

# FAMILY FORMS, INSTITUTIONS, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: EVIDENCE FROM IMPERIAL RUSSIA

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## 1. The European Marriage Pattern and Economic Development

When John Hajnal first outlined the characteristics of the ‘European Marriage Pattern’ (EMP) in a seminal article in 1965, it was assumed by many researchers that a system of late, non-universal marriage and nuclear family households had been prevalent in pre-industrial societies across the European continent.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent research findings, however, revealed significant variation in family forms, particularly in southern and eastern parts of Europe. Taking this evidence into account, Hajnal, in a later article (1982), made an explicit distinction between Northwest Europe, where household patterns conformed to the so-called ‘European’ pattern, and the rest of the continent (and indeed elsewhere), where a ‘non-European’ pattern was thought to have predominated.<sup>2</sup>

Not surprisingly, this distinction inspired a great deal of speculation among demographic and family historians about the relationship between marriage patterns and economic growth. That a system of late, non-universal marriage and nuclear family households was prevalent in precisely those parts of Europe that experienced early economic development seemed to some more than a coincidence. Indeed Peter Laslett, surveying the evidence on European family forms, suggested ‘that the remarkable difference between Europe and the rest of the world in matters of industry, commerce, and perhaps political aggrandizement may have been to some extent due to an entirely individual familial system’.<sup>3</sup> And Hajnal, in his 1982 article, noted that the differences between simple and joint family households ‘must be of great significance for economic development’.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hajnal, ‘European marriage patterns’.

<sup>2</sup> Hajnal, ‘Two kinds’.

<sup>3</sup> Laslett, ‘The European family’, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> Hajnal, ‘Two kinds’, p. 476.

Upon closer examination, though, the relationship between household formation patterns and economic development began to look much more complicated. Not all areas where the EMP was dominant were economically precocious. German-speaking central Europe was, for instance, a notable exception; in some parts of this region (such as Prussia and Bohemia) the EMP even co-existed with a resurgence of serfdom in the seventeenth century.<sup>5</sup> Such extensive variation within Europe has thus led researchers to call for new investigations into the relationship between household and family patterns and social and economic institutions.<sup>6</sup>

This is a timely demand, since family forms are once again in the spotlight. Economic historians are the most recent group to take an interest in household patterns and the extent to which they might account for the ‘Great Divergence’ and the economic success of Europe.<sup>7</sup> Yet despite all the attention, the relationship between household formation patterns and local economy is still not well understood.

In this paper I try to shed some light on this question with some evidence from rural Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both household formation practices (marriage, specifically) *and* the economy (labour markets, in particular), this evidence suggests, were shaped by local institutions – in this case by estate and communal policies. Constraints on serfs’ — especially women’s — labour allocation decisions, along with specific demographic restrictions, affected marriage decisions and household structure. Thus the same institutions that discouraged an EMP in Russia – rural communes, landlords – also undermined economic development. A broader application of these findings would suggest that the EMP in northwest Europe was not so much the cause of industrialisation, but the artefact of an existing institutional matrix which also happened to favour industrialisation.

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<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Cerman, ‘Mitteleuropa und die “europäischen Muster”’. On Prussia, see Hagen, *Ordinary Prussians*.

<sup>6</sup> See the discussion in Benigno, ‘The southern Italian family’; Viazzo, ‘What’s so special about the Mediterranean?’

<sup>7</sup> Recent examples include Greif, ‘Family structure’; de Moor and van Zanden, ‘Girl power’; Voigtlander and Voth, ‘Malthusian Dynamism’.

## 2. The Russian Context

Early and universal marriage, especially for women, is thought to have been the prevailing norm in Russian peasant society, placing Russia firmly outside the EMP zone.<sup>8</sup> Evidence from the pioneering studies of Peter Czap and Steven Hoch on serf households in the Central Black Earth (CBE) region largely supports this view. On these estates, serf women consistently married, on average, before the age of 20.<sup>9</sup> The proportion of women who never married was extremely small – well below five per cent – as was, similarly, the number of solitary householders. According to Czap, universal marriage for women was such an established practice on the Mishino estate (Riazan province) that reasons were often given in the documents when a woman was listed as unmarried. In most of these cases the women were said to have had physical handicaps that made them unsuitable for marriage.<sup>10</sup> Hoch quotes a nineteenth-century ethnographer who noted, with reference to the area near the Petrovskoe estate (Tambov), that ‘only freaks and the morally depraved do not marry.’<sup>11</sup>

In more recent years, further studies have complicated this picture of early, universal marriage among Russian peasants, revealing instead a substantial amount of variation in household formation patterns in imperial Russia, including variation in the marriage age and marital status of women. For instance, Michael Mitterauer and Alexander Kagan have presented evidence for nineteenth-century Iaroslavl’ province, in the Central Industrial Region (CIR), which indicates that peasant women in this area married significantly later than those at Mishino and Petrovskoe.<sup>12</sup> Herdis Kolle, too, in her study of households in nineteenth-century Moscow province (also in the CIR), has found a later age at first marriage for women (21.7 in 1834 increasing to

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<sup>8</sup> Universal marriage, according to John Hajnal, was characteristic of a ‘joint-family household system’, where marriage occurred early in the lifecycle, nearly all members of the society married, and newlyweds co-resided with parents rather than establish a new independent household. Hajnal, ‘Two Kinds.’

<sup>9</sup> Czap, ‘A large family’, pp. 118-9; Hoch, *Serfdom*, p. 76.

<sup>10</sup> Czap, *ibid.*, pp. 120-1.

<sup>11</sup> Hoch, *Serfdom*, pp. 76-7.

<sup>12</sup> Mitterauer and Kagan, ‘Russian’, p. 118.

23.1 by 1869), as well as a significant proportion of never married females (4-10 per cent).<sup>13</sup>

This variation is often attributed to regional differences, and, in particular, to the existence of labour markets in the CIR. This is the argument of Kolle, who notes that agriculture was the primary occupation throughout the Central Black Earth (CBE) region, while industry and commerce were more widespread in the CIR. On this view, women in the CIR, such as those in the proto-industrial society studied by Kolle herself, had the opportunity to work for wages, and could thus earn an independent living, unlike women in the agricultural zone to the south, who were obligated to work on demesne land or cultivate communal garden plots.<sup>14</sup> This argument is consistent with more recent accounts of the emergence of the EMP in pre-industrial northwest Europe, where the EMP and labour markets are thought to have worked together in a virtuous feedback cycle. The EMP, on this view, created a need for labour markets in northwest Europe to balance land to labour ratios, and these labour markets in turn bolstered the EMP by providing women with wage opportunities and thus greater bargaining power vis-à-vis parents and marriage partners. The result was a system of delayed marriage and a higher incidence of lifetime celibacy.<sup>15</sup>

It is certainly plausible that labour markets and household formation patterns were correlated. But was the relationship so straightforward as these views imply? In the EMP literature, the family system shaped the labour market, while in the literature on Russian households, regional ecological differences gave rise to (or precluded the emergence of) labour markets, which, in turn, determined the shape of family systems. I would suggest that the relationship was more complex. Labour markets and household structure were not independent variables; both were embedded in institutional frameworks that determined their specific local character. Estate policies, communal practices, and local interest groups all affected local labour markets *as well as* decisions about household formation. To make this case, this paper draws on evidence from estates of two of Russia's wealthiest landholding families: the Sheremetyevs and the Gagarins.

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<sup>13</sup> Kolle, *Socioeconomic*, pp. 190-1, 193-4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, esp. chap. 2 and conclusion.

<sup>15</sup> A more detailed argument can be found in de Moor and van Zanden, 'Girl power.'

### 3. Institutions and Demography

Most wealthy Russian landlords had explicit demographic policies, which were sometimes enforced and sometimes not. These policies were usually motivated by the belief that larger households were economically more stable and so better able to meet their feudal and state obligations, especially the provision of recruits for the Russian army. Female-headed households and unmarried women were viewed as liabilities. Thus many landlords encouraged early and universal marriage, especially for women, and multi-generational households. The Sheremetyev and Gagarin families were no exception.

The estate instructions for the Sheremetyevs' Voshchazhnikovo estate (in Iaroslavl' province) contain several points related to marriage and household formation. First, an annual tax was levied on all unmarried persons (single or widowed) between the ages of 20 and 40, in order to 'compel them to marry'. The tax was progressive: richer serfs were to pay six rubles per year, middling serfs four rubles per year, and the poorest serfs two rubles per year. Sheremetyev specifically included solitary female householders among those subject to the tax, noting in 1796 that 'as a woman can earn some 15 rubles per year in textile manufacturing, she is able to pay feudal levies'.<sup>16</sup> Because women on this estate had fewer earning opportunities than men, as we shall see later, this tax was especially onerous for them.

In addition, a fee was levied for the marriage of female serfs to other landlords' serfs or free persons, i.e. to anyone from outside the Voshchazhnikovo estate. The families of serf women who wished to marry non-estate grooms had to petition the landlord for permission. If it was granted, they then had to pay an up-front fee before the marriage could take place. Wealthy families were charged 150 rubles, middling peasants 100 rubles, and poorer ones 50 rubles. Serf men, who brought wives into their households in this patrilocal system, were not subject to this constraint. When a male serf married, an additional labourer was brought to the estate, along with a dowry and the promise of additional labourers in the form of offspring. Women, on the other hand, joined their husbands' households. If their husbands were not Sheremetyev's serfs, he lost the female serf, her labour, her dowry, and her potential

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<sup>16</sup> RGADA, f. 1287, op. 3, ed. khr. 555 (Estate instructions).

offspring. It was thus in his interest to impose marriage fees to make marriage to outsiders less appealing for serf women.

Another important demographic constraint was the discouragement of household division. On the Voshchazhnikovo estate, all households were to contain at least 2 adult males (between the ages of 17 and 65). This regulation was probably related to state conscription levies, which required landlords to send a certain number of serfs to the tsar's army each year. Landlords did not want to undermine the economic viability of households (and their ability to pay feudal dues and taxes) by conscripting a household's only adult male worker. If a serf and his wife wished to separate from his father's or brother's household, he first had to petition the landlord for permission. If a household divided without permission, a fine was levied. If a household was unable to pay the fine, its adult males were to be conscripted to do hard labour. And if a household could not provide a conscript for the army when its turn in the queue came up (places in the queue were assigned by lottery), then that household was to be fined the price of a recruit on the market.

The Gagarins were likewise concerned about household formation practices among their serfs. But rather than the Sheremetyevs' system of incentives, they employed blunt instruments. At the Mishino estate (Riazan) in 1817, the landlord issued an order giving households the option of arranging marriages for their unmarried daughters over 15 or sending them to work in a textile mill on another estate. Estate registers show that the majority of serf families made arrangements to have their daughters wed by Easter of that year.<sup>17</sup> A similarly coercive approach was taken toward household fission. At the Petrovskoe estate (Tambov), serfs who separated from their families without approval were subjected to corporal punishment and then forced back into the extended family unit.<sup>18</sup> At Manuilovskoe estate (Tver') widows who refused to remarry were threatened with exile to a paper mill in a neighboring province.<sup>19</sup>

These pressures were often reinforced by local communes, whose more powerful members shared the landlords' concern about the economic viability of serf

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<sup>17</sup> Czap, 'A large family', pp. 120-1.

<sup>18</sup> Hoch, *Serfdom and social control*, pp. 87-8.

<sup>19</sup> Bohac, 'Widows', pp. 111-12.

households, since feudal obligations and state taxes were levied collectively in rural Russia. When poor households failed to pay their share, the better-off households in the commune were forced to subsidise them. On the Voshchazhnikovo estate, this concern over viability can be seen in communal resolutions on petitions from serfs to split away from their parents' households (all such petitions required both landlord and communal approval). Communal officials would often grant permission for the households to divide physically, but insisted that they remain together on paper as a single tax unit.<sup>20</sup> This forced serfs to subsidize their poorer relatives. The Voshchazhnikovo commune discouraged female-headed households by withholding assistance. Although welfare provision was a recognised function of the commune, communal authorities were nonetheless reluctant to provide relief, often denying even temporary assistance to widows with young children.<sup>21</sup> This may have discouraged the formation of nuclear-family households more generally as it raised the risk to young couples who wished to establish their own households.

Communes on Gagarin estates also constrained demographic decisions. Steven Hoch notes that on the Petrovskoe estate, the 'patriarchs' who headed multi-generational households and held power in the commune cooperated with the landlord to keep households on the estate large and complex, for the same reasons as in Voshchazhnikovo. In addition, the system of communal land tenure, with periodic repartition, encouraged early and universal marriage on estates such as Petrovskoe and Mishino, since the commune allotted land in accordance with the number of able-bodied workers in a household. At Manuilovskoe, as on many estates, the commune monitored household size in relation to conscription policies; it was easier to take recruits from larger households.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4. Institutions and Local Markets

As noted earlier, it has been suggested that geography determined the extent to which such policies and practices were enforced. The idea is that more attention was given (by landlords and communes) to household formation patterns in the CBE region, since a large household was supposed to have been critical to economic viability in an

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<sup>20</sup> Dennison, 'Serfdom', pp. 402-3.

<sup>21</sup> Dennison, *Institutional framework*, chap. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Bohac, 'Mir'.

agricultural region with few opportunities for wage employment. In the CIR, on the other hand, wage labour was widespread, due to the inhospitable soil and climate, and thus household structure is thought to have been somewhat less important to viability. In other words, it is held that households were somewhat less complex in the CIR because labour market opportunities made diversification of household economies possible.

But this approach neglects the endogeneity of those labour market opportunities. The very same institutions that constrained household formation decisions also shaped local labour markets and serfs' labour allocation decisions. The Sheremetyevs allowed their serfs to engage in markets to a greater extent than many other landlords. They allowed serfs to work as migrant labourers in towns and cities throughout European Russia. They permitted their serfs to hire labourers to work their communal allotments or perform their labour obligations. Moreover, they shaped local markets by allowing their serfs to establish manufacturing and retail enterprises of various sizes, for which hired labour was required. Serfs on the Voshchazhnokovo estate (or at Ivanovo or Iukhotskoe or Pavlovo) were not simply plugging in to existing labour markets. Their tanneries and brick manufactories and paper mills were creating a demand for wage labour.<sup>23</sup>

The Sheremetyevs not only shaped local markets by permitting serfs to engage in them, they also shaped them by constraining that participation, from which they also benefitted. They affected the price of labour by levying fees on migrant labourers, annual taxes on craftsmen and owners of rural industries, and fees on those who hired labourers. They insisted that those who engaged full time in wage work should still cultivate their communal allotments, thus creating a local market in agricultural labour. The most restrictive policies were those that shaped female labour force participation. Women were rarely allowed to leave their estates of residence. At Voshchazhnikovo, the few women granted permission to engage in migrant labour were married or widows over the age of 40. A serf wishing to hire a female labourer,

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<sup>23</sup> On the market activities of Sheremetyev serfs, see Dennison, *Institutional framework*; Gestwa, *Protoindustrialisierung*; Prokof'eva, *Krest'ianskaia obshchina*; Shchepetov, *Krepostnoe pravo*.

especially on a long-term contract, required special permission.<sup>24</sup> Women were permitted to engage in wage work locally, but the heavy restrictions constrained their choices and almost certainly lowered their wages.<sup>25</sup>

The policies of the Gagarin family also shaped local labour markets, but with very different results. The Gagarins discouraged labour market participation. Hoch notes that Petrovskoe bailiffs disliked serfs hiring others to work their allotments.<sup>26</sup> On Manuilovskoe estate serfs participated in ‘forced migration’, whereby the terms of their employment were arranged by the landlord’s officials and their wages were paid directly to the estate management instead of to them.<sup>27</sup> According to Hoch, Petrovskoe serfs were punished by the estate management for hiring labourers, renting out land, selling grain, and other market activities which might have ‘contributed to economic differentiation’.<sup>28</sup> Thus it was not the case that there simply were no markets for Gagarin serfs to engage in. Rather, estate policies themselves undermined the development of local markets by penalizing households that sought to take advantage of them.

Communes, too, shaped local markets, just as we saw them shaping household formation. At Voshchazhnikovo, all migration decisions had to be approved by the commune. Collective responsibility for feudal and state obligations made communal officials reluctant to let members leave.<sup>29</sup> Ironically, a household in arrears in feudal dues was unlikely to be granted permission to migrate for wage work. And, like estate authorities, the commune took a restrictive approach to female participation in markets, limiting women’s mobility and their access to local resources.<sup>30</sup> The commune was thus unwilling to provide relief to poor women, as noted earlier, but at the same time actively constrained their possibilities for earning a living. A similar

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<sup>24</sup> Such policies were probably motivated by fear of illegitimate pregnancies, which were viewed as a burden on the community.

<sup>25</sup> For more on such restrictions, see Dennison, *Institutional framework*. The effects on wages are speculative at this point because there are so few data on serf wages available.

<sup>26</sup> Hoch, *Serfdom*, p. 55.

<sup>27</sup> Bohac, ‘Family’, chap. 3.

<sup>28</sup> Hoch, *Serfdom*, pp. 125-6.

<sup>29</sup> Examples can be found in Dennison and Ogilvie, ‘Serfdom and social capital’, esp. pp. 534-8.

<sup>30</sup> See discussion in *ibid*.

phenomenon has been reported for the Gagarins' Manuilovskoe estate, where widows were deprived of communal land and subjected by the commune to other economic pressures to induce them to remarry.<sup>31</sup>

It has been argued in recent accounts of the EMP that the decline of kinship groups in northwest Europe gave rise to strong corporate entities and, ultimately, in places like England, to economic growth.<sup>32</sup> It is worth noting the contrast in this account of northwest European development with the evidence for imperial Russia. As described here, the existence of strong corporate groups in Russia – especially land communes – appears to have *hindered* the emergence of anything like an EMP in rural Russia, and, at the same time, undermined economic growth. This contrast further demonstrates the complexity of the interaction between household formation decisions and the local institutional framework.

### 5. Marriage and Household Structure: Variation in Outcomes

But how can we be sure that any of these things actually mattered? Evidence of household formation patterns for several of these landlords' estates is highly suggestive. Household structure at the Sheremetyevs' Voshchazhnikovo estate differed markedly from that at the Gagarins' Mishino and Petrovskoe estates, as indicated in Table 1 below. One of the most remarkable differences concerns the incidence of so-called 'solitary' households. Solitaries, in the Laslett-Hammel classification scheme, were separate households, comprised of only a single person.

*Table 1: Household Size and Structure on Three Serf Estates c. 1850\**

	<i>Mishino</i>	<i>Petrovskoe</i>	<i>Voshchazhnikovo</i>
<i>MHS</i>	8.8	8.3	5.2
<i>% Complex</i>	72.7	74.0	57.0
<i>% Solitaries</i>	1.2	7.0	20.0

\* Figures from Czap, 'Perennial'; Hoch, *Serfdom*; Dennison, 'Serfdom'.

<sup>31</sup> Bohac, 'Widows', pp. 102-3.

<sup>32</sup> Especially Greif, 'Family structure'.

The proportion of solitary households at Voshchazhnikovo in the nineteenth century was much larger than on the other estates. This figure ranged from 5 to 20 per cent in the period between 1816 and 1858. At Mishino, the range was 0 to 2.3 per cent between the years 1814 and 1858. On the Petrovskoe estate, between 1814 and 1856, solitaries comprised 0 to 9 per cent of households. Even more interesting is the fact that the majority of solitary householders on the Voshchazhnikovo estate was female. Of the 34 solitaries counted in the village Voshchazhnikovo in 1850, 24 (70 per cent) were women who were either widowed or had never married.<sup>33</sup>

Voshchazhnikovo was different in other ways, too. Women on this estate married at a later age than did serfs on the other estates. The Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM)<sup>34</sup> in the nineteenth century (1816-1858) ranged from 18.3 to 22.0 for Voshchazhnikovo women, and from 22.1 to 26.4 for men.<sup>35</sup> This is broadly similar to the range found by Kolle for Bunkovskaia volost' in Moscow province,<sup>36</sup> but differs significantly from the pattern found on the Black Earth estates. At Mishino, in the period 1782-1858, the SMAM varied from 16.6 to 19.0 for women, and from 17.0 to 19.7 for men.<sup>37</sup> The average age at first marriage at Petrovskoe (1813-1856) was between 18.4 and 19.5 for women and between 18.8 and 20.1 for men.<sup>38</sup>

Nor was marriage universal for women in Voshchazhnikovo village. Between 1816 and 1858, 5 to 21 per cent of serf women never married; the village average for the period was 14 per cent. This was even higher than that in the proto-industrial community of Bunkovskaia, where never-married women comprised some 4-10 per cent in the period 1834-69.<sup>39</sup> It was substantially higher than on the Mishino estate,

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<sup>33</sup> RGADA, f. 1287, op. 3, ed. khr. 1941.

<sup>34</sup> The singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) is an estimate of the mean number of years lived by a given cohort before their first marriage, and is calculated from the proportion of unmarried males or females in successive age groups as provided in a census or other similar document. See Hajnal, 'Age at marriage'.

<sup>35</sup> Dennison, 'Serfdom', p. 414.

<sup>36</sup> Kolle, *Social change*, p. 90.

<sup>37</sup> Czap, 'Perennial multiple-family', p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> Hoch, *Serfdom*, p. 76.

<sup>39</sup> Kolle, *Social change*, p. 194.

where the figure was consistently under 5 per cent in the nineteenth century.<sup>40</sup> At Petrovskoe, a household listing for 1851 indicates that only about 2 per cent of women on this estate remained unmarried.<sup>41</sup>

At first glance, these patterns are consistent with evidence of regional or geographical differences in household patterns. Voshchazhnikovo was in the CIR, while Mishino and Petrovskoe were in the CBE region. But the case for regional differences is complicated by Bohac's findings for the Gagarins' Manuilovskoe estate in Tver' province. At Manuilovskoe, mean household size in the nineteenth century was 7.9 and 90 per cent of households were multi-generational. Between 1813 and 1861, the proportion of solitary households on this estate ranged from 0 to 1.4 per cent. The proportion of females on this estate who never married ranged from 6 to 8 per cent. In other words, Manuilovskoe was located in the CIR, where labour markets were widespread, yet the household formation patterns on the estate are indistinguishable from those reported for the two estates in the CBE region (and significantly different from those found for Voshchazhnikovo).<sup>42</sup>

It is hardly a coincidence that Manuilovskoe belonged to the same landlord as Mishino and Petrovskoe. It seems plausible that the institutional framework established by the Gagarins generated similar outcomes regardless of geography. In particular, their coercive approach to the regulation of serfs' demographic and economic behaviour – close scrutiny, corporal punishment, forced labour – resulted in more uniform behaviour across their holdings. On the other hand, the Sheremetyevs' willingness to tolerate market participation, and their use of targeted incentives to maximize their income and encourage behaviours they thought desirable, resulted in a wider range of outcomes than the cowed uniformity observed on Gagarin estates.

## 6. Conclusion

It seems unlikely that geography was the primary determinant of demographic behaviour, specifically the household formation practices of Russian serfs. Nor can we attribute the variation we have observed to a marriage pattern as an exogenous

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<sup>40</sup> Bohac, 'Widows', p. 99; Czap, 'A large family', p. 119.

<sup>41</sup> Bohac, 'Widows', p. 99.

<sup>42</sup> Bohac, 'Family'.

influence. Marriage and household patterns responded to differing institutional environments much more than to geographical differences or any other specific variable. There was no single ‘Russian’ marriage or household pattern, since there was no single ‘Russian’ institutional environment. The overarching framework of serfdom put the power to determine the local institutional environment, within certain limits, in the hands of the landlord. In the case of larger landlords, the institutional environment evolved by each appears to have had a relatively fixed character across their far-flung holdings and even over time, from one landlord generation to the next.

It is certainly possible that other patterns held among smaller landlords, or even that there was a customary default pattern toward which smaller holdings gravitated in the absence of the kind of institutional inertia prevailing in operations with large centralized bureaucracies. Literary sources seem to hint at such a default pattern. However, we have little hard evidence of it, and given that smaller landlords kept fewer and less systematic records, it may be a long time before any evidence comes to light. Meanwhile, though, we can improve our insight into the relative sensitivity of demographic and economic variables to landlord policy and other influences by comparing the serf behaviour observed in local studies of different landlords within the same region (or with the same other hypothesized variable held constant), and of the same landlord across many regions (or across other variables of interest).

Regarding the larger question about the interrelations of demography and economic growth, the Russian evidence suggests that any proposal to make the EMP responsible for economic development is too simple. It seems likely that what we have found in Russia applies to other areas as well: variations in both marriage patterns *and* local economy resulted from differences in institutional structure. A place like England was relatively unique in having a largely homogeneous (centrally imposed) institutional structure across a substantial land area over a long period of time, and it happened to be one that, like that arrived at fortuitously by the Sheremetyevs, was relatively conducive to economic growth — as well as simpler family structures and higher ages at first marriage. Other parts of Europe varied widely; in some there was an institutional structure not unlike that of England; in others (such as southern Italy) the institutions favoured simpler families but not economic development. On the whole, it still seems reasonable to say that the EMP is correlated (very generally) with growth. But it was probably not the *cause* of growth.

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