion that one marries primarily before one’s partner and that homosexuality by nature is unacceptable have a negative effect. Hence positive effects stem from attributes and notions that assign the church and religion a prominent place, whereas negative effects (apart from frequency of church attendance) come from attributes and notions focusing on the individual and entailing a permissive attitude towards homosexuality by nature.
Musical rites

The following table gives the regression coefficients for musical rites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–d</th>
<th>2a–b</th>
<th>2c</th>
<th>3–6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church membership Parents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>One parent</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency church attendance</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership respondent</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Church membership partner</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
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<td>Non-member</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intentional participation transitional rituals</strong></td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Religious salience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in ultimate reality</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contract</strong></td>
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<td>Religious/ecclesiastic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>Exclusively judicial</td>
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<td>Alternative forms of cohabitation</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td><strong>Having children</strong></td>
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<td>Religious task</td>
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<td>Premarital sex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homosexuality by nature</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual behaviour</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liefde:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agapè, self–effacing love</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eros, erotic love</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philia, reciprocal love</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storgè, caring love</td>
<td>-.06</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>R-Square</strong></td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjusted R-Square</strong></td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first model confirms hypotheses 1a to 1d. There is a significant negative difference (-.59) in the extent to which participants feel affected by musical rites between respondents.
from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community and those from homes where neither parent is a member. Participants from homes where both parents are non-members feel less affected by church marriage rituals than those from homes where both parents are members. When the predictors of participation in religious life are added in the second model this significant effect is neutralised. Now the important effect is that of importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals (.48). This positive effect remains significant in models 3 and 4, although it decreases slightly (.40). As in the case of the eucharistic rites, inclusion of the predictors of strength of belief in model 3 has no significant effect in itself, but it does slightly reduce the impact of the importance that participants attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals (.40). Inclusion of the predictors of conceptions of marriage in model 4 likewise has no significant effect and does not neutralise any other effect. The significant effect of importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals remains unchanged (.40).

In terms of McCauley and Lawson’s theory musical rites are special patient rituals rather than special agent rituals. Participants in church marriage rituals sing to God and the rites are even-numbered (McCauley & Lawson, 2002, p. 28). But they do little more than offer sensory stimulation and usually have a low frequency, since special hymns are sung in marriage ceremonies and other music is specially chosen for the occasion. It is the emotionality or aesthetic quality of the actual music that evokes the presence of the CPS. We surmise that these rites too function in much the same way as special agent rituals. The regression analyses show that the more thoroughly people are religiously socialised by their parents and community, the more these rites affect them. Over half the participants feel affected or even deeply affected by the musical rites (table 5.4). One would expect religious socialisation to have a less decisive effect, since the impact of the rites depends more on the intensity of the sensory stimuli than on repetition. The reason why religious socialisation remains decisive could lie in the religious character of the music (even when popular music is used along with hymns). In that case it seems plausible that participants with a thorough religious socialisation would be more powerfully affected by these rites. As for explained variance, it is mainly participation in church life, more especially the value attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, that has substantial explanatory power. Hence the answer to our second research question reads: Participants’ religious socialisation explains the extent to which they feel affected by musical rites to a considerable extent.

Predictors of conceptions of marriage do not neutralise the effect of the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. In themselves they have no decisive impact either and explained variance barely increases. Thus the answer to our third research question reads: Conceptions of marriage do not explain the influence of participants’ religious socialisation on the extent to which they feel affected by musical rites to any appreciable extent.

The pre-eminence of the value attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals could indicate that we are dealing mainly with a specific type of Christian. Their Christianity is not a matter of belief, church attendance or conceptions of marriage, but a conviction that it is important for them to get married in church, have their children baptised and eventually have a church burial. Hence they are probably people who regard the church as a kind of ‘service institution’ dispensing life rituals. They are still Christian in their socialisation to the extent that they turn to the church for these rituals, but that’s where their commitment ends.
Marriage rites

The following table gives the regression coefficients for the marriage rites.

Table 5.17: Parameter Estimates for the regression analysis of marital rites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses and Models</th>
<th>1a–d</th>
<th>2a–b</th>
<th>2c</th>
<th>3–6</th>
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<td><strong>Church membership Parents</strong></td>
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<td>Both parents</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.31</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>Non-member</td>
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The first model confirms hypotheses 1a to 1d that people from homes where both parents are members of a church or religious community are more powerfully affected by the marriage
rites than those from homes where neither parent is a member: there is a significant difference (-.36) in the extent to which the two groups are affected by the marriage rites. In the second model, which includes the predictors of participation in religious life, the significant difference is neutralised, but the difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and from homes where only one parent is a member becomes significant (-.43). The predictors probably have a suppressor effect. Among the predictors the importance that participants attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals have a significant positive effect (.51). In the third model the predictors of strength of belief don’t neutralise this effect, but merely reduce it slightly (.43). However, the significant difference between respondents from homes where both parents are church members and from homes where only one parent is a member is neutralised. The predictors of strength of belief have no significant effect, neither do the predictors of conceptions of marriage that are added in model 4. However, the significant positive effect of the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals declines (.32).

As pointed out in section 5.2.2, marriage rites can be defined as a special agent ritual: the CPS is present in the priest. The ritual has a lifelong effect, hence its frequency is low. The direct presence of the CPS is expressed in the wide variety of sensory stimuli. Our hypotheses anticipate mainly a correlation between conceptions of marriage and the extent to which participants feel affected by the marriage rites. The regression analyses show that they do not correlate significantly. Despite some correlations between these two variables, conceptions of marriage ultimately have no decisive impact. The decisive predictors are those of religious socialisation by the religious community. Hence the effect of marriage rites on participants is not caused only by the sensory stimuli; they must also be able to interpret these. That is the only explanation for the decisive influence of religious socialisation. It is a necessary condition. Note, however, that this applies only to the extent to which these people attach value to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. Most likely they belong to the same group as those who feel affected by the musical rites. Evidently the fact that they turn to the church for transitional rituals goes hand in hand with sufficient familiarity with the symbols and metaphors of church marriage rites to be affected by them.

When it comes to explained variance, socialisation by parents does have an impact, but it only explains a fraction of the variance (.03) in the impact of these rites. The greater part of the variance (.19) is explained by integration with the religious community through participation in religious life, especially the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. The predictors of strength of belief slightly increase the explained variance. Hence the answer to our second research question about marriage rites reads as follows: Religious socialisation, especially participation in the religious life of the community, explains the extent to which participants feel affected by the marriage rites to a considerable extent.

Explained variance increases a little more when the predictors of conceptions of marriage are included, but this increase disappears when we control for number of predictors (adjusted R-square). In fact, conceptions of marriage hardly increase the explanatory power of the model at all. Hence the answer to our third research question about the marriage rites reads: Conceptions of marriage do not explain the relation between religious socialisation and the extent to which people feel affected by the marriage rites to any extent.
Three types of rites

If we look at the three regression analyses collectively, we observe that religious socialisation by parents has an effect throughout, most markedly in the case of the eucharistic rites. The impact of importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals is consistently decisive and is not neutralised by any of the other predictors. Only in the case of the eucharistic rites do other predictors have any influence, some of them in model 4 a decisive influence. Religious salience has an influence in model 3, but it is neutralised in model 4. Predictors of conceptions of marriage, however, have a decisive effect (along with participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals). The three regression analyses show a clear distinction between the eucharistic rites on the one hand and the musical and marriage rites on the other. We interpret the eucharistic rites as special instrument rituals. Although the musical rites may be special patient rituals, they do not function as such. The marriage rites are manifestly special agent rituals. Hence it is remarkable that conceptions of marriage have a decisive effect in the case of eucharistic rites but not in that of the other rites. In fact, the powerful impact of religious socialisation on the extent to which participants feel affected by the musical and marriage rites is confined to the importance they attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. In our view its indicates that these rites have a more marked religious character than we anticipated. People do not opt for these rites on, for example, purely aesthetic grounds but actually attach value to participating in such an ecclesiastic transitional ritual. By contrast, the extent to which they feel affected by the eucharistic rites is less exclusively associated with the importance attached to ecclesiastic transitional rituals. At the same time people's perception of marriage (before God and the church, before their partner, their attitude towards homosexual behaviour) has a strong influence. We may take it that participants in eucharistic rites in the course of a church marriage ritual associate them more with the marriage rites than with the rites of the Sunday liturgy. We did not investigate the extent to which participants feel affected by the eucharistic rites in the Sunday liturgy, so we cannot say to what extent they feel affected by the eucharistic rites per se. People who attach value to the religious and ecclesiastic character of marriage are more deeply affected by the eucharistic rites. The religious and ecclesiastic nature of church marriage rituals is probably manifested most clearly in these rites. If people attach more value to the personal character of marriage, they are less affected by the eucharistic rites. Hence we are clearly dealing with two distinct types of rituals, with the eucharistic rituals expressing the religious and ecclesiastic aspect.

5.5 Conclusions and discussion

5.5.1 Conclusions

In this chapter we considered why people still get married in church, in view of the social processes that are placing both marriage and the church under pressure. In response to our first research question we conclude that participants in church marriage rituals distinguish between marriage rites, musical rites and eucharistic rites. Marriage rites relate explicitly and exclusively to the marriage ceremony. Musical rites include both singing (hymns and other songs) and listening to live or recorded songs or instrumental music. Respondents indicate that they are most affected by the marriage rites (80%) and the musical rites (62.5%). Only 26.9% of them feel affected by the eucharistic rites. Thus they are very much affected by the marriage ritual,
5.5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

but less by the rites of the (eucharistic) service interwoven with it.

As for the second research question, we conclude that religious socialisation definitely influences the extent to which people are affected by church marriage rituals. In the case of the impact of the eucharistic rites both religious socialisation by parents and participation in religious life D to a limited extent also strength of belief D are pertinent. However, the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals is patently the decisive factor. In the case of the musical and church marriage rites the sole influence is the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. Following Lawson and McCauley’s theory, we defined eucharistic rites as special instrument, even-numbered rituals, in which God is represented mainly by the host and the proclaimed word. Musical rites are special patient rituals, but consist almost totally of sensory stimuli and therefore should affect people profoundly. Marriage rites are special agent, odd-numbered rituals, in which the CPS is directly present, as expressed by the much richer variety of sensory stimuli compared with the eucharistic rites. It seems likely, however, that these stimuli require some minimal religious socialisation to be interpretable and capable of affecting people. That minimum is the value people attach to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals.

The answer to the third research question permits the conclusion that conceptions of marriage account for only a small part of the relation between religious socialisation and the extent to which people feel affected by church marriage rituals. Only in the case of the eucharistic rites is it decisive. As far as their meaning is concerned they are linked with the other rites. In fact, they highlight the religious and ecclesiastic character of church marriage rituals, and depending on the value people attach to that, they are more or less affected by the eucharistic rites.

5.5.2 Discussion

Why do people still get married in church? Karl–Josef Kuschel’s (1993) answer to this question is theological and normative. In his view the extra value of a church marriage is that it adds a dimension of depth to the choice of a partner. In other words, opting for a church marriage involves God in the contingent choice of a life partner, which can then be viewed in a religious perspective. Our study shows that church marriage rituals affect the participants deeply, especially the marriage and musical rites. They are less affected by the eucharistic rites, which contribute most to the religious and ecclesiastic character of the ceremony (see above). In these rites God is less directly present (i.e. in the elements consecrated by the priest and the proclaimed word) and they also offer least sensory stimulation. But the rites that do affect people – musical and marriage rites – also have a religious character. The more thorough people’s religious socialisation, the more they are affected by them. The main influence is the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. In short, musical and marriage rites affect participants mainly because they want to take part in the church’s transitional rituals. That would mean that they do find the religious perspective offered by a church marriage ritual important. After all, it is at peak moments in life when the ordinary course of events changes or is changed that people turn to the church. The ritual probably addresses participants inasmuch as they attach value to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals and thus gives them the resources to deal with the contingency that features at such moments.

The majority of people in our sample were not frequent churchgoers, but this did not greatly affect the extent to which they were moved by the church marriage ritual. On the other hand, most of them attach importance to ecclesiastic transitional rituals. They are not characterised
by close involvement with the church or an explicitly religious lifestyle, yet at pivotal moments in their lives they still turn to the church. That is a minimal form of religious socialisation: the church is seen as a service institution that dispenses transitional rituals. If Kuschel’s interpretation holds water, the church fulfils a major religious and social function at these key moments, namely dealing with the contingency of life. The fact that church marriage rituals make an impression on participants, as our study demonstrates, could be evidence of this. An interesting theme for further research would be to determine whether the impact of these rites influences the way participants handle the contingency of their lives. To this end one would have to determine more accurately how they are affected and what it does to them.
Chapter 6
Overview and questions for further research

6.1 Introduction

This chapter recapitulates our research questions and the answers we found in chapters 2 to 5. The review culminates in a reflection on the relation between religious socialisation, conceptions of marriage and notions about church marriage rituals. We also assess to what extent theories in ritual and liturgical studies used in our conceptual framework are discernible in our empirical findings. Section 6.5 deals with the contribution this study makes to theorising on church marriage rituals and sacraments generally. Finally we discuss some insights gained from our research with a view to liturgical practice.

6.2 Research questions

This chapter deals with the research questions about the main concepts in this thesis, our conceptualisation of these key concepts and the answers we found to our questions.

Our introductory chapter proceeded from the following research question: What ideas do participants in church marriage rituals have about the ritual and to what extent do these ideas relate to their religiosity and their notions about marriage? The basic question was broken up into three secondary questions:

1. What concepts do participants in church marriage rituals discern in regard to

   (a) the social goal of church marriage rituals?
   (b) the temporal goal of church marriage rituals?
   (c) the form and participants of church marriage rituals?
   (d) the experience of church marriage rituals?

2. To what extent do participants agree with these notions about church marriage rituals?

3. To what extent do discrepancies in participants’ notions about church marriage rituals relate to differences in their religious socialisation?
4. To what extent can the influence of features of participants’ religious socialisation on their notions about church marriage rituals be explained by their conception of marriage?

Below we outline our conceptualisation of the question, then discuss our answers to each research question.

6.2.1 Social goal

Chapter 2 of the thesis dealt with the first key concept in our study: the social goal of church marriage rituals. Our premise was the rite of passage classification of Van Gennep (1909), which led us to define a rite of passage as a ritual accompanying a transition. The transition could be temporal or spatial and may involve an individual or a group, but it always entails a crossing from one social group to another. In the case of marriage rituals at least one partner leaves her or his parental home and moves in with the other partner. In view of present-day individualisation one must consider to what extent people still make such transitions: is it not a case of achieving a social position rather than having it ascribed to them by the community? The crossing from the single to the married state now proceeds in several phases, in which individuals decide for themselves when to make which part of the transition. Hence the question is: to what extent is it a status transition? The generic term ‘social goal’ comprehends both status transition and status confirmation. What, in fact, is a church marriage meant to accomplish in the social domain?

On the basis of Catholic marriage theology we defined a church marriage ritual as a transcendent transitional ritual, in which God establishes an indissoluble sacramental bond between the couple (Brink, 1977, 89–98, Lawler, 1987, p. 187–196, Schillebeeckx, 1963, p. 229–233, Stevenson, 1987, p. 16–29). As a result of secularisation, however, it could well be that participants assign the ritual immanent rather than transcendent meaning. Accordingly we added the distinction of an immanent transitional ritual, in which the couple’s relationship becomes permanent by virtue of the presence of their social environment. A private promise can still be broken, but if it is made in the presence of family and friends it is not so easy. But in view of individualisation we have to allow of the possibility that it could be a status confirmation. The partners achieved marital status for themselves by living together. This status is confirmed by the ritual. On the basis of the sacramental theology of Schillebeeckx (1966, 1967) en Chauvet (1995, p. 446, 490–492) we introduced a transcendent confirmatory ritual as well, in which God affirms that he created man and woman for each other. Finally we identified an immanent confirmatory ritual, to which participants do not assign any transcendent meaning but believe that the couple’s relationship is confirmed by their social environment.

Our research results (factor analysis) indicate that participants see it as a combination of transition and confirmation. They did not really see it as either a change or a confirmation. Hence we could not define church marriage rituals as a status confirmation or a status transition. Our findings concur with Schilderman’s (Schilderman, 2005) claim that in modern society we can no longer speak of a status ascribed by the social environment but of a social status achieved by the couple themselves. But church marriage rituals do not function as confirmatory rituals, because they rest on the assumption of ascribed status. Thus they cannot function as either transitional or confirmatory rituals. Yet our interpretation of our research findings can go beyond a distinction between transitional and confirmatory rituals if we postulate a combination of the two, in the sense of both change and remaining the same. This combination is not feasible in terms of the status transition assumed on the basis of Van Gennep’s rites of passage, which
derive from a binary logic: the couple either have marital status, or they don’t. In terms of classical Catholic marriage theology there was no ontological bond between them before the ritual, whereas afterwards there is. The combination of change and remaining the same can be interpreted by invoking the concept of narrative identity expounded by Ricoeur (1992) in terms of continuous discontinuity and discontinuous continuity. On the basis of our participants’ ideas we cannot affirm that church marriage rituals effect or accompany a status transition. Instead there is a reconstruction of their identity. (We deal with this in more detail in section 4 below.)

We did not confine our study to the distinction between transitional and confirmatory rituals but also examined whether respondents distinguish between transcendent and immanent rituals. This distinction was affirmed by their responses. Transcendent reconstruction implies that the couple pledge fidelity before God and have a moral – also a religious – duty to keep that promise. Immanent identity reconstruction means that they make their marriage vows before their social environment and thus have a social duty to keep their promise. While their everyday life remain the same, their identity changes. We found that 37% of the participants subscribed to a transcendent reconstruction compared with 27.8% that opted for immanent reconstruction. That answered our second research question about the social goal of church marriage rituals.

To answer the third and fourth research questions we explored the relations between attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the one hand and agreement with transcendent and immanent identity construction on the other. A remarkable finding was that there were hardly any relations with immanent reconstruction, so we decided against multivariate analyses. After all, if there is no relation between the various attributes or conceptions of marriage on the one hand and agreement with immanent reconstruction, there is no point in determining which attributes or conceptions have a decisive impact. So our regression analysis is confined to transcendent reconstruction.

In answer to our third research question, regression analysis shows that the attributes of religious socialisation have a major influence on agreement with transcendent reconstruction (R-square .39). The attributes concerned are frequency of church attendance, respondent’s church membership, religious salience and strength of belief in God.

Conceptions of marriage also have considerable influence (R-square increases to .52). The decisive influence is that of the notion that one marries primarily before God. Another noteworthy finding is that, apart from strength of belief in God, the influence of religious socialisation is neutralised. Hence conceptions of marriage largely explain the influence of religious socialisation on agreement with transcendent reconstruction. That answers our fourth research question.

6.2.2 Temporal goal

The second key concept is the temporal goal of church marriage rituals, which we dealt with in chapter 3. Church marriage rituals occur at pivotal moments in human life, which are accompanied by change. The changes, which occurred prior to the ritual, also have a temporal dimension that participants in the present ritual look back on the past and ahead to the future. There are anecdotes about how the couple met each other and decided to get married, as well as wishes for their future. Halbwachs (1991) and Assmann (1991), (1992) maintain that memory is collective. There can be no memory without an individual who remembers, but memories are preserved through all sorts of collective criteria that are shared and discussed. There are two forms of collective memory – communicative and cultural. Communicative memory derives from oral
transmission and offers a biographical perspective on time. It is clock time. Cultural memory
derives from certain fixed points in history that determine the identity of the relevant group. It
also includes myths and legends. Communicative memory determines people’s everyday out-
look on the present and the future, but on special occasions like religious feasts, hence church
marriage rituals as well, the rituals cause the biographic or immanent perspective to make way
for a religious or transcendent perspective, expressed in supra-temporal terms. Thus it is not
just a matter of past and future, but of origin and destiny.

Thuria (1963) uses the terms ‘anamnesis’ and ‘epiclesis’ to describe the transcendent per-
spective. In liturgy God’s salvific acts are called to mind so people can relive and actualise
that salvation. Reliving and actualising salvation in the present give them a new perspective
on future salvation. Thus the couple’s relationship is located in salvation history and their mar-
riage becomes a reliving and actualisation of all marriages since the creation of man and woman
through the history of Israel and the life of Jesus up to the present.

To answer our first research question about respondents’ notions concerning the temporal
goal of church marriage rituals we conducted a factor analysis. It showed that they did in fact
distinguish between transcendent and immanent notions about the origin and destiny of the cou-
ple’s relationship, but it was not possible to measure to what extent the transcendent superseded
the immanent perspective during the ritual. It transpired that 36.1% of the respondents endorsed
a transcendent origin, 98.1% favoured an immanent origin, 38.9% a transcendent destiny and
82.4% an immanent destiny. Clearly an immanent origin and destiny have greater support than
the transcendent alternative. That answered our second research question.

We also examined relations between attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of
marriage on the one hand and agreement with a transcendent and immanent origin and destiny
of the couple’s relationship on the other. There were many significant correlations, from which
it emerged that attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage correlated far
more with a transcendent origin and destiny than with an immanent origin and destiny.

Our third research question concerned the attributes of religious socialisation and concep-
tion of marriage that decisively influence notions about the origin and destiny of the couple’s
relationship. To this end we performed regression analyses on the four variables for the origin
and destiny of their relationship. These showed that in the case of transcendent origin relig-
ious socialisation has a major influence (R-square .32), strength of belief in God being most
influential.

In the case of immanent origin religious socialisation again has considerable influence on
agreement with this notion (R-square .34). Parents’ church membership has a positive influence,
frequency of church attendance a negative one.

When it comes to transcendent destiny religious socialisation greatly influences agreement
with this notion (R-square .34). The most influential factors are frequency of church attendance,
importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals and religious salience.

Finally, in answer to the third research question about an immanent destiny, religious social-
isation does little to explain respondents’ agreement with this notion (R-square .12). Partner’s
church membership has a positive effect, religious salience a negative one.

To answer the fourth research question about the transcendent notion about the origin of
the couple’s relationship we included the influence of conceptions of marriage. They have
considerable explanatory power (R-square increases to .43). The influence of belief in God is
not neutralised, but the notions that one marries primarily before God and the church and that
homosexuality by nature is unacceptable acquire decisive significance.
In the case of an immanent notion about origin matrimonial values have a major impact on agreement (R-square .43). The influence of parents’ church membership is not neutralised, and a suppressor effect moreover makes the respondent’s own church membership decisive. The other attributes of religiosity cease to have a significant influence. Decisive conceptions of marriage are that one marries primarily before one’s partner, that the social environment expects the couple to have children, that premarital sex is acceptable and that self-effacing love plays a major role in marriage. Only this last notion has a negative impact.

As for a transcendent notion about origin, we can say that conceptions of marriage have an influence (R-square increases to .49): they. fully explain the influence of religious socialisation. The decisive notion is that one marries primarily before God and the church.

In the case of an immanent notion about the destiny of the relationship, conceptions of marriage are a major influence (explained variance increases to .26). The influence of partner’s church membership remains intact, but that of religious salience is neutralised. Decisive notions are that one marries primarily before one’s partner and that homosexuality by nature is unacceptable.

6.2.3 Form and participants

Our fourth chapter dealt with notions about the form of church marriage rituals and normative ideas about the composition of the participants, the question being to what extent the ritual should be adapted to the hybrid nature of the assembly. Liturgy always raises a hermeneutic problem, since the form and content of the tradition has to find ritual expression that both accords with the form and content that have been handed down and is meaningful to the actual group of participants. Hence rituals may be defined as more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers but also dictated by tradition (Rappaport, 1999, p. 119–124). Form has two aspects: more or less invariant sequence, and acts and utterances. Hence we made a distinction between guidelines (more or less invariant sequence) and language (acts and utterances). The form of rituals is partly dictated by the religious tradition. Since modernisation means that people no longer adhere blindly to tradition, they must decide for themselves in how far the ritual will stick to tradition and in how far they will determine its form for themselves (Berger, 1980, p. 10–29). Michels’s study (2004, p. 173–175) indicates that bridal couples increasingly want a ‘customised’ marriage in the sense that it is adapted to their preferences and situation. On the basis of Berger en Luckmann’s work (1966, p. 70–85,110–146) we distinguish between a deductive and an inductive view of the language and guidelines of church marriage rituals. The deductive view of language is that it must accord with ecclesiastic tradition, while the inductive view is that it should link up with the participants. A deductive view of guidelines is that the ritual has to be performed according to traditional guidelines, while an inductive view is that it should be performed in accordance with participants’ needs.

Apart from the form of church marriage rituals, we also want to know to what extent the participants should comprise a homogeneous group of church members and, if not, in how far the ritual should be adapted to their composition. On the basis of the distinction between sacred and profane (Durkheim, 1995;1912, p. 310-312) we believe that rituals always differentiate, in the sense that they position people. Their logic is binary: you are either baptised or not, either ordained or not. This allows for differentiation and indicates who may do what and with what authority (Chauvet, 2001, p. 110–111). Rituals are performed in sacred places, using...
holy scriptures and instruments. When something is sacred there are all sorts of restrictions and prohibitions (Durkheim, 1995;1912, p. 304). Ritual links the sacred with human beings by giving them appropriate access to it. This could entail a sacred place as well as other dimensions like acts, times, instruments and roles (Grimes, 1999, p. 261, 267). Since church marriage rituals concern the sacred, can anybody take part in them? Here one can adopt a restrictive view, namely that only active church members may participate. Or one can have an open view, namely that everybody may join in.

An open notion about the composition of participants raises the question of the extent to which the ritual should be attuned to this diversified group. Should the officiant ignore the diversity and adhere to the traditional, prescribed liturgy, irrespective of the extent to which less involved church members or non-members are able to participate? Or should the ritual be adapted to allow non-members to participate fully? Again there are two possible views, a closed view that precludes adaptation and an open view that permits it.

In the case of the first research question about participants’ notions regarding the form of church marriage rituals, the composition of the participants and the measure of adaptation to them, factor analysis shows that participants do not distinguish between language and guidelines. To them form constitutes a whole. They have the same view of language and sequence, in that the ritual comprises both. To them it appears to be a single form, to which one either adheres or not. Hence Rappaport’s distinction between language utterances and sequence is not confirmed empirically. However, there is a distinction between deductive and inductive notions. Respondents discern a difference between a ritual form that adheres to the religious tradition and one that is attuned to them. In the analysis 45.5% of the respondents endorsed the deductive notion about form and 83.4% favoured an inductive approach. This implies that some respondents, while distinguishing between a deductive and an inductive approach to form, do not regard the two as mutually exclusive. Hence in their view religious tradition and the contemporary life world of participants in rituals can interrelate.

As for the participants, we have said that there are two phased questions: one about the composition of the participants, and the other, if still applicable, about the measure in which the ritual should be adapted to them. In the case of the composition of participants we distinguish between a restrictive and an open notion, in the case of measure of adaptation between an open and a closed notion. If one adopts a restrictive view of composition, one automatically has a closed notion on measure of adaptation, since a homogenous group of churchgoers requires no adaptation. In answer to the first research question no distinction is made between a restrictive notion about composition and a closed notion about measure of adaptation. But along with an open notion about composition we found an open notion about measure of adaptation. The restrictive notion about composition and the closed view of adaptation to participants are supported by 10.1% of the respondents, while 92.1% subscribe to an open notion about the composition of participants and 29.6% to an open notion about the measure of adaptation. Thus a large majority feel that everybody may take part in church marriage rituals, while a minority also feel that the ritual should be adapted to them.

We then examined the relations between attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the one had and agreement with notions concerning form and participants on the other. Remarkably, there were far more relations with the deductive notion about form and the restrictive/closed notion about participants. The interrelationship between notions about form and participants strengthens our surmise that an open view of composition in no way presupposes an open notion about measure of adaptation.
The answer to the third research question regarding a deductive notion about form shows that religious socialisation partly accounts for agreement with this notion (R-square .29). The important predictors are parents’ church membership and the value attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. In the case of the inductive notion about form it appears that religious socialisation has hardly any impact on agreement with this notion (R-square .07). Significant predictors are parents’ church membership and strength of belief in God, the latter having a negative effect.

The extent of agreement with the restrictive/closed notion is hardly affected by religious socialisation at all (R-square .10). There are no decisive predictors.

As for the open notion about the composition of participants in church marriage rituals, regression analysis shows that religious socialisation influences agreement to a limited extent only (R-square .09). Important influences are parents’ church membership and strength of belief in an ultimate reality. In the case of the fourth research question about the deductive view of form, we found that the effect of the value attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals is neutralised by conceptions of marriage (R-square .41). Among conceptions of marriage the decisive one is the notion that caring love should play a role in marriage.

As for the inductive notion about form, certainty of belief in God becomes decisive once conceptions of marriage are included in the analysis. The influence of parents’ church membership is neutralised. Conceptions of marriage have a far more decisive influence on agreement with the inductive notion about form (R-square .23). Among the conceptions of marriage the most influential are that one marries primarily before one’s partner, that homosexuality by nature is unacceptable, and that friendship plays an important role in marriage. All these conceptions have a positive influence.

In regard to the restrictive/closed notion, inclusion of conceptions of marriage in the analysis increased explained variance appreciably (R-square .29). Decisive predictors are that one marries primarily before the civil authority, that premarital sex is acceptable and that erotic love plays an important role in marriage. The acceptability of premarital sex has a negative influence.

Regarding the open notion about the composition of participants, conceptions of marriage have more impact than attributes of religious socialisation (R-square .18). The influence of parents’ church membership disappears, but that of strength of belief in an ultimate reality is not neutralised. The notion that homosexuality by nature is unacceptable has a decisive positive influence.

6.2.4 Experience of liturgical rites

In chapter 5, on the reasons why people still settle for a church marriage, we examined their experience of church marriage rituals. On the basis of the work of Whitehouse (2000, p. 9–12) and McCauley and Lawson (2002, p. 8–35, 50,51, 65) we made a distinction between special instrument rituals and special agent rituals. This is based on two principles. The first is McCauley and Lawson’s Principle of Superhuman Agency (PSA) concerning the way in which the Culturally Postulated Superhuman agent enters reality in the minds of participants in a ritual: does it happen via the officiant (special agent ritual), an instrument (special instrument ritual) or the people undergoing the ritual (special patient ritual)? The second is their Principle of Superhuman Immediacy (PSI), which concerns the number of steps required for the CPS to enter human reality. As a rule the CPS is more directly present in special agent rituals than in special instrument or special patient rituals. The more direct the deity’s presence (in the sense of need-
ing fewer enabling rituals), the more permanent the effect of the ritual. Ritualy this is expressed in a greater variety of sensory stimuli. The more direct the deity’s action is considered to be, the lower the frequency of the ritual. Hence among the various rites constituting a church marriage ritual we distinguished between eucharistic and marriage rites. Eucharistic rites are a special instrument ritual, because God’s presence is more indirect (via the communion consecrated by a priest) than in marriage rites (when God is present in the priest). Marriage rites occur less frequently than eucharistic rites, since one usually gets married only once but one can celebrate the eucharist daily. Marriage rites also offer more sensory stimuli than eucharistic rites. Hence we expect marriage rites to affect participants more deeply than eucharistic rites.

In answering our first research question factor analysis revealed that the respondents identified a third group of rites – musical rites – in addition to eucharistic and marriage rites. This is probably associated with the actors in the rites. In marriage rites the main actors are the bridal couple, in eucharistic rites it is the pastor, and in musical rites it is less clear-cut. Every participant can be an actor in these. Only 26.9% of the respondents feel affected by the eucharistic rites, 62.5% are moved by the musical rites and 88.7% by the marriage rites.

Next we looked into the relations between attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the one hand, and the extent to which people feel affected by the various kinds of rites. We found many correlations with church membership, frequency of church attendance, importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals and strength of belief in God. There are many negative relations with the notion that one marries primarily before one’s partner or the civil authority and that other forms of cohabitation are acceptable. The same applies to acceptability of premarital sex and homosexuality, either by nature or in behaviour. The extent to which participants feel affected by any one of the three types of rites depends greatly on the other two.

In answer to our third research question regarding the eucharistic rites, regression analysis shows that religious socialisation has a major influence (R-square .42), particularly the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals and religious salience.

As for the impact of musical rites, the strongest influence is that of religious socialisation (R-square .27), specifically the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals.

In the case of the extent to which participants feel affected by marriage rites, regression analysis shows that religious socialisation has considerable explanatory power (R-square .25). Again the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals is a major influence.

In answer to our fourth research question regarding the eucharistic rites, conceptions of marriage influence the extent of agreement even more strongly (R-square increases to .51). The effect of religious salience is neutralised. The influence of frequency of church attendance and strength of belief in an ultimate reality becomes decisive (suppressor effect). Among conceptions of marriage the notion that one marries primarily before God and the church has a decisive positive effect. The notions that one marries primarily before one’s partner and that homosexual behaviour is unacceptable have a decisive negative impact.

Conceptions of marriage have a limited influence on the musical rites (R-square .31), but they do not neutralise the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals and in themselves they do not have a decisive influence.

Conceptions of marriage do influence the extent to which participants are affected by the marriage rites (R-square increases to .32), but they do not neutralise the influence of importance...
attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals and they have no decisive effect in their own right.

### 6.3 Religious socialisation, conceptions of marriage and notions about church marriage rituals

In the previous section we recapitulated the answers to our research questions. In the case of the third and fourth research questions we consistently checked the influence of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage on the various notions about church marriage rituals. On the basis of these answers this section systematically presents the relation between religious socialisation, conceptions of marriage and notions about church marriage rituals generally. Our aim is to see how these three variables relate.

The following table reflects their influence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notion about church marriage rituals</th>
<th>Influence of religious socialisation</th>
<th>Influence of conceptions of marriage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent reconstruction</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent origin</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immanent origin</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent destiny</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>some influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immanent destiny</td>
<td>little influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deductive form</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductive form</td>
<td>little influence</td>
<td>some influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictive/closed</td>
<td>little influence</td>
<td>some influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open composition</td>
<td>little influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucharistic rites</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical rites</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital rites</td>
<td>strong influence</td>
<td>little influence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.3.1 Influence of religious socialisation

On the whole religious socialisation has quite a strong influence on the extent to which participants feel affected by church marriage rituals. It consistently has a marked effect on notions that presuppose affiliation with Christianity (transcendent reconstruction, transcendent origin, transcendent destiny, deductive form and eucharistic rites), although there is a clear difference between transcendent reconstruction, transcendent origin and transcendent destiny on the one hand and deductive form and eucharistic rites on the other. In the case of the first three it refers to active participation in church life (church membership, frequency of church attendance) and strength of belief (certainty of belief in God and religious salience). In the case of deductive form and eucharistic rites it is exclusively a matter of importance attached to participation in religious rituals.

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1When attributes of religious socialisation and conceptions of marriage have an R-square of .25 or higher they have a strong influence, below .15 there is little influence, and in between there is some influence.
ecclesiastic transitional rituals, that is on pivotal occasions. Remarkably, restrictive/closed notions are not much affected by the attributes of religious socialisation, probably because hardly anybody agrees with this notion, so the regression model has little explanatory power in this regard. In the case of immanent destiny, inductive form, a restrictive/closed notion about form and participants and an open view of composition of participants, religious socialisation has little influence. With the exception of the restrictive/closed notion, they are all notions that do not imply any link with Christian tradition. Understandably, therefore, religious socialisation will have little impact.

Another remarkable finding is the influence of religious socialisation on the extent of agreement with immanent destiny and the effect of the musical rites and marriage rites. We did not anticipate this. Since immanent origin is unrelated to religion, we did not expect religious socialisation to have any influence. Yet religious socialisation by parents has a positive effect and frequency of church attendance and strength of belief in God have a negative impact. The positive influence of parental religious socialisation may relate to the fact that immanent origin features in the context of a church service and that religiously socialised people tend to look back to the origin of the relationship anyway. The negative influence of frequency of church attendance and strength of belief in God probably relates to the fact that people who are practising, believing Christians do not look for the origin of the relationship in the bridal couple themselves but in something that transcends them. We also did not expect religious socialisation to influence the response to musical and marriage rites, because they provide so much sensory stimulation that everybody will feel affected by them. While this was confirmed, religious socialisation had a manifest impact, more especially the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. This is probably a last residue of religious socialisation. It is not a matter of church membership, frequent church attendance or strength of belief, but simply that people want to undergo these special rituals.

6.3.2 Influence of conceptions of marriage

By and large conceptions of marriage have little influence on agreement with notions about church marriage rituals, although they have some impact in the case of transcendent destiny, the inductive notion about form and the restrictive/closed notion about the composition of participants and adaptation to them. In the case of transcendent destiny it is the religious/ecclesiastic notion; in that of inductive form it is the personal notion, unacceptability of homosexuality by nature and love in the sense of friendship; and in the case of the restrictive/closed notion is it the exclusively judicial notion, erotic love and the acceptability of premarital sex. Those who feel that one marries primarily before God and the church agree more strongly with the transcendent notion of the couple’s relationship. The connection of the importance of God and the church with this transcendent notion is self-evident. But if they feel that the couple are primarily entering into a contract, that homosexuality by nature is unacceptable and that married love should basically be a friendship, the form of the marriage ritual should be more attuned to the participants. If people feel that one marries primarily before the civil authority, that premarital sex is acceptable and that erotic love plays an important role in marriage, they will be more in favour of a closed/restrictive view of the composition of participants in church marriage rituals and adaptation to them. Here the role of the various conceptions of marriage regarding the form of the ritual emerges more clearly. People who favour the inductive form may regard the couple as equal individuals entering into a contract with each other and sharing
a reciprocal love relationship. People who adopt a closed/restrictive view may be less inclined to see the church ceremony as a judicial ritual. After all, the contractual aspect has been dealt with by the civil authority. The restrictive/closed notion could be associated with a certain conservatism that sees marriage as the only place to experience one’s sexuality. Hence premarital sex is less acceptable and the emphasis is on erotic conjugal love.

Overall notions about church marriage rituals can be divided into three categories: substantive notions (about transcendent reconstruction, transcendent origin and destiny, and immanent origin and destiny); notions about form (inductive and deductive form, restrictive/closed and open composition); and notions about being affected by various rites (eucharistic, musical and marriage). It is noteworthy that religious socialisation has a strong impact on substantive notions, especially religious socialisation by parents, frequency of church attendance and strength of belief in God. In the case of notions about form conceptions of marriage have most influence: notions about the contractual aspect of marriage (religious/ecclesiastic, personal or exclusively judicial), about love (friendship and erotic love) and about sexuality (acceptability of premarital sex and homosexuality by nature). In the case of notions about the impact of various rites religious socialisation again features, this time exclusively the importance of participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. When we examine the relation between ritual notions and religious socialisation, religious socialisation –that is, religion as a cultural system –affects mainly the substantive notions about ritual. Conceptions of marriage or matrimonial values feature mostly in notions about the form of the ritual. Finally, all people are affected by the rites of church marriage rituals, with participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals as the main influence. This last category is particularly interesting, since it does not involve the substance of religion. It doesn’t matter what participants believe or how they view marriage, as long as they find it important to participate in these rites. It would be extremely interesting to study this group in more detail, since theirs is a different kind of religiosity not encountered in existing classifications, being unconcerned about religious content, frequency of participation or involvement but focusing purely on participation in a specific type of ritual.

Following Durkheim’s theory of socialisation and integration, we conclude that agreement with ritual notions is largely explained by religious socialisation. In this respect integration with the religious community is the principal source of socialisation, especially the importance attached to participation in ecclesiastic transitional rituals, although other elements also have an impact. The influence of parents’ church membership is mostly neutralised, and that of the partner is not decisive. A further conclusion, however, is that it is not just a matter of religious socialisation generally or socialisation within a religious community. Our study clearly shows that conceptions of marriage mostly have a decisive influence, especially when that of religious socialisation is minimal. In only one instance do they totally neutralise the influence of religious socialisation, but increase the explanatory power of the regression model for all but two of the ritual notions.

6.4 Church marriage rituals as identity construction

6.4.1 Introduction

In this thesis we treat church marriage rituals, as is usual in liturgical studies, as a transitional ritual and a liturgical service. We also draw on sacramental theology, since marriage in the Catholic tradition –and our respondents attended a Catholic marriage ceremony –is a sacra-
ment. Note that the sacramental status of marriage and its effect have been subject to theological debate for centuries. The effect of sacraments has been a major issue in theological controversy, although in the period between the Council of Trent and Vatican II the debate was purely judicial. In our study we did not inquire into the sacramental efficacy of church marriage rituals, but into their impact from the perspective of the participants. To this end we explored four aspects of church marriage rituals. What do they seek to achieve at a social level? What happens during the ritual at a temporal level? What form should the ritual take and who should participate in it? (Since the Council of Trent form has been the key criterion of the validity of a church marriage.) And fourthly, what does the ritual do to people: does it affect them? Chapter 2 contains what may be the principal discovery of our research, namely that from the participants’ perspective the effect of church marriage rituals is not definable as a status transition or confirmation, since the concept of status rests on a binary logic: one either has married status or not. Our respondents, however, did not make a distinction between status transition and status confirmation. Such a combination of change and remaining the same is explicable in terms of narrative identity. Hence we interpreted the effect of church marriage rituals as a reconstruction of the couple’s identity. In this section we explore that finding in more detail. First we look more closely at the process of identity reconstruction in Paul Ricoeur’s thinking. Then we elaborate on transcendent and immanent identity reconstruction.

### 6.4.2 Identity reconstruction

In Ricoeur’s work identity reconstruction is analogous to plotting. The various events in a person’s life are configured anew in a meaningful whole, a dynamic process that one has to go through several times in one’s lifetime. Van Gennep’s classification of rites of passage rests on a threefold structure: separation rites, in which the person is detached from her former social position and becomes status-less; then follows a liminal phase between the old and the new position; and finally integration rites that reintegrate her with society in the new position. Note that Van Gennep’s classification rests on a binary logic: first you have the old status and you don’t have the new one; after the ritual you no longer have the old status but occupy the new one. In such a view a combination of confirmatory and transitional rituals is not tenable, since binary logic does not permit the possibility that a ritual can accompany a change of status and at the same effect no change but merely confirm it.

Ricoeur’s concept of narrative identity plotting likewise has a threefold structure, but it is based on a continuum marked by continuous discontinuity and discontinuous continuity. Hence there is no clear-cut transition from an old to a new identity. Although a new identity is constructed, the old one continues to some extent. First the identity is prefigured. That is the identity before plotting commences. A person has a certain background, events and actions occurred in a particular context and fit into an existing symbol system. In the configuration stage events and actions are assembled in a meaningful whole, thus acquiring a plot. In refiguration the person arrives at conclusions for subsequent action on the basis of the new plot that his life assumes (Ricoeur, 1984, 54–87, Zuidgeest, 2001, p. 40–41). In other words, when a couple marry they already have an identity based on their lives in interaction with each other and their social environment. That is the prefiguration of their identity. Then, in the ritual, they take a fresh look at their lives. New elements, especially those arising from the life that they built up together, are integrated with their past, resulting in a new plot for their lives and a new identity for them as a couple. That is the configuration. Next they look at their future as a married cou-
ple that have pledged to be faithful to each other. Their future actions will be greatly influenced by these marriage vows. That is the refiguration. The marriage vows are crucial to the reconstruction, in that the couple declare that—regardless of circumstances, change and developments—they will remain the same to each other in this respect. Keeping this promise in the face of change enables them to find their own identity. It is in keeping their promise that they are able to say: “This is where I am, this is what I stand for.”

The moral aspect of their identity lies in keeping their vows. In chapter 2 we pointed out Ricoeur’s distinction between an idem and an ipse identity. On the one hand it consists in continuity of attributes, recognition of sameness. That is most evident in a person’s character, which is built of this continuity of attributes. But one cannot describe a person’s identity totally in terms of sameness, since both circumstances and humans are subject to change. Identity is conceivable only as self-constancy, the moral aspect of ipse identity, in the face of all change. Whatever the changes, the subject still says, “This is what I stand for, here I am.” Neither husband nor wife can guarantee that they will remain constant always, but at least they promise that their faithfulness will remain unaffected, however much their identities may change. Here the temporal goal of church marriage rituals, in addition to the social goal, becomes apparent. One looks ahead at the future and destiny of the relationship based on continuity of identity as far as mutual fidelity is concerned. Despite the passage of time and any developments that may take place, the subject affirms: “I stand for this pledge of faithfulness.”

6.4.3 Transcendent and immanent identity reconstruction

Our study shows that the reconstruction can be either transcendent or immanent. Respondents’ views differ in this regard. Neither alternative is unequivocally endorsed or rejected. The fact that the reconstruction can be both transcendent and immanent necessarily relates to the nature of the ritual. As noted in chapter 3, church marriage rituals reveal two perspectives on time: an immanent and a transcendent perspective. Identity can only be reconstructed by looking back on the past. What a person is depends partly on the continuity of certain attributes and characteristics. The couple are confronted with what they were at the beginning of their relationship and how they arrived at this marriage ceremony. Then they look at the future in terms of their reconstructed identity: living together as husband and wife, and remaining constant in their mutual faithfulness.

Identity reconstruction in church marriage rituals highlights an important aspect of Ricoeur’s concept of identity. Identity is never isolated; it is always relational. Only in the other does one truly confront oneself. Ricoeur distinguishes between three forms of otherness or alterity: one’s own body, the other party, and conscience. Regarding the body, one can say that one both has and is one’s body. It mediates our every contact with the world and is our first link with others. The other as another person represents intersubjective alterity. I encounter the other when I take responsibility for him or he takes responsibility for me. Finally there is conscience, the other as one’s most intimate self. These three forms of alterity are essential for moral identity. This moral self that shows that one remains constant despite flux cannot do so in the absence of another that compels one to be moral. A promise is a promise only if it is genuinely made to another person and is kept out of concern for the other.

Reconstruction of identity may happen in various ways. It can be reconstructed from the biographical backgrounds of bride and groom, when these are joined in the presence of their social environment and finally united in the present. From this shared present participants in the
ritual consider the destiny of the couple, in which respect the vows of mutual fidelity are not just between bride and groom but are also made in the presence of their social environment. Their future life together will be lived in the midst of that environment. This we defined as immanent reconstruction of the couple’s identity. In addition church marriage rituals offer a transcendent reconstruction of identity as religious identity: who am I before God? The church marriage ritual declares that before God the couple are given to each other as man and woman. That is part of Christian tradition, in which married people have a clear place and task as a symbol of God’s love for humankind. They may rely on God’s blessing and on Jesus’ presence at their wedding as he was present at the wedding at Cana. Their marriage vows are made before a God who, as far as marriage is concerned, reveals himself as a benign God. That locates the couple’s story in salvation history. Hence they should see themselves not simply as a married couple, but as a consecrated couple with the future task of representing, through their love, God’s love for humankind. This reconstruction of their identity is based on salvation history.

Some of the participants in the ritual subscribe to this transcendent reconstruction. That could be why people still clearly attach value to the ritual forms of church tradition, as was seen in chapter 4. Respondents manifestly support a deductive notion of ritual form, although there is some support for an inductive approach. And they are far from ready to countenance sweeping adaptation of the ritual to non-members of the church, although they feel that everybody should be allowed to participate. Finally, church marriage rituals deeply affect people, especially the marriage and musical rites. The marriage rites are particularly moving, possibly because that is when the couple’s identity is reconstructed. According to Chauvet’s theology the eucharistic rites should reinforce the participants’ Christian identity. We found signs of this in the observation that the impact of the eucharistic rites correlates with the extent of agreement with the notion that one marries primarily before God and the church. The eucharistic rites highlight the religious, ecclesiastic character of church marriage rituals, but the actual reconstruction is effected by the marriage rites, which manifestly affect people.

6.4.4 Suggestions for further research into identity reconstruction

On the basis of our research sample we interpret church marriage rituals as identity reconstruction comprising prefiguration, configuration and refiguration. Actions and events – in effect the construction of the relationship and (usually) cohabitation in the couple’s life story – are subsumed in a new plot that will direct the course of their life together. This means that their real-life biography can be linked with the story of the Christian tradition, thus giving the new identity construction a transcendent aspect. Their new identity is religious, so they may see themselves as created for each other in order to embody God’s love for humankind. For this they have God’s blessing.

Although we took pains to keep our sample a-select, it is limited in that it can only be generalised to participants in Roman Catholic church marriage rituals. It would be interesting to do a study that includes two other samples as well. Of our 216 respondents only eleven were Protestants. There were 54 who did not belong to any church; the remainder were Roman Catholic. Protestant churches have a very different marriage tradition from the Catholic one, since the reformers saw marriage as a purely civil matter that should take place before a civil authority only. Because of historical developments, more especially the hesitancy of government to assume responsibility for marriages and the concomitant administration, it remained an ecclesiastic concern for a long time. By the time the separation of church and state made
6.4. CHURCH MARRIAGE RITUALS AS IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

marriage a civil matter in most countries, the Protestant marriage service had become part of Protestant tradition. It was not viewed as a marriage before the Protestant church, however, but as the blessing of a union formed in a civil court. Hence Protestant marriage rituals are not marriages but the blessing of a marriage. Neither are they sacramental, since marriage is not a sacrament in Protestant churches.

This very different conception of marriage has implications for our conceptual framework, since Protestant church marriage rituals cannot be regarded as transitional: the transition was made previously in the civil ceremony. The church merely confirms this prior marriage and blesses it. Hence it does not give rise to an ontological bond. In terms of Protestant marriage theology one can only speak of a confirmatory ritual. But to what extent do participants in these rituals view them in this light? The ecclesiastic nuptial blessing is profoundly solemn, with the couple kneeling—something rare in Protestant liturgy. At a Reformed wedding that we observed prior to our research we heard one participant say that this (i.e. the church ceremony) was the actual marriage. Hence it would be interesting to determine in how far a group of Protestant respondents distinguishes between a transitional and a confirmatory ritual. Will we again encounter continuous discontinuity, or will we find only continuity, thus ruling out identity reconstruction and leaving only a confirmation of status? Another possible sample would consist of participants in church marriage rituals in a country where the church’s ritual and the civil marriage coincide, as in the Church of England in the United Kingdom. In that country there is only one marriage ritual, not two. That could mean that the continuous aspect we identified in our sample relates to the fact that the couple were already married in the civil ceremony, making the church marriage ritual an ecclesiastic confirmation of something that has just taken place in the civil court. If this prior civil ritual falls away, it could reinforce the discontinuous character of the church marriage ritual, making it a status transition rather than a reconstruction of identity. But do respondents not see it as a confirmation of the couple’s relationship and cohabitation rather than a civil marriage? Hence it would make sense to draw a sample from participants in a marriage by an established church. Again we would need to determine to what extent it entails identity reconstruction or whether it is exclusively a transitional ritual.

Apart from other samples to find out if our findings hold water in the case of Protestant and established church marriage rituals, it would be interesting to see in how far our concept of identity reconstruction is applicable to the other life rituals, baptism and burial. The main difference between these and a marriage ritual is that the latter concern the couple’s identity both before and after the ritual. In the case of infant baptism one can hardly speak of an identity prior to the ritual, because it takes place so soon after birth. The attributes constituting the continuous identity are still unknown and need to develop. At most we can say that after the baptismal ritual the infant is a child of God. In the case of funerals the problem lies beyond this life. What is the identity of a deceased person? In how far can we speak of continuity? Or, when it comes to memories of the deceased, in how far do these differ from those before the funeral ritual? If we want to establish the extent to which the concept of identity reconstruction is a meaningful alternative to the classification of rites of passage, we have to measure the extent to which participants in church funerals and infant baptisms regard these ceremonies as identity reconstruction.
6.5 Insights for liturgical practice

Church marriage rituals allow a great deal of latitude, since the sole requirement is that the vows are made before a priest and two witnesses. Our study allows us to infer certain practical insights, which we discuss on the basis of the various notions about church marriage rituals.

Stevenson (1987) offers all sorts of liturgical tips to restore the rites of passage character of church marriage rituals. Thus he wants the betrothal to be announced in church and have the marriage vows accentuated by a crowning or a canopy. Our study does not support this. It is not a matter of reinforcing the rites of passage character with its threefold structure, but of effecting an immanent and a transcendent reconstruction of identity. In our research into the social goal of church marriage rituals we encountered a combination of continuity and discontinuity. The ritual does not effect an outright change, but neither does everything remain the same. The notion that it entails identity reconstruction requires differentiating what remains the same and what changes. This could play a significant role in the preparation for the marriage. Prefiguration of identity could feature in the ceremony in the officiant’s introduction and sermon. Here it would be important for those who plan the liturgy with the couple to appreciate how fixed an image people have of a wedding. They are more inclined to use elements from a ‘lavish wedding’ (Otnes & Peck, 2003) than to look at their own real-life situation. It hardly makes sense for the bride to be given away by her father if she has been living with the groom for years and they have children together. In the case of such a couple prefiguration would mean including the existing family in the marriage ritual. Configuration and its moral character could be accentuated by making the vows more concrete, as in the marriage liturgy in the Church of England’s Alternative Service Book, which refers to faithfulness in prosperity and adversity, sickness and health, et cetera. In some of the marriage rituals that we observed the marriage vows comprise a promise always to love the other partner. Is that a marriage vow that can be made sincerely for the future? After all, one cannot control one’s emotions, hence one cannot promise always to love somebody, nor can one demand that of the other. A better way of expressing the moral character of the marriage vows may be a promise to remain faithful, keep caring and trying to make the other happy, even if circumstances change and perhaps, as a result of that, one’s emotions. Refiguration, which again entails a dialectic of change and continuity in the couple’s identity, could also feature in addresses, music and readings.

If we regard church marriage rituals as a reconstruction of the couple’s identity, we have to consider their biographies. In our inquiry into the temporal goal of these rituals we found that participants distinguish between a transcendent and an immanent notion about the origin and destiny of the couple’s relationship. In the immanent notion the focus is on their biographical background and their future biography. Hence to permit reconstruction of identity this biographical past and future should feature in the ritual and, of course, in the preparation for it. As mentioned already, this could happen in the addresses and sermon, but also in the selection of contemporary texts or music. But there are also transcendent notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship. The liturgy offered by the various churches (in our case the Roman Catholic Church) contains many images from Christian tradition, with which the couple can identify or be identified by the other participants. Images of their destiny are less concrete and less widely present. Liturgical texts could contain more Christian images of the future conveying the couple’s task of expressing God’s love for humankind. But an even more noteworthy finding is that there is hardly any correlation between the transcendent and immanent notions about either the origin or the destiny of the relationship. That raises the question of the extent
to which participants associate the transcendent and immanent notions with each other. Do they actually perceive the couple as epitomising the creation of man and woman for each other? Do they apply the image of Christ’s love for the church to the couple? The liturgy could render these associations more explicitly in carefully chosen images. The use of symbols such as those proposed by Stevenson –crowning the couple or putting them under a canopy – could make it easier for participants to interrelate the transcendent and immanent notions about the origin and destiny of the relationship.

We have spoken at length about the form of church marriage rituals as an implication of their social and temporal goals. What we said highlighted the importance of both the couple’s real-life biographical context and images and metaphors from Christian tradition. Our findings about the form of church marriage rituals support this. Almost without exception participants feel that the language and structure of the rituals must accord with their own experience. But a fair proportion also consider it important to maintain the link with Christian tradition. So the two views are not mutually exclusive. This indicates the importance of a sound hermeneutic approach to preparing the marriage liturgy. The distinction pastors and bishops still make between traditional hymns and readings on the one hand and contemporary or popular texts and songs is purely theoretical. An effective ritual requires both genres. On their side the participants feel that everybody should be able to participate in the ritual, but by no means all of them believe that the ritual should be adapted to non-members of the church. They do not insist that the form should enable everyone to participate fully in the ritual. Possibly the desire to have the entire assembly participate is more on the side of the officiants than on that of the participants. In that sense liturgical ‘concessions’ to relatives and friends are not always advisable. It is probably better to have a liturgy that emphasises the biographical and religious images of the couple’s origin and destiny and to relate these to each other.

When we inquired into the extent to which people feel affected by the various liturgical rites, we found that almost everybody feels moved by them. This applies far less to the eucharistic rites. In addition the extent to which people feel affected by the marriage rites is not really influenced by their religious socialisation or conceptions of marriage. The only influence is the value attached to participating in ecclesiastic transitional rituals. To those who are closely involved with the church the eucharistic rites give the entire ritual an ecclesiastic character. If churches want to move people who are not particularly involved with church life, they would be wise to devote more attention to ecclesiastic transitional rituals such as baptism, marriage and burial. In practice, however, one finds that baptisms have become impersonal in that several infants are baptised in one ceremony and funerals are standardised because volunteers have to officiate. The large numbers of baptismal and funeral rituals have forced the churches to resort to this liturgical practice. At all events, church marriage rituals affect virtually all participants, including those who are not church members. Possibly ecclesiastic transitional rituals are a good way of getting such people to experience the relevance of churches, which implies that pastors ought to devote a lot of attention to baptismal, marriage and funeral rituals.

In such rituals their ecclesiastic character can be highlighted by eucharistic rites. Although they affect people less, it might be better not to gloss them over, because that tones down the ecclesiastic character of the ritual till it becomes interchangeable with a civil of self-improvised ceremony. In the process it might be possible to give the eucharistic rites a form that will make people more aware of God’s presence. From this point of view radical liturgical pruning of the eucharistic rites is undesirable. Proper use of sensory stimuli may intensify participants’ experience that God is actively present.
We started with the question why, despite everything, people still get married in church. Our research shows that church marriage rituals affect people, work for them, and even enable them to reconstruct their identities at a social and religious level. In this regard form is vitally important, invoking images from both Christian tradition and the couple’s biographies and relating these to each other. If that happens, both church members and non-members can be touched and the church can make its relevance felt. Thus church marriage rituals are incontrovertibly valuable and do not deserve to be marginalised –indeed, they merit special attention and appraisal.
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Chapter 7

Verbintenissen vieren, een empirisch onderzoek naar opvattingen over het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel.

Samenvatting

7.1 Inleiding en probleemstelling

Deze dissertatie is geschreven als resultaat van een liturgiewetenschappelijk onderzoek naar opvattingen over het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel van mensen die in 2005 eraan deelnamen. Het is daarmee een liturgiewetenschappelijk onderzoek binnen de empirische theologie.


Deze vragen hebben we uitgewerkt voor de context van de Nederlandse maatschappij. Twee grote sociale processen zijn hierbij belangrijk, de individualisering en secularisering van de maatschappij. Individualisering is een proces waarin individuele vrijheid en ontplooiing de centrale waarden worden binnen een samenleving waarin de economie en de welvaart met sprongen toenemen. De traditionele instituties van de samenleving lopen leeg of verliezen hun belang (de-institutionaliseren). Traditionele opvattingen en waardenoriëntaties hebben hun populariteit verloren (de-traditionaliseren). Ook de invloed van sociale groepen of collectiviteiten op de opvattingen en waardenoriëntaties is sterk afgenomen1 (Felling et al., 2000, p. 237, 238). Dit

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1Felling e.a. onderscheiden vijf dimensies van de individualisering, de-institutionaliseren, de-traditionaliseren, privatisering, fragmentering en heterogeniseren. Wij beperken ons hier tot de eerste drie, omdat
laatste proces van privatisering is voor ons onderzoek van groot belang. De secularisering een afname impliceert van de godsdienstigheid van mensen, dat de inhoud van het geloof aangepast wordt aan maatschappelijke veranderingen en dat de invloed van de kerkelijke instituties op de samenleving afneemt (Bruce, 2003 [2002], p. 2,3, Dobbelare, 2002, p. 17–43).

7.2 Concepten


Kenmerkend voor de rites de passage is verder de drievoudige structuur binnen een overgangsritueel. Er zijn meestal afscheidingsritten (rites de séparation) waar te nemen, maar ook een tussenfase (liminalité) en integratieriten (rites de intégration). Hoewel deze verschillende riten meestal te onderscheiden zijn, claimde Van Gennep niet dat ze altijd alle drie moeten voorkomen (Van Gennep, 1909, p. I–XIX, 1–13). In navolging van Van Gennep is er veel gepubliceerd over de riten de passage. Victor Turner heeft zich geconcentreerd op de tussenfase (liminale fase), en de functie die deze fase heeft voor de verandering en hernieuwde stabilisering van een samenleving (Turner, 1969). Soms heeft de rite de passage zijn classificatie–karakter verloren en is zij komen te staan voor rituelen die belangrijke momenten in iemands mensenleven begeleiden (Grimes, 1995), (Grimes, 2000). Hoewel de sociale overgangsrite als een aparte rite onderscheiden kan worden, wordt bijna elke overgang gekenmerkt door een overgang van individuen of een groep naar een andere groep. Bij het huwelijksritueel is deze dimensie de belangrijkste (Snoek, 1987, p. 66). Volgens Van Gennep verlaat minstens één van de huwelijkspartners het ene huishouden om in een nieuw huishouden of het bestaande huishouden van de andere partner in te trekken (Van Gennep, 1960, p. 116–145). Het is echter de vraag of dit ook voor de bruidsparen van vandaag geldt, aangezien de meeste bruidsparen een eigen huishouden hebben opgebouwd toen zij gingen samenwonnen. In hoeverre kan het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel als een sociaal overgangsritueel geclassificeerd worden?

Vanuit de rituologie kan het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel echter ook op een andere wijze getypeerd worden. Een huwelijksritueel is namelijk een feest en bij belangrijke feesten staat deze relevant zijn voor onze probleemstelling.
7.2. CONCEPTEN


Het is echter niet zonder meer duidelijk is in hoeverre het kerkelijke huwelijksriteueel in de opvattingen van de deelnemers als een rite de passage of als een verschuiving in het tijdsperspectief verstaan wordt. Door de individualisering komen huwelijken heel anders tot stand en is het de vraag of het wel om een overgang gaat. Door de secularisering is het mogelijk dat de christelijke beelden en verhalen niet meer begrepen worden en dat het mythische tijdsperspectief helemaal niet de alledaagsheid kan doorbreken tijdens het huwelijksriteueel. Daarom kiezen we voor een meer generieke term, het doel van het ritueel. Wat wordt in het ritueel beoogd? Een overgang, een verschuiving in het tijdsperspectief of iets heel anders? We onderzoeken daarom het sociale, respectievelijk het temporele doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksriteueel.

De liturgiewetenschap kijkt echter nog vanuit andere perspectieven naar het kerkelijke huwelijksriteueel. Zij ziet het kerkelijke huwelijksriteueel namelijk niet alleen als een riteueel, maar meer specifiek als een liturgische viering binnen een officieel kerkelijke setting. Er zijn vele aspecten van een liturgische viering te onderscheiden. Hier beperken we ons tot twee aspecten, die verbonden zijn met de in de eerste paragraaf beschreven problematiek rond het huwelijk en het huwelijksriteueel. Als we ons namelijk afvragen waarom mensen nog voor een kerkelijk huwelijksriteueel kiezen als de praktijk van het samenleven zo sterk veranderd is, dan laat zich dat ten eerste vertalen naar de vraag hoe zij vinden dat het ritueel vorm moet krijgen. Met andere woorden hoe moet het kerkelijke huwelijksriteueel worden uitgevoerd, als liturgische viering staande in een institutioneel verankerde christelijke traditie enerzijds en in een praktijk die de afgelopen vijftig jaar radicaal veranderd is anderzijds? Ten tweede roept de problematiek de vraag op naar de individuele beleving van het kerkelijke huwelijksriteueel. Als mensen ondanks de veranderde samenleefpraktijk toch voor dit specifieke ritueel kiezen, wat menen zij er dan te beleven?
Bij de eerste vraag naar de vormgeving van het kerkelijke huwelijkseritueel komt een specifiek kenmerk van de modernisering in het algemeen en de individualisering in het bijzonder naar boven, namelijk het wegvallen van vanzelfsprekende kaders (Berger, 1980), (Felling et al., 2000, p. 238). De consequentie hiervan is een verplichting tot keuzes maken. Het is niet langer mogelijk zo maar volgens de religieuze (voor onze Westerse wereld christelijke) normen en waarden te leven. De moderne mens moet zich uiteenzetten met de moderniteit. Dat geldt in het bijzonder voor mensen die voor de kerk willen trouwen. Ze kunnen (en willen) niet langer alleen maar volgens de gebruiken het ritueel van de kerkelijke huwelijksviering ondergaan. De moderniteit (o.a. door de verhoogde mobiliteit en verbeterde communicatiemogelijkheden) heeft ervoor gezorgd dat mensen zich bewust zijn van allerlei alternatieven op de voorheen dominante traditie. De religieuze traditie heeft haar vanzelfsprekendheid verloren. Het feit dat mensen individuen zijn in een moderne samenleving, eist van hen dat ze keuzes maken en zo de gestalte van hun eigen ritueel construeren. Hierbij moeten ze zich verhouden tot de moderniteit, waarbinnen kerk en huwelijk zoals we in de eerste paragraaf al schreven door de individualisering en secularisering twee problematische instituties zijn.

De vraag naar de beleving van de liturgische riten hangt sterk samen met de observatie dat ondanks het feit dat men naar de maatschappelijke normen niet meer hoeft te trouwen én het aantal kerkelijke huwelijksrituelen sterk is afgenomen (zie hierboven), er toch mensen zijn die voor het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel kiezen. Heeft dit dan toch te maken met iets wat men meent of verwacht te zullen beleven tijdens het ritueel? Dit sluit aan bij een discussie binnen de liturgiewetenschap rondom de beleving van kerkelijke rituelen sinds de liturgiehervormingen van Vaticanum II. Vanuit een nieuwe theologie van kerk en sacramenten hebben de hervormers de kerkelijke rituelen transparanter willen maken, zodat de gelovigen er actief en met begrip aan kunnen deelnemen. Hierdoor worden de sacramenten niet langer handelingen van de ambtsdrager in persona Christi, maar van de kerk opgevat als gemeenschap van gelovigen (ambtsdragers en leken) (Schillebeeckx, 1959, p. 52,53,58,(Rahner, 1966, p. 49). Daartegenover beweert Lorenzer (Lorenzer, 1981, p. 182–188) dat de liturgiehervormingen de zinnelijk–symbolische interactie tussen voorganger en gelovigen heeft vervangen door een discursieve. Dit zou tot betekenisverlies leiden. Vanuit deze discussie kunnen we met betrekking tot het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel de vraag stellen in hoeverre het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel de deelnemers raakt.

Van de liturgische aspecten van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel onderzoeken we in dit proefschrift de gestalte van het ritueel en de beleving van de liturgische riten.

Dit brengt ons tot vier centrale concepten voor ons onderzoek:

1. het sociale doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel
2. het temporele doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel
3. de vormgeving van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel
4. de beleving van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel

7.3 Onderzoeksvragen

In de eerste paragraaf hebben we de problematiek rond het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel om- schreven. Centraal stond hier het feit dat ondanks de maatschappelijke veranderingen ten
gevolge van de individualisering en secularisering die het huwelijk als instituut niet langer noodzakelijk maken voor het samenleven en die het samenleven zelf hebben veranderd, er nog steeds mensen zijn die kiezen voor het huwelijk en daarbij voor het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel. De onderzoeksvraag voor ons proefschrift luidt daarom: Wat zijn de opvattingen van de deelnemers aan het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel over dit ritueel en in hoeverre hangt dit samen met hun religiositeit en hun opvattingen over het huwelijk?. Deze hoofdvraag valt uiteen in drie subvragen:

1. Welke opvattingen onderscheiden de deelnemers aan het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel ten aanzien van
   (a) het sociale doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel
   (b) het temporele doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel
   (c) de vormgeving van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel
   (d) de beleving van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel

2. In welke mate stemmen de deelnemers met deze opvattingen over het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel in?

3. In hoeverre hangen verschillen in opvattingen van de deelnemers over het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel samen met verschillen in hun religieuze socialisatie?

4. In hoeverre kan de invloed van de kenmerken van de religieuze socialisatie van de deelnemers op hun opvattingen over het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel verklaard worden door hun huwelijksopvattingen?


Religieuze socialisatie kan opvattingen over het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel beïnvloeden. Het is echter de vraag, in hoeverre het om de religieuze socialisatie in het algemeen gaat of om de opvattingen over het huwelijk, die al dan niet hierin besloten liggen. In de westerse samenleving heeft het huwelijk (en het relationele leven voorafgaande aan het huwelijk) een grote verandering doorgemaakt op de volgende vier waarden: de contractuele dimensie van het huwelijk, kinderen krijgen, seksualiteit en liefde. Onze vierde onderzoeksvraag gaat daarom in op de invloed van deze vier waarden.

7.4 Steekproef

Om onze onderzoeksvragen te beantwoorden hebben we gekozen voor een survey–design, waarbij we aan de hand van de concepten en de daarbij horende uitwerkingen meetinstrumenten hebben ontwikkeld en een vragenlijst hebben opgesteld. We wilden hiermee niet alleen de opvattingen van pastores of huwenden weten, maar als populatie hebben we gekozen voor alle deelnemers aan de katholieke huwelijksviering. Zoals we hierboven hebben beschreven heeft
de secularisering ervoor gezorgd dat lang niet alle mensen die deelnemen aan het ritueel kerkbetrokken zijn. Hierdoor wordt onze populatie breder dan kerkbetrokken mensen, breder dan rooms-katholieken, zelfs breder dan christenen. De steekproef is genomen door uit een bestand van alle Rooms-katholieke parochies in Nederland aselect 150 parochies te trekken. Van die parochies werden de eerste drie bruidsparen die in de periode januari tot juli 2005 trouwden, be- naderd om een vragenlijst in te vullen (de meeste parochies hadden minder dan drie bruidsparen in dat jaar). We willen niet alleen de opvattingen en kenmerken van de bruidsparen weten, maar ook van de andere deelnemers. Daarom werd de bruidsparen gevraagd om de gegevens van zes van hun bruidloftsgasten te geven, waarvan er drie kerk betrokken waren en drie niet. Hierdoor konden we de opvattingen meten van zowel kerk betrokken als niet-kerk betrokken deelnemers. Op deze wijze zijn de resultaten van ons onderzoek generaliseerbaar voor de populatie bestaande uit alle deelnemers aan het katholieke huwelijksritueel in het jaar 2005.

7.5 Resultaten

Het voert te ver om alle onderzoeksresulaten hier samen te vatten zonder op ieder concept in te gaan. Daarom beperken we ons hier tot enkele algemene conclusies. Omdat de deelnemers het sociale doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel noch als een overgang noch als een bevestiging opvatten, hebben we een combinatie van deze twee concepten gepostuleerd als identiteitsreconstructie. Door gebruik te maken van Hermans en Ricoeurs concepten van narratieve identiteit, vatten we het sociale doel van het ritueel op als ‘plotting’. Bruid en bruidegom hebben elk hun eigen levensverhalen die deels met elkaar verbonden zijn. Tijdens het huwelijksritueel worden nieuwe elementen, vooral die samenhangen met hun nieuwe gezamenlijk opgebouwde leven, geïntegreerd in het verleden. Hierdoor krijgt hun leven een nieuw ‘plot’ en het bruidspaarn een nieuwe identiteit. Deze identiteit biedt een nieuw perspectief op het verleden en de toekomst. Dit is het temporele doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel. Het ritueel biedt zowel een transcendent als een immanent perspectief op het verleden en de toekomst. Het sociale en temporele doel van het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel hebben consequenties voor de vorm van het ritueel en zijn deelnemers. Hoewel de respondenten unaniem vonden dat iedereen mocht deelnemen aan het ritueel, betekende dit nog niet dat het ritueel aan hen moest worden aangepast. Hierbij maken de respondenten onderscheid tussen een deductieve en inductieve opvatting over de vorm van het ritueel. Toch sluiten de beide opvattingen in hun ogen elkaar niet uit. Met betrekking tot de rituele beleving worden de deelnemers het meest geraakt door de huwelijksriten en de muzikale riten, maar niet door de eucharistische riten, die het kader van het ritueel vormen. De bijzondere huwelijksritten, het geven van het ja-woord, de ringwisseling en de huwelijkszegen raken bijna alle deelnemers. Datzelfde geldt voor de muzikale riten, het zingen van gezangen en het luisteren naar (af)gespeelde muziek. Religieuze socialisatie heeft een sterke invloed op de opvattingen over het kerkelijke huwelijksritueel. In sommige gevallen kon deze invloed worden verklaard door huwelijksopvattingen. In de meeste gevallen bleef een deel van de invloed van religieuze socialisatie onverklaard. Dit was zeker zo bij de invloed van religieuze socialisatie op de beleving van de huwelijksritten en de muzikale riten. Bij de beleving van deze riten was het enige invloedrijke kenmerk van de religieuze socialisatie van de deelnemers het feit dat zij meenden dat het belangrijk was de kerkelijke overgangsrituelen, doop, huwelijk en uitvaart, te ondergaan.
7.6 Liturgische praktijk

Onze onderzoeksresultaten pleiten voor aandacht voor de voorbereiding en uitvoering van kerke-lijke huwelijksrituelen. Vooral de reconstructie van de levensverhalen van bruidsparen kan ondersteund worden door de huwelijksvoorbereiding en het ritueel. Kerkelijke huwelijksrituelen kunnen ook een manier voor de kerken zijn om hun relevantie te laten zien aan niet kerkbe-trokken mensen.
CHAPTER 7. VERBINTENISSEN VIEREN. SAMENVATTING
Chapter 8

Biography

Remco Robinson (1979) studied Theology at the Faculty of Theology of the Radboud University Nijmegen. In 2003, he graduated with honour in the field of Dogmatic theology with a master thesis on the marriage theology of Edward Schillebeeckxs within the context of the modern Dutch society. Recent publications are:


Besides his academic work, Robinson is a parish priest of the Old Catholic Church in St. Willibrord’s parish in Arnhem. He is married and has two daughters.
The way in which people live together has changed within the last 60 years. Only after living together for several years do couples marry or they do not marry at all. This development implies a change in the way people look at relationship, marriage and if applicable the church wedding ritual. This dissertation explores how people think about church wedding rituals. Using social scientific methods within the methodology of empirical theology, the author measures and discusses notions about the goals, form and experience of these rituals from the perspective of the ritual participants. The main question is to what extend can these notions be explained by people’s religious socialisation and what role do their ideas about marriage play. The author studies the social and temporal goal of the church wedding ritual, its form and the extent to which participants are affected by it. The results are not just interesting for theologians, ritual scholars and social scientists, but are also instructive for pastors and volunteer workers active in the celebration of the wedding liturgy and marriage preparation.

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