

Provincial Employees in the Country of Councils on Statistical Data of the 1920s
Empleados provinciales en el país de consejos sobre datos estadísticos de la década de 1920

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Fecha de recibido: 2020-10-14

Fecha de aceptado para publicación: 2020-11-18

Fecha de publicación: 2020-11-20



Abstract

The authors of the article study demographic and social characteristics of the Soviet employee of the 1920s. The historical period, we dwell on, seems to be one of the most complex and dramatic in the history of Russia and its regions. The initial period of development of the new state is characterized by the search for optimal ways out of the economic crisis, the formation of a renewed social structure frame, and attempts to show the whole world the achievements of the first years of Soviet power. The study characterizes the socio-demographic category of employees in a particular region of Russia. Based on statistical data of the given period we analyzed domestic and foreign sources on the topic and revealed specific character of each historical stage in the historiography of the issue. The article analyzes the number, marital status, gender and age of employees, their national structure in the Tatar Autonomous Republic, as well as their distribution by certain occupational types, groups and sectors of the national economy. The census data of 1923 and 1926 are compared and the social dynamics of public servants in the republic in the 1920s is shown. The analysis of historical sources made it possible to present a comprehensive description of the average urban employee of one of the Russian regions (Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic) in the 1920s - a married 35 years old Russian man, who lived in the city of Kazan.

Keywords: Soviet employee, TASSR, 1920s, social structure, population census, demographic characteristics

Resumen

Los autores del artículo estudian las características demográficas y sociales del empleado soviético de la década de 1920. El período histórico, en el que nos detenemos, parece ser uno de los más complejos y dramáticos en la historia de Rusia y sus regiones. El período inicial de desarrollo del nuevo estado se caracteriza por la búsqueda de vías óptimas para salir de la crisis económica, la formación de un marco de estructura social renovado y los intentos de mostrar al mundo entero los logros de los primeros años del poder soviético. El estudio caracteriza la



categoría sociodemográfica de empleados en una región particular de Rusia. Con base en datos estadísticos del período dado, analizamos fuentes nacionales y extranjeras sobre el tema y revelamos el carácter específico de cada etapa histórica en la historiografía del tema. El artículo analiza el número, estado civil, sexo y edad de los empleados, su estructura nacional en la República Autónoma de Tártaros, así como su distribución por determinados tipos de ocupaciones, grupos y sectores de la economía nacional. Se comparan los datos censales de 1923 y 1926 y se muestra la dinámica social de los servidores públicos en la república en la década de 1920. El análisis de fuentes históricas permitió presentar una descripción completa del empleado urbano promedio de una de las regiones rusas (República Socialista Soviética Autónoma de Tártaro) en la década de 1920: un ruso casado de 35 años que vivía en la ciudad de Kazán. .

Palabras clave: empleado soviético, TASSR, década de 1920, estructura social, censo de población, características demográficas

Introduction

Historians and sociologists have always been interested and they still are in the demographic and social characteristics of the Soviet population as a whole, as well as its individual categories. Employees can be called one of the most significant and sustainable elements of Soviet society. The study of the social group will make it possible to draw up a more complete and qualitative picture of the social, economic and cultural life of the Soviet state.

At present, Russia is experiencing a period of political activity, modernization of the state apparatus and, as a result, the growth in the number of employees. At the same time, scientists do not have a universal idea about which category of the population employees can be referred to. This topic is practically not developed in historical science. The need for a comprehensive study of the demographic and social characteristics of employees at different stages of development of this social category is completely obvious. Russian history presents a complex process of interaction between many local histories, so the study of the various regions features, including the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR), becomes especially relevant.

Statistics on employees in the TASSR of the 1920s will allow us to answer the question of who belonged to the provincial employees of the Soviet Union during this period and will become the basis for further, deeper study. Particular attention in the study is paid to city employees, since it was in the cities that their main number was concentrated.

Methods

The work used general scientific theoretical methods (analysis, synthesis, comparison, typologization, etc.) and special methods of applied statistics.

Using the typologization method, we divided the social category of employees according to various characteristics and systematized groups according to characteristics (gender, age, nationality, marital status). The number of selected categories of employees, their specific gravity, dynamics and average values were identified using methods of applied statistics

Results and Discussion

Historical studies of the Soviet period cover many problems of the social structure of the USSR urban population. Significant factual material was collected and introduced in scientific notion. Contemporaries of the studied period used mainly the data of current statistics (Ermolaev, 1924). Those works were a mechanical reflection of the social changes that took place in the USSR and TASSR in the 1920s. There were no special studies about employees. Most often, they were mentioned in the framework of studying the problems of the Soviet intellectuals. This state of affairs was also characteristic of the subsequent stages of the Soviet period historiography.

The period of 1930-50ss saw a noticeable narrowing of the research problems due to securing by the 1936 Constitution the social structure of Soviet society (the union of workers, collective farmers and labor intellectuals), the adoption of the "Short Course in the History of the Bolsheviks All-Union Communist Party" as the methodological basis and the strict Stalinism regime. Nevertheless, there are works on the history of the social structure and its individual elements (Glezerman, 1949).

Subsequent years' research mainly centered around two aspects: the general laws of social development (Keller, 1937) and the history of each of its individual components [4]. Since the second half of the 1980s, historians begin to move from a social-class to a socio-territorial approach in the social



structure study. This time shows scientific works on the social-class structure of the urban population as a whole. For example, the work of Zhiromskaya V.B. for the moment is one of the most detailed studies on the urban employees of the USSR of the 1920s (Baranov, 1981). The 1990s see the formation of post-Soviet historiography; the authors consider and interpret in a new way the period of the 1920s of the XXth century in the political, economic, social, cultural life of the USSR (Baranov, 1981).

There are also no works dedicated to Soviet employees of the TASSR in foreign historiography, but there are some publications on certain social categories of the entire Soviet society in the 1920s and 30s (Gorinov, 1990).

The main attention of foreign authors to Soviet social history is based on the study of violence and terror by the state in relation to its citizens[8], gender policy[9], childhood history (Goldman, 2002) and people's private lives (Kelly, 2007).

Thus, there is a sufficient number of works devoted to the study of the social structure of the Soviet society in the 1920s, but there is no comprehensive study presenting a generalized characteristic of the urban employee of the Russian region at that time.

The bulk of the data for the study was provided by the published census data from the 1920s. They make it possible to analyze the number, marital status, gender and age and national structure of employees, their distribution by certain types and groups of occupations and sectors of the national economy. The data of the All-Russian City Census of 1923 and the All-Union Census of 1926, taking into account some differences in the administrative-territorial division, are comparable in almost all respects, since they both use the same criteria for distinguishing social categories.

Summary

In the 1920s, employees were the largest group of the TASSR self-employed working urban population. In 1923, there were 31,745 people (27.3% of all self-employed working citizens) (Fitzpatrick, 2009). In 1926, they maintained a leading position of 34,343 people (27.9%) (Results of the 1923 All-Union City Census. Part II The population of the cities of the USSR by occupation). Even the rather active staff reduction in the state institutions was not able to stop the growing number of this social class and reduce its share among the citizens of the republic. The growing number of employees among the urban population of the republic might be more substantial, if not for the devastating consequences

of wars and revolutions of the early XXth century and famine of 1921-1923; the citizens of our republic had to survive even before the restoration of industry and trade, which began with a new economic policy. It is natural that all these factors had the most negative effect on the number and age and gender structure of citizens and employees, in particular.

The share of employees, who were mainly in the public service, was quantitatively high in provincial cities, since most administrative and cultural-educational institutions were located there. Kazan concentrated 71% and 71.1% of all city employees of the republic in 1923 and 1926 respectively (The All-Union Population Census of 1926, 1929).

Middle-aged people predominated among urban employees of the republic, and the young were fewer, which is natural, since many types of mental work required education and work experience. The average age of Kazan employees in the mid-1920s was 32 years. For men it increased to 35 years, and for women, on the contrary, decreased to 31 years (Results of the 1923 All-Union City Census. Part II The population of the cities of the USSR by occupation) since women had a welcoming environment to go into higher education under the Soviet regime. Men could receive education and they did receive it in tsarist Russia, while women received such an opportunity to the full extent only after the October Revolution.

In the reviewed period, among the social group under question, prevailed men. Nevertheless, if in 1923 they accounted for 20,025 people. (63.1%), by the end of the recovery period, their number slightly increased and totaled to 21334 people thus decreasing the men's share to 62.1%. The proportion of women in this social group increased from 11720 people in 1923 to 13009 people in 1926 and totaled to 37.9%. (Results of the 1923 All-Union City Census. Part II The population of the cities of the USSR by occupation).

The predominant number of metropolitan employees at the beginning of 1924 were Russian - 11,338 people (84.5%), second largest were the Tatars - 1172 people (8.7%) followed by Jews - 511 people (3.8%). Representatives of the rest of nationalities did not exceed even 1% (Results of the 1923 All-Union City Census. Part III. Issue I. The population of the cities of the USSR Union by age).

In 1926 Russians continued to occupy leading positions among employees (33638 people). Like the Tatars, who followed Russians in number, but already represented as "Tatars, Kryashens and Mishars" (8178 people), the third largest group, compared to the 1920 census, were the Chuvash



(513 people). Moreover, male employees firmly held leading positions in all nationalities (Results of the 1923 All-Union City Census. Part II The population of the cities of the USSR by occupation).

According to figures of the 1923 census, more than half of the employees (57%) were married (15,010 people), there were almost half as many single people (33.8%, or 8914 people), quite a few were "widowed" (7, 9%, or 2081 people). The smallest group appeared to be the "divorced" - 1.3%, or 331 people (Borisov, 1924).

If the "single" were approximately equal among men and women, the "married men" significantly prevailed over the "married women" (85.2% (12789 people) and 14.8% (2221 people), respectively). Women predominated in the category of "widows" - 73.5%, or 1529 people, which can be explained by the large losses of the male urban population in the First World War and the Civil War, during the famine and epidemics, and "divorced" - 56, 8%, or 188 people (Borisov, 1924). Married women found it difficult to combine service with housework, while those who stayed without a breadwinner in the family were forced to work.

In 1926 in Kazan, the main ages when men started family life were 25-29 years old - 19.4% (2212 people); 30-34 - 20.2% (2303 people); 35-39 - 17% (1932 people). Early marriages (15-19 years) among employees were quite rare. The census identified 13 people in this age group; two people were married at the age of 18 and 11 at the age of 19. A small number of Kazan citizens were married after 60 years. There were more widowers in the middle and senior ages. The marriage peak hit the 50-54-year-old male employees (19.9%, or 51 people). The divorced prevailed in young and middle ages (especially at the age of 25-29 years - 21.7%, or 28 people). The average age of single people was 26 years, married - 34 years, widows - 51 years and divorced - 36 years (Results of the 1923 All-Union City Census).

The townswomen of the RSFSR mainly married at the age of 20-24 years (42-46%). The remaining age groups observed a decrease in the number of marriages - 25-44 years (30-31%), 45-49 years (1.1%). Unlike men, women were more likely to marry at the age of 18-19 years (15-17%) and less often at 50-55 years and older - 0.9% (Results of the All-Russian City Census of 1923, 1926). In Kazan, things were a little different. Most of the married employees were in the age group of 25-29 years (30%, or 820 people), then there is a gradual decrease in the number of married women, and by the age of 60 there are only a few left. Most widows

were 25-49-year-old women (75.9%, or 1470 people), and their number, of course, was much more significant than that of the male half. The average age of maidens, as well as those of bachelors, was 26 years old, married women's average age was 31 years old, that of widows' - 40 years, the divorced - 29 years (Results of the 1923 All-Union City Census). Such results suggest that female employees belonging to the last three groups were on average younger than male employees. As in the whole of the RSFSR, in Kazan, female employees, as well as men, were married at a young, middle, and less often at an older age. The divorced employees of both sexes prevailed in young and middle ages.

It should be noted that with regard to marital status, the 1926 census instruction indicates that unregistered marriage is equal to the registered marriage. The peculiarity of this census is the exception to the general rule on the registration of the actual state in relation to the divorced, who were "only those who received a proper divorce document" (The All-Union Census of 1926, 1930). We should bear in mind that the group of "bachelors and maidens" included both those who were not married, and those who dissolved their unregistered marriage. As for the category of widows, if they had children from an unregistered marriage terminated by the death of one of the parties, there was a tendency (especially among women) to register themselves in this category (Results of the All-Russian City Census of 1923, 1926).

Conclusions

The obtained data analysis allows us to present a comprehensive description of the average urban employee of the TASSR in the 1920s - a married 35 years old Russian man, who lived in the city of Kazan.

Acknowledgements

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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