

Vladimir Vladimirov, Dmitriy Sarafanov, Anna Shchetinina
Barnaul, Russia

“New Historical Demography” in Russia: evolution or a leap?*

Introduction

In the recent decades, historical demography in Russia has undergone considerable transformation. Today scholars continue addressing issues that were of concern to their predecessors over 100 years ago: population dynamics and structure, reproduction and migration processes, territorial aspects of demographic processes in retrospect, etc. However, the research depth of those inquiries has changed significantly. Demographic processes are studied within broader contexts and new research domains have emerged. These changes are due to the expansion of the methodological background of the discipline, but above all to its rapid informatization and computerization.

The article examines the main features of this “New Historical Demography” which developed in Russia during the 1990s. We analyze factors and trends in social science and the humanities that have influenced the formation of this new research strand, and review the main issues related to its definition, status and methodology. Its impact on alterations in the source base, methods and tools of historical demographic inquiry are also discussed. In the central part of the paper, we review modern Russian centers involved in the “new historical demographic” research and discuss their research profile against the European background. We conclude by pointing out the need for better integration of the Russian “New Historical Demography” with European currents of the discipline.

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Contemporary Russian Historical Demography: the New in the Old?

Events of the early 1990s had a great influence on the development of historical science in Russia. Marxism, which had long methodologically dominated in all historical studies, fell by the wayside. Alternative methodologies arose and historians started to address prerevolutionary Russian works and studies carried out by foreign colleagues. A unique feature of Russian history of the time turned out to be its openness and ability to absorb new ideas irrespective of their ideological provenience. It was a real methodological transition.

The advent of computers (personal computers in particular) has fundamentally changed the approaches to and opportunities for historical demographic studies. The use of computer technologies has helped shift the focus from crude aggregate data to large scale nominative data. That, in turn, has fostered a change of scholarly perspective from that focused on the macro level of demographic processes to the micro level of individual behavior, allowing for an application of a full-array of demographic quantitative methods at the same time. As foreign historical demography achievements, which integrated methods of sociology, social psychology, historical anthropology and other human sciences, became increasingly available, standard statistical and demographic approaches gave place to more interdisciplinary orientation. The concurrency of the “microcomputer revolution” and methodological transition led to the rise and development of historical computer science, inevitably causing sudden changes also in the methods and the research domain of historical demography in Russia.

The terms “new demographic history” and “New Historical Demography” have been employed in Russian studies since the late 20th century. In 1996 N.L. Puškareva wrote that Russian historians knew almost nothing about “... the so called “new demographic history” – the study of historical and demographic processes from the perspective of demographic views as well as by exploring the ties between the mode of thinking (mentality) and demographic transformations”.² She referred to the paper of Y.L. Bessmertnyj who defined this concept as implying the understanding of demographic behavior (i.e., attitudes towards the family, marriage, children, disease and death) rather than crude exploration of “demographic statistics”.³ Yet, to effectively apply such a research program new data and new tools were necessary. This is why “new historical demographers” have turned their attention to those time periods when there have emerged sources providing for full-value demographic analysis on a relatively large scale. Accordingly, the

²Natalya L. Puškareva, „Russkaâ sem'â X–XVII vv. v «novoj» i «tradicionnoj» demografičeskoj istorii”, *Ėtnografičeskoe Obozrenie* 3 (1996): 66.

³Ūriy L. Bessmertnyj, *Žizn' i smert' v srednie veka. Očerki demografičeskoj istorii Francii* (Moskva: Nauka, 1991), 222.

use of computer technologies and mathematical methods of mass data processing became an inherent ingredient of the new approach, making it possible to create huge nominative electronic datasets and providing for their quantitative analysis. Popularisation of the mainstream historical demographic methods in Russia after 1990 generated further stimulus for working with historical microdata.⁴

Another recent trend within Russian historical demography that turned out to be constitutive for “New Historical Demography” was the creation of electronic repositories of nominative historical sources.⁵ Often linked with the development of the so-called “digital historical demography” (a subfield of the discipline merely concerned with digital/computer presentation of historical demographic primary sources), it has spawned the introduction of mass-scale demographic data into scientific use, leading to a real “breakthrough” in historical demographic studies in Russia.⁶

The new research field has blossomed out further thanks to its embedment in one of the Russian leading professional associations, called “History and Computer” (H&C; founded in 1992), gathering the majority of Russian historical demographers. Due to the fact that the H&C association initially united historians who actively employed mathematical methods and computer technologies in their studies, it was here that rapid transformation of population studies into the “New Historical Demography” took place. Today this field is one the most rapidly developing in the association.

The rapid expansion of personal computers as a result of the microcomputer revolution provided different research centers with new source processing techniques. The role and importance of modern historical demography in the development of methodological and methodical base of mathematical methods and computer technologies in historical studies are so great that it can be called a locomotive of Russian historical computer science in its move toward new achievements.

⁴ Henry, Louis. Alan Blum, *Metodika analiza v istoričeskoj demografii* (Moskva 1997). Early antecedences of this approach include the research by the Baltic historians from 1970s–1980s (esp. H. Palli), who studied Estonian parish registers of the 17th–18th centuries, and were the first in the USSR to employ the «reconstitution des familles» method. See Heldur Ë. Palli, „Metod vosstanovleniâ istorii semej i osobennosti ego primeneniâ po èstonskim materialam (XVII–XVIII vv.)”, in: *I Vsesoûznyj seminar po istoričeskoj demografii* (Tallin 1974); Heldur Ë. Palli, „Vosstanovlenie istorii semej na ÈVM po èstonskim metrikam XVII–XVIII vv.”, in: *Opyt primeneniâ matematičeskih metodov v istoričeskih issledovaniâh učenymi Èstonskoj SSR* (Tallin 1976); Heldur Ë. Palli, „Sistema identifikacii èstonskih semej XVII – XVIII vv.”, *Problemy istoričeskoj demografii SSSR* (Tallin 1977); Heldur Ë. Palli, „Metodika ispol’zovaniâ metrik v istoriko-demografičeskih issledovaniâh”, *Istoriâ SSSR* 1 (1982).

⁵ Oleg V. Gorbačev, Ludmila N. Mazur, „Istoriko-demografičeskie bazy dannyh kak issledovatel’skij resurs”, in: *Demografičeskie processy na postsovetskom prostranstve sbornik materialov VI Ural’skogo demografičeskogo foruma s meždunarodnym učastiem* (Ekaterinburg 2015), 53.

⁶ Boris N. Mironov, „Novaâ istoričeskaâ demografiâ imperskoj Rossii: analitičeskij obzor sovremennoj literatury”, *Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo un-ta. Ser. 2. Istoriâ* 1 (2007).

“New Historical Demography” in Russia: a regional perspective

The analysis of literature references of the works published in one of the main issues of the “History and Computer” association Information Bulletin suggested 119 authors working in the area of historical demography. The increase of regional research centers has changed the traditional Soviet “vertical” structure when the majority of studies were carried out in the capital and a few big cities. As a result, a “horizontal” structure with multiple regional research centers currently emerges. The most influential Russian regional centers, which are determinative of the main trend of “New Historical Demography” development, are Barnaul, Tambov, Saint-Petersburg, Petrozavodsk, Moscow, and Yekaterinburg. In some cases one must speak of regional historical demography “schools” that are characterized by common academic infrastructure and influence each other. This is caused by traditional choice of sources and research methods as well as preservation and availability of a documentary base. The analysis of studies carried out by those different regional research groups demonstrated both similar and peculiar features as regards topical issues addressed, methods and techniques employed, as well as results achieved.

The research performed by the Department of Document Science, Archive Science and Historical Computer Science of the Altai State University, headed by V.N. Vladimirov (Barnaul) focuses on region’s historical demography and employs variety of primary sources. The authors use both aggregate data (materials of gubernial statistics committee, extracts from church sources, census data, etc.) as well as nominative micro-level data. Church sources, for example, provide for multi-stranded studies of population history of the region, including issues related to population size dynamics as well as reproduction and migration processes.⁷ GIS-technologies are commonly applied to study these phenomena.⁸ Great analytical opportunities are provided particularly by the database “Barnaul

⁷ Dmitriy E. Sarafanov, „Struktura naseleniâ Bijska v XIX v. (po dannym cerkovnogo i administrativnogo učetov naseleniâ)”, *Problemy istoričeskoj demografii Sibiri. Sbornik naučnyh trudov*, vypusk 2, Novosibirsk 2011; Dmitriy E. Sarafanov, „Vnebračnaâ roždaemost’ v Barnaule v XIX v.”, *Izvestiâ Altajskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, 4/1 (88) (2015); Dmitriy E. Sarafanov, „Smertnost’ naseleniâ v Barnaule v XIX v.”, in: *Migracii i postmigracionnye soobšestva (Altaj – Kazahstan, XIX–XX vv.)* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. un-ta 2007); Anna S. Šetinina, *Bežency na ũge Zapadnoj Sibiri 1914 – 1923 gg.: avtoref. dis. kand. ist. nauk* (Barnaul 2007).

⁸ Vladimir N. Vladimirov, Irina G. Silina, „Geoinformacionnye tehnologii v izučenii migracij”, *Informacionnyj Bũlleten’ Asociacii «Istoriâ i komp’ũter»* 34 (2006); Vladimir N. Vladimirov, *Istoričeskaâ geoinformatika: geoinformacionnye sistemy v istoričeskikh issledovaniâh* (Barnaul 2005); Vladimir N. Vladimirov, Irina G. Silina, Maksim E. Čibisov, *Prihody Barnaul’skogo Duhovnogo Pravleniâ v 1829–1864 godah (po materialam klirovyh vedomostej)* (Barnaul 2006); Dmitriy V. Koldakov, „Geoinformacionnye tehnologii v izučenii poselenceskoi seti Altaâ v 1920-e gg.”, *Vestnik Tomskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Istoriâ* 4 (2011).

Population in the Second Half of the 18th – Early 20th Centuries; Parish Register Books Data”,⁹ constantly expanded.

Starting with the 2000s, a new research domain called “Historical Occupation Studies” has been developed by the research group in Barnaul in cooperation with scholars from the Netherlands (Marco H.D. van Leeuwen).¹⁰ On the basis of different types of historical sources (primarily mass sources) the authors have created a Russian version of the HISCO classification scheme.¹¹ This scheme was subsequently used to study occupational structure of the population in different regions of Russia based on the data (both aggregate and nominative) from the First All-Russian Population Census of 1897, and using geoinformation technologies.¹² Various topical issues pertinent to the methodological orientation of “New Historical Demography” are currently being developed.¹³

Worth mentioning are also on-line projects carried out by the research group at the Altai State University. These include the search system “Historical Occupation Studies”, the information system “Occupations in the Russian Empire, late 19th – Early 20th Centuries”, “Analysis of the First All-Russian 1897 Population Census”, and others. Currently, a new information system called “Sociodemographic Processes of Altai as Presented in Church Records of the 18th Early 20th Centuries” is under preparation, aimed at providing information resources covering a wide spectrum of historical demographic issues.

Besides the studies mentioned above, one must note those by A.R. Ivonin, V.A. Skubnevskiy, Y.M. Goncharov and other Barnaul historians which are more akin to traditional historical demography. The major *problematique* of these

⁹ Vladimir N. Vladimirov, Dmitriy E. Sarafanov, *Informacionnye tehnologii v izučeníi metričeskikh knig (naselenie Barnaula v konce XVIII – načale XX v.)* (Barnaul: Izd-vo AltGU 2013).

¹⁰ Marco H.D. van Leeuwen, Ineke Maas, Andrew Miles, *HISCO: Historical International Standard Classification of Occupations* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002).

¹¹ *Istoričeskoe professiovedenie: sb. nauč. tr.* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. gos. un-ta, 2004); *Istoričeskoe professiovedenie: istočniki, metody, tehnologii analiza* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. un-ta, 2008); *Istoričeskoe professiovedenie: sozdanie HISCO i issledovaniâ professional'noj i social'noj mobil'nosti* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. un-ta, 2009); *Istoričeskoe professiovedenie: professiâ, kar'era, social'naâ mobil'nost'* (Barnaul: Izd-voAlt. un-ta, 2012).

¹² Elena A. Brûhanova, Vladimir N. Vladimirov, *Kodirovanie istoričeskikh professij* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. un-ta, 2015); Nataliya V. Neženceva, „Metodika raboty s agregirovannymi dannymi vseobšej perepisi naseleniâ 1897 g.” *Informacionnyj Bûlleten' Asociacii «Istoriâ i komp'ûter»* 38 (2012).

¹³ Vladimir N. Vladimirov, Dmitriy E. Sarafanov, „Social'no-demografičeskoe razvitie naseleniâ Altaâ v XIX – načale XX vv.: metodologičeskie i metodičeskie aspekty issledovaniâ”, *Vestnik Altajskoj Nauki* 1 (2013); Vladimir N. Vladimirov, Dmitriy E. Sarafanov, Anna S. Šetinina, „K istokam «novoj istoričeskoj demografii»: ot formy k soderžaniû”, *Izvestiâ Altajskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta* 4/2 (88) (2015); Vladimir N. Vladimirov, Anna S. Šetinina, „Social Science History: momenty istorii”, *Vestnik Permskogo Universiteta* 4 (27) (2014); Vladimir N. Vladimirov, Mariya V. Rygalova, „Zarubežnaâ istoriografiâ o problemah i perspektivah primeneniâ geoinformacionnyh sistem v istoričeskikh issledovaniâh”, *Vestnik Permskogo Universiteta* 3 (26) (2014).

studies are sociodemographic processes in West Siberian cities, such as demographic developments of the family, population size dynamics and natural population movement, which are explored on the basis of multiple statistical sources.¹⁴ However, most of these studies employ aggregate data.

The traditional approach of a similar kind boasts interesting historical demographic studies carried out by Novosibirsk historians of the Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Siberian Branch. Population change of the prerevolutionary period was studied by L.M. Goryushkin and A.N. Sagaidachnyi, and more recently by V.A. Zverev.¹⁵ However, the majority of research by Novosibirsk historical demographers focuses on the 20th century.¹⁶ Thus, there appear to exist two parallel traditions in the studies of historical demographic processes of Siberia: local studies within the framework of “New Historical Demography” and classical population history works.

Computer technologies are also used by scholars of the G.R. Derzhavin Tambovskiy State University, where manifold micro-studies of sociodemographic issues related to urban and rural population development have been conducted (the group is led by V.V. Kanishchev). Results of these works were presented in several PhD-theses¹⁷ and a copious historiography of these themes is growing.¹⁸

¹⁴ Aleksandr R. Ivonin, *Zapadnosibirskij gorod v poslednej četverti XVIII – 60-h gg. XIX v. (Opyt istoriko-demografičeskogo issledovaniâ)* (Barnaul 2000); Valeriy A. Skubnevskij, *Urbanizacionnyye processy v Sibiri vtoroj poloviny XIX – načala XX v. Izbrannye stat'i* (Barnaul 2010); Valeriy A. Skubnevskij, Ūriy M. Gončarov, *Goroda Zapadnoj Sibiri vo vtoroj polovine XIX – načale XX v. Čast' I: Naselenie. Èkonomika* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. un-ta, 2003); Ūriy M. Gončarov, *Gorodskââ sem'â Sibiri vtoroj poloviny XIX – načala XX v.* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. un-ta, 2002).

¹⁵ Vladimir A. Zverev, Ekaterina K. Šiškova, „Èše sto tridcat' zagovorov iz Pričulym'â. K voprosu o vital'nom povedenii ruskogo naseleniâ Sibiri v XX – načale XXI v.“, in: *Problemy istoričeskoj demografii Sibiri. Sbornik naučnyh trudov*, vypusk 4 (Novosibirsk 2015); Vladimir Aleksandrovič Zverev: bibliogr. ukaz. (Novosibirsk 2009).

¹⁶ Vladimir A. Isupov, „Naselenie Sibiri v gody vojn i revolucij (1914–1922 gg.)“, *Problemy istoričeskoj demografii Sibiri*; Nadezhda S. Korobejnikova, „Dinamika razvodimosti v gorodah Zapadnoj Sibiri v gody Vtoroj mirovoj vojny“, *Problemy istoričeskoj demografii Sibiri*; Odon B. Dašinamžilov, „Roždaemost' v gorodah Zapadnoj Sibiri v 1960–1970-e gg.“, *Problemy istoričeskoj demografii Sibiri*.

¹⁷ Roman B. Končakov, *Demografičeskoe povedenie krest'ânstva Tambovskoj gubernii v XIX – načale XX v., novye metody issledovaniâ: avtoref. dis. kand. ist. nauk* (Tambov 2001); Marina K. Akol'zina, *Izmenenie social'noj struktury naseleniâ srednego ruskogo uezdnoho goroda v pervoj polovine XIX v. (po materialam Moršanska Tambovskoj gubernii): avtoref. dis. kand. ist. nauk* (Tambov 2002); Èlla A. Morozova, *Osobennosti social'no-demografičeskogo oblika naseleniâ trgovno-promyšlennogo sela v pervoj polovine XIX v. (na primere sela Rasskazovo Tambovskoj gubernii): avtoref. dis. kand. ist. nauk* (Tambov 2003); Nataliya V. Strekalova, *Social'naâ stratifikaciâ i social'naâ mobil'nost' gorodskih srednih sloev v 1907–1917 gg. (na materialah Tambova): avtoref. dis. kand. ist. nauk* (Tambov 2003); Nikolay A. Žirov, *Demografičeskââ istorii Orlovskoj gubernii v načale XX v.: avtoref. diss. kand. ist. nauk* (Tambov 2012).

¹⁸ Valeriy V. Kanišev, Roman B. Končakov, Ūriy A. Mizis, „Sootnošenie kogortnogo i splošnogo analiza demografičeskogo povedeniâ rossijskogo krest'ânstva XIX – načala XX v. (po materialam

The participation of Tambov historians in several international projects since the mid-1990s resulted in close cooperation with western scholars, especially with the Dutch economic historians and historical demographers,¹⁹ allowing for a pioneering application of international research tools to Russian historical data. In 1995 on the initiative of V.V. Kanishchev, the Social Science Laboratory was established at Tambovskiy State University.²⁰ Its members have achieved notable results in methodology and software development issues related to family reconstitution, social mobility classification, and other demographic topics of interest. The Laboratory's achievements in historical database construction and analysis permitted the research into the seasonality of births, marriages and deaths, population age-sex structure, as well as causes of death and migration. Recent years have witnessed a trend to combine database technologies with spatial analysis based on GIS. Moreover, in 2009 the Center of Fractal Modeling of Social and Political Processes was established in Tambov,²¹ pursuing, among other topics, the large-scale study of Russian historical microdata with the help of fractal modeling technology.²² One of the recent achievements of the Center is a comprehensive

prihoda s. Malye Pupki Tambovskoj gubernii”, in: *Social'no-demografičeskaâ istoriâ Rossii XIX–XX vv. Sovremennye metody issledovaniâ* (Tambov 1999); Anatolij A. Artemov, Vladimir L. D'âčkov, Valeriy V. Kanišev, „Dlinnye râdy demografičeskikh dannyh: poisk optimal'nyh metodov matematičeskoj obrabotki i vizual'nogo predstavleniâ”, *Informacionnyj Bûlleten' Associacii «Istoriâ i komp'ûter»* 36 (2010); Valeriy V. Kanišev, „Klasternyj analiz demografičeskogo povedeniâ sel'skogo naseleniâ Evropejskoj Rossii v naçale XX v. i v naçale XXI v. K postanovke voprosa”, *Ineternum* 1–2 (2011). Roman B. Končakov, „Sezonnost' brakov v pristancionnyh selah: k voprosu izučeniâ modernizacii demografičeskogo povedeniâ krest'ânstva v 1860–1900 gg.”, *Social'no-ekonomičeskie Avleniâ i Processy* 1 (59) (2014); Nataliya V. Strekalova, „Social'naâ mobil'nost' gorodskih srednih sloev v period transformacii rossijskogo obšestva naçala HH v.: problemy i perspektivy issledovaniâ”, *Vestnik Tambovskogo Universiteta. Seriâ: Gumanitarnye nauki* 9 (2012).

¹⁹ Stanislav L. Protasov, „Nekotorye predvaritel'nye rezul'taty raboty nad rossijsko-gollandskim proektom «Integral'naâ istoriâ na lokal'nom urovne»”, *Informacionnyj Bûlleten' Associacii «Istoriâ i komp'ûter»* 14 (1995); Ūriy A. Mizis, „Rossijsko-amerikanskij seminar po istoričeskoj demografii Rossii”, *Vestnik Tambovskogo Universiteta. Seriâ: Gumanitarnye nauki* 1 (1996). See also P. Kooij (ed.), *Where the Twain Meet. Dutch and Russian Regional Development in a Comparative Perspective, 1800–1917* (Groningen-Wageningen 1998); Kooij, P. and Paping, R. (eds.), *Where the Twain Meet Again. New Results of the Dutch-Russian Project on Regional Development 1750–1917* (Groningen-Wageningen 2004).

²⁰ Site of Social History Laboratory of G.R. Derzhavin Tambovskiy State University, accessed 29.05.2016, <http://www.2.letops.peterhost.ru/fcp>.

²¹ Site of the Center for Fractal Modeling of Social and Political Process, accessed 29.05.2016, http://www.ineternum.ru/ineternum/aaa_fractal_centre/sotr.html.

²² Dmitriy Źukov, Valeriy Kanišev, Sergey Lâmin, „Fractal modeling of historical demographic processes”, *Historical Social Research* 38 (2) (2013); Dmitriy Źukov, Valeriy Kanišev, Sergey Lâmin, „Vozmožnosti ispol'zovaniâ teorii samoorganizovannoj kritičnosti v izučenii demografičeskikh processov v rossijskom pozdnem agrarnom obšestve”, *Istoričeskaâ Informatika. Informacionnye tehnologii i matematičeskie metody v istoričeskikh issledovaniâh i obrazovanii* 1 (7) (2014).

map of demographic behavior of the rural population of Tambovskaya Guberniya between 1862 and 1926. Overall, the research group at Tambov lends itself an example of successful combination of historical expertise with professional approach to computer technologies application in the humanities.

The high rate of preservation of mass sources in Northwest Russia covering the period from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries (parish registers, confession lists and census records, including the so-called *revizskie skazki*) permitted extensive study by scholars from Saint-Petersburg University under the guidance of S.G. Kashchenko. The late 1990s witnessed first attempts by Petersburg scholars to create large-scale historical-demographic microdata repositories analysis of which was carried out with the help of quantitative methods, often in cooperation with research groups from abroad (e.g., Groningen University in the Netherlands and Iowa State University in the USA).²³ In addition, more traditional approaches to population movement, marriage behavior, social mobility, and the size and direction of migrations, are being explored. Last but not least, scholars from Saint-Petersburg University have become prominent because of their interests in quality assessments of historical demographic data, their research applicability, and their digital preservation.

Scholars of the Faculty of History of Petrozavodsk University have been studying social and demographic history of Northwest Russia and Kareliya in the 16th–19th centuries for a long time. Today their activities are channeled through the Research Laboratory of Kareliyan Local and Microhistory established by I.A. Chernyakova in 2004.²⁴ Members of the Laboratory have wide experience of cooperation with foreign researchers. For instance, in 1980–1994 one of the first international projects was implemented there, which aimed at searching and exploring mass-scale quantitative sources about Karelian history in the archives of Russia, Sweden and Finland, and their introduction into scholarly use. Studies based on these materials are of a local and a micro level character, and address various aspects of the region's rural population history (family, household, settlement, *volost*), administrative and environmental changes, often in the form of interdisciplinary GIS-projects (see, for example, Chernyakova's paper in this issue).

²³ Steven L. Hoch, Sergey Kashchenko, Yuriy Mizis, „Project in Russian population history, 1700–1917: Preliminary results”, in: *Data Modelling, Modelling History. Abstracts of XI International Conference of the Association for History and Computing* (Moskva 1996); Sergey G. Kašenko, „Izučenie istoričeskoj demografii Rossijskoj imperii na kafedre istočnikovedeniâ istorii Rossii Sankt-Peterburgskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta”, *Informacionnyj Bülleten' Associa-cii «Istoriâ i komp'üter»* 41 (2013). The most complete bibliographic list of Saint-Petersburg scholars is in: Sergey G. Kašenko, Mariya A. Markova, *Naselenie uezdov stoličnoj gubernii v XVIII – pervoj polovine XIX veka. Istoriko-demografičeskie očerki* (Brânsk 2013), 5–7, 55–58.

²⁴ Site of the Investigative Laboratory for Local and Microhistory of Karelia, accessed 29.05.2016, <http://illmik.petrsu.ru/illmik/Welcome.html>.

Methodologically wise, the Laboratory’s approach to historical data and the major frame for their analyses have been influenced by foreign historical demography schools, especially that of the Cambridge Group in the UK.²⁵

Computer technologies combined with quantitative methodologies have been long employed in historical studies carried out at the Historical Computer Science Department of Lomonosov Moscow State University under the guidance of L.I. Borodkin. A wide spectrum of issues are addressed by this group, majority of which relate to the development and use of algorithms and computer programs to process mass-scale data on socioeconomic and demographic history of Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Recently, the Moscow group has expanded its interests to cover migration and the urbanization processes in Russia and the USSR in 1897–1959, which are tackled with the use of GIS technologies²⁶ and cartographic representation,²⁷ mostly on the basis of the Soviet census data. Whereas economic and social history are often used as major conceptual and theoretical frameworks for demographic studies carried out by this group,²⁸ considerable

²⁵ Irina A. Černâkova, „Parameters of life and death in karelian local parish community: Yalguba area in context of XIX century archival quantitative documentary sources”, *Učenyje zapiski Petrozavodskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Serii: Obščestvennye i gumanitarnye nauki* 7 (128) (2012); Irina A. Černâkova, „Baza dannyh, sostavlenââ po arhivnym dokumental’nym istočnikam massovogo haraktera, kak sposob istoriko-demografičeskogo issledovaniâ sem’i i domohozâjstva karel’skogo krest’ânstva XIX veka”, in: *Informacionnyje tehnologii i pis’mennoe nasledie. Materialy IV meždunarodnoj naučnoj konferencii El’Manuscript – 2012* (Petrozavodsk 2012); Irina A. Černâkova, „Local karelian parish community as object for social and demographic research: Yalguba area in context of XIXth century archival quantitative documentary sources”, *Učenyje zapiski Petrozavodskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Serii: Obščestvennye i gumanitarnye nauki* 5 (2012); Evgeniya D. Suslova, „Reconstruction of Karelian parish net in early modern time: an experience of database formation”, *Informacionnyj Bülleten’ Asociacii «Istoriâ i komp’üter»* 37 (2011).

²⁶ Leonid I. Borodkin, „GIS-analiz migracionnyh potokov v Rossii/SSSR v konce XIX – pervoj četverti XX vv. po dannym perepisi naseleniâ 1926 g.”, *Informacionnyj Bülleten’ Asociacii «Istoriâ i komp’üter»* 42 (2014); idem, „Prostranstvennââ struktura krest’ânskikh pereselenij v Rossii/SSSR po materialam perepisi naseleniâ 1926g.: GIS-analiz i formirovanie ob’âsnâûših gipotez”, *Informacionnyj Bülleten’ Asociacii «Istoriâ i komp’üter»* 43 (2015).

²⁷ Timur Â. Valetov, „Problemy kartografičeskogo otobraženiâ processa urbanizacii (na primere Rossii/SSSR, 1897–1959 gg.)”, *Informacionnyj Bülleten’ Asociacii «Istoriâ i komp’üter»* 43 (2015); Timur Â. Valetov, Andrey Ū. Volodin, „Problema sopostavleniâ raznyh vremennyh sloev v GIS (na primere dannyh o gorodskom naselenii Rossii v 1897-1959 gg.)”, *Informacionnyj Bülleten’ Asociacii «Istoriâ i komp’üter»* 42 (2014).

²⁸ „Tematičeskij blok «Demografiâ»”, in: *Elektronnyj resurs «Dinamika èkonomičeskogo i social’nogo razvitiâ Rossii v XIX – načale HH v.»*, accessed 29.05.2016, <http://www.hist.msu.ru/Dynamics>; L.I. Borodkin, „Byla li ustojčivoj social’naâ dinamika russkogo krest’ânstva v XIX veke? Pamâti D. Filda”, *Informacionnyj Bülleten’ asociacii “Istoriâ i komp’üter”* 39 (2012); Leonid I. Borodkin, „K voprosu o social’noj i professional’noj mobil’nosti promyšlennyh rabočih dorevolucionnoj Rossii: metodologičeskije i metodičeskije aspekty issledovaniâ”, in: *Istoričeskoe professiovedenie: sozdanie HISCO i issledovaniâ professional’noj social’noj mobil’nosti* (Barnaul: Izd-vo Alt. un-ta 2009); Ekaterina M. Mišina, „Professional’nyj sostav repressirovannyh

attention is also paid to recent developments in information technologies and how they can be used for database construction and the creation of internet resources in historical demography.²⁹

Two other scholars from the Lomonosov Moscow State University have to be mentioned, i.e. A.A. Avdeev and I.A. Troickaâ from the Faculty of Economics. Trained as economists *cum* demographers, they pioneered the application of the mainstream demographic methodologies to the Russian historical population data. As part of their collaboration with a renowned French scholar, Alan Blum, Avdeev and Troickaâ carried out analyses of combined data from parish registers and “the revision lists” (revizskiye skazki) of three villages of the Moscow *uezd* (Vykhino, Zhulebino and Vyazovki). Their research has revealed a complex history of major sociodemographic processes of the village inhabitants as regards marriage and household behavior, as well as mortality during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.³⁰

One must also note the contribution of Tula scholars D.N. Antonov and I.A. Antonov studying mass sources and family reconstruction issues in Russian sources.³¹ The authors published a monograph about parish registers in 2006.³²

Recent years have witnessed a gradual increase in “New Historical Demography” studies carried out by a research group at the Faculty of History of the Ural Federal University in Yekaterinburg. Within the framework of a newly

v 1935–1937 gg.: analiz bazy dannyh na osnove «knig pamâti» Altajskogo kraâ s 1991 g.”, *Informacionnyj Bûlleten’ Associacii «Istoriâ i komp’ûter»* 41 (2014).

²⁹ Irina M. Garskova, „Istoričeskaâ informatika kak professional’noe soobšestvo: kontent-analiz polnotekstovoj bazy po materialam konferencij 2000–2010 gg.”, *Istoričeskaâ Informatika* 1 (2012).

³⁰ Alan Blum, Irina Troickaâ, „Mortality in Russia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: Local assessments based on the Revizii”, *Population: An English Selection* 9 (1997); Alan Blum, Irina Troickaâ, Aleksandr Avdeev, „Family, marriage and social control in Russia – Three villages in Moscow region”, in: Muriel Neven, Catherine Capron (eds.), *Family Structures, Demography and Population. A Comparison of Societies in Asia and Europe* (Liege 2000); Aleksandr Avdeev, Alan Blum, Irina Troickaâ, „Sezonnyj faktor v demografii rossijskogo krest’ânstva v pervoj polovine 19 veka: bračnost’, roždaemost’, mladenčeskaâ smertnost’”, *Rossijskij Demografičeskij Žurnal* 1 (2002); Aleksandr A. Avdeev, Alan Blum, Irina A. Troickaâ, „Narečenie imeni v Rossii”, in: *Istoričeskaâ demografija: Sbornik state* (Moskva: MAKSS Press 2008); Aleksandr A. Avdeev, Galina N. Ul’ânova, Irina A. Troickaâ, „Soslovnye različia v strukturah domohozâjstv v XIX veke: Moskva i ee okrestnosti”, *Demografičeskoe Obozrenie* 2 (2015).

³¹ Dmitriy N. Antonov, Irina A. Antonova, „Metričeskie knigi: vremâ sobirat’ kamni”, *Otečestvennye Arhivy* 4–5 (1996); Irina A. Antonova, *Metričeskie knigi XVIII – načala XX v. v Rossii: istočnikovedčeskoe issledovanie: avtoref. dis. na soisk. učen. step. kand. ist. nauk* (Moskva 1998); Dmitriy N. Antonov, *Vosstanovlenie istorii semej: metod, istočniki, analiz: avtoref. dis. na soisk. učen. step. kand. ist. nauk* (Moskva 2000).

³² Dmitriy N. Antonov, Irina A. Antonova, *Metričeskie knigi Rossii XVIII — načala XX v.* (Moskva: RGGU, 2006).

established laboratory “The International Demographic Unit” headed by the Norwegian scholar G. Thorvaldsen, the main research topic is “East-West: Models of Regional Community Evolution in the Context of Demographic Transitions”.³³ Several research domains are being developed under this heading, all underlain by a prime agenda related to the creation and analysis of computerized databases comprising contemporary and historical vital statistics, as well as census data for the Ural population. Importantly, the works carried out at IDU strive to achieve comparability of their demographic information to major data infrastructure initiatives of Western European colleagues, such as the European Historical Population Samples Network.³⁴ Data infrastructure developed in Yekaterinburg, apart from providing a complex resource for studying the region’s demographic development, serves also the exploration of comparative regional models of population change in Russia and Europe from the second half of the 19th to the 21st century; the analysis of regional family models in the course of demographic transition of the second half of the 19th and 20th centuries; and to study Russian migration patterns since the second half of the 19th until very recently.³⁵

Intensive historical demography research is also conducted in Syktyvkar in the Institute of Language, Literature and History of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Ural Branch). The journal “Historical Demography”, published since 2008, presents mainly the proceedings of international and Russian annual forums held in Syktyvkar.³⁶ “New Historical Demography” studies by the Institute members are also published in the journal.³⁷

³³ Science laboratory “International Demographic Unit”, accessed 29.05.2016, <http://idun.rufu.ru/ru/o-laboratorii/>.

³⁴ Oleg V. Gorbačev, „Istoriko-demografičeskie bazy dannyh v kontekste evropejskih komparativnyh issledovanij: proekt EHPS-NET”, *Istoričeskaâ Informatika* 2–3 (2014); Elena M. Glavackaâ, „Religioznye soobšestva i demografičeskie processy v materialah cerkovnogo učeta: metody statističeskogo analiza”, *Izvestiâ Ural'skogo Federal'nogo Universiteta. Seriâ 2: Gumanitarnye nauki*, 145 (4) (2015).

³⁵ Elena M. Glavackaâ et al., „Religioznye soobšestva Ekaterinburga v konce XIX — načale XX vv.: opyt kartografirovaniâ”. *Informacionnyj Bülleten' Asociacii "Istoriâ i komp'üter"* 43 (2015); Ludmila N. Mazur, Oleg V. Gorbačev, „Vserossijskaâ partijnaâ perepis' 1922–1924 gg. kak istočnik po istorii sem'I”, in: *Aktual'nye problemy istočnikovedeniâ. Materialy III Meždunarodnoj naučno-praktičeskoj konferencii* (Vitebsk 2015); Oleg V. Gorbačev, „Migraciâ naseleniâ v istoričeskom diskurse: vozmožnosti i ograničeniâ teoretičeskikh interpretacij”, in: *Čelovek v usloviâh modernizacii XVIII–XX vv. Vserossijskaâ naučnaâ konferenciâ s meždunarodnym učastiem, sbornik naučnyh statej* (Ekaterinburg 2015).

³⁶ Igor L. Žerebcov, Nadezhda M. Ignatova, „Žurnal «Istoričeskaâ demografiâ» v 2008–2014 gg. (obzor)”, *Istoričeskaâ Demografiâ* 1 (15) (2015); eadem, „Istoriko-demografičeskim naučnym forumam v Syktyvkarë – 10 let”, *Istoričeskaâ Demografiâ* 1 (15) (2015).

³⁷ Dariya V. Višnâkova, „Matrimonial'noe povedenie naseleniâ evropejskogo Severo-vostoka Rossii v XIX – načale XX v.: gendernye karakteristiki”, in: *Istoričeskie, filosofskie, političeskie i ūridičeskie nauki, kul'turologiâ i iskusstvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki* 6–1 (2012); Dariya V. Višnâkova, V.A. Semenov, „Bračnost' naseleniâ evropejskogo severo-vostoka Rossii vo vtoroj

Recent developments in Russian historical demography against the European background

The presented overview allows highlighting the following peculiar features of modern Russian historical demography. First, there is a growing number of new research groups within the area we have called “New Historical Demography” which employ new computer technologies in historical studies and analyze large-scale quantitative primary sources. Generally, these studies are concentrated on the 18th – early 20th centuries and rely on nominative (microdata) sources of the pre-Soviet period (parish registers, confession lists, and other census and census-like materials). Studies of that sort are usually well anchored in database infrastructures, many of which have been developed in international collaborations. While most Russian historical demographers generally share an interest in new techniques for the analysis of demographic and social processes, differences in the research practices between different research groups – related to the availability of sources, historical data processing traditions, general profile of the group, and existing opportunities for databases development (access to archival repositories, availability of technical assistance in database construction, finances), are also visible.

Still, however, more traditional historical and demographic studies are being carried out by research groups of professional historians (and individual scholars), primarily based on aggregate data. Various methods of descriptive statistics and demography are used, and these studies are characterized by a relative width of their territorial perspective. Most of them also cover the 20th and early 21st centuries, i.e. the period when the primary sources make complete demographic analysis feasible without a need of turning to nominative data.

Overall, it appears that the scholarship in historical demography and historical computer science is currently flourishing in Russia, and an increasing number of publications in “New Historical Demography” contribute to this general tendency as well. The 1990s witnessed discussions about the place and importance of local historical and demographic sources based on large-scale quantitative data as well as the usefulness of the past Soviet historical demography. Today both domains seem to exist and complement each other. However, rapid growth of the domain that we call “New Historical Demography” allows us to consider it the future of Russian historical demography.

polovine XIX – načale XX v.”, *Izvestiâ Komi naučnogo centra UrO RAN* 4 (2010); also Igor A. Serdûk, „Detskaâ smertnost’ i točnost’ metričeskogo učeta naseleniâ Getmanšiny vo vtoroj polovine XVIII v.”, *Istoričeskaâ Demografiâ* 1 (13) (2014); Evgeniy A. Borodenko, „Povtornoe замуžestvo ovdovevših ženšin Levoberežnoj Ukrainy (na materialah metričeskikh knig XVIII veka)”, *Istoričeskaâ Demografiâ* 2 (14) (2014).

Though “New Historical Demography” can reasonably be considered a Russian phenomenon, some of its underlying forces are akin to more general trends pervading historical demography in Western Europe and North America. The first thing to mention is the stress on historical data infrastructure development. At present, both the US and European scholars are increasingly shifting their attention from the formation and use of national databases to international large-scale comparative Big Data projects (for example, IPUMS, EHPS-Net, etc.). Our review of the way recent historical demographic research has been developing in Russia suggests that the Russian scholarship had generally embarked on that agenda. The idea that computer technologies are indispensable to carry out a successful historical demographic research is now well established (at least among the core practitioners), so is the conviction that large statistical databases require an acquaintance with quantitative methodologies of the social sciences and demography. There is also no doubt that Russian historical demography has undergone great qualitative changes related both to research domain expansion and methodological development. Today historical demographic studies in Russia are a part of an active interdisciplinary research domain of social science history. Overall, general similarity of the way Russian and European historical demography are evolving suggests that the Russian scholarship in that domain is still in a progressive stage.

Unfortunately, some negative factors hinder the intensification of historical demographic studies in Russia and their full integration into international scientific framework. The first thing to name is still the fragmentary and dispersed nature of data and research infrastructure basis. An analysis of historical demographic studies based on quantitative historical information demonstrates that the Russian scholarship in historical demography is dominated by separate regional projects each working on and further developing its own database. Regrettably, this concerns also the “New Historical Demography” studies which are represented mainly by regional projects based on small local databases. Yet another type of hindrance is that, as a rule, these repositories were created in different data formats and can be understood by only a small number of historians. Furthermore, there is no organized free access to these datasets. In spite of cooperation with European centers which carry out large-scale historical demography studies, Russian historians have not even reached the national research level. Rare examples when Russian data are present in international databases are mere exceptions to this rule. Though these features stand for a probably inevitable stage in the development of the discipline, in the longer run such a situation will inhibit scientific progress.

Conclusion

“New Historical Demography” has already made a breakthrough in Russian scholarship, but now it starts facing certain difficulties. The first thing to mention is the state of the source base (archival materials), its fragmentary nature and unavailability at times. Furthermore, there is no system of historical demographers’ training in Russia. Given that historians often “stew in their own juice” and lack, or withdraw from, opportunities to communicate with colleagues from other disciplines (one of the main reasons here is the poor financial support of research activities), generally low qualifications of the scientific personnel that might be needed for a historical demographic research does not come as a surprise. Finally, Russian historical demographers do not have an organization similar to the “History and Computer” association. This hinders the coordination of studies, development of methods and techniques of historical demographic research as well as opportunities for discussing possible ways to move beyond fragmentary research inquiries.

We think that in spite of its cumulative successes, further development of “New Historical Demography” in Russia is nearly over. What is needed now is a breakthrough in the sphere of research techniques and, above all, in the integration of the Russian scholarship with modern European historical demographic training and research programs. Only then can a successful transition be made from local and regional studies based on fragmentary data infrastructure towards truly big projects grasping several, if not all, regions or Russia as a whole. We believe that only with the help of such nationwide projects that “New Historical Demography” may realize its full potential in Russia.

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Summary

The article examines the main features of the “New Historical Demography” which developed in Russia during the 1990s. The authors analyze factors and trends in social science and the humanities that have influenced the formation of this new research strand and review the main problem issues related to its definition, status and methodology, as well as its impact on alterations in the primary source base, methods and tools of historical demographic inquiry. Modern Russian centers involved in “new historical demographic” research are presented in the European comparative perspective. The authors conclude that historical demography has become a driving force behind introducing computer technologies in historical research. The article notes certain successes of “New Historical Demography” in Russia, but emphasizes the need to shift from “extensive” to “intensive” development, and suggests integration with modern European historical demographic programs and the transition from local to pan-Russian databases as means to achieve this.

Keywords: historical microdata, demographic databases, Russian historical demography, parish registers and census data, computer science and information technologies

„Nowa demografia historyczna” w Rosji: ewolucja czy przewrót?

Streszczenie

W poniższym artykule zbadano najważniejsze czynniki charakteryzujące tzw. „nową demografię historyczną”, która wykształciła się w latach 90. w Rosji. Poprzez analizę trendów w humanistyce i naukach społecznych, które wpłynęły na rozwój „nowej demografii historycznej”, autorzy przedstawiają przegląd głównych kwestii związanych z jej definicją, statusem i metodologią. Wzięto również pod uwagę wpływ wyłonienia się tej nowej tendencji badawczej na zmiany w podejściu do baz danych źródłowych, metod i technologii badań historyczno-demograficznych, oraz jej wpływ na ewolucję samego zakresu badań. Na podstawie historiograficznej analizy rosyjskich badań naukowych w omawianym zakresie, zaprezentowano dane porównawcze odnoszące się do współczesnych rosyjskich ośrodków zaangażowanych w badania historyczne i demograficzne, proponując również porównanie europejskich i rosyjskich praktyk badawczych.

Według autorów, demografia historyczna stała się główną siłą napędową we wprowadzaniu technologii komputerowych do badań historycznych. Odnotowano istotne sukcesy „nowej demografii historycznej” w Rosji, podkreślając jednak konieczność położenia większego nacisku na intensywny raczej niż ekstensywny rozwój dyscypliny oraz jej integrację ze współczesnymi europejskimi standardami, m.in. poprzez przejście od lokalnych baz danych do ogólnorosyjskich.

Słowa kluczowe: dane nominatywne, demograficzne bazy danych, rosyjska demografia historyczna, księgi metrykalne i materiały spisowe, technologie informatyczne