

*Economic development and status homogamy:  
a study of France over the past three centuries*

Ineke Maas  
Marco van Leeuwen

Draft

Presentation for the Conference: Marriage Patterns,  
Household Formation and Economic Development,  
Utrecht, 6 October 2010

# Introduction

Homogamous marriages are common, now and in the past

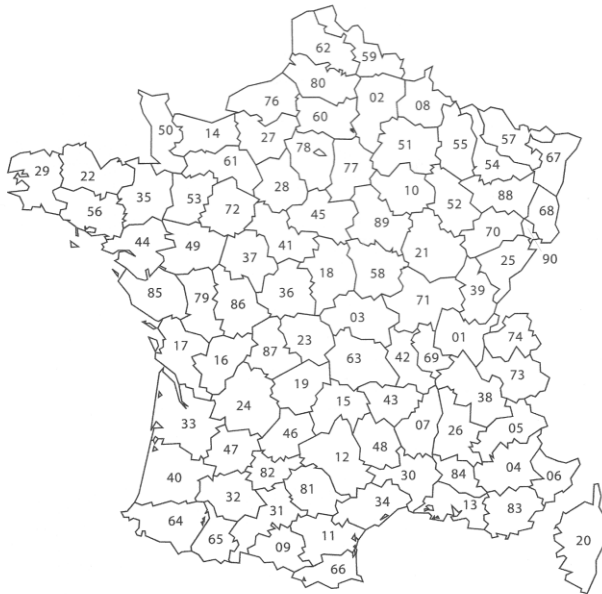
We study status homogamy = similarity of marriage partners with respect to occupational status of their father

Questions:

- Did status homogamy differ between regions and change over time?
- To what extent can temporal and regional variations in status homogamy be explained by economic development and accompanying processes?

## Context

Identification of departement by numero  
before 1964



Description: (parts of) France  
between 1670 and 1986

Explanation: French  
departments between 1818  
and 1906

Selection for practical reasons:  
availability of data

# Theory: determinants of partner choice

Kalmijn (1991)

- Meeting opportunities
- Personal preferences for a partner who is culturally similar and economically better off
- Third parties' influence to marry a partner who is culturally similar and economically better off

# Economic developments and their expected effects on status homogamy: the mechanism of meeting opportunities

With the development of

universal education

a modern labor market

means of transport



the opportunities to meet 'others' increase



and status homogamy decreases

# Economic developments and their expected effects on status homogamy: the mechanisms of personal preferences

With the development of

universal education

a modern labor market

less traditional family values



ascribed characteristics of a partner become less important and achieved characteristics become more important

+

notions of romantic love become more important



and status homogamy decreases

# Economic developments and their expected effects on status homogamy: the mechanisms of third parties' influence

With the development of

universal education  
a modern labor market

social security schemes

children's economic  
dependence decreases

parents' economic  
dependence decreases

the possibilities and needs of parents to influence  
their children's partner choice decrease

and status homogamy decreases

## Test of the hypotheses

Two approaches:

- Is status homogamy less common in economically more developed regions and periods?
- Is status homogamy less common among persons that lead the way with respect to economic development?



## Data

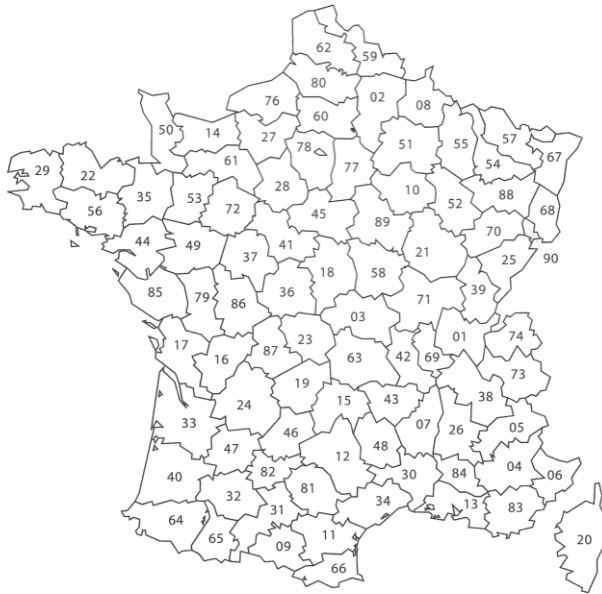
- City of Vendôme  
small city south of Paris  
3243 marriages (1670-1870)
- Henry 40 villages dataset  
40 villages spread over France  
1045 marriages (1704-1819)
- TRA sample France  
names beginning with Tra  
27849 marriages (1803-1986)

## Measurement of individual characteristics

- Homogamy: correlation between status of the father of the bride and status of the father of the groom
  - starting with occupational titles
  - classification into HISCO
  - from HISCO to the historical status scale HISCAM
- Education: signature of groom on marriage act
- Modern labor market:
  - groom has modern occupation
  - groom's intergenerational upward mobility (statuspoints)
  - groom's intergenerational downward mobility (statuspoints)

# Measurement of contextual characteristics

Identification of departement by numero  
before 1964



## Over time:

Marriage year

Transport: length of railway lines

## Between departments:

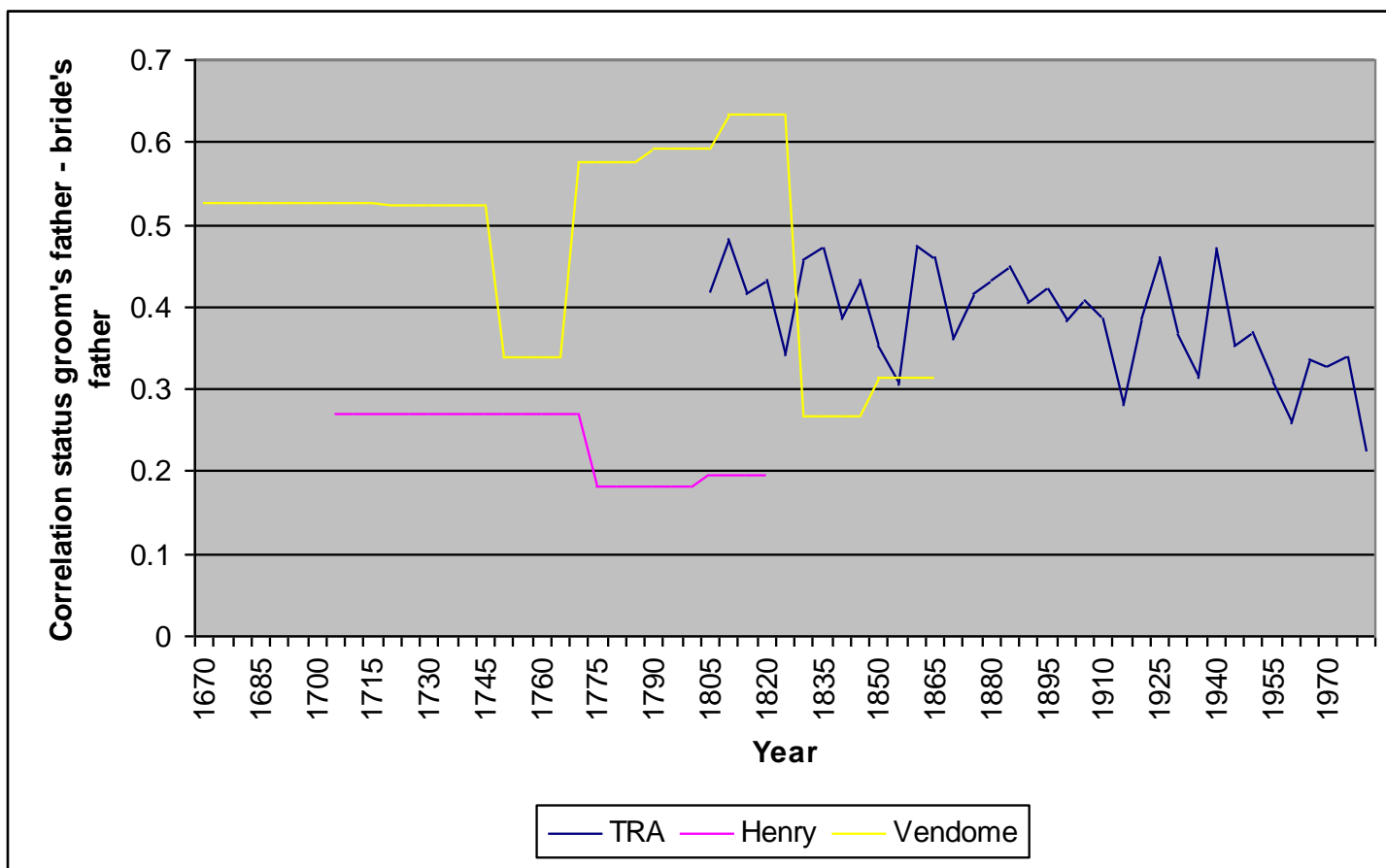
Traditional values: children are treated authoritarian and unequal

Modern labor market: number of steam engines in 1847

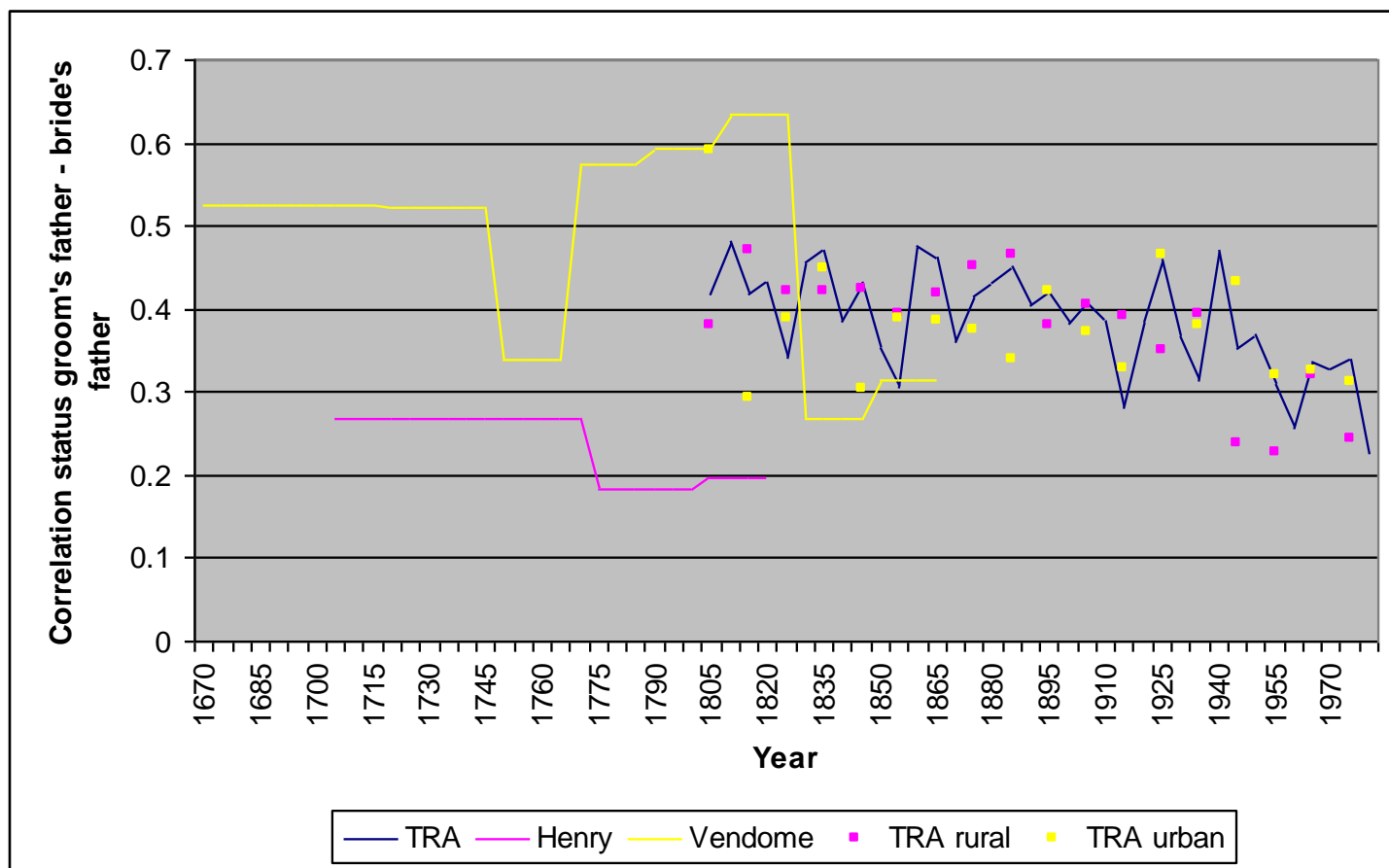
## Over time and between departments:

Education: percentage literate grooms

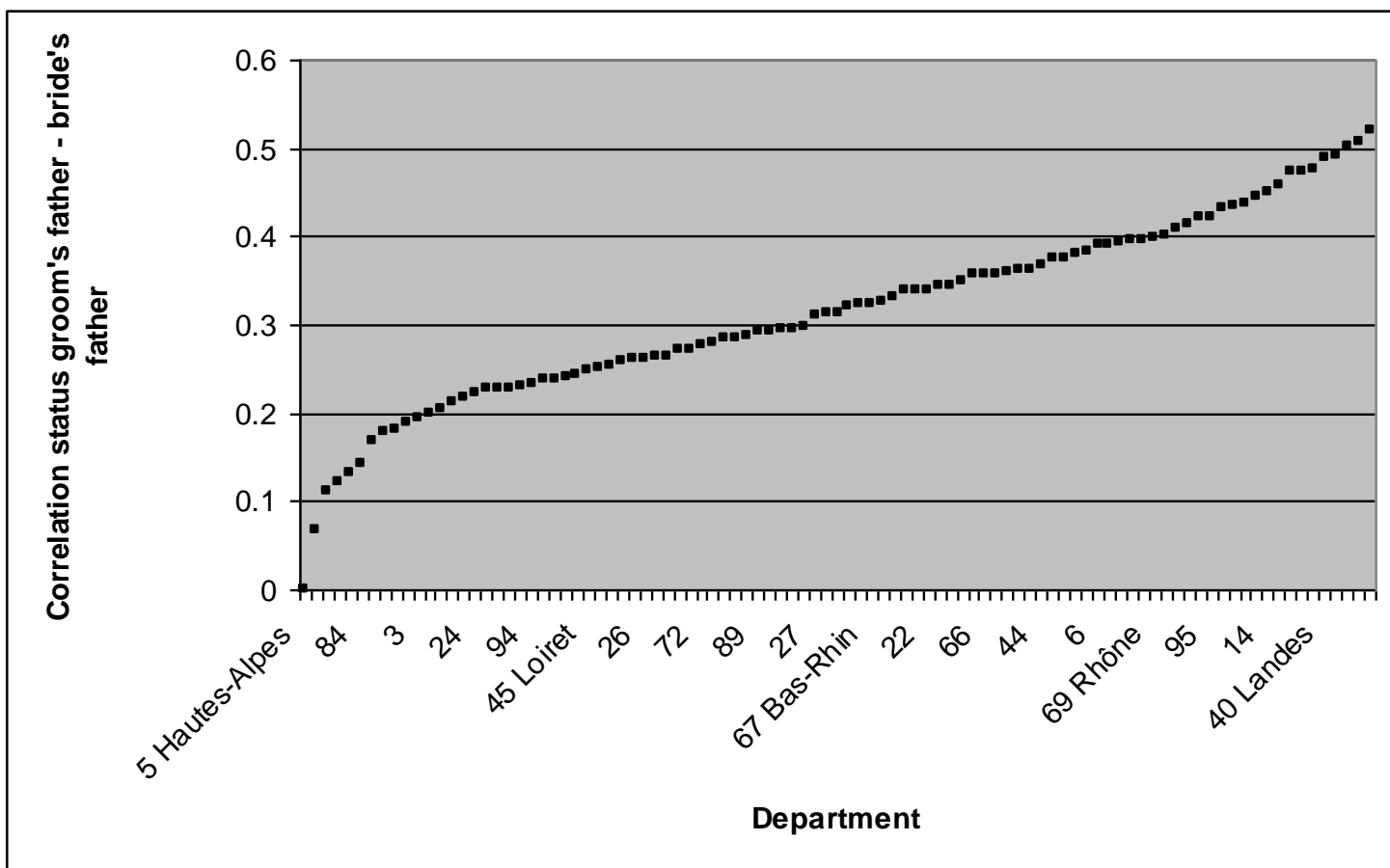
# Trends in homogamy in France over 3 centuries



# Trends in homogamy in France over 3 centuries

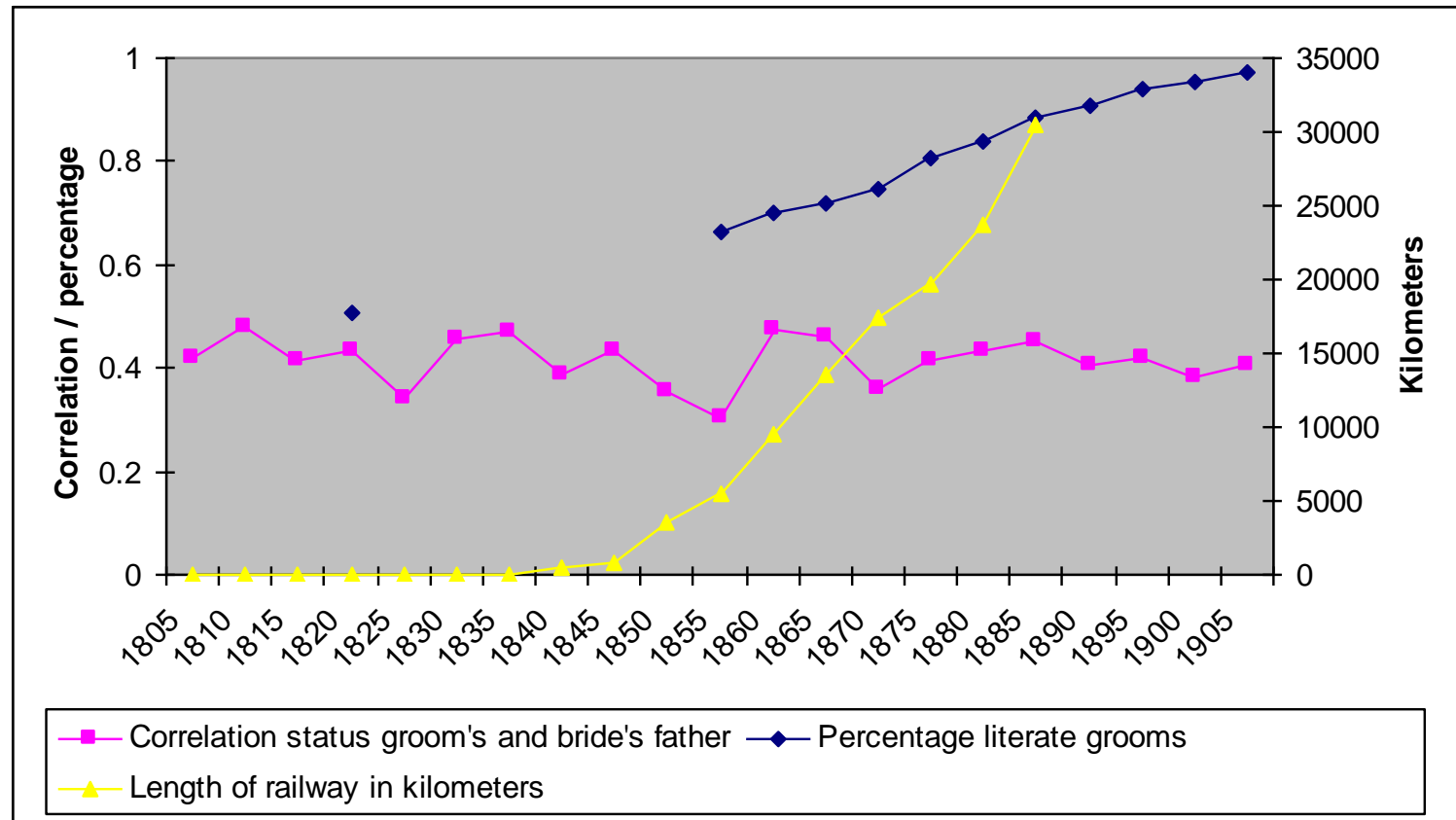


## Regional differences in homogamy: TRA



Paris is department 75: correlation .438

# Bivariate relations over time: homogamy, percentage literate grooms and length of railways



Corr. year – literacy: .697; year – railway: .969

## Multivariate analyses

- Multilevel model
- Couples nested in contexts
- Context = a department in a certain year
- Random slope of the effect of status of groom's father on status of bride's father  
(of course this is not a causal effect, but selection)
- Interactions of the effect of status of groom's father and context characteristics
- Interactions of the effect of status of groom's father and individual characteristics of the groom



## Results: variance components

	Estimate
Effects:	
Intercept	54.306**
Status groom's father	.398**
Variance:	
Individual	69.292**
Intercept (= context)	4.870**
Status groom's father	.074**

\*\* =  $p < .01$

## Results: interaction effects with context

	Model 1	Model 2
Effects:		
Intercept	53.006**	53.183**
Status groom's father	.348**	.354**
Marriage year/10	.230**	.018
Status groom's father * year/10	.006	.003
Traditional values:		
Non-authoritarian and egalitarian (ref.)		
Authoritarian or non-egalitarian	1.112**	1.583**
Authoritarian and non-egalitarian	2.157**	1.955**
Status groom's father * auth or non-eg.	.023	.023
Status groom's father * auth and non-eg.	.028	.052*
Steam engines in 1847	-.006**	
Status groom's father * steam engines	.000	
Percentage literate grooms	-.034**	
Status groom's father * perc. lit. grooms	-.000	

\* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ , model 2: only bivariately significant interactions

## Results: interaction effects with groom's characteristics

	Model 3
Effects:	
Intercept	54.657**
Status groom's father	.572**
Marriage year/10	-.048
Status groom's father * year/10	.008
Groom signed marriage act	.219
Status groom's father * groom's sign.	-.050*
Groom in modern occupation	-1.294**
Status groom's father * modern occ.	.007
Groom upwardly mobile (status points)	.197**
Groom downwardly mobile (status points)	-.261**
Status groom's father * upward mobility	-.005**
Status groom's father * downward mob.	-.006**

\* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$

## Results: interaction effects with groom's and context's characteristics

### Model 4

#### Effects:

Intercept	53.686**
Status groom's father	.539**
Marriage year/10	-.053
Status groom's father * year/10	.009*

#### Traditional values:

Non-authoritarian and egalitarian (ref.)	
Authoritarian or non-egalitarian	1.407**
Authoritarian and non-egalitarian	1.649**
Status groom's father * auth or non-eg.	.008
Status groom's father * auth and non-eg.	.036

Groom signed marriage act	.239
Status groom's father * groom's sign.	-.051*
Groom in modern occupation	-1.282**
Status groom's father * modern occ.	.011
Groom upwardly mobile (status points)	.199**
Groom downwardly mobile (status points)	-.255**
Status groom's father * upward mobility	-.005**
Status groom's father * downward mob.	-.006**

\* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$

## Conclusion

- Considerable status homogamy in France during the last 3 centuries
- Status homogamy decreased, but only during the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Status homogamy differed between departments
- Less status homogamy in less traditional (non-authoritarian and egalitarian) departments
- This can be explained by the fact that there is less status homogamy among literate and intergenerationally mobile groups
- Among the illiterate and intergenerationally immobile groups, status homogamy increases over time

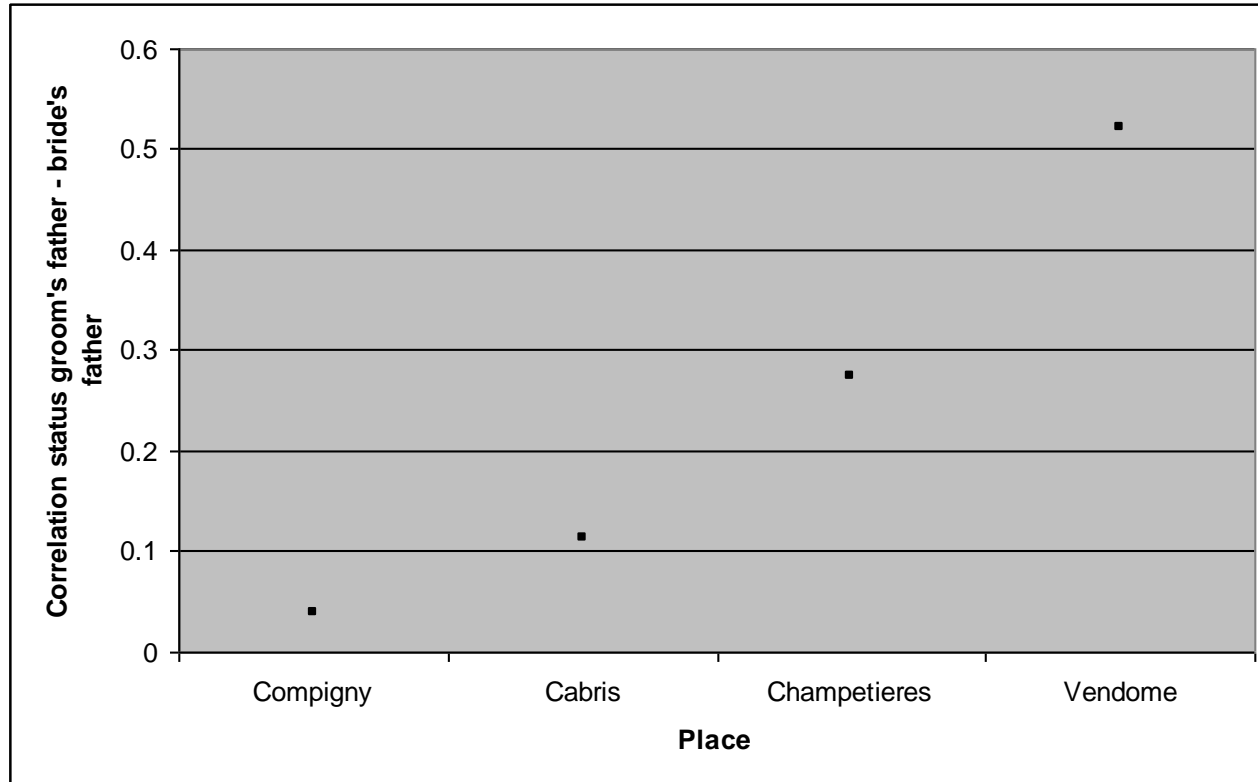
## The future

- Finding more data on context characteristics that relate to the theory on homogamy
- Including the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the explanatory analyses
- Studying class barriers to homogamy

End of presentation

Questions?

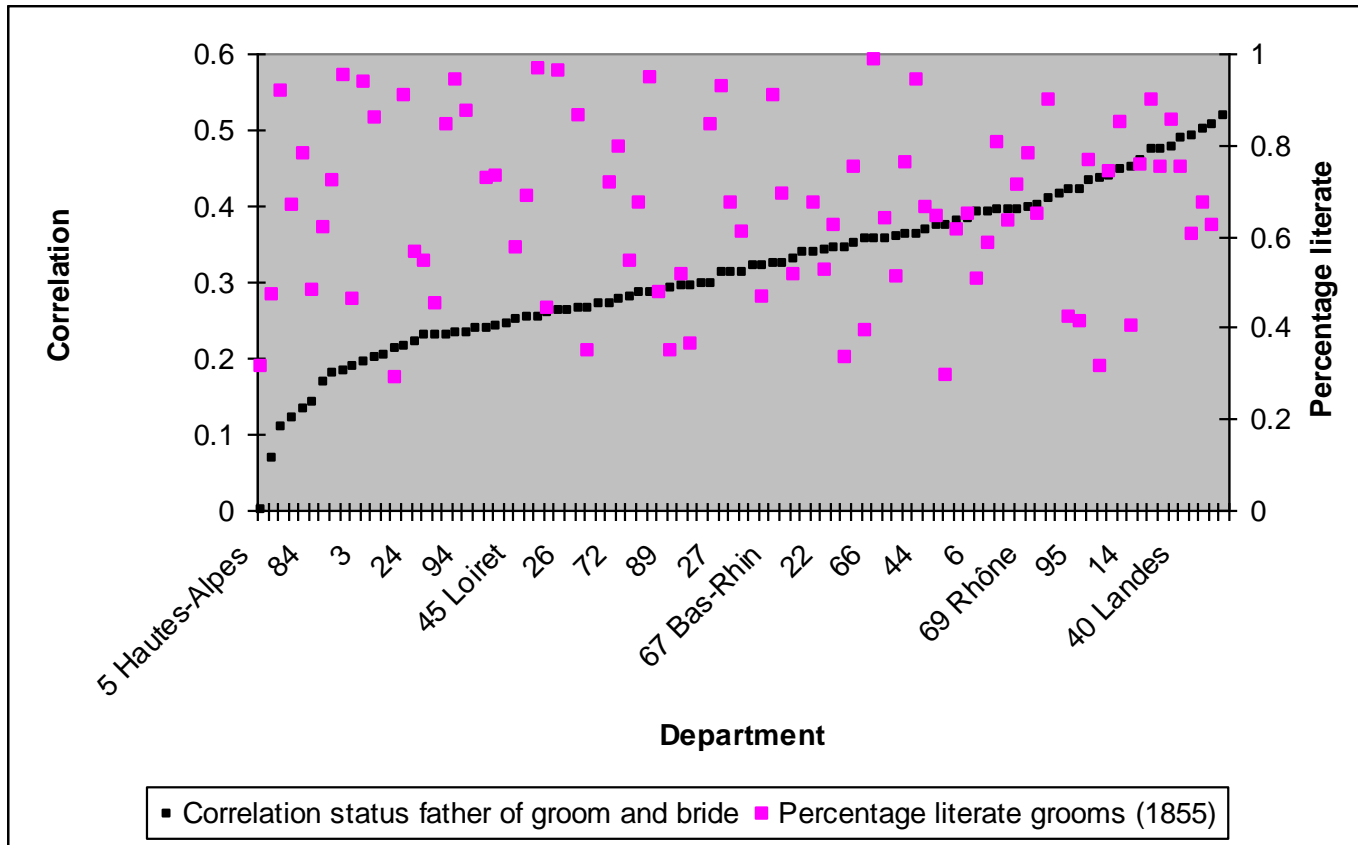
## Regional differences in homogamy: Henry data and Vendome



Vendome & Henry (selection of places with valid  $N > 100$ )



## Bivariate relation over departments: homogamy – percentage literate grooms



## Descriptives

	Mean/%	S.d.	Range
<b>Dependent variable</b>			
Status bride's father	54.30	9.86	30.60-99.00
<b>Independent variables</b>			
<i>Individual level, N = 12874</i>			
Status groom's father	54.24	9.85	32.50-99.00
Groom signed marriage act	76		
Groom in modern occupation	3		
Groom upwardly mobile (status points)	2.25	5.89	0-58.90
Groom downwardly mobile (status points)	3.02	6.44	0-55.20
<i>Contextual level, N = 5026</i>			
Marriage year	1863.67	24.83	1818-1906
Traditional values:			
Non-authoritarian and egalitarian	41		
Authoritarian or non-egalitarian	23		
Authoritarian and non-egalitarian	36		
Steam engines in 1847	34.92	78.51	0-581
Percentage literate grooms	73.49	21.33	13.35-100.00