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## **The early Soviet family in the documents of the All-Russia Communist Party Census of 1922\***

### **Introduction**

In the history of Russia, the 1920s period was marked by active family reforms. This process was determined, firstly, by objective modernization factors, that is, the gradual transition from the traditional family type to the modern one. Secondly, once they gained power in the October Revolution, the Communists began to strive for moulding the institution of the family in accordance with their ideas about its role and place in the society of the future. These two factors decisively affected functions, structure, and legal foundations of the family, and led to such trends as the accelerated emancipation of women and the redistribution of childrearing functions between the family and the state.

Part of the roots of these transformations dates back to the second half of the nineteenth century, when the public began discussing the questions of marriage secularization and the expansion of women's rights. According to Boris Mironov, the small (nuclear) family type spread first among the upper class and the intelligentsia and by the late nineteenth century this type family arrangement had started to prevail in Russian urban areas.<sup>1</sup> Peasant families tended to preserve traditional characteristics longer since peasant households required them to have more people and a more complex structure.

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<sup>1</sup> Boris N. Mironov, *Social'naya istoriya Rossii perioda imperii (XVIII – nachalo XX vv.)*, in 2 vols. (Sankt Petersburg: Dmitriy Bulanin, 1999), vol. 1, 266.

World War I had a powerful impact on the system of familial and marital relationships in the Russian Empire, by destroying the established patriarchal norms and practices. The losses among the male population led to an increase in the number of widows and single women, which inevitably affected their marriage behavior and patterns of intra-familial relationships.

However, it was thanks to the October Revolution that the trends which emerged in the early twentieth century first became formalized. In December 1917 the first decrees on marriage and the family were adopted, which included the “Decree on Civil Marriage, Children, and Keeping the Registry Books” and the “Decree on Marriage Termination”.<sup>2</sup> These legal acts laid the basis for the new Code of Laws on Marriage and Family, which was adopted in 1918. According to these decrees, the only legitimate form of marriage was civil marriage, based on the principles of voluntary union and registered in state registry offices. Thus, church marriage became a private affair left to the discretion of the soon-to-weds. These new norms corresponded to the Marxist concepts of individual sexual love as the only legal foundation for starting a family.<sup>3</sup>

Formally the legislation gave equal rights to men and women although contemporaries pointed out that in the conditions of vigorous democratization of the family institution, women were becoming more and more legally insecure and vulnerable.<sup>4</sup> The Code left many issues unsettled, including the question about the legal registration of marriage unions. As a result, the number of unregistered marriages and, therefore, extramarital children increased.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1920s the Russian Orthodox Church had lost its sway over the Soviet family but the Communist state had not yet gained full control over it. It was a period of searching for new patterns of family relationships based on simplified notions of equality and love, and the prevailing notion that the family will soon be replaced by the collective body, the Communist ideal of social organization.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Dekret VCIK i SNK ot 18(31) dekabrya 1917 g. ‘O grazhdanskom brake, o detyah i o vedenii knig aktov sostoyaniya’ 18(31) dekabrya 1917 g.*, in: *Dekrety Sovetskoj vlasti. Tom I. 25 oktyabrya 1917 g. – 16 marta 1918 g.* (Moskva: Gos. Izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1957), 247; *Dekret VCIK i SNK ot 16(29) dekabrya 1917 g. ‘O rastorzhennii braka’*, in: *Dekrety Sovetskoj vlasti. Tom I. 25 oktyabrya 1917 g. – 16 marta 1918 g.* (Moskva: Gos. Izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1957), 237–38. Accessed 24.04.2016, <http://www.hist.msu.ru/ER/Etext/DEKRET/17-12-18.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> Nadezhda K. Krupskaya, “Brachnoe i semejnoe pravo v Sovetskoj Respublike”, *Kommunistka* 3–4 (1920): 17–18.

<sup>4</sup> A. K. Lisitsyn, “K voprosu o sem’e i brake (v diskussionnom poryadke)”, *Kommunistka* 12 (1923): 24–26.

<sup>5</sup> See: Anatoly G. Kharchev, *Brak i sem’ya v SSSR* (Moskva: Mysl, 1990), 133; also Pitirim A. Sorokin, “Vliyaniye vojny na sostav naseleniya, ego svojstva i obshchestvennyuyu organizatsiyu”, in: *Ekonomist. Omnibus Edition. 1921– 1922* (Moskva: Terra Budushego, 2008), 79.

<sup>6</sup> For example: Alexandra Kollontay, *Prostitutsiya i mery bor’by s nei* (Moskva, 1921) 20–22; Stanislav E. Panin, “Bor’ba s prostitutsiej v Rossii v 1920-h godah”, *Voprosy Istorii*, 9 (2004): 113.

In 1926 the new Code of Marriage and Family<sup>7</sup> was adopted. It paid special attention to the court procedures of acknowledging de facto relationships as legal marriages and the procedures of marriage termination. The new legislation, however, failed to solve all the problems associated with the regulation of family relationships. Moreover, the government had to deal with the consequences of marriage democratization, which exacerbated the instability of the Soviet family. The number of divorces kept growing. In 1928 the ratio of divorces to marriages was four to five.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, the Soviet legislation made a considerable effort to democratize the family, secularize the marriage, and to form a new type of intra-familial relationships. This still proved to be insufficient for their drastic transformations, however, since it required some serious changes in the living environment and in the cultural patterns of familial behaviour and mentality.

In addition to the legal reform of family relationships, this period saw significant changes in the family's functions, especially in its economic role. The state started to actively interfere with the family sphere, trying to regulate not only the marriage itself, but also the mode of life, childhood, old age and so on.<sup>9</sup> Alexandra Kollontay actively supported the socialization of housework and child rearing and called for "separation of kitchen from marriage".<sup>10</sup> Vladimir Lenin held the same view: although he did not subscribe to the theory of "free" love, he put a great emphasis on the socialization of the material part of life, that is, the creation of public canteens, nurseries, and kindergartens, which he referred to as "sprouts of communism".<sup>11</sup>

While the revolutionary transformations aimed at destruction of the traditional family, the public views on the family reforms were fraught with contradiction and reflected the general processes that shook the foundations of Soviet society. In the 1920s, the public rejected everything that was associated with Tsarist Russia (church, school, art, and so on) and the family also came to be seen as a relic of the past. According to Anatoly G. Kharchev, "the family was mostly renounced as a figure which did not fit into the Bolsheviks' concept of socialization of the

<sup>7</sup> *Kodeks zakonov o brake, sem'e i opeke 1926 g.*, accessed 24.04.2016, <http://wap.praktika.borda.ru/?1-12-120-00000068-000-0-0-1176666001>.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Stites, *Zhenskoe osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie v Rossii. Feminizm, nigilizm i bol'shevizm. 1860–1930*, (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2004), 499.

<sup>9</sup> O. V. Kazmina, "Rossijskaya sistema zakonov o brake v 20 veke i traditsionnye ustanovki", *Etnograficheskoye Obozrenie* 4 (2003): 69–75.

<sup>10</sup> Alexandra Kollontay, "Polovaya moral' i social'naya bor'ba", in: Alexandra Kollontay, *Marksistskii feminizm. Text Collection* (Tver': Feminist-Press-Rossia, 2003), 231; Alexandra Kollontay, *Sem'ya i kommunisticheskoye gosudarstvo* (Moskva 1918).

<sup>11</sup> Vladimir I. Lenin, "Velikij pochin", in: Vladimir I. Lenin, *Complete Works*, vol. 39, ed. 5 (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1970), 24.

national economy...”<sup>12</sup> This trend was developing throughout the 1920s, but the subsequent decade witnessed the turn to traditional values, with the family being regarded as one of them. The family then became an object of state regulation and control, including the registration of marriage and divorce and child rearing. At the same time, while women were more and more actively engaged in social production, the state was restoring the old patriarchal intra-familial relationships.

In the late 1930s, the Soviet society was presented with a new idealized family model, in which all adult members were supposed to work and thus to discharge their duty to their country. The main function of this family was to create conditions for the reproduction of the workforce, that is, it preserved its status as a production unit of the society but it was not independent and was seen as some kind of appendage to industrial enterprises. The family existed under the official patronage of trade unions, which were supposed to support and strengthen it. The state also took charge of child rearing. Such a family model became fully established in the 1960s, when, according to Anatoly G. Vishnevsky, “the old traditional family was replaced by a sufficiently stable nuclear family of the urban type, which was markedly different from the patriarchal type, although some traces of continuity could still be found”.<sup>13</sup>

The processes of family transformations in the early Soviet period attracted a lot of scholarly interest. This topic was covered in numerous works by Russian sociologists and demographers, including Anatoly G. Kharchev, Anatoly G. Vishnevsky, Sergey N. Gavrov, Andrey G. Volkov, and many others.<sup>14</sup> They mostly focused on the state policy in the sphere of marriage and family and its influence on the development of the modern family type; on the changing structure and functions of the family, including child rearing; and on the emancipation processes.

Western scholars also paid considerable attention to the family reforms in the early Soviet period, expressing a broad range of opinions on this subject. Some of them are severely critical of the Soviet government’s policy while others try to unravel the intricacies of various factors and trends in the 1920–1930s family sphere.<sup>15</sup>

More recent studies put an emphasis on identifying and analyzing the alternatives which existed in the sphere of the family policy during the 1920s and the 1930s. For example, Becky L. Glass and Margaret K. Stolee emphasized the fact

<sup>12</sup> Anatoly G. Kharchev, “Socialisticheskaya revolyuciya i sem’ya. Iz rukopisnogo naslediya, *Sotsis*, 6 (1994): 95, accessed 24.04.2016, [http://ecsocman.hse.ru/data/777/532/1216/010\\_Iz\\_rukopisnogo\\_naslediya.pdf](http://ecsocman.hse.ru/data/777/532/1216/010_Iz_rukopisnogo_naslediya.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Anatoly G. Vishnevsky, “Evolyuciya rossijskoi sem’i: XX vek: Ot krest’yanskoi sem’i k gorodskoi (prodolzhenie)”, *Ecologia i Zhizn*, 8 (2008), accessed 24.04.2016, <http://elementy.ru/lib/430651>.

<sup>14</sup> Anatoly G. Kharchev, *Brak i sem’ya v SSSR* (Moskva: Mysl’, 1990); Vishnevsky, “Evolyuciya rossijskoi sem’i”; Andrey G. Volkov, “Evolyuciya rossijskoj sem’i v XX veke”, *Mir Istории*, 4 (1999): 47–57; Sergey N. Gavrov, *Istoricheskoe izmenenie instituta sem’i i braka* (Moskva: MGUDT, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> For example: Klaus Mehnert, *Sovetskii chelovek* (Moskva, 1959), 66, 70, 89.

that abolition of the family was just one of the many options considered at that time.<sup>16</sup> The same position is maintained by contemporary Russian scholars.<sup>17</sup>

A significant contribution to the studies of family transformations was made by works applying the perspective of microhistory, such as the article by Katy Turton devoted to Vladimir Lenin's family. She pointed out democratization trends in the intra-familial relationships in this period and observed that the real male and female roles in the family were also changing but much more slowly than had been expected by Communist theorists.<sup>18</sup>

Wendy Goldman analyzed women's position in the family in the first years of Soviet rule arguing that there was a sharp contrast between the idealized views about the role of the family in the Communist society and the real situation.<sup>19</sup> The social and legal aspects of the Soviet family policy in the 1920s-1930s were studied by Lauren Kaminsky.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, we can agree with Wesley A. Fisher and Leonid Khotin, who as early as in 1977 argued that the studies of the 1920s Soviet family history were overshadowed by the debates about the family's future under Communism.<sup>21</sup> The discussions about the possibility of the "radical" transformation of the family and the corresponding objectives of the Soviet state policy still tend to be primarily concerned with the theory and are not verified based on a larger scale empirical research. Therefore, the *actual* changes that took place in this period are still left largely undetected. While part of the reason for this situation is the scarcity of sources about the size and structure of the Soviet family, we suggest that some previously unexplored archival materials can shed an interesting light on the basic contours of the Russian post-Revolutionary family. In this paper we analyze the data from such a unique source, the All-Russia Communist Party Census of 1922, which provides information about the number of people and the ratio of workers to dependents in Party members' families.<sup>22</sup> This hitherto non analyzed material

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<sup>16</sup> Becky L. Glass, Margaret K. Stolee, "Family Law in Soviet Russia, 1917–1945", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 49 (4) (1987): 893–902.

<sup>17</sup> Yanina A. Shapovalova, "Politika bol'shevikov v otnoshenii sem'i v pervye gody Sovetskoi vlasti", *Obshchestvo: Politika, Ehkonomika, Pravo* 1 (2010).

<sup>18</sup> Katy Turton, "Revolution Begins at Home?: The Life of the First Soviet Family", *Family and Community History*, 8 (2) (2005): 91-104; see also Alla I. Chernykh, "Krylatyi Eros i promfinplan", *Sotsis*, 8 (1993): 105–13.

<sup>19</sup> Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State, and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917–1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>20</sup> Lauren Kaminsky, "Utopian Visions of Family Life in the Stalin-Era Soviet Union", *Central European History*, 44 (2011): 63–91.

<sup>21</sup> Wesley A. Fisher and Leonid Khotin, "Soviet Family Research", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 39 (2) (1977): 365.

<sup>22</sup> For more detail see: Lyudmila Mazur, Oleg Gorbachev, "Primary Sources on the History of the Soviet Family in the Twentieth Century: an Analytical Review", *The History of the Family*,

allows us not only to reconstruct the structure of Party members' families, but also to verify whether ideological factors in fact did influence the demographic transformation of family life under the Soviet rule.<sup>23</sup>

Our research focuses on the Ekaterinburg *guberniya*, which was detached from the Perm *guberniya* in 1918 and comprised the Middle and Northern Urals, that is, seven *uezds* (Verkhoturie, Ekaterinburg, Irbit, Kamyshlov, Krasnoufimsk, Nizhny Tagil, and Shadrinsk), with a total area of 189.4 sq.m. Three *uezds* out of seven (Verkhoturie, Nizhny Tagil and Ekaterinburg) had a developed mining industry and therefore played a key role in the economy of the region. The other *uezds* were predominantly agricultural. The total population of the *guberniya* in 1923 was 1,962,392 people, with 875,176 men (44.65%) and 1,087,216 women (55.35%).<sup>24</sup> The urban population was 201,876 people and accounted for 10.3% of the total population.

## Data

The All-Russia Communist Party Census was conducted in 1922 and 1923 and its purpose was to determine the precise number of Party members. At the same time the Census was used to replace Party membership cards: they were issued only to those Party members who had proven their right to be considered communists, that is, who had met the requirements in terms of their social background, occupation, behaviour, and views, in particular on religion. Thus, the Census was also used to purge the Party ranks. As a result, by 1923 there remained 373,000 members out of approximately 700,000 as of 1921.<sup>25</sup> The majority of those excluded were peasants (44.8 %) and white-collar workers (23.8 %).<sup>26</sup>

Of the six census record forms the form "A" is the most interesting. It includes fifty-nine personal information questions about the gender, age, nationality, education, social background, employment and history of Party members' participation in the revolutionary movement, their army service, and so on. This form contained only two questions about the family – i.e., on the number of workers

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21(1) (2016): 101–20.

<sup>23</sup> The structure of Communist Party members still remains a relatively underexplored area. Edward Kohn published an article in 2009, which discussed Communists' family life in the post-war period. See: Edward Kohn, "Sex and the Married Communists: Family Troubles, Marital Infidelity, and Party Discipline in the Postwar USSR, 1945–64", *The Russian Review* 68 (2009): 429–50.

<sup>24</sup> *Spisok naseleennykh punktov Ekaterinburgskoj gubernii s vazhnejshimi statisticheskimi danymi i alfavitnym ukazatelem* (Ekaterinburg, 1923), 6.

<sup>25</sup> Otto Lazis, *Perelom: Stalin protiv Lenina* (Moskva: Politizdat, 1989), 148.

<sup>26</sup> Documentation Centre of Non-Governmental Organizations of Sverdlovsk Region (TsDOOSO), f. 76, op. 1, d. 645b, l. 10.

and dependents. However, by analyzing these data in conjunction with other social and demographic information contained in the census (place of residence, gender, age, social background, nationality, education, occupation, and so on), some important aspects related to structural patterning of the family (household) can be explored. First, family composition can be analyzed in the light of its consumption-labour balance. Second, the family forms characteristic of different social groups (peasantry, blue collar workers, white collar workers, military men, party members and officials) can be identified; and, thirdly, a more detailed picture of the respondents' views about the family can be obtained. The latter refers to mental models which had formed among the general public and in the minds of communists by the early 1920s. These models were shaped by the whole complex of factors (traditional concepts of the family's role in people's lives, ideological and propagandist clichés, emancipation and modernization processes). As a result, we can trace back the process of traditional family values being replaced by new communist ideas and the impact of this process on family organization.

Furthermore, our primary sources included census forms that contained more detailed information about the family, allowing a more detailed reconstruction of the intra-familial roles of family members and their relationships. There are not so many such forms (less than 10% survived) but even in these small numbers they permit a typological analysis of the family structure.

Given these data availability, our research strategy was the following. We first took the master sample from the 1922 Census by randomly selecting 517 surviving forms covering 3.5% of all Party members covered by the Census. This sample was used to study the family structure according to the number of family members and the number of workers and dependents. Secondly, we applied the purposive sampling to choose forms containing detailed information about the composition of families (altogether 254 forms; single person families were omitted). These data were used to study the demographic typology of the family and the family status of Party members. Although these data are not sufficiently representative,<sup>27</sup> they can still be used to identify dominant family types and to illustrate the general trends of family development in the early Soviet society.

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<sup>27</sup> We found a considerable discrepancy in the indicators of the social composition of the Party organization: the officially processed materials from the 1922 Census show that the percentage of blue collar workers in the structure of Party organizations in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* was 41.5%; peasants, 37.8%; white collar workers, 15.7% (calculations were made on the basis of the data from TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645a, l. 4). However, the percentage of blue collar workers and peasants that is yielded by our sample was significantly smaller: 17.6% and 18.9% respectively. On the contrary, Soviet white collar professionals, Party officials and law enforcement officers accounted for over a half of all the Party members (57.6%; from this point onward if no special references are made, the indicators were calculated on the basis of the sample. TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 557–574). The reason for this discrepancy lies in the fact that when processing the census

### Composition and Membership of the Communist Party in the Ekaterinburg *Guberniya*

According to the 1922 Census, the structure of the Party organization in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* included 874 Party units with 14,662 members and candidates (0.7% of the total population of this *guberniya*), of which 12,038 people (i.e., 94.2% of the total number) were surveyed. The distribution of Party members and candidates according to the history of their membership and social background is shown in Table 1; according to their education and social background, in Table 2. The tables illustrate the predominance of blue collar workers and peasants (79.2%) in the Party stratification in this *guberniya*. Over half of them joined the Party in 1919 during the recruitment campaigns. It was in this period that 61.2% (as of the end of 1921) of all the Party members were recruited.<sup>28</sup>

Table 1. Distribution of Party members in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* according to their Party membership history and social background

Date of joining the Communist Party	Blue-collar workers	Peasants	White-collar workers	Other	Total	Percentage, %	Sample, %
Before 1905	27	2	5	2	36	0.29	0.39
1905–16	80	4	54	4	142	1.18	2.13
1917	833	100	189	37	1159	9.62	9.09
1918	696	399	252	47	1394	11.58	12.57
1919	2301	2538	830	302	5971	49.60	49.52
1920	771	1086	402	147	2406	19.99	18.57
1921	227	398	116	53	794	6.59	4.84
1922	•	•	•	•	•	•	1.55
Not specified	65	29	33	9	136	1.13	1.35
Total	5000	4556	1881	601	12038	100.00	100.00
Percentage, %	41.454	37.85	15.62	4.99	100,00	×	×
Sample, %	47.97	30.75	9.48	11.80	100,00	×	×

Source: TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645a, l.4; the grouping results are based on the sample.

results, respondents' social background was indicated according to their occupation *before the Revolution*: by 1922 most of them had already obtained their 'portfolios', that is, had already been transferred to the category of Soviet and Party officials

<sup>28</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645a, l. 3 rev – 4.



About two-thirds (77.3%) of all Party members in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* had primary education. The percentage of those who had secondary or higher education did not exceed 3%. Illiterate members accounted for 6.5% and were mostly peasants (see Table 2). In total, the distribution of Party members according to their social background and education corresponded to the general parameters of the Russian society.

One of the characteristic features of the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* was that the mining industry played a major role here and therefore the percentage of blue collar workers was also high (17.6%; see Figure 1). About one-third of Party members lived in cities and towns and 67% in rural areas (villages and factory settlements)<sup>29</sup> (see Table 3). In rural areas the percentage of peasants in the Party structure did not exceed 40.0%.<sup>30</sup>

Table 2. Distribution of Party members in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* in 1922 according to their education and social background

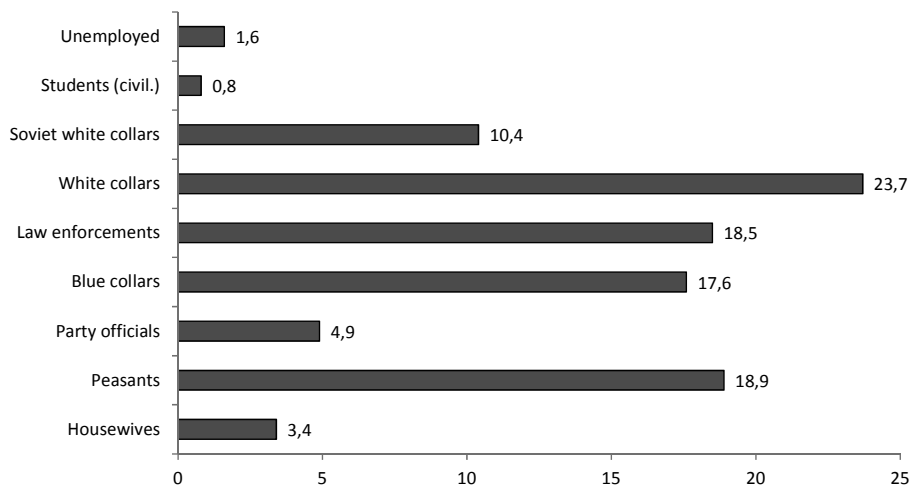
Education	Blue-collar workers	Peasants	White-collar workers	Other	Total	Percentage, %	Sample, %
Higher	–	–	32	1	33	0,28	6.58
Secondary	16	2	282	18	318	2,64	11.41
Primary	4091	3253	1491	468	9303	77,28	69.25
Home	670	769	67	71	1577	13,10	9.09
Illiterate	214	525	5	41	785	6,52	1.55
Not specified	9	7	4	2	22	0,18	2.12
Total	5000	4556	1881	601	12038	100,00	100.00
Percentage	41.5	37.8	15.7	5.0	100,00	×	×
Sample, %	47.97	30.75	9.48	11.8	100,00	×	×

Source: TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645a. l. 14; the grouping results are based on the sample.

<sup>29</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645a, ll. 1–2.

<sup>30</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645b, l. 10.

Figure 1: Distribution of Party members in the Ekaterinburg guberniya in 1922 according to their employment (%)



Source: TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 557-574, and the Census master sample.

Table 3. Distribution of Party members according to their place of residence

Place of residence	Total, persons	Total, %	Sample, persons	Sample, %
City	4801	32.74	196	37.91
Countryside	•	•	222	42.94
Factories	9861	67.26	98	18.96
No data	–	–	1	0.19
Total	14662	100.00	517	100.00

Source: TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645a, ll. 1–2, and the Census master sample.

Table 4. Distribution of Party members in the Ekaterinburg guberniya according to sex

Sex	Total	Percentage, %	Sample, persons	Sample, %
Male	13105	89.38	464	89.75
Female	1557	10.62	53	10.25
Total	14662	100.00	517	100.00

Source: TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 645a, ll. 1–2, and the Census master sample.

Table 5. Distribution of Party members in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* in 1922 according to age

Age, years	Sample, persons	Sample, %
15–19	16	3.08
20–24	89	17.15
25–29	126	24.28
30–34	104	20.04
35–39	82	15.80
40–44	47	9.06
45–49	34	6.55
50–54	9	1.73
55–59	4	0.77
60–64	6	1.16
Total	517	100.00

Source: the Census master sample.

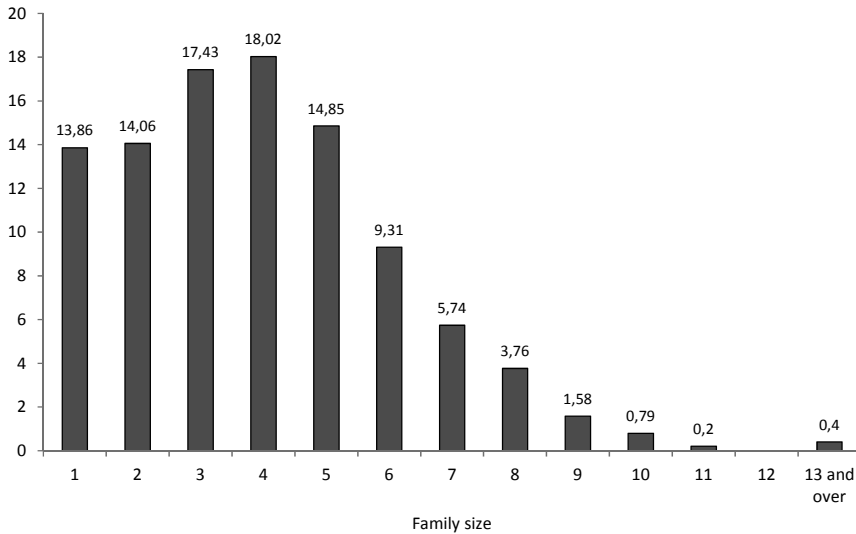
The age-sex composition of the Party organization was characterized by the predominance of young and middle-aged men (see Tables 4-5). There were 13,105 male Party members (89.4%) and 1,557 female members (10.6%). The majority of women (39.6%) were housewives and served their own household; 32.1% were recorded as white collar workers; 18.9%, blue collar workers; and only 9.4% were Party or Soviet officials. As will be shown below, the above-mentioned data are crucial to understand the family processes and the structure of Party members' families.

### **Structure of families of Communist Party members in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* in 1922**

According to the data from the main sample, about half of Party members' families (49.5%) were of presumably nuclear type (consisting of two to four people) (see Figure 2)<sup>31</sup>. The average family size was 3.97 persons and the modal size value was 4 people.

<sup>31</sup> Detecting family structure from its size is not the most reliable approach. Because in our main sample more detailed information on family composition was not available, we assumed that most families of the smallest size were also of a streamlined, nuclear structure (hence, referred to as "presumably nuclear").

Figure 2. Distribution of Party members' families according to their size  
(Communist Party Census of 1922, Ekaterinburg *guberniya*, %)



Interestingly enough, the percentage of single Party members at 13.9% was quite high: this group was dominated by young people under 24 (52.9%) and those between 25 and 34 (40.0%). In older groups the percentage of single people drops significantly: people between 35 and 44 account for 4.3% of this category, and over 45, for only 2.9%. Over a third of singles were women (33.9%). This gender imbalance can be explained by the overall post-war gender imbalance.

As for the social background, most of the singles were military men, who made up 38.6%, while white-collar workers accounted for 21.4%; Party and Soviet officials, 11.4%; blue-collar workers, 10.0%; peasants, 10.0%; students and others, 8.6%.

The category of single white-collar workers and Party and Soviet officials aged 25–34 (about 2.4% of the whole random sample) is particularly interesting: they seem to have consciously chosen to stay single. In the Party environment these feelings could have been fuelled by the idea that family is a manifestation of the “petty bourgeois spirit”. Representatives of the intelligentsia class often subscribed to an opinion that the family was a relic of the past and that it did not fit with the image of a “revolutionary hero”. This opinion was one of the many extreme notions engendered by the revolutionary mythology. One of the census forms contains the data on a single thirty-year-old man (with a Party history starting from 1914), who graduated from the University of London and devoted himself to Party work. His personality assessment, which was enclosed in the

form, includes the following characteristics, which were specially highlighted: “well-educated, gradually losing his faith in the Revolution, uncompromisingly honest”.<sup>32</sup> Single Communists with secondary or higher education and a non-proletarian background (usually from the merchant class or the lower middle class) are often found in the Census records; in our sample they accounted for 18.6% of the total number of single people. It is interesting that in the course of the Census taking some of them were expelled from the Party.<sup>33</sup> In general, the choice to stay single was a peculiar social phenomenon, which is often associated with the family modernization processes. It is often considered as a reaction to social transformations (urbanization; weakening of interpersonal ties; breaking traditions, and so on), which often contributed to increasing individualism and egocentrism.<sup>34</sup> Staying single became one of the ways of life consciously adopted by Party members: they chose not to start a family in order to realize their individual life strategies.

According to our purposive sample, 78.96% of the Communist Party members with families were married. In general, these data show that most Party members followed the traditional patterns of nuptial behavior, that is, they started a family at an early age (when they were under 25). Among the Party members over 20 years old, the vast majority of men were married with children. If there were no children, the young couple lived with their parents.

The Census described the family structure according to the two main parameters: the number of *workers* and the number of *dependents*. These questions were supposedly included in the Census program in order to find out how preoccupied Party members were with their family life and how orientated they were towards socially useful activities. The concept of the family as an economic and consumer unit was characteristic of the traditional society: for instance, the ratio of workers to dependents is one of the key indicators of the peasant family’s economic potential.<sup>35</sup>

The Census recorded as workers those family members whose income came in the form of salaries and wages; the rest were recorded as dependents. For example, in peasants’ forms all family members were recorded as “dependents”. As a result, the Census provides us with a reliable picture of the workers/dependents

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<sup>32</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 571, ll. 59–60.

<sup>33</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 568, l. 310.

<sup>34</sup> Anna I. Mikhailova, “Osmyslenie fenomena odinochestva kak social’nogo yavleniya”, *Journal of Transbaikalian State University* (2013), accessed 24.04.2016, <http://uchzap.ru/ru/journals/587>; Nikolay E. Pokrovsky, ed., *Labirinty odinochestva* (Moskva: Progress, 1989).

<sup>35</sup> Chayanov, Alexander, *The Theory of Peasant Economy*, ed. Daniel Thorner, Basile Kerblay, and R. E. F. Smith. Homewood (IL): R. D. Irwin, 1966.

ratio in the urban family, in which the family income was mostly formed by wages, and in families of blue-collar and white-collar workers living in rural areas. In peasant families, however, the Census failed to provide accurate data on this parameter and we excluded this information from our analysis (see Table 6).

Table 6. Distribution of Party members' families according to the ratio of workers to dependents (except for peasant families)

Number of family members	Number of workers in the family							Total	Percentage, %
	No	1	2	3	4	5	Over 6		
1	-	63	-	-	-	-	-	63	15.75
2	1	47	7	-	-	-	-	55	13.75
3	-	57	7	2	-	-	-	66	16.50
4	-	60	16	1	1	-	-	78	19.50
5	1	39	15	3	-	-	-	58	14.50
6	1	24	8	2	-	-	-	35	8.75
7	-	14	5	3	1	-	-	23	5.75
8	-	9	4	1	1	-	-	15	3.75
9	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	3	0.75
10	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	0.50
11	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.25
12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.25
Total	3	315	63	15	3	-	1	400	
Percentage of families, %	0.75	78.75	15.75	3.75	0.75	0.00	0.25		100.00

Source: the Census master sample.

In the vast majority of families there was only one worker, usually a man (see Table 6). Only 20.5% of families had two and more workers; in 15.7% of such families there were only two family members; in 3.8%, three family members; in 0.7%, four; and in 0.3%, five or more. Over half of the families consisted of four to six members, and the average family size was 5.2 people. A third of the families with two and more workers lived in the city (31.8%); in factory settlements, 19.1%; and about a half (49.1%), in rural areas.

In a traditional society the number of workers in a family grows because male members reach their working age: this picture is characteristic of the senior age groups of Party members. Another significant reason for changes in the consumption-labour balance of the family in the 1920s was female employment. In 1922 the percentage of women among blue-collar and white-collar workers was 25%;

by 1940 it had reached 39%.<sup>36</sup> Party membership was another crucial factor which affected women's behaviour. 83% of female Party members were employed: the majority of them were agricultural, white-collar or blue-collar workers; 9.4% worked in Party or Soviet institutions.

Therefore, the analysis of the consumption-labour balance demonstrates that, firstly, the early Soviet society still retained the traditions of the intra-familial distribution of functions, which meant that the head of the family was expected to support all family members. Nevertheless, women's employment was growing, which gradually transformed the conventional family roles.

### **Demographic typology of the family**

The demographic profile of Party members' families includes the family size, and more specifically, the marital status of the head of the family (two-parent or single-parent families), as well as the family's generational structure (nuclear or extended families). The grouping according to demographic type was done on the basis of an additional sample comprising 254 forms (see Table 7).

Thus, in the sample two-parent families account for 80.31% with almost two-thirds of them (71.8%) being small (nuclear) family units and 28.2% extended. The situation is the opposite for single-parent families, which make up 19.68%. In this group small family units account only for 18.0% while the rest correspond to extended families.

Our purposive sample included not only singles but also families consisting of two and more members, which in the main sample accounted for 86.14%. If we take into consideration this fact, the percentage of families corresponding to the given types will be slightly lower.

What is more, the peculiarities of the age and gender structure of the Party stratification made such distribution different from that of the whole of early Soviet society. Therefore, it does not reflect general social trends and is worthy of special attention.

*Two-parent families* predominated in the Party environment: over half of them (68.3%) were small families (2-4 members), which were mostly young Party members' families (under 34), that is, the families of white- and blue-collar workers living in cities and factory settlements. Large two-parent families (5-8 members) were typical of different social groups (blue-collar workers, white-collar workers, peasants). What they had in common was that the head of the family was usually middle-aged (35-44 years old) and over a half of them had many children (nuclear families) while the other half lived in extended families consisting of several generations.

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<sup>36</sup> *Narodnoye khozyajstvo SSSR za 60 let. Statisticheskii sbornik* (Moskva: Statistika, 1977), 469.

Close to every fifth family (19.68%) in our sample was *single-parent* group consisting of a widow/widower, who supported children and/or parents. Among the single-parent families, three quarters (78.0%) were small (2–4 members) and the rest were families with five and more members. Large families were mostly peasant: for example, the family of a Party member from Merkushino settlement consisted of the head of the family, who was a widower, his two children and his parents.<sup>37</sup>

Table 7. Distribution of families of Communist Party members according to their demographic types

Laslett's classification	Demographic type	Number	Percentage, excluding singles (%)	Percentage, including singles (%)
1a + 1b	Solitaries	41		13.86
Two-parent families				
3a	Childless married couples	52	20.47	17.64
4a	Married couples living with their parent/ parent-in-law and children (extended upwards)	30	11.81	10.17
4c + 4d	Childless married couples living with parent/ parents-in-law and relatives (extended families)	27	10.63	9.16
3c	Married couples with children (nuclear family)	94	37.01	31.88
5e	Laterally extended families	1	0.39	0.34
Single-parent families				
3c + 3d	Caregiver (mother or father) with children	9	3.54	3.06
4a	Caregiver with children and parent/parent-in-law (extended upwards)	6	2.36	2.03
4d	Caregiver with parent/ parent-in-law and relatives (extended)	29	11.42	9.83
4b	Caregiver with relatives (extended)	6	2.36	2.03
	Total	254	100.00	86.14
	Total (with solitaries)	295	×	100.00

Source: the Census purposive sample.

<sup>37</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 560, ll. 6, 8.



Three quarters of single-parent families (73.5 %) were male-headed and only 25% were headed by females. Such distribution is not typical but it was determined by the Party's gender structure. According to N. I. Vorobyov, who studied families in the town of Nerekhta in 1923,<sup>38</sup> the percentage of single-parent families in the structure of this town's population was significantly higher and reached 30.5%, while nine out of ten single-parent families were female-headed.

When analyzed through the lenses of the canonical classification scheme of the Cambridge Group, families in our sample exhibit a relative predominance of the nuclear families (61.1 %), though the share of extended families at 38.9 % was also substantial (these were the families which included not only parents but also grandparents, siblings and so on, that is, the immediate relatives who were in need of material support). In the data of the 1922 Census we can find numerous examples of extended families, including families in which the head was living separately, in the city, while his wife, children and parents were living in the countryside.<sup>39</sup> The reason for such separation was either military service<sup>40</sup> or seasonal work migration.<sup>41</sup>

These facts seem to buttress mainstream historical demographic hypothesis positing that the extended family type played an important role in Russia.<sup>42</sup> In our purposive sample, over a third of all families were households which included parents, grandparents, siblings, and so on, that is, immediate relatives supported by the Party member. This situation is typical of recession periods with high mortality rates. If the family lost their breadwinner, young men took on the task of providing for their relatives. For instance, a resident of Ekaterinburg, aged 22, supported a family of six, which included his wife, child and two sisters.<sup>43</sup> Another example is the family of a blacksmith (aged 24) from the settlement of Sylvenskoye. This family consisted of four people, including two grandparents and a foster child.<sup>44</sup> Extended families made up a large part of the family structure of the early Soviet society probably not only because of cultural reasons but also due to certain social and economic aspects of Soviet people's lifestyle, for example, housing conditions, which prevented extended families from breaking up into smaller nuclear units.

<sup>38</sup> Nikolay I. Vorobyov, "Sem'ya v Nerekhte (K voprosu ob analize sem'i)", in: *Sovetskaya demografiya za 70 let (Iz istorii nauki)*, ed. Timon V. Ryabushkin (Moskva: Nauka, 1987), 110–130.

<sup>39</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 571, ll. 123–124.

<sup>40</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 564, l. 8; d. 561, l. 62–63.

<sup>41</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 567, l. 266.

<sup>42</sup> For example: Czap, P. (1982). "The perennial multiple family household, Mishino, Russia, 1782–1858", *Journal of Family History*, 7, 5–26; Hajnal, J. (1982). "Two kinds of preindustrial household formation system", *Population and Development Review*, 8, 449–494.

<sup>43</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 566, l. 125.

<sup>44</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 564, l. 227–228.

### Urban-rural differences

One of the significant characteristics of family structure is the role of the place of residence: city or countryside (see Table 8). In the nineteenth century the city became a centre of modernization, involving the family in this process of transformation.

Table 8. Distribution of Party members' families according to size and place of residence (%)

Families	City	Countryside (factory, village)	Total
Singles	22.9	8.3	13.9
Small (2-4 people)	48.9	49.7	49.4
Medium-sized (5-8 people)	26.6	38.2	33.7
Large (9 and more people)	1.6	3.8	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: the Census master sample.

In the 1920s presumably nuclear families were predominant, but in rural areas over a third of all the families were medium-sized and there were twice as many large families in the rural areas as in the city. The size of the family was affected by two key factors: the number of children and the generational structure. In the countryside early marriages and large extended families were more widespread than in the city. In the city the age of first marriage was higher and urban families had fewer children than peasant ones. In the city there were also 2.7 times more single people than in the countryside. Household membership of extended kin occurred much less often in the city.

In general, according to the results of our master sample, 196 Party members (38.8%) were urban residents, with single people accounting for 22.9% of them. Nearly half of the urban families (46.6%) were those of young white-collar workers, Party and Soviet officials (under 35) with primary education. Another characteristic feature of Party members' urban families was that the head of the family usually came from the working class (42.5%) or peasantry (32.2%) and only in 12.6% of the cases was the father of the Party member a white-collar worker.

The 1920s saw a growing marginalization of the Soviet urban population, which was joined by those who descended from peasants or factory workers. After getting Party membership cards, they became the core of the Soviet and Party nomenclature and thus determined the social characteristics of the urban middle-class. The predominant low level of education and strong traditions of their parental families to a great extent contributed to the preservation of patriarchal intra-familial relationships in the urban setting.

### Social Typology of the Family

The family structure as reflected in the Census depended to a large extent on the gender and age composition of the Communist Party, which means that it did not always reflect the general population trends of the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* or Russia as a whole. However, by applying a more differentiated approach to the Census records and focusing on specific age and social groups, we can partly compensate for these discrepancies and obtain a more accurate picture of the early Soviet family organization.

In order to achieve that goal in table 9 we look at the distribution of families in accordance to the social background of the Party members: peasantry, white-collar workers, blue-collar workers, Party and Soviet officials, military men.

Table 9. Distribution of families according to Party members' social background (%)

Families	Blue-collar workers	Peasants	White-collar workers	Party and Soviet officials	Military men <sup>a</sup>	Other <sup>b</sup>	Total
Singles	8.4	6.7	12.5	10.2	28.7	24.0	13.9
Small (2–4 people)	4.4	48.6	55.8	51.3	48.9	40.0	49.4
Medium-sized (5–8 people)	48.2	37.1	30.8	34.6	20.3	32.0	33.7
Large (9 and more people)	0.0	7.6	0.8	3.9	2.1	4.0	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percentage of families, %	16.4	20.8	23.8	15.4	18.6	5.0	100.0

<sup>a</sup> The category “Military men” included not only those who served in the field army, but also officers of the Emergency Committees (*Chekists*), Special Forces, militia, and investigative agencies, that is, those who worked in the power structures.

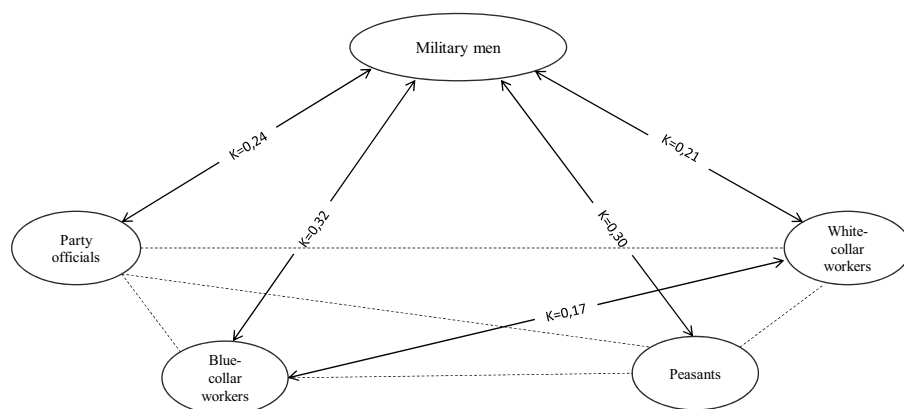
<sup>b</sup> The category “Other” includes students, housewives and unemployed Party members.

Source: the Census master sample.

According to Table 9, the family structure of different social groups had their own, peculiar characteristics. Although the small, presumably nuclear, family type prevailed, there were fewer single people among the peasants and this group also had the highest percentage of large families with over nine people. There were few single people among blue-collar workers and this group had a high share of families consisting of five to eight members. Among white-collar workers and Party and Soviet officials, the number of single people was visibly higher and over half of the families were small.

We applied the Neyman-Pearson criterion of independence for quantitative characteristics to find correlations or their absence between social groups. As a result, we can point out three typological categories of Party members' families with different quantitative characteristics: 1 - families of blue-collar workers and peasants; 2 – families of white-collar workers, Party and Soviet officials; 3 – families of military men (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Correlation pleiade of the social categories of families



Source: the Census master sample.

The first typological group comprised *families of blue-collar workers and peasants*, accounting for 37.2% of the sample. This group of families had similar distribution patterns, especially in the number of singles. In general, they tend to follow the “traditional” patriarchal family type. Demographically, the traditional family is characterized by high fertility and high infant mortality rates, a multi-generational structure and intra-familial distribution of responsibilities determined by the age and gender of family members. Familial relations are based on the norms which presuppose the dominant position of the family head and which were described in the seventeenth-century *Domostroi*.<sup>45</sup>

According to our analysis of the sample of the Ekaterinburg *guberniya*, *peasant families* made up 20.8% of the Party environment. The heads of 85.7% of such families came from the peasantry, 10.5% from mining workers, and 0.9% from craftsmen and white-collar workers. Therefore, the social base of the peasant

<sup>45</sup> For more detail see: Mikhail S. Matskovsky, *Sociologiya sem'i: Problemy teorii, metodologii i metodiki* (Moskva: Nauka, 1989), 48–49.

family remained virtually untouched by modernization. Peasant families tended to have a complex structure comprising children (sometimes adopted), parents, and grandparents, which is shown by the distribution of these families according to their size: singles accounted for 6.7%, families with two to four members 48.6%, those with five to seven members 37.1%, and those with over eight members 7.6% (see Table 9). Most of the peasants joined the Communist Party at a mature age, being already married and with children. The peasant family tended to be less affected by modernization than other social groups and it also tended to preserve its patriarchal features longer.

Accordingly, *workers' families* accounted for 16.4%: their heads were usually factory, mining or railroad workers. 53.2% of the family heads themselves came from families of workers, 31.6% from the peasantry, 5.1% from craftsmen, 1.3% from white-collar workers, and 8.9% provided no data. As for the family size, 8.4% of such families consisted of one person, 43.4% of two to four people, and 48.2% of five to eight people (see Table 9). The average family size was 4.5 people, which was similar to that of the peasant family (the modal family size was 4–6 persons). The majority of these families were supported by one person and they tended to have a large number of children. According to results based on the purposive sample, most workers' families were married couples with children or married couples with children and parents. There were also some single-parent families: widows or widowers with children and parents.

Unlike peasant families, families of workers had a different economic basis: their income mostly depended on the *wages* of the head of the family (man), who was responsible for supporting his wife and children. The structure of these families was rapidly changing in the 1920s, along with the increase in women's employment, but it still kept its traditional characteristics and in the 1930s it started to be promoted as the "workers' dynasties" and thus acquired the status of an "ideal family". In the construction of this ideologeme traditional familial imagery of an extended, multigenerational patriarchal family headed by an old worker and consisting mainly of workers (wife and adult children) was actively used to replace the archetype of a peasant family. In the late Stalinist period this image became the ideal of a Soviet family and was seen as the basis for the moral upbringing of younger generations.

*Families of white-collar workers and Party and Soviet officials* formed another separate group. These families, which accounted for 39.2% of the total (see Table 9), were the most highly influenced by modernization and the new trends in familial relationships. They were characterized by a high percentage of single people (over 10%) and the prevalence of small families, most of which were of the nuclear type. Large families were only rarely found among the Soviet and Party officials (3.9%), which shows that traditions, though not extinct, were generally

not followed any longer among this group. These trends are mostly observed in the average size of the family: for white-collar workers, it was 3.7 people, and for the Soviet and Party officials, 4.2 people.

In the category of small and medium-sized families, there are significant differences between urban and rural families: rural families of white-collar workers and Party and Soviet officials were mostly of the traditional type (see Table 10) while urban families were undergoing a demographic transition from the traditional to a more modern state.

Table 10. Distribution of families of white-collar workers and Party and Soviet officials according to their place of residence (%)

Families	City	Countryside	Total
Singles	13.2	10.3	11.6
Small (2–4 people)	58.2	50.5	54.1
Medium-sized (5–8 people)	27.5	37.4	32.8
Large (9 and more people)	1.1	1.9	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percentage of families, %	45.9	54.1	100.0

Source: the Census master sample.

We should pay special attention to *families of Party and Soviet officials* (15.4%), the prototype for the evolving Soviet nomenclature family, which became fully established in the 1930s. Over half of the families in this category were small and consisted of two to four people (51.3%), 34.6% of five to eight people, and less than 4% contained over eight people (see Table 9). The modal age of the Party members in this family category was 30–39: the people of this age accounted for half (50.0%) of all the respondents in this group. As for the social background, in nearly one-third of the cases the father of the family head was a blue-collar worker, in 54.3% he was a peasant, and in 12.9% a white-collar worker. The majority of these families were supported by one person (73.1%) and in every fourth family two or more family members were employed. Originally, Party membership of spouses did not affect the division of intra-familial responsibilities and women continued to do household work, but gradually the wives of nomenclature officials started to be more actively involved in Party or Soviet work and were employed by state institutions.

*Families of military men* form a special group which included representatives of power agencies: those doing compulsory military service, militiamen, officers of the Emergency Committees and Special Forces, investigators, and so on. This category of families accounted for 18.6% of the total, which is more than the number

of families of the Party and Soviet nomenclature and blue-collar workers (see Table 9). These were the families which had the highest percentage of singles (28.7%) and the lowest percentage of medium-sized families – 20.3%. Such familial behaviour is primarily determined by the age factor: 74.5% of the family members in each group were under 29 years. In 80.8% of the cases these were families supported by one person while in the rest of the cases families had two or more working members. The average family size is the smallest, only 3.2 people. This category of families evidently had its own pattern of development depending on how frequently their heads had to move and on the specific characteristics of their service.

### **Ideal family types**

The Communist Party Census materials are particularly interesting because, apart from the general structural-quantitative picture, they allow exploring the spread of the new forms of families evolving under the impact of the following ideological factors:

utopian socialism (family as a commune),

revolutionary romanticism (family as a union of Communist comrades, who devoted their lives to the struggle for the common cause).

These kinds of families were *ideal models* corresponding to the mythology of revolutionary renewal, and were constructed as antitheses to the bourgeois family. As ideological constructs they were short-lived and did not significantly affect the general family structure of the society. However, they can be studied as a remarkable historical and social phenomenon.

One of these ideal family types was the *communal family*, which was found in rural areas. As early as in 1918, the government encouraged peasants to create their own self-sustaining agricultural communes on the basis of nationalized estates. These communes united several peasant families which were engaged in collective farming and shared property and equipment. However, under the influence of the revolutionary ideology, the idea of the commune was often taken to extremes and the concept of socialization started to be applied to the mode of life, household activities, and familial relationships, which made commune members consider it as a new kind of social organization and a substitute for the family as such.

According to the lists of settlements in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya*, in 1923 there were 41 registered communes.<sup>46</sup> In 1922, 4.8% of Party members in the Ekaterinburg *guberniya* were members of communes. In their forms communes

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<sup>46</sup> See: *Spisok naseleennykh punktov Ekaterinburgskoj gubernii s vazhnejshimi statisticheskimi dannymi i alfavitnym ukazatelem* (Ekaterinburg 1923).

were sometimes referred to as families: for example, the commune “Krestyanin”, which was located in the village of Nikolskoye, Kamyshlov *uezd*;<sup>47</sup> the commune “Muraveynik”, village of Golsky, Irbit *uezd* (the census form states that there were 89 family members, 37 of whom were workers and 52 dependents);<sup>48</sup> the commune “Dom” in the village of Mikhalevo, Irbit *uezd*<sup>49</sup>; and the commune “Krasnaya Zvezda”.<sup>50</sup> The data in the census forms shows that census takers and respondents themselves found it difficult to identify their family status, for instance, when they had to provide the number of workers and dependents: they either wrote all members of the commune or, on the contrary, wrote “0”, which meant that there were no workers or dependents in the commune since everybody was engaged in collective labour. Overall, the communal family was the most radical type of transformed peasant family of the post-Revolutionary times.

Another ideal type was the *revolutionary family*, engendered by revolutionary romanticism. Such families normally consisted of married professional revolutionaries, usually without children, united by the common goal, for example, the family of Vladimir Lenin and Nadezhda Krupskaya and the families of other Bolshevik leaders.

There were two subtypes of the revolutionary family which could be found in the 1922 Census materials: the old (romantic) revolutionary family and the new (nomenclature) one. The first kind of family consisted of Party members with a pre-Revolutionary Party history (since 1903–1905), aged 35–62, with 2–3 family members: the Communist Party member, his wife (usually employed) and mother. The only exception was the Census form which described a family of thirteen people, nine of whom joined the family “because of the famine”. In total, the sample includes 2.6% of Communists with their Party history going back to the pre-Revolution period.

Family strategies adopted by professional revolutionaries were not popular among young people but laid the foundation for the formation of Soviet mythology. In the 1930s, the image of a revolutionary family was widely promoted by fiction and cinema much in the same way as was the image of a revolutionary as a saint who sacrificed his family happiness to the struggle for the “bright future” of the working people.

In the early 1920s, the romantic ideal of a revolutionary family was replaced by a more realistic type – the “*nomenclature*” family, which was usually a family of young Party members, who actively encouraged their relatives (wives, brothers,

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<sup>47</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 585, l. 34; d. 578, l. 108.

<sup>48</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 567, l. 129; d. 558, l. 169.

<sup>49</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 589, l. 134.

<sup>50</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 582, l. 203; d. 578, l. 30.



sisters) to join the Party and facilitated their career development. For example, in the settlement of Asbestovskie rudniki, a husband, who was the Chair of the Committee of Mining Workers, helped his stay-at-home wife to join the Party.<sup>51</sup> Family connections can also be traced between the members of the Party unit at “Valerianovsky” factory: the head of the family joined the Party in 1918 and in a year his brother and wife also became Party members. Interestingly enough, in the course of the Census this man was expelled from the Party because he was stealing gold.<sup>52</sup> At later stages, when the nomenclature mechanisms were well-established, such family strategies turned into a norm and marriage could often become a guarantee of a successful Party career.

Thus, the main characteristic of a *nomenclature family* was the Communist Party membership of both spouses. If in the early 1920s, membership did not affect the division of intra-familial responsibilities and women continued doing all the housework, later they started to be more actively involved in Party work and were employed by Soviet state institutions. In the 1930s the family behaviour of Party members, especially Party functionaries, was controlled more closely since they were expected to set an example for ordinary Communists. With time, the nomenclature family occupied a high position in the new system of classes and became the Soviet elite.

## Conclusion

The All-Russia Communist Party Census gives us an interesting view of the early Soviet society, since the party members it has surveyed were the most susceptible to the Communist ideology. This influence manifested itself through career strategies, cultural and religious transformations and also through family behaviour. Along with the development and transformation of the traditional family into the modern/democratic one, the early Soviet society witnessed the emergence of new family forms including ideally constructed types such as the communal family and the revolutionary family, which reflected the *Zeitgeist*.

To conclude, the family organization of Communist Party members was in a transitional state: the traditional, patriarchal structure still prevailed, but family life was gradually democratized, in particular through the introduction of new legislation. This transition, however, was left unfinished. Throughout the period from the 1920s to the 1940s, the traditional family form predominated and even became one of the symbols of Socialist society (the same way it happened to the

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<sup>51</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 557, ll. 66, 67.

<sup>52</sup> TsDOOSO, f. 76, op. 1, d. 570, ll. 245, 248.

workers' family), which was due to the unfinished character of modernization. This pattern was further enhanced by the increasing traditionalism of the Stalinist era. In this sense the Russian society of the first half of the twentieth century can be described as a "*halbmoderne Gesellschaft*" (semi-modern society), a term suggested by Ulrich Beck, which illustrates the complex and challenging process of modernization.<sup>53</sup>

What is more, no definitive general break with older forms of family living could be observed in our data, except perhaps for small groups of forerunners. Rather, it seems that older, more complex and more patriarchal, family arrangements have been adapted to changing social realities and political-ideological imaginaries of the time. These findings are particularly interesting if confronted with well-known stipulations of Emmanuel Todd who argued that the Communist ideology was able to spread in Russia partly thanks to its structural compatibility with the prevalent traditional family structure based on complex households and communal-familistic behaviour.<sup>54</sup> While, as mentioned above, certain adaptation processes can indeed be identified in our data, our analysis also points out clearly that real life situations were much more nuanced than macro-structural theories could suggest.

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<sup>53</sup> Ulrich Beck, *Obshchestvo riska. Na puti k drugomu modernu*, transl. by B. Sidelnik, N. Fedorova (Moskva: Progress-Traditsia, 2000), 234.

<sup>54</sup> Emmanuel Todd, *Explanation of Ideology: Family Structures and Social Systems (Family, sexuality, and social relations in past times)*, transl. by David Garrioch (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985).

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### Summary

Communist ideology transformed the size, functions, structure and legal foundations of the family in Soviet Russia. There were objective and subjective factors which brought about active reforms of the family in the 1920s: the objective factors involved the modernization processes in the society, while the subjective ones were conscious attempts to construct the family institution in accordance with the idealized concept of the future

society. The 1920s family reform generated multiple family types, shaped in particular by ideological concepts and beliefs.

This paper analyzes the data from a unique source, the All-Russia Communist Party Census of 1922, which provides information about the number of people and the ratio of workers to dependents in Party members' families. Party members constituted the social group which was the most susceptible to ideology, which renders their family structure particularly interesting. These data also reflect the general trends in the early Soviet society and their scale. We put a special emphasis on the analysis of new family forms such as communal family, 'revolutionary' family, and so on.

**Keywords:** Soviet Russia in the early 1920s, family reform, All-Russia Communist Party Census, family structure and change, traditional family, modern family

### **Rodzina wczesnosowiecka w spisie ludności Komunistycznej Partii Związku Radzieckiego z 1922 roku**

#### **Streszczenie**

Ideologia komunistyczna wywarła ogromny wpływ na rozmiar, funkcję, strukturę oraz prawne podstawy rodziny w Rosji sowieckiej. W wyniku działania zarówno obiektywnych, jak i subiektywnych czynników, w latach 20. XX wieku dokonała się głęboka reforma rodziny. Do czynników obiektywnych zalicza się naturalne procesy modernizacyjne w społeczeństwie, natomiast do subiektywnych należały świadome próby zbudowania instytucji rodziny na podstawie wyidealizowanej koncepcji społeczeństwa przyszłości. Reforma rodziny z lat 20. doprowadziła do powstania licznych form rodziny, ukształtowanych w szczególności przez koncepcje i przekonania ideologiczne.

W artykule zanalizowano dane pochodzące z unikatowego źródła, jakim jest spis ludności Komunistycznej Partii Związku Radzieckiego z roku 1922. Spis ten dostarcza szczegółowych informacji odnośnie do rodzin członków Partii, tj. liczby domowników i proporcji osób pracujących do osób będących na ich utrzymaniu. Członkowie Partii stanowili grupę społeczną najbardziej podatną na wpływ i działanie ideologii, przez co analiza struktur ich rodzin staje się wyjątkowo atrakcyjna badawczo. Dane pochodzące ze spisu ludności z 1922 roku odzwierciedlają również ogólne trendy panujące we wczesnym społeczeństwie sowieckim oraz ich zasięg. W niniejszym artykule szczególnie nacisk położony jest na analizę nowych form rodzinnych takich jak komuny, rodziny „rewolucyjne” itd.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Rosja sowiecka we wczesnych latach 20. XX wieku, reforma rodziny, spis ludności Komunistycznej Partii Związku Radzieckiego, struktura rodziny i jej przemiany, rodzina tradycyjna, rodzina współczesna