

11

The development of the family structure in the Tambov region 1800-1917

Valery Kanitshev, Roman Kontchakov, Yuri Mizis and Ella Morozova

Introduction

Historical demographic studies of the family structure are dealing with one of the most important themes of social modernization – the transition from a traditional extended family to a small nuclear one. Some Western demographers, such as John Hajnal, tend to suggest that there is a relationship between the rise of the nuclear family and the development of a socially advanced Western Europe. He implied, though without stating it in so many words, that societies which preserved extended families for longer periods are somewhat defective.¹ Recently, Boris Mironov has attempted to prove by means of an in-depth study that a ‘normal European’, though somewhat belated, transition from a traditional to a modern model took place among families in Imperial Russia.²

This paper aims to trace the peculiarities of the modernization of provincial Russian families in the Tambov region, using an objective approach as far as possible and avoiding any ideological presumptions.³ Computer micro-analysis of the census registers and other censuses has been used as the main research method. This has allowed the many processes operating in particular families to be made visible from a bottom-up point of view whereas working with aggregate data often leaves these hidden. The main sources are the data from the 7th to 10th censuses of several villages with differing peasant class structures in the Tambov region combined with data for the typical regional town of Morshansk. Although some data is missing, information on the majority of the families in each settlement and for each census has been found. These hundreds of families provide a good and re-

¹ J. Hajnal, ‘European marriage patterns in perspective’, in: D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (eds.), *Population in history. Essays in historical demography* (London 1965).

² B.N. Mironov, *The social history of Imperial Russia 1700-1917*, volume 1 (Boulder 2000).

³ S. Yesikov, ‘The characteristics of the Tambov region in the nineteenth century’, in: P. Kooij (ed.), *Where the twain meet. Dutch and Russian regional development in a comparative perspective 1800-1917* (Groningen/Wageningen 1998) 7-15.

liable selection for a structural analysis of the local population. The sources list all members of each taxable family in a separate settlement, or on a landlord's estate in the case of serfs, with a record of the kind of relationship of the other family members to the family head and also all changes which had occurred (deaths, migrations, army recruitment) since a preceding census. These sources allow such basic indices as the number of family members and the type of family to be calculated, taking into account its status, its landowner or the settlement in which the family lived. The main shortcoming of the census registers as a source is that they formally report one peasant household as an extended big family, while in fact it was divided into several small independent ones.

In pre-reform Russia, the authorities and the landlords tried to prevent family partitions and this ban makes it very difficult to trace real peasant life. Thus, in the first instance, a household and a family had to be regarded as one and the same with supplementary comments being made where possible. There is only one case, that of the single family householders (*odnodvortsy*) in Rasskazovo, where the families of serfs are explicitly delineated. Because of this, other types of sources, such as the confessional lists, were studied to find data on the real family structure. Data on families in different peasant categories who went to confession in the separate parishes of Rasskazovo in 1811, 1823, 1832 and 1843 and in one parish of Morshansk in 1850 has now been compiled. Because the confessional lists and the census registers were prepared with similar structures and at relatively close dates to each other, a comparison makes it possible to specify the characteristics of the specific families. Various data from the registration records of the late eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries for the different classes (nobility, officials, *meschane*) in the Tambov region and in the towns of Tambov, Morshansk and Kirsanov were also used.

There are even more source problems for the study of the family structure during the period 1850-1917. The pre-reform censuses came to an end by the late 1850s and Russia waited until 1897 for the first general census. This appears to have been regarded as somewhat inaccurate because its primary data with information on specific families was destroyed on the instructions of the Central Statistics Committee. The published aggregate data of the 1897 census allow an evaluation to be made of the average sizes of rural and urban households at the levels of an *uezd* (region) and of separate towns. The average sizes of the land commune's households and of the separate farmsteads can be calculated using the *uezd* data from the 1917 agrarian census, which noted the peasant population and the number of households. The primary data for 1850-1917 for families of peasants and other social strata are sporadic and heterogeneous. The household censuses of the 1880s arranged by the

Tambov *Zemstvo* are helpful to some extent. They contain data on the number of consumers in a household mentioning the first and the family name of a household head, making it possible to estimate the average size of the households. Some demographic data can be found in the *Zemstvo* papers from applications for allowances for wives of the reservists recruited for the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878 and for the Russian-Japanese war of 1904-1905, as the *volost* (a small region or group of neighbouring villages) boards inspected the property status of the soldiers' families. Clergy registers (primary data on parishes and on the families of priests), the lists of merchant families and the lists of service by officials between 1850-1917 were also used. In this way new primary sources have been used to provide evidence for family history and family structure in the period 1850-1917, and the methods of deriving indirect data on the structure of specific rural and urban families have also been improved.

The peasant family in the first half of the nineteenth century

In traditional villages peasants generally preserved big family households. Moreover, Kiselev's reform of the state villages resulted in large households being retained in the censuses with the result that their average size almost doubled. This was shown most clearly in the wholly state-owned village of Malye Pupki and possibly also in the outskirts of Rasskazovo (table 1).

Table 1 The average size of census households in separate villages in the Tambov region, 1816-1858

	1816	1834	1850	1858
Malye Pupki (agricultural village, state peasants)	8.3	11.3	15.0	14.0
Kalugino (agric. village, serfs and state peasants)	8.9	-	10.8	-
Bailovka (agricultural village, serfs)	7.6	7.3	-	7.0
Rasskazovo (trade-indus. village, various peasants)	6.6	7.1	-	6.7
Rasskazovo outskirts (agric. villages, state peasants)	-	12.8	13.5	14.2

Bailovka, which was a village wholly inhabited by serfs, tended to have smaller families, presumably due to the crisis in the serf villages. The values for Kalugino fall in between those of Malye Pupki and Bailovka, probably because there was a mixed peasant population there. From as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, the peasant families in the trade-industrial village of Rasskazovo were on average notably smaller than the families in wholly agricultural and remote villages. However, it must be kept in mind that it is difficult to relate some of the average indices to specific social classes because Bailovka, Kalugino and Rasskazovo were also inhabited by peasants from other categories who may possibly have had family sizes and structures different from the majority of the peasants.

Table 2 The average size of census households for different estate groups in Bailovka (B) and Kalugino (K), 1811-1858

	1811		1816		1834		1850		1858
	B.	K.	B.	K.	B.	K.	B.	K.	B.
Serfs	7.3	8.2	8.3	-	7.4	-	6.9	9.2	6.5
Estate serfs	3.6	3.5	3.0	-	3.3	-	6.1	4.8	4.4
State peasants	-	-	-	8.9	-	-	-	-	-

Note: The figures calculated for 1811 are estimates based on the average number of males in the census. The figures have been almost doubled in keeping with the approximate equality of the number of males and females in traditional villages.

The average size of households of state peasants in Kalugino in 1816 was very close to that of Malye Pupki, suggesting that this was the typical family size for that category of peasants. The figures for the serfs in Bailovka prove that it was the serfs who were responsible for the general decrease in family size in this village. In contrast, the figures for Kalugino do not show a similar decrease in the period 1811-1850. In order to clarify these contradicting developments it is necessary to make further comparisons with other settlements. A special trend was revealed by the families of estate serfs, whose family size doubled in Bailovka and also increased in Kalugino. A possible explanation for this could be that restrictions imposed on the marriage of estate serfs by the landlords were far less common by the 1850s.

Table 3 The average size of census households for different classes in Rasskazovo and its outskirts, 1816-1858

	1816	1834	1850	1858
Serfs	7.0	7.2	-	8.0
Single family households	-	12.8	13.1	15.2
Principality (Tsar Family's) peasants	-	-	13.3	17.3
Factory-hand peasants	5.1	-	-	6.3
Estate serfs	4.1	3.9	-	4.8
Serfs of state peasants	-	4.3	-	5.0

A joint study of the census registers and the confessional lists showed that the Rasskazovo state peasants, who made up the majority of the population, preserved rather large families (on average 7-8 family members) through the whole of the first half of the nineteenth century, though their households remained notably smaller than those of the state peasants in the agricultural outskirts of Rasskazovo. The confessional data on the family size of the single family households (6.5 in 1823) and of principality peasants (7.3 in 1843) suggests that the actual families in these classes were only half the size suggested by the lists of the official household censuses.

Table 4 The average size of households according to confessional lists in Rasskazovo and its outskirts, 1811-1843

	1811	1823	1832	1843
Estate serfs	-	3.6	-	-
Single family households	-	6.5	-	-
Serfs	8.3	7.3	7.9	-
Principality peasants	-	-	-	7.3
Total	7.9	6.4	7.0	7.3

The average family size of the serfs in Rasskazovo is close to that of the Bailovka figure. Shortage of land was possibly a common restriction on family size in these settlements since Kalugino, where the available land had not yet been exhausted, also had notably larger families. Similar figures can be found for Kamenka, a neighbouring landlord's village in this steppe area.⁴ Steven Hoch, who studied the village of Petrovskoe which was situated in the same part of the Tambov region, calculated similar family sizes to those found for Kalugino.⁵

During this period, the families of peasants who were working as factory hands were notably smaller with only 5 to 6 members, which suggests that industrialization had some impact on the behaviour of this social group. The Rasskazovo estate serfs and the state peasants' serfs (whose way of life was very similar to that of the estate serfs) had rather small families (averages of 5.7 and 4.4 members for this period). Their family sizes reflect the distortions brought about by the numerous bans imposed by landlords on the marriages of their household servants. There were only 5 children among the 15 single estate serfs listed in the 1816-1858 censuses, the other 10 (comprising 12.3% of all estate serfs' families) were adult single people. Such a high share of single people was unnatural for Russian peasant society and was caused by the bans on marriage imposed by the landlords. In comparison, there were only 1% of unmarried adults in the serf and factory hand peasant groups. In contrast to Kalugino and Bailovka, there was almost no increase in the average family size in Rasskazovo suggesting that the bans on marriages were still of importance there.

The tables contain no data on the smallest population groups, which were not listed in the censuses as such but were included in the census registers for the sake of completeness or could be calculated by the changes from the one census to another. In the 1850s, 47 families of factory hand peasants, comprising on average 5.6 members each by 1858, were emancipated and this was obviously less than the average figures for Rasskazovo. In 1858, some 28

⁴ Н.Н. Ротанов, *Село Каменка и его болость. Особое прибавление к «Сборнику статистических сведений по Тамбовской губернии»* (Tambov 1886).

⁵ S.L. Hoch, *Serfdom and social control in Russia. Petrovskoe, a village in Tambov* (Chicago/London 1986).

families of Rasskazovo factory hand peasants entered the Tambov *meschane* group, although they stayed in their native village. Their average family size was 6.3 by 1858, a figure which was also less than the average due to their transition to trade-industrial activities.

The soldiers' families displayed the biggest variations. According to the census, the families of the soldiers' wives contained only 3-4 people each, while the confessional lists reported only soldiers' wives living alone and soldiers' children. At the same time, the families of retired soldiers grew on average from 5.5 members in 1850 to 9.0 in 1858 thanks to a shortening of the service period and more furloughs.

The value of microanalysis increases if we compare its information with aggregated data on a higher level. Such a comparison helps to make clear what the objects of microanalysis are. It is possible to obtain an understanding of the special characteristics of separate settlements, classes and inner class groups and of separate households and families by relating figures obtained in this way to the total figures for the region and the country, making it easier to display the real diversity of social life than is possible with abstract average numbers.

The Tambov regional data on peasant households in 1862, for instance, showed an average household size of 8.3 people, while the villages of Bailovka, Kalugino and Rasskazovo displayed deviations from this average with figures ranging from 7.5 to 9.5 people. This does not, however, change the general picture of the dominance of big families. At the same time, the numbers differed sharply from the data of the 1858 census. In 1862, Bailovka having had some increase of population, was found to have 20% fewer households than in the preceding census, pushing up the average family size by 2.4 people. The opposite was found in Kalugino with 50% more households in 1862 than there were 12 years before, which reduced the average family size by 3.3 people. Such statistical contradictions can only be explained by different methods of census taking and administrative counting.

Census registers were mainly aimed at fixing and strengthening big and solvent peasant families, which in reality should have been divided into several smaller ones. On the other hand, census registers counted remnants of disintegrated families from the preceding censuses as independent households while they often consisted only of infants or elderly people. It should be kept in mind that the estate serf families listed in the registers as separate households in fact lived on estates.

The administrative lists of settlements probably counted the real households. So, in 1862 fewer households were recorded in Bailovka than the number of families in the last census because in fact many estate serf families had no households. The opposite situation found for Kalugino can be ex-

plained by the fact that some state peasant families lived separately but were listed in the census as being part of united big households. This was clearly the case in 1862 in Malye Pupki. The village population was almost the same in the 1858 census lists as in the 1862 lists, while the number of households differed drastically changing from 255 to 863, which cut the average family size down three times to 4.2 people. In all probability many small families were living separately. The 1858 census counted 1,086 small families and a large share of them could have formed independent households. However, the 1862 family size reported for Malye Pupki deviates too much from figures for other villages and the region as a whole to state that such small households were typical for peasant families. It would appear that the census clerks listed households not as joint peasant economies but as separate houses.

The average family sizes in Rasskazovo and the outskirts of Rasskazovo for 1858 and 1862 were, however, almost the same, showing not only the stability of the counting methods but also the quality of the calculations for the different settlements. The all-region data for 1862 also provides information on social class and household size which can be compared with the figures for the villages being studied. On a regional scale, the average size of a serf household appears to have been 0.3 people more than the figure for the average state peasant household. The census registers for the villages studied showed the opposite, suggesting that the officials had deliberately made efforts to exaggerate the state peasant family size in the census registers. The average peasant family size of 8 people in the Tambov region in the 1850s was probably the optimum for a peasant household of that period. Some 4–5 children survived, plus 3–4 adults resulting in a normal number and ratio of consumers to workers. A second reason was that an average family of 8 people needed 4 statistical males to get enough land allotments, since four allotments for a household were regarded as the optimum in the Tambov region. However, reality was more complex and most families were far from the desired optimum size and composition. There were large deviations from the optimal family size and the optimal consumer-worker ratio in these villages, making living standards quite different for different families.

The distribution of family types reflects the common family structure in a certain population. Peter Laslett proposed a classical peasant family typology,⁶ which was later adjusted to Russian data by Steven Hoch.⁷ This latter classification has been used in our research and tables.

⁶ P. Laslett, 'Introduction: the history of the family', in: P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds.), *Household and family in past time* (Cambridge 1972) 28–32.

⁷ Hoch, *Serfdom*, 80–81. For comparable data on nearby Voronezh 1887–1896, see also C.D. Worobec, *Peasant Russia. Family and community in the post-emancipation period* (Princeton 1991) 108–110.

Table 5 Peasant family types in Malye Pupki, 1816-1858, in %

Family type	1816	1834	1850	1858
1.1. Single widowers	1	0.5	2	3
1.2. Singles (family status unknown)	3	3	0	1
2.1. Blood relatives with no families	2	0.5	0.5	0
2.2. Other relatives living together	1	0.5	0.5	1
3.1. Couple	1.5	3	2	2
3.2. Couple with children	24	9	10	8
3.3. Widowers with children	2	0.5	0.5	2
3.4. Widows with children	0.5	0	2	1
3.5. Soldiers' wives with children	0.5	0.5	0	0
4.1. Couples with children and widowed parents	2.5	4	3	3
4.2. Couples with children and nephews/nieces	1	1	1	1
4.3. Couples with children and unmarried brothers/sisters	3	2	4	3
4.4. Combination of the previous types	4	6	2	1
4.5. Unclear relationship	0	2	0	0
5.1. Widows/widowers with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	0	0	0	0
5.2. Couples with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	18	20	16	18
5.3. Couples with married and unmarried children and nephews/nieces	6	4.5	7	4
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with married and unmarried children	0	0	0.5	2
5.5. Other types of extended families	30	43	49	50
Total	100	100	100	100

The family types in Malye Pupki displayed increasing conservatism resulting in an increasing number of extended families. In 1816, these types (categories 4.1 to 5.5) made up 65% of all families, in 1834 their share had increased to 82%. The percentage remained almost the same in 1850 and 1858. The share of more complicated extended families (category 5.5: Other types of extended families) even increased from 30% in 1816 to 50% in 1858. The enormous percentage of 'Other types of extended families' with distant relatives suggests that there were serfs present in the households of the state peasants. That was prohibited in the Kiselev reforms but serfs were listed as fake relatives to circumvent the law. At the same time, the share of simple nuclear families consisting of couples with children fell from 24% in 1816 to only 8% in 1858.

In contrast to Malye Pupki, the serf village of Bailovka (Table 6) experienced a slight decline in the numbers of the extended types (categories 4.1 to 5.5) with their share falling from 80% in 1816 to a still considerable 70% in 1858. On the other hand, the percentage of couples and couples with chil-

dren rose from 10% to 22%. There were also comparatively few of the most complex families (category 5.5). In 1850, the family types in Kalugino (Table 7) had a very similar structure to that in Malye Pupki with 84% being extended families and only 14% couples and couples with children.

Table 6 Peasant family types in Bailovka, 1816-1858, in %

Family type	1816	1834	1850-51	1858
1.1. Single widowers	0	2.5	1	0
1.2. Singles (family status unknown)	5	4	0	2
2.1. Blood relatives with no families	0	2.5	0	3
2.2. Other relatives living together	0	0	0	0
3.1. Couple	0	0	1	0
3.2. Couple with children	10	7	22	22
3.3. Widowers with children	0	5	2	3
3.4. Widows with children	2	2.5	5	1
3.5. Soldiers' wives with children	0	0	0	0
4.1. Couple with children and widowed parents	5	5	3	2
4.2. Couple with children and nephews	3	0	1	1
4.3. Couple with children and unmarried brothers/sisters	5	1	1	2
4.4. Combination of the previous types	10	2.5	7	3
4.5. Unclear relationship	0	0	0	0
5.1. Widows/widowers with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	14	21	16	17
5.2. Couple with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	29	23	22	22
5.3. Couple with married and unmarried children and nephews/nieces	0	6	2	6
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with married and unmarried children	5	13	3	3
5.5. Other types of extended families	12	5	14	13
Total	100	100	100	100

A more precise view of the relationship between family structure and social class can be obtained if the data for the villages is split up into the different peasant categories. A division between serfs and so-called estate serfs has been made for Bailovka and is shown in Table 8. It is clear that there were a relatively large number of singles among the estate serf families in the beginning of the period, however, the figures for estate serfs gradually approached those of the other peasant categories in later years. This development was due to the fact that the landlords more often gave permission for their estate serfs to marry. The percentage among the estate serfs of couples with children and other live-in relatives also increased. Nevertheless, there were not many estate serfs with families of the fifth type. This was probably due to the absence of agricultural economies of scale which would have required many workers of several generations.

Table 7 Peasant family types in Kalugino, 1816-1850, in %

Family type	1816	1850
1.1. Single widowers/widows	2.5	1
1.2. Singles (family status unknown)	0	0
2.1. Blood relatives with no families	4	0
2.2. Other relatives living together	0	1
3.1. Couple	2.5	3
3.2. Couple with children	12	9
3.3. Widowers with children	0	1
3.4. Widows with children	1	1
3.5. Soldiers' wives with children	0	0
4.1. Couple with children and widowed parents	7	2
4.2. Couple with children and nephews	0	2
4.3. Couple with children and unmarried brothers/sisters	5	0
4.4. Combination of the previous types	1	2
4.5. Unclear relationship	0	1
5.1. Widowers/widows with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	25	22
5.2. Couple with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	28	22
5.3. Couple with married and unmarried children and nephews	1	7
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with married and unmarried children	10	19
5.5. Other types of extended families	1	7
Total	100	100

The typology of serf families differed little from that of the state peasants. The fourth and fifth types of extended families continued to be in the majority with a slight decrease from 70% in 1816 to 60% in 1858. There was a rise in the nuclear family type (category 3), but its share had barely reached 25% by the 1850s. Therefore, it is difficult to state that the peasant families in Bailovka were more modernized than those in Malye Pupki. Some modern characteristics are found among the families of the estate serfs, but this was caused by the fact that they did not live a traditional peasant's life.

There were not very many differences in the family typologies of the several different social groups in Kalugino. Complex (extended) families prevailed both for state peasants and serfs and the figures for the state peasants are almost equal to those for Malye Pupki in 1816. The percentage of the third family type (nuclear families) among the serfs was half that in Bailovka, a settlement where the estate serfs showed a majority of couples with or without children.

It is clear that the extended family (types 4.1 to 5.5) predominated in all peasant classes. The percentage of simple (nuclear) families (types 1.1 to 3.5) was highest for factory hand peasants (a possible impact of the industrial nature of the profession) and was lowest for state peasants due to the policies of the authorities, which were aimed at restricting the partition of households. The position of the extended family was strengthened for all the peasant

classes and the reasons for that, particularly in the case of serfs and factory hand peasants, must be studied further.

Table 8 Family structure for different social groups in Bailovka, 1816-1858, in %

[illegible]

Table 9 Family structure for different social groups in Kalugino, 1816-1850, in %

Family type	1816	1850	
	State peasants	Estate serfs	Serfs
1.1. Single widowers	-	-	2
1.2. Singles (family status unknown)	2.5	-	-
2.1. Blood relatives with no families	5	-	-
2.2. Other relatives living together	-	14	-
3.1. Couple	2.5	7	2
3.2. Couple with children	13	43	7
3.3. Widowers with children	-	7	-
3.4. Widows with children	-	-	1
4.1. Couple with children and widowed parents	8	-	2
4.2. Couple with children and nephews	-	-	1
4.3. Couple with children and unmarried brothers/sisters	5	-	-
4.4. Combination of the previous types	1	-	2
4.5. Unclear relationship	-	-	1
5.1. Widowers/widows with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	24	-	23
5.2. Couple with married and unmarried children and grandchildren	28	29	20
5.3. Couple with married and unmarried children and nephews	1	-	8
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with married and unmarried children	10	-	23
5.5. Other types of extended families	1	-	8
Total	100	100	100

The Rasskazovo confessional lists do not mention any families consisting of single peasant children, showing that these did not actually exist. This can be explained by the fact that peasants traditionally cared for their orphaned relatives. The 1811 confessional list shows that the extended groups of blood relatives were far more widespread than is suggested by the census data. At confession, the fifth type of families made up 79% of the total while, according to the 1816 census data, they comprised only 55% of households. In contrast, the share of the third type of families was recorded as being 12% and 27% respectively. At the same time, blood relatives were not always recorded as forming a united household in the confessional lists. A comparison of computer selections shows structural coincidence for half of the families recorded in the census and confessional lists. Small differences can be explained by the number of deaths and births in the period between the years of the confession (1811) and the census (1816). The rest of the families were recorded in the confessional lists as being more extended families, particularly in the branches of brothers and sisters, than was recorded in the census data.

Table 10 Family structure for different social groups in Rasskazovo according to census data, 1816-1858, in %

Family type	Factory-hand peasants		State peasants			Serfs			Estate serfs		
	1816	1858	1834	1850	1858	1816	1834	1858	1816	1834	1858
1.1. Single widowers	1	1	2.5	-	-	1	6	-	-	3.5	-
1.2. Singles (family status unknown)	4	2	-	-	-	3	-	5	5	18	16
2.1. Blood relatives with no families	-	-	6	-	-	3	-	-	5	3.5	9.5
2.2. Other relatives living together	2	4	2.5	-	-	2	-	7	-	-	3
3.1. Couple	2	3	2.5	-	-	2	-	2	9.5	11	3
3.2. Couple with children	11	17	11	14	6	18	-	5	51.5	35.5	34.5
3.3. Widowers with children	31	2	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-
3.4. Widows with children	1	5	2.5	-	-	3	-	-	9.5	7	6
3.5. Soldiers' wives with children	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-
4.1. Couple with children and widowed parents	6	10	-	5	11	4	19	9	-	7	6
4.2. Couple with children and nephews	-	-	-	3	3	0.5	-	2	9.5	-	-
4.3. Couple with children & single brothers/sisters	6	1	-	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	3
4.4. Combination of the previous types	2	8	-	3	3	5	-	7	5	-	-
5.1. Widows/widowers with married and single children and grandchildren	3	14	14	14	-	8	-	9	-	-	9.5
5.2. Couple with married and single children and grandchildren	6	20	20	24	46	28	37	32	-	11	9.5
5.3. Couple with married and single children and nephews	5	1	6	-	11	3	13	-	-	-	-
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with married and single children	17	8	26	32	17	11	6	7	5	-	-
5.5. Other types of extended families	3	4	6	5	3	4.5	13	9	-	3.5	-
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 11 Family structure for different social groups in Rasskazovo according to the confessional lists, 1811-1823, in %

Family type	Serfs			Estate serfs	State peasants
	1811	1823	1832	1823	1823
1.1. Single widowers	-	-	-	1	-
1.2. Singles (family status unknown)	-	-	-	1	-
2.1. Single blood relatives (brothers/sisters)	-	-	1	1	-
2.2. Other relatives living together	-	1	-	-	-
3.1. Couple	-	2	1	9	-
3.2. Couple with children	12	13	17	64	50
3.3. Widowers with children	-	-	-	-	-
3.4. Widows with children	-	2	1	18	10
3.5. Soldiers' wives with children	-	-	1	-	-
4.1. Couple with children and widowed parents	5	7	8	-	10
4.2. Couple with children and nephews	-	1	3	-	-
4.3. Couple with children and single brothers/sisters.	-	2	6	9	-
4.4. Combination of the previous types	4	7	3	-	-
5.1. Widowers/widows with single and married children and grandchildren	17	12	12	-	-
5.2. Couple with married and single children and grandchildren	35	36	33	-	30
5.3. Couple with married and single children and nephews	2	2	1	-	-
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with married and single children	23	12	12	-	-
5.5. Other types of extended families	1	3	1	-	-
Total	100	100	100	100	100

A comparative study of the evolution of the structure of the families as shown in the census and the confessional lists in the 1810s to 1830s shows that the percentage of the most extended families grew by 15% according to the censuses, while it declined by 18% in the confessional lists. The reverse trend was shown for the nuclear families with their share being reduced by 20% according to the censuses, while growing by 8% in the confessional lists. It appears that a number of big families with complicated blood relationships were reduced at confession with their various branches becoming registered as separate households. The reasons for registering more complex family structures in the census by the 1830s are, however, not clear.

According to the census of 1834 and the confessional lists of 1823, the structures of the families of state peasants differed profoundly, although there are only 10 families named in the confessional lists, which limits the possibility of drawing general conclusions. As in the case of the serfs, the confes-

sional lists showed no singles or unmarried people, while the census reported more than 10% of families of these types. The largest share in the confessional lists, 60%, consisted of families of the third type, while in the census lists they only had a share of 16%. On the other hand the confessional lists reported the share of the fourth and fifth types of families at 40%, while in the census lists the share of these kind of families was 68%. So there is some ground for believing that the real families as reported by the confessional lists were smaller than those fixed in the formal census.

It is accepted that the family structure of the estate serfs was unstable because it depended to a large extent on living at a landlord's house and its out-buildings and included people doing service labour such as gardeners, grooms, guards, etc., but the Rasskazovo estate serfs still had their own families. The confessional lists showed the predominance of the nuclear family reflecting the estate serfs' normal human eagerness to establish a family, but there was no need for them to have an extended family structure since they were not involved in agricultural labour.

On the whole, peasant families in the villages studied remained extended throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. The percentage of the most branched families grew in state peasant villages, probably due to better administration and to restrictions on partitioning of households. In the villages owned by the landlords, the feudal arrangements for the estate serf families have to be taken into account and this cannot be taken as signs of modernization.

The presence of higher class families in the villages formed by the nobility and the clergy should also be taken into account. Data is available only for nine Rasskazovo priests' families in the period 1811-1832. Seven of them were simple (nuclear) families. As for the nobility, data is available for 152 estates by the late 1700s in the central and most typical *uezd* in the Tambov region. As usual, landlords lived in nuclear families with an average of 2.4 children. The average family size for the landlords (including relatives living together) was 4.3 people. It can, therefore, be stated that the Tambov nobility had already experienced the transition to a modern kind of family by the early 1800s.

The peasant family in the period 1860-1917

The sources for the period provide most help in studying peasant families at the meso level of the *uezd* and *gubernia* (region). As table 12 shows, there was a gradual reduction in the average size of the peasant household since the Emancipation in 1861 and throughout the period 1860-1900 when family partitions became easier. The largest reduction in family size (some 40 to 50%) occurred in the regions where the oldest settlements (Elatma, Lebedyan,

Morshansk) were situated and which also first experienced agrarian overpopulation. A possible reason for this reduction in family size was the exploitation of the best steppe black earth, which allowed almost double the yield of cereals to be produced in the nineteenth century with a smaller family labour force. However, the arable land reserves in the region had been exhausted by the 1880s and there was almost no change to modern intensive agricultural methods, so that no further noticeable reductions in the sizes of peasant families took place. Nevertheless, the 1917 agrarian census data suggests a predominance of the nuclear family. The average regional ratio of consumers to workers was about 2 to 1, or 3 adults and 3 children in an average family. The most likely family structure combinations were families consisting of a couple with 1 adult and 3 small children and families consisting of a couple with 3 small children plus an unmarried younger brother of the head of the family.

Table 12 The average size of peasant families in the Tambov region, 1862-1917

Region	1862	1897	1917	1917
			Commoners	<i>Khutor</i> (ind. owners)
Borisoglebsk	8.3	6.5	6.5	6.8
Elatom	9.5	5.8	4.8	4.3
Kirsanov	7.9	6.3	5.0	7.1
Kozlov	8.3	6.6	6.1	3.8
Lebedyan	10.6	6.4	6.1	-
Lipetsk	8.3	6.6	5.9	7.9
Morshansk	8.8	6.3	5.8	6.4
Spassk	7.7	6.3	6.6	-
Tambov	8.5	6.5	5.8	6.9
Temnikov	8.2	6.0	6.2	6.9
Usman	8.4	6.6	6.4	6.7
Shatsk	8.3	6.4	6.4	7.1
Overall average	8.5	6.4	6.1	6.3

Source: *Списки населенных мест Российской империи. V.XLII.* (St Petersburg 1866); *Первая Всеобщая перепись населения Российской империи 1897 г. V.42.* (St Petersburg 1904); *Поездные итоги сельскохозяйственной переписи Тамбовской губернии в 1917 г.* (Tambov 1917).

The 1917 agrarian census data allows peasants who stayed in land communes to be distinguished from those who had turned to *khutor* households, running an independent farmstead. The latter group of families was larger in 8 of the 10 *uezd* and in the Tambov region as a whole. An independent farmstead was more interesting for big families who were able to manage the land without the use of machinery. The higher consumers/workers ratio (about 2.2) supports the idea that such farmsteads were populated by young families with

large numbers of small children, who had no chance of acquiring large allotments in an overpopulated commune.

Table 13 Average household size in Bailovka, Kalugino and Malye Pupki, 1850-1911

	1850/1858	1880s	1911
Bailovka	7.0	6.0	7.5
Kalugino	10.8	6.7	6.3
Malye Pupki	14.5	8.5	8.3

There is no doubt that the household census papers of the 1860s till 1917 were more accurate than the census registers in registering the exact number of households. Firstly, the *Zemstvos*, which were responsible for the household censuses, had no fiscal aims. Secondly and most importantly, the household censuses were aimed especially at peasant households. These papers show an uneven reduction in family size in specific places, which contrasts with the pattern shown by the region as a whole. The former serf village of Bailovka showed a growth in family size by the 1910s. The former state peasant village of Malye Pupki had experienced an enormous family size reduction by the 1880s, afterwards that process slowed down to leave an average family size noticeably higher than the regional average. Kalugino, with its mixed social class structure, was close to the figures for the region as a whole.

Tambov historians have begun a special family reconstruction study to investigate the causes of the observed trends. The database of 154 Kozlov reservists recruited for the Russian-Japanese war of 1904-1905 may be of some help in this endeavour. The average size of the family from which the recruits came was 5.9, consisting of the 2 marriage partners, 2 children and 2 relatives (parents, brothers and sisters). The number of children might have been higher by 1917 as the average age of a reservist in 1904 was around 30. Only 1 in 5 of the reservists recruited lived with his parents. The average age of these parents was over 60 in 1905, so there was very little likelihood of them surviving another 12 years. On the other hand, two thirds of the recruits had brothers, usually younger ones, who could have formed separate families by 1917. Most of the children of the recruits were young in 1905, with only 17 out of 287 being older than 18 at that time, so that it is unlikely that many of them had become independent householders in 1917. The families of the recruits contained almost no uncles or nephews of the recruits, so that it is possible to state that practically all the adult married males lived separately from their brothers and that there were few collateral-branched families. Assuming that this reasoning is correct, the families of recruits in 1917 consisted of couples with 3-4 children and rarely of parents and unmarried brothers. Regional data on family size at the turn of the century shows

similar results with the average size being 6 people, so that it is possible to suggest that this size was optimal for the Tambov peasantry of this period. This is 2 persons less than in the 1850s, reflecting the trend towards modernization of the family unit to households formed from a couple with children no longer living together with all kinds of collateral branches. Despite this, the average Russian rural or agricultural household remained bigger than the equivalent Western European household in the same period, which had already reduced to an average size of 4–5 people before the nineteenth century.⁸

The urban family in the first half of the nineteenth century

Information on the typical medium-sized town of Morshansk (a *uezd* centre) plus some selected data on Tambov (the regional capital) and the small *uezd* centre of Kirsanov is available for studying the various classes of provincial urban families in Tambov. No analysis has been made of urban families as a generalized idea because such a broad and abstract concept has little relationship with reality and would have been a contradiction of the essence of micro-history studies, which are aimed at investigating the real past.

Table 14 Average family size according to census data for different social groups in Morshansk, 1816–1850

	1816		1833				1850			
	Meschane		Merchants		Estate serfs		Merchants		Meschane	
Size	Abs.	%	Abs.	%	Abs.	%	Abs.	%	Abs.	%
1	33	10	9	4	25	50	18	9	67	33
2–5	199	59	66	29	24	48	43	22	98	49
6–10	92	27	76	34	1	2	65	33	34	17
11–15	13	4	36	16	0	0	37	19	1	0
16–20	1	0	20	9	0	0	14	7	1	0
21–26	0	0	10	4	0	0	10	5	0	0
More than 26	0	0	8	4	0	0	8	4	0	0
Total	338	100	225	100	50	100	195	100	201	100

Source: Tambov Regional State Archive (GATO) fund 12, register 1, file 681, 1102, 1374, 1757, 1759.

The Morshansk *meschane* showed the biggest changes in average family size, moving towards the smallest size families. Merchant families remained large and their family structure was comparatively stable. For reasons which have already been explained, the estate serfs had practically only small families of up to five people and half of them were reported in the census as living alone.

⁸ Laslett, 'Introduction', 60–61.

The average merchant family size, as recorded in the census, increased from 9.7 in 1833 to 10.4 in 1850 while the figures for the *meschane* fell from 4.8 in 1816 to 3.4 in 1850.

Table 15 Family structure for different social groups in Morshansk according to census data, 1816-1850, in %

Family type	Merchants		Meschane		Estate serfs
	1833	1850	1816	1850	1833
1.1. Single widowers	1	5.5	2	7	4
1.2. Singles (family status unknown)	3	4	7	26	61
2.1. Single blood relatives	1	-	2	5	11
2.2. Other relatives, living together	-	2.5	0.5	2	-
2.3. Persons with no blood relations	-	-	0.5	-	-
3.1. Couple	4	2.5	8.5	11	7
3.2. Couple with children	28	20	38	25	13
3.3. Widowers with children	1	2	2	2	4
3.4. Widows with children	1	2	5	4	-
3.5. Soldiers' wives with children	-	-	0.5	-	-
4.1. Couple with children and widowed parents	6	2	7	3	-
4.2. Couple with children and nephews	-	-	0.5	-	-
4.3. Couple with children and single brothers/sisters	1	0.5	0.5	1	-
4.4. Combination of previous types	6	5	9	7	-
5.1. Widows/widowers with single and married children and grandchildren	6	4	3	1	-
5.2. Couple with single and married children and grandchildren	19	21	8.5	2	-
5.3. Couple with single and married children and nephews	1	-	0.5	-	-
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with single and married children	7	11	4	2	-
5.5. Other types of extended families	15	18	1	2	-
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: GATO, fund 12, register 1, file 681, 1102, 1374, 1757, 1759.

Type five (complex extended families) was the most popular family type among the Morshansk merchants in 1833 with 48% of all families, then came type three (nuclear families) with 34%, while singles, types one and two, were not very usual with 4% and 1% respectively. The percentage of complex extended families (type five) grew to 54% by the 1850s while the percentage of nuclear families decreased to 26.5%. The percentage of singles (type one), however, increased notably to 9.5%. Such trends can be explained by the need for merchants to consolidate in the face of business difficulties and was also supported by the immigration of peasants with their village tradition of extended families.

Nuclear families (type three) were favourite among the *meschane* with 54% in 1816 and 43% in 1850. Extended and complex families, types four and five, were less common with 33% in 1816 and 19% in 1850. These decreases were the result of a large increase in the share of singles, types one and two, from 12% to 40% within 33 years. Possible reasons for this change include a general increase in the age at marriage for those in the trade-industrial social classes and a considerable worsening of the economic conditions which made it more difficult to enter into marriage. As usual, single people dominated among the estate serfs (65%), families of types three comprised 24% while there were no extended families at all. Nevertheless, the town estate serfs differed from their village counterparts.

What data can be derived from the confessional lists? In total, 3,276 persons of all classes went to confession in Morshansk in 1850. Of these 1,106 (34%) lived in nuclear families, type three, and there was exactly the same percentage of extended families, type five, with 1,104 persons. Slightly fewer than this, 965 people (29%), lived in a family of type four, and only 77 people, 2%, were singles of type 1, and even fewer, just 24, were singles living together (type two).

Most representatives of the honorary citizens class (67%), of the merchants (53%) and of the tsar family peasants (50%) lived in complex extended families, type five. The confessional data shows the same percentage of families of type five for the merchants as was obtained from the census data. A high percentage of type five families for the honorary citizens was due to the fact that that class was formed from the families of the richest merchants whose fortunes originated from their co-operation as a clan. The figures for the tsar family peasants are noticeably higher than those shown by the confessional data concerning the Rasskazovo state peasants, while they are lower than those from the census data on Malye Pupki and Rasskazovo. According to the confessional lists, nuclear families were common among the families of non-commissioned officers (100%), the families of officers (87%), the nobility (62%), the emancipated serfs (59%), the clergy (60%) and the *meschane* (35%). The confessional data for the *meschane* is comparable with that obtained from the censuses and allows the same conclusion to be drawn – the nuclear family prevailed. The predomination of nuclear families for the other town classes can be explained by the nature of their professions which did not require the co-operation of relatives. The families of type one were predominant among the soldier's wives (5%) and the estate serfs (33%). The behaviour of these town families was as much restricted by feudal social conditions as those in the villages.

Data on 37 *meschane* and 14 merchant families has been selected for the city of Tambov in the first half of the nineteenth century. The *meschane* fami-

lies consisted on average of 4.5 people, which is close to the Morshansk figure. The families of merchants numbered 5.0 people, which means that the families of merchants in Tambov seem to have been much smaller than those in Morshansk. The reasons for this are not clear. It is possible that this class behaved in a more modern way in the older regional centre than it did in a smaller-sized town like Morshansk. Tambov did not experience such strong business swings as was the case in Morshansk during this period, where it became economically favourable to cling on to a family/clan co-operation strategy.

The service lists of 152 officials from Tambov, Morshansk and Kirsanov for 1850 show that there had been a completed transition by this class to the nuclear family structure with an average of 2.2 people, but these lists also show the abnormal family position of the state officials. A total of 65 men were single and that was, of course, not only due to modernization of the family structure. An equally important reason was the existence of the feudal system, with state bans on marriage for officials who had not reached a certain rank.

The data does not, therefore, support the common idea of a total predomination of nuclear families in Russian towns in the first half of the nineteenth century. The evolution of the family structure was much more complex than this, being influenced by particular situations and the social structure prevailing in a specific place.

The urban family in the second half of the nineteenth century

The First General Census of 1897 also includes data on urban family sizes.⁹ Three categories of households are distinguished: 1) singles households, 2) households with relatives but no hired workers or lodgers, and 3) households of hired workers. The first two can be seen as real families, while the third category represents hostels for workers employed by one master or one enterprise or for those who had formed a cartel (an association for joint work).

In the majority of the towns, families with relatives formed more than 80% of the total number of households and consisted on average of 4–5 people, which fits the standards of modern society. Only Shatsk, Lebedyan and Usman, which had a high proportion of people engaged in agriculture, showed average family sizes which were closer to the norms of a traditional society. In most towns the share of families composed of unmarried people was between 8 and 11%. Most of these households consisted of 2 singles while others were households with just one person, both being a clear sign of

⁹ For the results for the city of Tambov also see V. Kanitshev, 'The demographic, occupational and social structure of the Tambov and Yaroslavl populations at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century', in: Kooij (ed.), *Where the twain meet*, 87–94.

the crisis in traditional marital behaviour which was aimed at maximum conjugation. The shares of singles in the village population was never more than 1%.

Table 16 Average urban household size in Tambov Region, 1897

Towns	Households with relatives	Singles household	Households of hired workers
Tambov	4.2	1.7	16.2
Borisoglebsk	4.3	1.6	15.8
Elatma	4.4	1.8	11.5
Kadom	4.8	1.7	5.5
Kirsanov	4.3	2.1	9.1
Kozlov	4.3	2.0	13.0
Lebedyan	5.2	1.8	9.4
Lipetsk	4.8	1.8	9.4
Morshansk	4.4	1.7	5.9
Spassk	4.6	1.6	4.0
Temnikov	4.5	1.9	7.6
Usman	5.2	1.8	11.5
Shatsk	5.6	1.7	8.7

The percentage of households consisting of hired workers was only 1 to 2% but because these accommodated a large number of people they had a disproportionate influence on the average urban household size, resulting in a figure for Tambov, Kirsanov and Kozlov which was 2 people more than in the average normal household. This illustrates once more the danger of using average figures which can give a false impression of the actual situation.

Family lists of the Tambov merchants for the period 1890-1910 (Table 17) are used as primary sources for the second half of the nineteenth century. The data on 114 families results in an average size of 5 people, which is larger than that for the average urban family.

The simple nuclear family was clearly predominant with almost two thirds of all families being of this type. The share of types four and five was small whereas the share of singles was relatively large. This was due to the prolonged bachelor status of young merchants who delayed marriage until they had achieved steady business success. Deducting the singles allows an average family size of 5.7 people to be calculated, i.e. each couple had on average around four children. Thus, although many of the merchants had turned to a simple family structure, they continued to have comparatively large households by modern standards due to the tradition of having (a lot of) children.

The families of the clergy for the same period show similar results. The data on 22 families of priests from Tambov, Morshansk and Kirsanov for the period 1892-1903 showed an average size of 5.2 people. Most of these were families consisting of a couple and 3 to 4 children.

Table 17 Family structure of merchants in Tambov, 1890-1910, in %

Family type	1890/1910
1.1. Single widowers	12
2.1. Single blood relatives	1
2.2. Other relatives, living together	1
3.1. Couple	8
3.2. Couple with children	54
3.3. Widowers with children	5
3.4. Widows with children	6
4.3. Couple with children and single brothers/sisters	1
5.1. Widows/widowers with single and married children and grandchildren	2
5.2. Couple with single or married children and grandchildren	9
5.4. Families of brothers/sisters with single or married children	2
Total	100

The family pattern of the officials (54 families in the same towns in the period 1880-1890) proved to be very different with the average family size being 2.8 persons. A quarter of the officials were bachelors and each couple had on average only one child. There were no adult children living in the families of the officials. This seemingly modern family structure was in fact the result of the feudal bans and rules mentioned earlier.

In conclusion, it is clear that the urban family in the Tambov region experienced a profound modernization in its size and structure in the period 1850-1917. This modernization had a different impact on the various social strata depending on both the power of traditions and on the social-economic status.