

# ON LIVING THROUGH SOVIET RUSSIA

COVER IMAGE:

GEORGI PETRUSOV, LUNCH IN THE FIELDS (1934),  
COURTESY OF GALERIE ALEX LACHMANN, COLOGNE

'The idealization of Russian family and collective life  
in this photograph stands in sharp contrast to most  
of the autobiographical memories on which we draw  
on this book.'

*Edited by Daniel Bertaux,  
Paul Thompson and Anna Rotkirch*

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# CONTENTS

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*Notes on contributors* ix

**1 Introduction** 1

DANIEL BERTAUX, ANNA ROTKIRCH AND PAUL THOMPSON

## PART I

### Creating Soviet Society

**2 The cultural model of the Russian popular classes  
and the transition to a market economy** 25

DANIEL BERTAUX, IN COLLABORATION WITH  
MARINA MALYSHEVA

**3 Equality in poverty: the symbolic meaning of  
*kommunalki* in the 1930s-50s** 54

VICTORIA SEMENOVA

**4 Coping with revolution: the experiences of  
well-to-do Russian families** 68

EKATERINA FOTEEVA

## PART II

### Personal and Family Life

**5 'What kind of sex can you talk about?': acquiring sexual  
knowledge in three Soviet generations** 93

ANNA ROTKIRCH

<b>6 Family models and transgenerational influences: grandparents, parents and children in Moscow and Leningrad from the Soviet to the market era</b>	120
VICTORIA SEMENOVA AND PAUL THOMPSON	
<b>7 'Coming to stand on firm ground': the making of a Soviet working mother</b>	146
ANNA ROTKIRCH	
<b>8 The strength of small freedoms: a response to Ionin, by way of stories told at the <i>dacha</i></b>	176
NAOMI ROSLYN GALTZ	
PART III	
<b>The Marginal and the Successful</b>	
<b>9 Memory and survival in Stalin's Russia: old believers in the Urals during the 1930s-50s</b>	195
IRINA KOROVUSHKINA PAERT	
<b>10 The returned of the repressed: survival after the Gulag</b>	214
NANCI ADLER	
<b>11 Success stories from the margins: Soviet women's autobiographical sketches from the late Soviet period</b>	235
MARIANNE LILJESTRÖM	
<b>12 Epilogue: researching with interview sources on Soviet Russia</b>	252
DANIEL BERTAUX, PAUL THOMPSON AND ANNA ROTKIRCH	
<i>Biography</i>	258
<i>Index</i>	271

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## 'COMING TO STAND ON FIRM GROUND'

### The Making of a Soviet Working Mother

Anna Rotkirch

#### THE UNLIKELY PRIZE CANDIDATE

Among the works included in the shortlist for the prestigious Russian Booker literary award in 1998, one appeared particularly surprising with regard to genre, author and content. The jury had unanimously agreed to include the autobiographical text of Aleksandra Chistiakova, an elderly woman from the Siberian town of Kemerovo. This life history had been published with the title *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?* – 'Enough for one?' – by the journal *Den' i Noch'* (Day and Night), published in Krasnoiarsk. The book was edited by the journalist Vladimir Shiriaev.<sup>1</sup>

The extent of Shiriaev's involvement remains unclear. The text appears to be drawn from diary excerpts, as suggested by the opening sentence – 'I decided to keep a diary. But first I will describe my life so far. I am already twenty-four years old ...' and the last page – 'Now it is already winter and New Year is approaching ... This is how we live, the two of us, Stepan and I. Today I came from visiting my mother, where I was for two days. He is sleeping now, the rugs are rolled away ... When he insults me, I no longer want to live. I will for the rest of my life be disappointed with my fate.' Shiriaev is said to have 'recorded' the text (the verb used is *zapisal*, which can be understood to mean both 'to record', as in recording an interview, and 'to write down'). It is possible that he selected and transcribed the diary excerpts, or that Chistiakova read them to him. He also interviewed her directly to complement the entries. He may indeed have chosen the title and added the very last sentences, which are both more abstractly reflective than the main text.

Language corrections may also have modified the original language of the diary. This published version of Chistiakova's life-history text has none of the frequent spelling and punctuation errors found in other working-class

women's autobiographies of the same generation.<sup>2</sup> Chistiakova tells us that she was never very good in Russian at school, but that she loved writing poems. Her writing often has a real literary quality – for instance, when Aleksandra recalls how for the first time she talked with her childhood love and he 'looked at me like on some map that he wanted to study'.<sup>3</sup>

In this chapter I will use Chistiakova's life history as a case for exploring the experiences of the first generation of Soviet women. I am interested in the gendered aspects of Soviet social mobility and everyday life: in how professional work was intertwined with unpaid care work, and how kinship networks competed with marital loyalties. From the point of view of the analysis here, therefore, possible grammatical corrections to Chistiakova's original diary do not matter. But precisely because of this uncertainty with regard to authorship, the Russian Booker jury had in advance agreed that Chistiakova could not be awarded the main prize.<sup>4</sup>

*Enough for One Woman?* was thus no conventional literary work. In addition, its narrator represented one of the lowest social groups in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia, elderly women of the countryside. The life history depicted famine, unhappy love, a drinking husband, illegal abortions, hard work and extreme physical and emotional suffering. These topics are easily put into the category of being frustratingly banal, commonplace and intellectually worthless. Thus the prestigious literary weekly *Literaturnaia gazeta* wondered what a *derevenskaia starukha*, or countryside hag, was doing in the Booker shortlist, and suggested that the jury could as well give money to the beggars on the street. Another journalist predicted that this trivial story would interest only 'Western feminists'.<sup>5</sup> The latter assessment was, as this article shows, not totally wrong, but it was intended as an insult belittling the possible domestic relevance of the work. Chistiakova documents the repetitive, boring and 'feminine' aspects of everyday life, or *byt*, which in Russian history of ideas has usually been understood as provokingly trivial, degrading and amoral.<sup>6</sup>

However, many commentators wholeheartedly supported the jury's decision to include Chistiakova among the six best literary publications of the year. During the 1990s, post-socialist Russian literature had witnessed a veritable autobiographical boom, ranging from the publication of previously censored and unpublished diaries from Soviet times to memoirs written by more or less famous contemporaries. The boom included the spread of life-history interviews and of biographical methods in the social sciences.<sup>7</sup> Several of the published memoirs were written by women, although mostly these were women with higher education.<sup>8</sup> The publication of Chistiakova's autobiography clearly formed part of this general movement to rediscover and preserve personal memories of everyday life under socialism. It was, however, unique in voicing the experiences of a poor working woman. The previous year had seen the full publication of perhaps the closest analogue to Chistiakova's work – the autobiographical notebooks of Evgeniia G. Kiseleva, 1916–90. The general outline of Kiseleva's life is close to Chistiakova's, including migration from the countryside to industrial work, two



children, male betrayal, emotional abandonment, alcoholism and violence. Kiseleva's three notebooks form a longer text, with emphasis on everyday social relations and emotions, written in an incoherent and detailed, 'naïve', style. Kiseleva was less well educated, and was also a less qualified worker, than Chistiakova. Evidently Kiseleva's everyday life had also been even more violent. As Kozlova and Sandomirskaja point out, Kiseleva's way of life approaches 'the borders of social existence', with few indications of self-control, long-term planning, division between work or free time, or basic knowledge of history.<sup>9</sup>

Chistiakova's text has almost nothing in common with the testimonies of the times that have characterised both men's and women's published autobiographical writings in Russia.<sup>10</sup> Nor does it follow the official Soviet autobiographical format of social success and political correctness. Due to its diary basis, it avoids any clear divisions into 'professional' and 'intimate' biography.<sup>11</sup> The political system is also only indirectly present in this intense, highly personal document. Like in most autobiographies written by 'ordinary' people, political events and legislation are referred to only if they affect the everyday life of the author and her family – the announcement of the beginning of the war on the radio; the difficulty of finding a doctor who agrees to help when you are bleeding to death from an illegal abortion. (By contrast with Chistiakova's narrative, Kiseleva's notebooks often praise the Soviet leaders. These mentions refer to television news or to letters Kiseleva writes to the authorities. Their style is highly hagiographic, the socialist leaders taking the place previously reserved for the Tsar, the Almighty and the Virgin Mary: 'I certainly don't want Leonid Il'ich [Brezhnev] to die. He is already old; I want him to be immortal.'<sup>12</sup>)

As the president of the Booker jury, professor of literature Andrei Zorin, noted at the time, *Enough for One Woman*,<sup>2</sup> was written in 'the language of a person standing on the threshold of illiteracy'. Zorin was fascinated both with the life history itself and with the unexpected literary perspective it opened up. Most of Russian fiction in the late 1990s had been overtaken by 'sweet-languishing erotica, mystical symbols and belated experiments with flows of consciousness'. By refreshing contrast, the often horrendous events in this autobiography were rendered with laconic detachment. In Zorin's view, it also showed how 'radical naturalism in its extremely exaggerated outpouring approaches the esthetics of absurdity'.<sup>13</sup>

Below, I will use the 'naturalist absurdity' of Chistiakova's life and text to discuss what it could be like to live through Soviet Russia as a woman of the first Soviet generation. We will see how the formative experiences of this female generation were combined in the *working mother*, the gender contract that has dominated Russian society since the forced industrialisation of the Stalin period.

By gender contract, I here understand a dominant form of gender relations in a specific society. The gender contract is no legal, formal agreement – rather, it denotes a prevailing view about how the relations between the sexes should be shaped. The gender contract may be both tacit and explicit, and it is shaped by social institutions and discourses. It especially reflects how family life is organised

and under what conditions men and women can enter the public sphere and professional life. The gender contract can be approached from various angles. Yvonne Hirdman has shown how the gendered system of work is perpetuated in an asymmetrical and hierarchical way on the symbolic, the institutional and the individual levels of gender contracts. In Soviet society, we can also distinguish between the official, the everyday and the illegitimate gender contract.<sup>14</sup>

Many traits of the Soviet gender contract are already familiar from previous research. The specific contribution of this chapter is to redefine the concept of Russian gender traditionalism by introducing the notion of selective traditionalism. Chistiakova's detailed memories will also help us go beyond the stereotype of the 'strong Russian woman'. Both Western and Russian accounts of Russian working women have shown a 'remarkable measure of agreement ... resulting in admiration for the stoicism of Russian women mixed with frustration at their apparently willing acceptance of a subordinate role'.<sup>15</sup> Women in the Russian countryside and Soviet factories are easily lumped together to form a monolithic image of the strong woman who is also passive and self-sacrificing, a woman whose life is 'to labour, to bear and to endure'.<sup>16</sup> Her partner, the Russian man, is described just as stereotypically as a brutish drunkard. As with most stereotypes, these images are not totally untrue. Nevertheless, I would like to point to their structural underpinnings, and also to put some real flesh and blood on them, through discussing the forms of organising everyday life between genders and generations in Soviet Russia.

#### TURNING POINTS AND GENERATIONAL FORMATION

Born in 1922, five years after the October Revolution, Chistiakova belongs to the first generation born and raised in Soviet Russia. As it turned out, her generation was also the only one that lived through the main events of the life course under the Soviet regime. When the Soviet Union fell apart in 1991, Chistiakova had already been retired for more than a decade, her husband had returned from jail, and both her children had tragically died. The formative years of this generation were in the late 1930s, the period when Soviet society, including the Soviet class and gender order, was established. This generation benefited most dramatically from the educational and professional opportunities of Soviet society, as well as from the relative calm and material prosperity of late socialism in the 1960s and 1970s.

Obviously, many people of this generation also died in famines and camps or were denied education and professional self-realisation for political reasons. However, I will here focus on the constructive and 'positive' effects of the Soviet system. This is due to the interesting tendency of generational consciousness to feed on specifically positive experiences. Generational experiences appear to follow two criteria: they should happen at about the same time for the whole generational cohort, and they should help to build a positive self-image of that

generation. Indeed, formative experiences are usually by definition positive in the sense of empowering, constructive, opening up ways of social advancement and creating new life-styles. Illness and death are individual turning points, but not the stuff that generations are made of. Tragedies that do affect a whole generational cohort simultaneously – such as economic depression, famine or war – tend to become formative generational experiences mainly through the way that they present opportunities for upward social mobility and create meaningful collective memories.<sup>17</sup>

I will discuss some of the major turning points in Aleksandra Chistiakova's life history, in order to highlight the formative experiences of the first Soviet generation. First, however, I will present a chronological overview of Chistiakova's life.<sup>18</sup> Table 7.1 shows the main events of her life course on the left, with individual turning points marked in bold. To the right are some of the major events in Soviet history that directly affected Chistiakova's life.<sup>19</sup>

Table 7.1 Chronology of Aleksandra Chistiakova's life history, with turning points marked in bold

Year	Chistiakova's life history	National events
1918		Family law of Soviet Russia passed <sup>20</sup>
1920		Abortion legalised
1922	<b>Birth of Aleksandra (A) in Maloitatka;</b> <b>A is the fourth daughter in the family</b>	
ca 1926	Mother sick with tuberculosis; birth of younger sister Tamara	
1928	<b>A starts school in Itata</b>	First five year plan
1929	Birth of A's brother	Forced industrialisation and collectivisation of agriculture
1932	Family moves to Tiazhin	Nationwide famine
1932	A in 3rd grade; mother sick again <b>A's parents divorce; the family splits up; A begs for food with her sister</b>	
1933	A's first love	
1936	A stays with elder sister; enters 4th grade	Abortion criminalised

Year	Chistiakova's life history	National events
1939	A joins mother and younger sisters in Taiga <b>A finishes 7th grade and enters professional education</b> <b>A to Novosibirsk for training at construction site</b>	World War Two begins
1943	A to Kemerovo, attends chauffeur courses <b>1st marriage and divorce</b>	
1944	<b>2nd marriage, to Stepan Chistiakov, b. 1927</b> <b>1st pregnancy; Stepan sentenced to 3 years' jail</b>	End of World War Two
1945	Stepan freed in post-war amnesty	
1945	<b>Birth of 1st son, Vladimir (Volodia)</b>	
c. 1947	2nd pregnancy, illegal abortion <b>Stepan unemployed, then tractor driver</b>	
c. 1948	A looks for wage work after prolonged child-care leave <b>A employed at railway station</b>	
1949	<b>Birth of 2nd son Anatolii (Tolia)</b> <b>4th pregnancy, illegal abortion</b>	
1953		Death of Stalin
1955		Abortions legalised again
1958–60	<b>A builds a new house</b>	
c. 1961	<b>Stepan kills his own mother</b> <b>A rescues him from death sentence; Stepan jailed</b>	
c. 1963	Volodia's army service	
c. 1967	Tolia's army service	
1968	Volodia marries <b>Tolia dies in accident in the army, 13 June</b>	
1975	Stepan freed from jail	
1977	<b>A retires</b>	
c. 1978	<b>Volodia dies in accident</b>	
1991		Dissolution of the USSR
1997	A living with Stepan, active in community life	

Aleksandra's own mother was born during the last years of the nineteenth century into a poor village family in Siberia. Aleksandra's grandmother had been forced to send her daughters to work after becoming a widow. 'My mother was always praised for her cooking. She learnt that in the homes of the rich. After her father had died she worked as a nanny from the age of seven, then as a servant, that's how she learnt. And at seventeen she was already married.' Aleksandra's father also grew up in a poor agrarian family with too many mouths to feed. 'They were divided, each got a spoon and a cup, an old cow and an old mare.'<sup>21</sup> The couple settled down in the small town of Maloitatka and had six children altogether: five daughters, of whom Aleksandra was the fourth, and a younger son.

Aleksandra's first childhood memories – recorded in her diary at the age of 24, in 1946 – are those of a large, happy family. When their parents were away working in the fields, the three elder sisters took care of the house. The most joyful memories are of the whole family making *pelmeni*: 'Mother is making the dough, father rolls the meat, while we all put them together, and we were always singing while doing this.'<sup>22</sup>

Then Aleksandra's mother fell ill with tuberculosis. At first, her father reacted with appropriate concern: he sold the family's cow and sent his wife to be treated at the nearest hospital, in Tomsk, where she was temporarily cured. In 1928, Aleksandra's older sisters started school in the nearby town of Itata, and she persuaded her parents to let her start school earlier in order to be able to join her sister Katia, who was two years older and very close to her. The father, whose current occupation we are not told, was 'assigned' work in various small towns, and the family moved twice, so Aleksandra attended the third grade in Tiazhin. During these years her mother's illness continued. She also gave birth to two more children. While Aleksandra's mother was once more hospitalised, her father started drinking heavily and spending time away from home. When their mother returned, the children had stopped attending school, their clothes were in rags, and their father was having an affair with 'some dairymaid'. In 1932 the mother divorced him, and he disappeared, receiving no further mention in Aleksandra's life history.

After the divorce, Aleksandra's mother returned to live in Maloitatka with her own mother and brother, who was also Aleksandra's godfather. Soon afterwards, their house burned down and they all found themselves homeless. The eldest sisters had already married, but the middle children, Aleksandra and Katia, were sent to work in other people's homes – Aleksandra as a nanny, Katia as a servant – in a repetition of the childhood experiences of Aleksandra's mother. The two youngest children were left in the care of their grandmother and uncle. We are not told why or where Aleksandra's mother went. 'Mother left alone,' Aleksandra notes, in her only comment on being abandoned by both her father and her mother during the same year.<sup>23</sup>

Next autumn, famine hit. Katia and Aleksandra had to go on the streets begging for food. The nationwide famine of 1932–3 is nowadays estimated to have killed between three and seven million people. The tragedy was suppressed

by the authorities and could only occasionally be referred to – as 'the well-known events' (*izvestnye sobytia*).<sup>24</sup> Chistiakova does not use the dangerous word 'hunger' (*golod*), but merely mentions 1932 as a 'year of bad harvest' (*god neurozhainyi*). She describes her own hunger and poverty openly, but does not mention other people dying of hunger.<sup>25</sup>

At this point there comes the first terrible memory to be described in detail. Aleksandra's uncle asked her to visit him, and she went to her grandmother's house in the hope of finding food, since 'they had everything, meat and grease and milk and much potatoes also'. Instead, he asked her to travel with him to the town where her mother was. (These small towns that the family moves between – Itatka and Maloitatka, Taiga and Tiazhin – all lie south of Tomsk, but are separated by hundreds of kilometres and several hours by train.) Evidently the uncle wanted to return Aleksandra's young brother to their mother. However, they could not find her, and when they returned by train the uncle refused to pay for Aleksandra's ticket, pretending he did not know her. The young girl was thrown out of the train and almost froze to death before she managed to get home. She did not cry, although her 'heart was pressed together'. After making it to her grandmother's house, she was put on top of the stove to warm herself, received 'a piece of bread and three cooked potatoes', and fell asleep. But when her uncle came home, he yelled at his mother for letting Aleksandra in. Aleksandra stood up and left the house without a word. Her grandmother did not apparently dare to say anything in her support. Outside, she could no longer hold back the tears and cried out loud.<sup>26</sup>

Parallel to such memories of abandonment and suffering run Aleksandra's memories of her first love, for Shura, a young man in her grandmother's village. Her frequent attempts to travel there in order to meet him, and the problem of not having a pretty dress to put on. This dress problem also appears in Kiseleva's notebooks,<sup>27</sup> and reminds us of what kind of status symbol a factory-made dress was in the Siberian villages of the early 1930s. Although 80 per cent of Soviet citizens lived in the countryside, this part of the population received only 30–40 per cent of all textiles, shoes and soap – products that were also scarce in the cities. The peasants were severely underpaid and faced higher prices than urban citizens. According to one estimate, a peasant had in theory to sell 1630kg (or 100 Russian *pu*d) of bread in order to buy one pair of boots.<sup>28</sup>

By then, Aleksandra was staying with her elder sister, and in 1939 she was reunited with her mother and younger siblings in Taiga. The family seems to have escaped the famines of 1936. Things slowly improved, if only in comparison with the collapse and chaos of the beginning of the decade. Aleksandra was the first generation of her family to finish seven years of school. While less than 10 per cent of Russian children had enrolled in grades five to seven in the 1920s, the proportion grew during Aleksandra's childhood to almost two-thirds in 1939.<sup>29</sup>

At the outbreak of World War Two, Aleksandra was seventeen years old and had just begun to work at a construction site. She started in outdoor production but was soon transferred to indoor work. News reached her about the infidelity



of Shura, her childhood sweetheart, and when he soon afterwards married somebody else, she also quickly got married. However, her first marriage ended 'within a month', because it turned out that her husband was already married to somebody else and had a daughter. Such parallel marriages – whether officially registered or not – were not uncommon due to the migrations, evacuations, sexual licence and general instability of the war situation. Kiseleva's biggest sorrow was the loss of her first husband during the war, and when she found him again he had remarried. She scolds him for subsequently 'remarrying' several times without officially divorcing his first wife, while Kiseleva herself also lived in a second 'marriage' without first being divorced.<sup>30</sup>

By the time of her first short marriage, Aleksandra was already the object of attention from a 'countryside boy with curly hair ... but I did not like him at all, everything in this boy showed that he was rude and lacked manners'. The boy was five years her junior and called Stepan, or 'Stepa', Chistiakov. Notwithstanding this version of Aleksandra's first impression of Stepan – written in 1946, after they had been married for some years, by which time she already had many reasons to regret her choice – she soon decided that she could make him change his ways and would always stick to him. 'At this time Stepan Chistiakov crashed a car. I somehow started to pity him.'<sup>31</sup> He moved into her apartment after one of many quarrels with his sister and mother. Soon she was pregnant. It is not clear from the account at which point the Chistiakovs officially registered their marriage, although they probably did so at the beginning of their life together. From the mid-1930s to the mid-1950s, Soviet family policy was at its strictest, discouraging divorce, reintroducing the stigma of born-out-of-wedlock children, and protecting the rights of married men as opposed to those of unmarried mothers.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, it remained more liberal than the average family policy of capitalist Europe, especially the Catholic countries.

Stepan was a heavy drinker, and incapable of the kind of tenderness and attention Aleksandra longed for. Chistiakova's relatives soon understood that this marriage was the mistake of her life. Nevertheless, she stuck to her husband – and was evidently still living with him when the publication of her life history made her famous all over Russia.

At the very beginning of their life together, Stepan was sentenced to three years in prison for causing accidents at work when drunk. Miraculously, he was soon set free 'by uncle Kalinin in honour of Victory': that is, in the post-war general amnesty. From Kemerovo the couple moved to the village where Stepan's mother lived, sharing an apartment with Stepan's sister and another mother with two children. At the age of 23, Aleksandra gave birth to a son, Vladimir, known as Volodia. She notes how it was her mother-in-law and a friend of Stepan's, not the new father himself, who fetched her from the hospital. 'That is when my suffering began. My husband drinks, leaves with his mates, and I am sad. Volodia sucks my breast and screams the whole night, and sometimes the whole day. I cannot understand that he did not die of it.'<sup>33</sup>

After the war, Stepan's father returned from the front, but moved out soon afterwards, disappearing from the life of the family for the next fifteen years. Aleksandra's mother-in-law obtained a better dwelling from the *soukhaz* and moved in there with her own daughter, Stepan, Aleksandra and little Volodia. They continued to live, on and off, with Stepan's mother for several decades.

Partly because of her baby's constant screaming, Aleksandra decided to stay at home with him for a few years. Her mother-in-law moved out after a quarrel about milk: as Chistiakova explains, her mother-in-law had taken all the milk to the house of her other son, so that Stepan had none. Such shortage of basic products was no exception. In the 1930s and 1940s, peasants often had worse access to bread and milk than they had had in the 1920s. It was only at the end of the 1950s that the production of dairy and meat products would return to the level of Aleksandra's childhood.<sup>34</sup>

When Volodia was a bit older, Aleksandra found herself a new job as a watchman at the railway station. Having registered as a worker, she immediately received a bread card of 800g for her and 400g for her son. This day, as we shall see below, was one of the happiest of her whole life. Also, in a longer perspective, family life settled down, and Aleksandra could often feel on 'firm ground'. She enjoyed work and its advantages – for example, she could take home coal from her work for heating the house. Stepan took care of the household when she had night shifts. The house was tidy: the floors shone 'like an egg yolk', and the baby was clean. Her mother-in-law was so impressed by these improved living standards that she wanted to move back in with them once again.<sup>35</sup>

In 1949 Stepan and Aleksandra's second son, Anatolii (Tolia), was born. Between and after these births Aleksandra had at least two illegal abortions, of which the first was almost fatal.<sup>36</sup> Stepan was still drinking more or less heavily, but there were moments when they lived as proper cultivated citizens and 'went to the cinema, or read books'. Aleksandra regularly received appreciation for and reward from her work on the railway.

But it is also at this time that we get the first close account of one of Stepan's jealous rages. The reason we are given for the outburst is that her mother-in-law had told him that Aleksandra had mentioned her earlier suitors when the two women were blaming each other for Stepan's drinking. When Stepan heard about this, he hit his wife on the head and tore her clothes to pieces. That time she fled to her sister, who advised her – as she always did – to leave her husband. Instead, Aleksandra wrote him a letter threatening to kill herself if he ever beat her again. He asked her to forgive him, and she did.<sup>37</sup>

At the age of 35, Aleksandra started having health problems in the form of complicated neural inflammations. She was ill for several months at a time, but recovered after several stays in special sanatoria, organised and paid for by her workplace. Then, at the end of the 1950s, Aleksandra embarked on one of the big projects of her life, that of constructing a house for their family. Detailed descriptions follow of how much workers should be paid, how to organise the transportation of roof tiles, etc. Obviously she had the organisational and most

of the economic responsibility for the construction. Stepan also had health problems, and Aleksandra pushed him to obtain sanatorium trips from his workplace. At regular intervals Aleksandra also saved him from the consequences of the accidents he caused at work – once by proving that he could not be blamed for sinking a tractor in a marsh, as the boss had only seen the tractor but not Stepan actually driving it! Almost as frequently she tried to influence his employers to improve his behaviour, or at least to tell her how much money he should be bringing home. Tolerance for drunk-driving was obviously quite high at Stepan's workplace. When Aleksandra once called there as an outsider and asked, 'Please tell me, how is Chistiakov working these days?', the immediate cheerful response was that comrade Chistiakov was working very well.<sup>38</sup>

Then the first of a series of absolute tragedies hit. At a party, Stepan once again became jealous, and a heavy beating followed. When Aleksandra woke up, she found herself in hospital, while her mother-in-law was 'in the morgue'. For having killed his own mother, Stepan was initially sentenced to execution. Aleksandra then travelled, on her own and for the first time in her life, to Moscow to defend him. She succeeded, and Stepan's death sentence was changed to fifteen years in prison.

While Stepan was serving his sentence, their younger son, Tolia, died during his army service. Aleksandra was told that he accidentally became stuck under a crane.<sup>39</sup> In the mid-1970s, Stepan returned home from prison. Their older son, Volodia, had married and had two children (although Aleksandra believed the gossip about only the second being his biological child; she was not exactly fond of her daughter-in-law). Volodia had been persuaded by his mother to study at a professional high school and become a mountain engineer. His family, therefore, lived in what to Aleksandra's eyes was luxury: they had three rooms and a kitchen, a piano, and a Chinese table service for twelve persons. But then, in the late 1970s, Volodia too was killed in an accident, after attempting to climb into his apartment from a neighbour's balcony. The role of alcohol in this accident is not mentioned, but the reader knows that Volodia had for several years been both smoking and drinking.<sup>40</sup>

'Is this destiny? Or not knowing how to live otherwise? I still do not know', ends Aleksandra Chistiakova's published life history. As I have mentioned, such sweeping reflections are not typical of the whole text. Instead, we have frequent allusions to tears, to when it is of no use crying and yet one does so nevertheless. We also have recurring laments in the form of poems and letters written to Stepan: 'Everything good and sane in my organism I gave to you ... I did not have enough strength to re-educate you, I hope you are satisfied with the state you have pushed me to.'<sup>41</sup> The diary excerpts are also full of lengthy quotations of both Aleksandra's and other women's laments in connection with the deaths of relatives and children. However, it is crucial to remember that such rhetorical use of self-sacrifice and passivity does not imply actual passive behaviour.

The formative experiences of Aleksandra's generation of Russian women coincided, as we have seen, with the formation of the Soviet Russian gender contract. I

will now approach this 'contract' as it was lived out by Aleksandra and her families. First, I will discuss the gender contract from the perspective of change and continuity in Russian women's work. Next, I will look more closely at women's care arrangements in the pattern of extended mothering; love stories and selective traditionalism in perceptions of masculinity and femininity; and finally at Aleksandra's encouraging experiences of professional life.

#### THE GENDER CONTRACT OF THE WORKING MOTHER

As in many workers' autobiographies, Aleksandra's transition to adulthood took place as she entered paid work.<sup>42</sup> In connection with her frequently interrupted years in school, Chistiakova recalls the young girl's eagerness to learn and her joy in studying. At the age of seventeen she received some marriage proposals, but turned them down and travelled alone to Novosibirsk in 1939. Through the Komsomol organisation she became a trainee at a construction site. Of the newcomers, twelve were men and three women. All the women were sent to the same work, which included outdoor digging. 'My girlfriends quit, but I decided to endure it.' Chistiakova also proudly remembers how she introduced the habit of reading the newspaper during lunchbreaks, one paradigmatic way of implementing active Soviet citizenship. Soon she was transferred to the storage room and white-collar work. As it was wartime and one of the supervisors was away at the front, she received much responsibility and work 'up to the cars ... I knew what to do in the household of one home. But this was a whole organisation!' She was also unprepared for the level of stealing that went on; everything from building materials to the cups from the canteen kept disappearing, until she learnt to demand receipts for everything. 'Probably the chairman of the local committee himself took them', she reflects about some lost curtains.<sup>43</sup> By this time, the black market had become an integral and parasitic part of the Soviet economy.<sup>44</sup>

After her training, Aleksandra's first permanent job was at a construction site, where she handled a transport vehicle together with a male chauffeur. Again, we are told how she succeeded in working in a male environment as a worthy stand-in for the men who were away fighting. She boasts about being approved of by the men – including those who were known to dislike female colleagues.

I was so glad that, being so young, I could stand in for a man and that they did not laugh at me, like at the other girls, whom the steamers hunted. Sometimes I worked two shifts in a row and nobody knew about it.<sup>45</sup>

Eventually, Aleksandra was moved from Novosibirsk to Kemerovo, where her workplace provided her with an apartment of her own – a happy event, since most of her co-workers went to live in a workers' dormitory. She worked briefly as an operator at the station, but as she did not like it she applied for chauffeur

courses. Once more, her gender created doubts about her competence and suitability, but she managed to win the argument. 'I pointed out that, as I will not be taken to the front, I should substitute for a man at the home front. And I succeeded.'<sup>46</sup> After quitting this workplace during her first pregnancy, at 29 Aleksandra was employed by the railway, and remained there until her retirement at the age of 55.

The young Aleksandra was thus part of the fast migration (if not flight) from the countryside to the cities and from agriculture to industry. During the first five-year plan, from 1928 to 1932, women moved into industrial work at a tempo unpredicted by Party politicians. The number of women in industry doubled within a few years, as they entered especially textiles and the railways, but also the iron and mining industries.<sup>47</sup> Aleksandra's career included several typical traits of women workers in the Soviet Union. In her first workplaces, she was one the women who did heavy industrial work 'as men' and together with men. In such heavy, male-dominated work, Russian women tended to encounter more sexist attitudes, sexual harassment, and a higher gendered wage gap.<sup>48</sup> Through her next work, on the railways, she again entered a previously male-dominated sector: before the Revolution, very few Russian women worked there, and in 1927 they constituted less than 9 per cent of railway workers. But in the following fifteen years women railway workers made fast progress, both in numbers and symbolically. The number of women in the railway sector rose rapidly in the early 1930s, and Soviet propaganda celebrated the first woman to become a fully qualified engine driver – Zinaida P. Troitskaia in 1935.<sup>49</sup>

For these reasons, it is often stressed that the decisive break with regard to women workers in Russia came not with the Bolshevik Revolution but during Stalin's forced industrialisation from 1928.<sup>50</sup> The lives of Aleksandra's grandmother in the 1890s and of her mother in the 1920s were quite similar: both were illiterate, agrarian women who worked long days and bore many children. The change came with Aleksandra's generation, although this change was of course not that women suddenly started working. In Aleksandra's family, women had always worked – in the fields, in households and in other people's homes. Indeed, if it makes any sense at all to use the expression 'traditional womanhood' in Russia, the term should refer to women raising children *and* working. The change of the 1930s consisted in the speed of women's education and entry into the workforce, especially the sharp increase in factory work and the wages this (unlike most agrarian and *kolkhoz* work) brought – money the women could freely dispose of. If one of the spouses in a Soviet family had control over all the family's income, it was usually the wife.

The type of gender relations that the Soviet state offered and forced women into from the early 1930s has been called the *contract of the wage working mother*. All women were supposed to do wage work and have children, while the socialist state was supposed to provide improved versions of traditional domestic work by establishing state canteens and nurseries. However, any abolition of the family or

housework was no longer on the agenda when Aleksandra came of age, as it had briefly been in the 1920s. Stalinism reintroduced the concept of the tidy, well-kept home, the woman as its creator and the husband as a somewhat distant but authoritative person. Especially in the post-war period, Stalinist socialism emphasised soft, subdued femininity and moderate consumerism as part of promoting middle-class values.<sup>51</sup>

The woman who both mothered and worked for a wage quickly became the official, everyday norm – a part of the symbolic level of the Soviet gender contract that lasted well into post-socialist Russia. For instance, Chistiakova feels a need to justify her decision to stay at home with her first child for a while in the late 1940s: 'I did not work any longer. Where would I go from such a [screaming] child? Who would agree to look after him? And my work was inconvenient, over eight kilometres away. I thought that as I am married, and with a small child, no-one will judge me if I quit. Even more so as the war was over.'<sup>52</sup>

Later, Aleksandra made an appeal to the shared identity of women workers when she wanted to find out about Stepan's salary.

The woman screamed to me that she did not have time to answer all the wives. Then I asked in an even quieter voice: 'Have you worked here for a long time?' She answers: 'Yes.' 'Know then that as long as this quarry exists I have called you for the first and maybe the last time. I'm a woman like you and I work like you. I bothered you because I want to learn what a conscience my husband has.' She listened to me, and now answered amiably that Chistiakov earned one thousand one hundred and fifty.<sup>53</sup>

The Soviet contract of the working mother has been described as a way of life where women were 'married to the state'. In this view, not the bourgeois male breadwinner but the patriarchal socialist state supported and exploited women's labour. Indeed, socialist social policies are even understood as intentionally undermining the patriarchal role of men in the family in order to gain increased control over both men and women. According to Marina Kiblitkaia, this 'marriage' was first and foremost based on women's sense of duty towards wage work, a duty that for the first Soviet generations often grew to a strong commitment and emotional attachment to work. Chistiakova's memories do show how the state – as mediated by the work collective – did indeed provide her with many things she expected but failed to get from her husband: appreciation, happiness, friendship, rest, truthfulness, rewards and gifts. The expression 'married to the state' also captures the important point that Soviet men were little symbolised in the Soviet gender contract. The relation focused on women, as they were held responsible for child rearing and social reproduction.<sup>54</sup>

However, the concept of being married to the state ignores two crucial aspects. First, and most obviously, it ignores the physical and sexual dimensions of gender and marriage – in this case, especially Stepan's continual beating of



Aleksandra and his relatives and all the consequences this had for family life. Second, the expression is constructed in opposition to the male breadwinner model, so that the state supported women 'instead' of her being provided for by her husband. For instance, in Sarah Ashwin's anthology *Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, the frequent references to 'the traditional family' are either little defined or referring to a bourgeois nuclear family. Ashwin writes how 'the [Soviet] authorities sought to forge an alliance with mothers through their definition of motherhood as a noble and rewarded service to the state, rather than as a private matter proceeding from the relationship between husbands and wives', thus contrasting the state's alliance with the mothers with the 'private matters' of an isolated heterosexual couple; while Marina Kiblitkaia introduces the 'pre-revolutionary figure of the male breadwinner', in contrast to which Soviet women 'were supposed to look to the state and their work for support, not individual men'.<sup>55</sup> This is a crucial mistake, since the majority of both men and women in pre-revolutionary Russia did not live in nuclear but in extended family households. Most Russians have always, 'traditionally', worked both inside and outside the home and under the dictate of somebody else – first the landlord and the Tsar, then the socialist state. Hierarchical networks between women – in-laws and servants – were an integral part of daily coping. Aleksandra's mother and grandmother were used to their fathers and husbands being away fighting, drinking or at seasonal work. And even if present, they were not automatically reliable sources of either income or support.

Finally, the notion of 'marrying the state' completely ignores the vital importance of informal social networks in keeping up the Soviet gender contract. As we shall see, Aleksandra was in many senses as much 'married' to her mother-in-law and to her own mother, as she was to Stepan or to the state.

#### EXTENDED MOTHERING

The rapid move into industrial paid work described above went hand in hand with a drastic drop in the numbers of births. Together, these two tendencies formed the greatest change for Aleksandra's generation, compared to those of her mother and grandmother.<sup>56</sup> While forced industrialisation affected both sexes, the changes in reproductive behaviour were obviously more directly connected with women's lives. Indeed, a shorthand for the term 'gender contract' would be 'who takes care of the children?'.<sup>57</sup> The answer to this question was increasingly hard to provide, as mothers worked further away from home and as state childcare and other basic services were not adequately developed. Becoming a Soviet working mother implied developing intricate networks of predominantly female caring work.

For the smaller number of children being born, the pattern of extended mothering was essential. Victoria Semenova and Paul Thompson describe the crucial role of grandmothers in chapter 6 of this volume. Extended mothering –

the norm in most non-European cultures – takes care of children and household tasks through a large network of mainly female kin. The biological mother and her own mother and sisters, or mother-in-law and sisters-in-law, form the core, collecting around them other kin, friends and neighbours.

Aleksandra herself had been raised mainly by her biological parents until they divorced. She was born in the village of her maternal grandmother, and that is where her mother returned after she had left her unfaithful and drinking husband. In this and subsequent crises – the loss of their house, the famine – the mother relied on the help of her kin. So did Aleksandra when she had children of her own. After the birth of her first son, Volodia, Aleksandra's mother arrived and, obviously grasping the complicated marital situation, returned home with her young grandson. Her younger sister sent Aleksandra a letter – because the mother could not write herself, perhaps – urging her to leave Stepan and join her mother again: 'Leave it all! The precious thing in your life – that is Volodia, and Volodia will always be with you. Don't look at that house, you did not build yourself a house but a tomb. Leave it all, come here.' Similar invitations were accepted by other young Soviet mothers. One woman from Leningrad, born in 1923, the same year as Chistiakova, recalls how her mother persuaded her to leave her first husband: 'When I argued that he was the father of my child, [my mother] said: "The father is not the one who conceives, but the one who brings the child up ..." That is how I became a single mother.' But Chistiakova tells us that she felt uneasy about how people would react to her if she left her husband, and especially unsure about how her mother would react. 'I should not involve other people in my life.' Getting Volodia back was not easy, and Aleksandra had to send many demanding telegrams before he was returned. Aleksandra's mother clearly was 'not at all happy with my life'.<sup>58</sup>

The help from her maternal kin nevertheless continued. As Aleksandra was expecting her next child she travelled to her mother's town in order to give birth there. She then took her youngest sister back to Kemerovo as a nanny, and this sister eventually stayed in the city and married one of Stepan's friends. Most probably Aleksandra's relatives would have taken care of her children if something fatal had happened to her. Still, Stepan's maternal relatives were the ones directly involved in her everyday life. Following the usual Russian custom, Aleksandra moved in with her mother-in-law, whom she simply called 'mother'. In the beginning of her marriage, she also lived together with Stepan's sister.

Aleksandra's house project in the late 1950s should be seen against this background – it is a general desire to live 'at least these years like people live',<sup>59</sup> but it is also an attempt to live separately from Stepan's relatives. The couple's relations with his mother were never easy, and we have seen how she moved in and out of their house depending on her own income and her relations with other kin. For instance, in the late 1940s Aleksandra's mother-in-law had started drinking too much, and after the neighbours complained about her behaviour Stepan threw her out of the house. Aleksandra, although not very attached to her mother-in-law,

complained about the loss of helping hands: 'We were left alone, but things did not get easier for me because of that. Earlier, at least, mother helped, so that I was not completely alone.'<sup>60</sup> Some years later, in 1952, Aleksandra, Stepan and his mother bought and fed a cow together. At last they had enough milk for everybody. Then, suddenly, the mother-in-law sold the cow and kept all the money for herself. Stepan and Aleksandra were upset and decided 'no longer to think about her as a mother'. But as winter approached, Aleksandra knew the old woman had no fuel, and took her back again to live with them.<sup>61</sup>

At an earlier point, when her two sons were still young, Chistiakova recalls hiring a nanny because her mother-in-law was wage working at the time. She almost presents this absence of her mother-in-law as a reason for aborting her fourth pregnancy:

I was pregnant again. Again sorrow was on my head. Tolia is still small, no help at all from my husband, nor from his mother. She had begun to work at a sauna, she had begun to earn money. She began to eat separately, I had to take a nanny. I took a young girl.

I made an abortion again.<sup>62</sup>

From the traditional Russian agrarian pattern of early marriage and many children, Soviet Russia moved in the 1930s to a pattern of somewhat later marriage and few children. In Aleksandra's generation, women with four or five children were already seen as exceptional. How much did this reflect desired birth limitation and to what extent was it a necessary response to harsh conditions? Unfulfilled dreams about a second or third child were found in many Russian women's lives.<sup>63</sup> In any case, the smaller number of children was a clear generational marker for Aleksandra's generation. Abortions were illegal for the first half of their reproductive years (1936-1955), the part of the life course during which most women give birth to children. This notwithstanding, her generation of Soviet mothers soon found ways to terminate unwanted pregnancies, and Stalin's anti-abortion legislation did not succeed in raising the number of births.

These patterns of extended mothering contrast sharply with the prevalent American and Northern European family pattern, where the biological parents are considered more central than a larger, female community. Extended mothering also constitutes one of the long-term continuities in Russian history, and continues well after Chistiakova's generation. When her son Volodia had his children, he and his wife took it for granted that Aleksandra would look after them. She grunted over this as the parents offered little compensation (for instance, once they brought her back nothing but 'two oranges' from a romantic trip they had made to the Black Sea). Nevertheless, she eagerly advised Volodia to leave his wife, keep his children and move back in with her: 'There's room, and I don't raise them any worse than she does.'<sup>64</sup>

## THE ROLE OF BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

Extended motherhood made grandmothers a functional necessity, whether the parties involved liked it or not. In Chistiakova's life, we see how this feature of Russian family life formed part of the close urban-rural interaction in Soviet society. Forced industrialisation, the destruction of agricultural trade and the imposition of state distribution contributed to the peculiar Soviet phenomenon in which villagers travelled to the cities to buy food. At the same time, city residents used the countryside as a source of extra food and childcare provision; for importing nannies and grannies or exporting children to them. As the mother-in-law moved in and out with the Chistiakovs, so did Aleksandra's whole family appear to have moved in and out of an industrialised and monetarised way of life. This had already been typical of late nineteenth-century Russia. 'The patterns of migration reinforced the town-village nexus so that even where peasants became year-round factory workers, their ties with the village persisted, and the industrial system in Russia was permeated with the institutions, habits and customs of a recently enserfed peasantry whose communal tradition retained its vitality.'<sup>65</sup> It was only implemented on a grander scale in the 1930s and 1940s.

Some scholars like to present extended mothering as something completely different from current Western conceptions of motherhood. For instance, one overview of the research into contemporary transnational motherhood experienced by domestic servants in Europe quotes the relativist view that, because the child has several female caregivers, a prolonged absence of the mother (or father) is not as dramatic as it would be for a Western child, accustomed only to its biological parents. Other approaches have been more concerned about the emotional costs of both parents and children facing prolonged abandonment.<sup>66</sup> In any case, it is worth inquiring about the mother-daughter relation in Chistiakova's life history, and considering why she herself writes so little about it.

When Aleksandra was in her mid-thirties, she decided to write to the newspaper with a poem praising her mother. The poem was not published by the newspaper, but is included in her life history. Its rhymed verse depicts a touching image of a sweet, poor, illiterate mother with six children. All of the children now have their own families, but they lovingly gather around their mother every New Year's Eve. The children had always understood that their mother had a hard time coping, the poem claims: 'one needs means to clothe children, and where could she find them?' Still, the mother had succeeded with her wise education. 'Raising children does not demand luxury, but a wise approach and words', the poem ends.<sup>67</sup>

Chistiakova's verse is far from the empty glorification common in Soviet printed maternal praise. Nevertheless, the reader feels a bit uneasy recalling that this mother left all her children for one or more years during the worst times of hunger. The maternal - and paternal - abandonment in Aleksandra's youth is, as we have noted, never commented or reflected upon in the published text. It is difficult not to interpret this silence as one of suffering, a suffering that is then

echoed in the numerous complaints about emotional abandonment in other close relations. This is because extended mothering does not, in my understanding, mean that all caregiving women are equally close to the child, or that the child and/or the mother do not suffer as a result of separation. What it does imply is a shared female responsibility for childraising and household work that does not systematically involve men.

What, then, was the place of men in the pattern of extended mothering typical of the Soviet working mother? In Stepan's family, as well as in Aleksandra's own childhood and adult families, men were not around or not to be trusted – including male blood relatives such as the treacherous uncle of the famine years. Aleksandra's mother, Stepan's mother and his sister had all divorced, although some of Aleksandra's sisters had husbands who did stay around. Men could provide support in the form of both money and care, but even then they were not as functionally necessary as the networks of extended kin. In her diary, Aleksandra often complained about Stepan's bad influence on the children and his refusal to assume a paternal role with them: 'You're one big misunderstanding, not a father!'<sup>68</sup> But otherwise she mostly remains silent about his emotional relationship with the children. At one point, she complains that he did not ask about the children when she visited him in prison. She presents us with only one indication of fatherly involvement, but one that is all the more touching. In the court during his trial for manslaughter, Stepan looked at his youngest son and started to cry, and then a little later he asked his older son to sit closer so that he could see him better.<sup>69</sup>

#### LOVE AND SELECTIVE TRADITIONALISM

As extended motherhood co-existed with a relatively frail marriage institution, it is worth looking more attentively at the depictions of heterosexual love in Chistiakova's life history. They appear to follow two quite common themes in Russian women's autobiographies: the story of the first and sweet love (with a tragic ending), and the story of the unhappy relationship the woman nevertheless decides to stay in. The first story is obviously not unique to Russian culture, although the status of pure and unhappy love appears to be especially prominent in Soviet Russia.<sup>70</sup> Kozlova and Sandomirskaja trace this characteristic to the traditional agrarian life course where the few years of non-married young courtship provided the only time of unregulated, joyful living and bittersweet memories.<sup>71</sup>

The second love story – the story of the Chistiakovs' marriage – is what probably most irritates its readers. Andrei Zorin found that the text had an 'intonation of resigned agreement with fate', and that 'the semi-question put in the title sounds as almost the only outburst of protest in the whole book'.<sup>72</sup> Of course, Chistiakova does protest – against her workload, against ignorant doctors, against fate, and most of all against Stepan's behaviour. But her protests have little credibility, as she always forgives him:

Oh sorrow, my sorrow! Even if I am away from him I know everything he is doing. Sometimes this thought came to me: if I only could stand up [from the sickbed] and then I should think it well over, should we live together or part? He is no friend to me, he has no feeling of pity for me ...

Again my partner started drinking. He's one day drunk, a second day, on the third I resolutely tell him: it's the vodka or me. Chose as you like, but there is no way I can accept your drinking.<sup>73</sup>

Aleksandra posed such questions in the second decade of her marriage. So why doesn't she leave him, the reader asks, and the author almost revels in her misery and self-denigration: 'I didn't have enough courage to divorce him, and I had to think about the upbringing of the children. How will they manage without a father? No, once you've started, you can't back out.'<sup>74</sup> She uses the Russian proverb, 'You have taken the rope, so you must pull.'

Interestingly, Chistiakova does not appeal to the good and/or the attractive sides Stepan probably did have. While her teenage first love was said to be 'like a flower, enchanting me', making her want to 'hug him and even kiss him',<sup>75</sup> Stepan is seldom pictured as being romantic. We get only a few glimpses of something: of how he used to call her his queen, or how once, after she had refused to sleep with him for several nights, a scene of tender reconciliation took place. 'Once at night he came to our bed and called me quietly: "Sasha, hey, Sasha". "What is it?" I answered. "Stop tormenting me, come to me." I was silent, but he took me in his arms and carried me like a child. He caressed me and was content that we had come back to each other.'<sup>76</sup>

Perhaps there were more such scenes, and perhaps Chistiakova, who can openly describe do-it-yourself abortions and illness, did not want to record sexual passion. Be that as it may, her obstinate attachment to her husband can well be regarded as an active attitude to life – contrary to what her rhetoric of weakness and self-sacrifice implies. Keeping her marriage, against the advice of her closest kin and her own better knowledge, even just keeping her husband alive, demand enormous efforts, from trying to get hold of Stepan's salary before he drinks it away, to saving him from a death sentence by travelling alone to Moscow to defend him, replacing an inefficient lawyer. Obviously one cannot recommend this marital strategy for everybody, but does that make it less of an absolute protest?

Nevertheless, the limits of my understanding are reached at the point where Chistiakova recommends her own way of life to the next generation of Russian women. When her daughter-in-law told her that her son, after receiving a work bonus, had been drinking and stayed away the whole night, Aleksandra retorted:

'Is that all?'

'Is that not enough?'

'It's not enough to worry a mother ... Look at your drunkard husband – your apartment is furnished like a high boss's and you've



only just started living together ... I don't say that it's good that he was drinking, that's not right, but you should live in peace with your family ...'<sup>77</sup>

Similarly, when Aleksandra's young friend complained that her boyfriend was drinking and told Aleksandra that she had written about this to her own mother, Aleksandra immediately advised the young woman to send a telegram home saying, 'Dear parents, everything is fine' – supposedly in order to protect her mother's health.<sup>78</sup>

In her obstinate devotion to her husband, Chistiakova is obviously not representative of her generation, in which Russian women did initiate divorce – all the more often once it had again become easier in the mid-1950s. But she does espouse a trait typical of the Soviet gender contract when it comes to her view of masculinity and femininity. "You're a man, aren't you", I said, "you look strong and brave, but your little soul is worse than a weak woman's."<sup>79</sup>

At another time, Stepan had a very bad headache, and Aleksandra tried to organise for him a trip to a sanatorium, but he resisted getting his medical certificate and said he preferred to die.

'Who will you surprise', I said, 'if you go into the moist earth in these years. It's never too late to die, but in order to live as a human being, that's where you need willpower. You're a man, but you have no willpower, and that's very bad. I'm even sometimes ashamed of you, that you're so weak. And then you also drink vodka.'<sup>80</sup>

Such statements are typical, are frequently found in Soviet and post-Soviet talk, and have been labeled Russian 'gender traditionalism'.<sup>81</sup> In family life, the husband is supposed to be strong and authoritative and the wife soft and submissive, so the tradition goes. This perception of gender had deep roots in Tsarist legislation and Bolshevik ideology. It also formed an integral part of the contract of the Soviet working mother, who was supposed to put the needs of her husband and children before any personal ambitions. Both men and women generally appreciated gender equality at work but not at home, and this was (and still is) true also for many career women in Russia.<sup>82</sup>

However, one should be careful not to confound this lip-service to 'tradition' with traditional practices. Soviet-style gender traditionalism often implied a normative *longing* for a certain kind of fixed, stable relation, thought of as 'natural' and 'normal'.<sup>83</sup> Men longed to be able to control women's reproductive and professional behaviour; women longed for emotional and practical support from men. In Chistiakova's text, we see a clearly strategic use of traditions: among traditional values, only those that would have suited her situation are appealed to, but others not. For instance, in Russian tradition the daughter-in-law should obey the mother-in-law. Aleksandra clearly did not always do this, and nowhere in her quarrels with Stepan's mother is this tradition alluded to.

Kozlova and Sandomirskaja correctly underscore that such unattractive traditions simply disappeared: 'Traditions force the fiancée to submit to the mother-in-law, to perform certain domestic duties and generally to "show respect". When the crust of habits falls apart, fiancées stop obeying. This submission is not replaced at all by some other level of relations, it simply ceases to exist. The conflict becomes grimmer and less controlled.'<sup>84</sup>

This perceptive comment, however, does not prevent Kozlova and Sandomirskaja's analysis from assigning women a more 'traditional' role with regard to their male partners. Thus they suggest that destruction of traditional female and male sociability followed a different pattern: 'The woman tries to follow a traditional morality in marriage. For the men this model has been destroyed. Women reproduce traditional values, providing the functions of protecting community life. For instance, men drink away their salary, but, because of the garden, fowls and domestic supplies, the family's life continues.'<sup>85</sup> But this view of male traditional behaviour is mistaken in its implicit reference to a male breadwinner that was never widely represented in Russia (nor in most other countries).

The interpretation also obscures the rational and pragmatic 'tradition work' which Soviet Russian women performed. For instance, Chistiakova tells us that Stepan used to complain about how she spent their income. Her reaction is not to oppose the 'tradition', but to challenge him to live up to it: 'Many times we quarrelled over money. I said: "Maybe indeed I cannot handle money; then stop drinking and take command yourself. But don't yell at me in front of the children."<sup>86</sup> In a situation where she organised and to a large extent financed everything the family did, Aleksandra had no reason to question the principle that a man should be in charge of the household money. But on the other hand, as we shall see, she was quick and effective in overriding Stepan's 'traditionally male' attempts to decide over where she would work.

#### WORK – THE FRIENDLY FAMILY

Chistiakova complains that her first, harsh construction work destroyed her looks: 'I had become so terrible that if anybody I knew had seen me they would not have recognized me. My face was wind-torn and my cheeks were peeling, as if I had frozen them a couple of times.'<sup>87</sup> But that is the only negative comment ever connected with her work. Only a couple of times does she discuss her work with the lamenting style that characterises the descriptions of her social relations, and that is when she felt excluded from work due to illness or retirement. Generally, work is the only constant source of pride, success and self-esteem in her life. As we have seen, her mother, father, sisters, relatives, children, mother-in-law and husband – all betray her at some point. But her workplace never did. It fed her, it healed her, it even remembered her birthday – and women's day on the 8 March – which her husband and sons all tended to forget. When

Aleksandra attempted to improve her working conditions, she succeeded in getting both more pay and two additional employees – very much unlike her numerous attempts to improve her husband.

The story of how Aleksandra found herself a new workplace after the birth of her first son is worth quoting at length here:

All three of us [Stepan, his sister and Aleksandra] were unemployed. I went looking for work. I learnt that they needed motorist women for the mine. I came home and said to him, I'm going there to register. My husband said: 'When you die, that's when you go to lie below the earth.' I said 'I went to the canteen, they need a cashier woman.' So again he says: 'I can swear enough at home, better than everybody swearing at you in the canteen.' Then I decided: 'I won't ask him because then you never get a place.'

I am going to the mine station. I meet a weigher, Galia, a nice young woman. I boldly ask her: 'Do you need a switchman or a weigher?' ... I wrote an application, and the foreman signed me on at once: 'Register as a watchman in the Butovskaia station in place of Shishkina.' ... The head of the administration also signed ... On the way home I stopped by the buffet Severnyi, bought two and four hundred [grams of] bread, and for the meat units on the food card I bought sausage. At that time I was shining from joy and pride at having come to stand on firm ground again. I walked so that probably no-one could have caught up with me. I wanted to surprise Stepan and entertain my beloved son. Stepan was actually glad when I told him that I would be a watchman on the station to the Butovskaia mine.<sup>88</sup>

Applying the fairy-tale structure of three attempts, Chistiakova here describes both the potential tensions between husband and wife caused by her wage work, and her enormous personal happiness. Aleksandra's retirement was even more loaded with emotions and proud memories. In the spring before her 55th birthday, she travelled on a holiday and health trip organised through her work. She knew it would be her last.

In Piatigorsk it was spring, very good care. We travelled with the guide to Kislovodsk and Essentuki, and the food was marvellous. I gathered strength for the whole rest of my life. I knew that I would soon retire and I will not dare to provoke the administration, although I will pay the trade union fees. I often thought about my retirement. I trained the new switchman as well as I could.

One night I was lonesome and wrote again:

... I do not wish for this, my friends

My heart is aching to

Retirement – there it all ends

And no-one visits you.<sup>89</sup>

After listening to this poem, her colleagues assured her that they would not forget her. Indeed, on Aleksandra's birthday they did show up, organised a party at the station, dressed her in new clothes from top to toe, and awarded her a premium of 100 roubles together with an honorary diploma as a veteran of work. The whole evening was perfect, with music, songs and dancing, and 'Stepan restraining himself, so as not to show his bad side'.<sup>90</sup> This is one of the few times he ever gets credit for not ruining everything. In this final turning point of her professional career, Aleksandra was celebrated by her work collective almost like a bride – witness the new clothes – and the importance of the situation even made her husband behave properly.

## CONCLUSIONS

Aleksandra Chistiakova's published life history illustrates the dramatic change which Russian gender relations underwent in little more than a decade, from the end of the 1920s to the post-war situation. In one generation, Soviet women experienced uniquely rapid social and gendered mobility. They achieved the means to decide about their education, spouse, numbers of children and the use of their own money in a way that was limited, but still unprecedented, for the Russian majority.

I have focused here on the formative experiences of a female generation, consciously emphasising the positive and constructive experiences. We can see Aleksandra's pride and joy in work as constitutive of the generation of the Soviet working mothers who gained financial independence, but who also enjoyed bringing home an especially good dinner for their husband and children. Chistiakova's story is one in which the state's relation to women is basically supporting and empowering. It is through her education and her work collective that she 'comes to stay on firm ground', can fulfil her dreams of building a proper house, can cure her illnesses, and can keep her family life at least partly under control.

Aleksandra's happy depictions of her workplace in the 1940s almost echo the situation of contemporary Western culture, where work is said to feel like home should feel, while home feels like work.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, her life history can also help us guard against the nowadays quite common view that socialism made women 'neglect' and 'sacrifice' their private and personal lives.<sup>92</sup> The same lesson can be drawn from the life history of Evgeniia Kiseleva, which I have partly discussed in relation to Chistiakova's fate. Kiseleva always worked in low-esteemed service jobs

and her life trajectory did not move towards an established and respectable working-class lifestyle as Chistiakova's did. In Kiseleva's case, the professional, private and public spheres do not appear to be separated from each other at all: she lives in a traditional world 'where everybody knows each other'.<sup>93</sup> Also for more generalisable data and with regard to the educated middle-class, Soviet Russian private relations appear to have been *more*, not less, intertwined with professional relations in comparison with Western Europe.<sup>94</sup> These findings contradict any easy assertions about what Soviet people neglected, although they do lead us to interesting further questions about the varying meanings of 'the private'.

Chistiakova's family life did not suffer as a result of her working life. On the contrary, it benefited from the now-extinct Soviet social policy that provided inexpensive, week-long trips for exhausted women or alcoholic men, and summer camps for children of all classes. Support from the state and the work collective can strengthen family life instead of undermining it. This should not make us forget the countless instances where the Soviet system on the contrary destroyed family life by imposing bureaucratic obstacles to professional self-realisation or by causing death by famine and political repression. Neither should this lead to any hasty conclusions about socialist achievements. As Irina Osokina has stressed, the feeling of material improvement many of this generation of men and women experienced was until the 1960s an actual improvement only in comparison to their youth in the early 1930s – and that period was in many ways worse and poorer than the 1910s or the 1920s.<sup>95</sup>

The Soviet system did not invent Russian women's harsh work, it did not even invent women's industrial work. Rather, it implemented female wage work on a massive scale, and presented the majority with new educational and professional opportunities, increasing women's economic and marital independence. As in many other tales of the modernisation of patriarchal agrarian societies, most women had relatively more to gain than most men. The gender contract of 'the Soviet working mother' was indeed in many respects an affair between women and the State. A man could lose his influence over his wife's choices, as she simply agreed with the employer without telling him first.

For this reason, it is sometimes claimed that Soviet ideology and everyday life presupposed a male breadwinner. According to this view, family life and traditions would follow the model of the male as the head of the family, notwithstanding egalitarian Communist rhetoric. There are several indicators that support this conclusion: the existence of a gender gap in wages; the nuclear family propaganda from Stalin to Brezhnev; the high tolerance for abusive and violent male behaviour; and the speed with which the male breadwinner was reintroduced in post-socialist Russia.

However, this argument tends to overlook the historical fact that both the bourgeoisie and its cultural values, including its gender values, rooted themselves comparatively late and only partially in Tsarist Russia.<sup>96</sup> In Soviet times, support of the male breadwinner ideal is not monolithic, but varies according to gender and class. For instance, a recent study shows how explicit propaganda for a male

breadwinner and head of the household is most often found among educated men of the Russian middle class, while male manual workers tend to talk less about differences in sex roles and duties. Allusions to the male breadwinner also serve different strategic aims when uttered by men and by women. It is in the collective interest of men to support the idea of submissive women. When women subscribe to apparently misogynistic ideas, it often expresses a longing – a dream of a second breadwinner in addition to the female, and a dream of a supportive and reliable husband. We need to take better account of the ways in which Russian women have made rational and pragmatic use of their 'traditional' habits, discarding the ones that restricted their freedom of movement and repeating the ones that could have increased their amount of received help, support, love and understanding.

### Notes

- 1 Aleksandra Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?* [Enough for One Woman?] (Den' i noch', Krasnoiar'sk, 1998). I want to thank Natalia Kolesova, Marianne Liljeström, Arja Rosenholm, Kristina Rotkirch, Marja Rytönen and Irina Savkina for their useful help and commentaries in reading this autobiography.
- 2 See the autobiography of Evgeniia Kiseleva published in N.N. Kozlova and I.I. Sandomir'skaia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*. 'Naivnoe Pis'mo'. *Opyt lingvo-sotsiologicheskogo chitaniia* [That's what I want to call the movie. The 'naive letter'. The experience of a linguo-sociological reading] (Gnozis, Moscow, 1996), in which ordinary words are spelled the way they are pronounced, *floroi* instead of *vtoroi* [second], or *harasho* instead of *horasho* [good]. Another autobiography of a Russian woman worker born in 1925 is discussed in Anna Rotkirch, *The Man Question, Loves and Lives in Late 20th Century Russia* (Department of social policy, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, 2000).
- 3 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia Odnoi?*, 35.
- 4 Andrei Zorin, *Kak ia byl predsedatelem* [When I was chair], *Neprikosnovennyi Zapas*, 4, 6, (1999).
- 5 Zorin, *ibid.*; Irina Savkina, personal communication, Tampere, 1998.
- 6 Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1994).
- 7 Kozlova and Sandomir'skaia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*, 7; Elena Zdravomyslova, 'Male life histories from St Petersburg', paper presented at the 4th European Conference of Sociology, RN1: Biographical Perspectives on European Societies, Amsterdam, 18–21 August 1999.
- 8 Marja Rytönen, 'Narrating female subjectivity in the autobiographical texts of Elena Bonner, Emma Gertejn and Maiija Pliseckaja', *NORA Nordic Journal of Women's Studies*, 7, 1 (1999), 34–46.
- 9 Kozlova and Sandomir'skaia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*, 87, 73–5. Among autobiographical publications of poor and marginalised groups we also find the collection *Rasskazhi Svoiu Istoriuu* [Tell Us Your Story] (Fond Nochlezhka, St Petersburg, 1999). Although extremely valuable and interesting, most of these stories are quite short and centre on the social marginalisation of the narrators in the 1980s and 1990s. This general scarcity of (published) non-middle-class women's autobiographies is evident, for example, in Jane McDermid and Anna Hillyar, *Women and Work in Russia 1880–1930. A Study in Continuity through Change* (Longman, London and New York, 1998), which aims to make extensive use of Russian women worker's memoirs, but does not feature any autobiographical accounts by ordinary Soviet women, partly



- because most women workers were still illiterate in the 1920s. For published oral histories of rural and working women of the same generation as Chistiakova, see Marina Malysheva and Daniel Bertaux, 'The social experiences of a countrywoman in Soviet Russia', in Selma Leydesdorff, Luisa Passerini and Paul Thompson (eds), *Gender and Memory*, International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories, IV (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996), 31–44; and Anastasia Posadskaya-Vanderbeck and Barbara Alpen-Engel, *A Revolution of Their Own: Voices of Women in Soviet History* (Westview Press, New York, 1998).
- 10 Sheila Fitzpatrick, 'Lives and Times', in Sheila Fitzpatrick and Yuri Slezkine (eds), *In the Shadow of Revolution: Life Stories of Russian Women from 1917 to the Second World War* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000), 3–17.
  - 11 See Marianne Liljeström, chapter 11, this volume.
  - 12 Kozlova and Sandomirskaiia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*, 156–7.
  - 13 Zorin, *Kak ia byl' predsedelem*.
  - 14 Yvonne Hirdman, *The Gender System: Theoretical Reflections on the Social Subordination of Women* (The Study of Power and Democracy in Sweden, English Series, Report 40, Uppsala, 1990). The Soviet gender contract of the working mother has been described in Anna Temkina and Anna Rotkirch, 'Soviet gender contracts and their shifts in contemporary Russia', *Idäntutkimus: Finnish Journal of Russian and Eastern European Studies*, 2 (1997), 6–24.
  - 15 McDermid and Hillyar, *Women and Work in Russia*, 3–4.
  - 16 *Ibid.*, 9.
  - 17 Tommi Hoikkala, Semi Purhonen and J.P. Roos, 'The baby boomers, life's turning points and generational consciousness', in Bryan Turner and June Edmunds (eds), *Generational Consciousness, Narrative and Politics* (Rowman and Littlefield, London, 2002: 145–64). As these authors stress, there is also a significant difference between the generational consciousness of the elite and that of 'ordinary' people. Here I will ignore this distinction and discuss 'formative generational experience' in the meaning of the key social events and structures facing a certain age cohort (not as how the members of this age cohort would define their generation themselves).
  - 18 I refer to Chistiakova as the author of her life history and in the present tense, while I use Aleksandra and the past tense to denote the actions of the protagonist of the life history; e.g., 'Chistiakova recalls how happy Aleksandra was to start school'.
  - 19 For this way of presenting the individual life course together with main historical events, see Daniel Bertaux, *Les récits de vie*, Nathan, Paris, 1997.
  - 20 The original family law of the Soviet Russian generation is world-famous for its gender equality. Marriage required the mutual agreement of the future spouses, and divorce could be obtained if both or either of the spouses so desired. The spouses had no right to each other's property, the wife had the right to keep her own surname, and the status of children born in and out of wedlock was formally equal. The abolition of large private properties also diminished economic inequalities between men and women. For a collection with English translations of early Soviet family legislation and principles, see Rudolf Schlesinger, *The Family in the USSR: Changing Attitudes in Soviet Russia – Documents and Readings* (Routledge, London, 1949). For an overview of Soviet family policy in this period, see Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917–1936* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993).
  - 21 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 34.
  - 22 *Ibid.*
  - 23 *Ibid.*, 35.
  - 24 Between 1928 and 1932 the previous system of trade and distribution of food and basic goods practically broke down, as the remaining private companies and trade relations were destroyed. Furthermore, the Soviet State imposed heavy production quotas for the countryside, quotas which had to be met irrespective of the harvest. In addition to the national famine of 1932–3, bad harvests easily led to local famines later in the 1930s too. Elena Osokina, *Za Fasodom 'Stalinskogo Izobiliiia'. Raspredelenie i Ryno Snabzhenii Naseleniia v Gody Industrializatsii 1927–1941* [Behind the Façade of 'Stalin's Time of Abundance': Distribution and the Market for the Population during the Years of Industrialization 1927–1941] (Rossiiskaia akademiia nauk, Institut Russkoi Istorii, Rosspen, Moscow, 1999), 114–20. An English version of this has appeared as Elena Osokina, Kate S. Transchel and Greta Bucher, *Our Daily Bread: Socialist Distribution and the Art of Survival in Stalin's Russia, 1927–1941* (M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 2001).
  - 25 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 35. By contrast, Evgeniia Kiseleva uses the word 'hunger' in 1933 in her life history, written in the 1970s. Kiseleva escaped by being employed in a canteen, and remembers stealing extra bread to help the hungry miners (Kozlova and Sandomirskaiia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*, 227–9).
  - 26 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 36.
  - 27 Kozlova and Sandomirskaiia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*, 156.
  - 28 Osokina, *Za Fasodom 'Stalinskogo Izobiliiia'*, 115–17.
  - 29 Gail Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society: Equality, Development, and Social Change* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978), 140.
  - 30 Kozlova and Sandomirskaiia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*, 70.
  - 31 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 41–2.
  - 32 Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society*, 111–14.
  - 33 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 42.
  - 34 R.W. Davies, Mark Harrison and Stephen Wheatcroft, *The Economic Transformation of the Soviet Union, 1913–1945* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994), 21, 41.
  - 35 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 44.
  - 36 Chistiakova recalls how she first lay silently bleeding for one whole night, without complaining and without her husband or her mother-in-law noticing anything. When her mother-in-law understood the situation, no doctor willing to help Aleksandra could be found. However, Stepan returned home from work and brought her milk and sugar. His care and the sweet milk gave Aleksandra power 'to continue fighting and not give in to death'. For a discussion of the symbolism used in this story, see Rotkirch, *The Man Question*, 99–101.
  - 37 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 45–6, 50.
  - 38 *Ibid.*, 56.
  - 39 *Ibid.*, 68 and 74.
  - 40 *Ibid.*, 81.
  - 41 *Ibid.*, 46.
  - 42 Cf. Mary Jo Maynes, *Taking the Hard Road: Life Course in French and German Workers' Autobiographies in the Era of Industrialization* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1995), 102.
  - 43 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 40.
  - 44 Osokina, *Za Fasodom 'Stalinskogo Izobiliiia'*, 11. Osokina calls the period between 1936 and 1941 a 'union' between State distribution and (legal or illegal) market provision. Evgeniia 'Zhenia' Kiseleva was at the same time employed in a food shop selling fish. She stole some fish and was caught by her boss, who yelled at her: 'I was all burning [with shame], I thought probably you have to cheat people ... I counted wrongly, where it was 200g I said 300g, where 500g I said 700g ... "What do you do, Zhenia, after the shop has closed – you will come to my office." I could not wait for the end of the working day. I entered trembling after work, but he stood up from his table, tapped me on the right-hand shoulder, and said "Ah-ah-ah, I think that is how one should work, that is how" ... Until 1941 I worked in the shop, both honestly and cheating people.' (Kozlova and Sandomirskaiia, *Ia tak tak khochu nazvat' kino*, 219.)

- 45 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 40.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 41.
- 47 Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society*, 99; McDermid and Hillyar, *Women and Work in Russia*, 202. Soviet women did not become domestic servants as often as in Western Europe, where it was a typical form of female urban migration: Malysheva and Bertaux, 'The social experiences of a countrywoman', 39; Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society*, 108.
- 48 McDermid and Hillyar, *Women and Work in Russia*, 201.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 202.
- 50 Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society*, 95–122; McDermid and Hillyar, *Women and Work in Russia*, 3.
- 51 On Soviet gender ideology of the 1920s and 1930s, see Barbara Clements, 'The birth of the New Soviet Woman', in Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez and Richard Stites (eds), *Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1985), 220–37; and Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*. On post-war conceptions of gender, see Vera Dunham, *In Stalin's Time. Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1976).
- 52 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 42.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 49.
- 54 The expression 'married to the state' is found in Marina Kiblitkaya, 'Russia's female breadwinners: the changing subjective experience', in Sarah Ashwin (ed.), *Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia* (Routledge, London, 2000), 55–70.
- 55 Sarah Ashwin, 'Introduction' to *Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, 11; Kiblitkaya, 'Russia's female breadwinners', 65. See also Sergei Kukhterin, 'Fathers and patriarchy in communist and post-communist Russia', *ibid.*, 71–89, for a better-argued but still problematic perception of what the 'traditional' Russian family and patriarch was.
- 56 As in most countries, the drop in birth rate in Soviet Russia did not totally coincide with industrialisation. In Russia, the decline in the birth rate was under way in urban areas by the end of the nineteenth century. It then accelerated during the first decades of Soviet power. By the 1970s, the average number of children per family was 2.24 in the countryside and 1.64 in the towns: Ellen Jones and Fred W. Grupp, *Modernization, Value Change, and Fertility in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987).
- 57 Temkina and Rotkirch, 'Soviet gender contracts'.
- 58 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 44–5. The quotation from the Leningrad woman's autobiography is from Rotkirch, *The Man Question*, 126.
- 59 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 42.
- 60 *Ibid.*, 48.
- 61 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 63 E.g. Valentina Belova, *Chisto Detei v Sem'e* [The Number of Children in the Family], (Statistica, Moscow, 1975), 109–41.
- 64 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 80.
- 65 McDermid and Hillyar, *Women and Work in Russia*, 34.
- 66 Emma Lutz, "At your service, madame!" The globalization of domestic service', *Feminist Review*, 70 (2002), 89–104.
- 67 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 55.
- 68 *Ibid.*, 52.
- 69 *Ibid.*, 67.
- 70 Rotkirch, *The Man Question*, 58–77.
- 71 Kozlova and Sandomirskaja, *Ia tak tak hochu nazvat' kino*, 73.
- 72 Zorin, *Kak ia byl predsedatelem*.
- 73 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 52, 54.
- 74 *Ibid.*, 55.
- 75 *Ibid.*, 37–8.
- 76 *Ibid.*, 55.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 76.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 76–7.
- 79 *Ibid.*, 50.
- 80 *Ibid.*, 56.
- 81 Peggy Watson, 'Eastern Europe's silent revolution: gender', *Sociology*, 27, 3 (1993), 471–87; Kiblitkaya, 'Russia's female breadwinners'; Kozlova and Sandomirskaja, *Ia tak tak hochu nazvat' kino*, 72–7.
- 82 See, e.g. Lynne Attwood, 'Young people's attitudes towards sex roles and sexuality', in Hilary Pilkington (ed.), *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia*, (Routledge, London, 1996), 132–51; Anna Temkina, 'Women's ways of entering politics', in Anna Rotkirch and Elina Haavio-Mannila (eds), *Women's Voices in Russia Today*, (Dartmouth, Aldershot, 1996), 33–48.
- 83 Watson, 'Eastern Europe's silent revolution', 472.
- 84 Kozlova and Sandomirskaja, *Ia tak tak hochu nazvat' kino*, 77.
- 85 *Ibid.*, 72.
- 86 Chistiakova, *Ne mnogo li dlia odnoi?*, 54.
- 87 *Ibid.*, 39.
- 88 *Ibid.*, 44.
- 89 'No mne ne chochetsia, družia, i serdtse moe zhenet, uidesh na pensio – konets nikto uzhe ne pridet.' This is the third of four verses; *ibid.*, 79.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 80.
- 91 Arlie R. Hochschild, *The Time Bind, When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work* (Metropolitan Books, New York, 1997).
- 92 Kiblitkaya, 'Russia's female breadwinners', 56, 60.
- 93 Kozlova and Sandomirskaja, *Ia tak tak hochu nazvat' kino*, 58.
- 94 Markku Lonkila, 'The social meaning of work: the teaching profession in post-Soviet Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 50, 4 (1998), 699–712.
- 95 Osokina, *Za fasadom 'stalinskogo izobilitia'*, 236.
- 96 For the relatively late arrival of the bourgeois gender role, see, e.g., Laurie Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-siècle Russia* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1992), 4.