

## Introduction

It was not until the closing decades of the nineteenth century that Russia entered the industrial age. Only then, under the impact of favorable government policies, did traditional Russian society begin to undergo a rapid transformation. Vast rural areas were soon converted into factory villages, and urban centers expanded to absorb new factories, shops, and residential districts. But most significant of all, a new and greatly enlarged working population was formed as tens of thousands of peasants migrated from the countryside, forsaking their plows for jobs in cities and towns.<sup>1</sup>

Labor force statistics testify to the magnitude of the changes that took place in the 1890s, a period of accelerated economic growth. More than

<sup>1</sup>On the history of Russia's industrialization, see William L. Blackwell, *The Beginnings of Russian Industrialization 1800–1860* (Princeton, 1968); M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky, *The Russian Factory in the 19th Century* (Homewood, Ill., 1970); Alexander Gerschenkron, "Problems and Patterns of Russian Economic Development," in *The Transformation of Russian Society: Aspects of Social Change Since 1861*, ed. Cyril E. Black (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 42–71; Theodore von Laue, *Sergei Witte and the Industrialization of Russia* (New York, 1963); Reginald E. Zelnik, *Labor and Society in Tsarist Russia: The Factory Workers of St. Petersburg 1855–1870* (Stanford, 1971). James H. Bater, *St. Petersburg: Industrialization and Change* (London, 1976) offers a valuable account of changes in the composition of the labor force and the impact of industrialization on the capital.

one million men and women—most of them peasants—entered the industrial labor force between 1887 and 1900, bringing the total number of factory and mine workers at the turn of the century to 2.4 million. But industrial employment represented only one aspect of the growing non-agricultural economy. During the 1890s, thousands of peasants found jobs in artisanal trades and in an expanding network of putting-out industries in cities and the countryside. Still others earned a livelihood in commercial firms and in the flourishing service, construction, transportation, and communications sectors of the economy. Another large group joined the ranks of day laborers. In all of these categories combined, there were 6.4 million hired workers in the Russian Empire in 1897, the year of the country's first national census.<sup>2</sup>

The Russian working class consisted of heterogeneous elements employed in many different occupations and industries. Together these diverse groups were destined to play a crucial role in the country's future, and by 1900 they were already showing signs of volatility and a propensity for collective action that could not be ignored. In the 1890s, factory groups in the capital, St. Petersburg, mounted the first large-scale city-wide strikes in Russia, and less than a decade later, during the 1905 revolution, workers throughout the Empire joined in upheavals that decisively challenged the autocratic system, forcing the government to give in to demands for constitutional reform. When the old regime finally collapsed during the February Revolution, workers once again moved to the forefront of the popular movement, this time helping to bring the Bolshevik party to power in October 1917.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*Chislennost' i sostav rabochikh v Rossii na osnovanii dannykh pervoi vseobshchei perepisi naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii 1897 g.*, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1906), I, pp. viii-xx.

<sup>3</sup>On the period before 1917, see Victoria E. Bonnell, *Roots of Rebellion: Workers' Politics and Organizations in St. Petersburg and Moscow, 1900-1914* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983); Laura Engelstein, *Moscow, 1905: Working-Class Organization and Political Conflict* (Stanford, 1982); John L. H. Keep, *The Rise of Social Democracy in Russia* (Oxford, 1963); Ezra Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle in the Pale: The Formative Years of the Jewish Workers' Movement in Tsarist Russia* (Cambridge, 1970); Solomon M. Schwarz, *The Russian Revolution of 1905: The Workers' Movement and the Formation of Bolshevism and Menshevism* (Chicago, 1967); Gerald Dennis Surh, "Petersburg Workers in 1905: Strikes, Workplace Democracy, and the Revolution," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1979; Allan K. Wildman, *The Making of a Workers' Revolution: Russian Social Democracy,*

Russian workers were exceptionally active during the final decades of autocratic rule, participating in three revolutionary upheavals in a dozen years. Yet little is known about the daily lives of workers, their experiences at the workplace and outside of it, their social relations, and aspirations. These important but neglected aspects of working-class life provide the subject for the memoirs and first-hand accounts by contemporaries that appear in this volume. My aim in the introductory essay is to place the selections in an historical context and to acquaint the reader with some of the major issues and themes in the study of Russian labor.

#### THE LABOR FORCE

The program of state-sponsored industrialization that got under way in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century brought about many changes in the nonagricultural economy, but none was so dramatic and fateful as the proliferation of factories and the appearance within them of a large and highly concentrated group of industrial workers.<sup>4</sup> As elsewhere in Europe at an earlier time, the advent of a factory system was inextricably connected to the expansion of two major industries: textiles and metalworking.

With more than half a million workers, the textile industry (cotton, silk, wool, and linen) was the largest single employer of factory labor in the

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1891-1903 (Chicago, 1967). On 1917, see William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution*, 2 vols. (New York, 1935); Diane Koenker, *Moscow Workers and the 1917 Revolution* (Princeton, 1981); Alexander Rabinowitch, *Prelude to Revolution: The Petrograd Bolsheviks and the July 1917 Uprising* (Bloomington, Ind., 1968); Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (New York, 1976); John L. H. Keep, *The Russian Revolution: A Study in Mass Mobilization* (New York, 1976).

<sup>4</sup>The precise definition and classification of the factory worker need not detain us here. Suffice it to note that before 1901 the government designated a "factory" any manufacturing enterprise that employed fifteen or more workers or utilized engine-powered machinery. In 1901, the definition of a factory was changed to include only manufacturing enterprises with twenty or more workers, regardless of the type of machinery. These criteria were not, however, applied consistently by the government. See S. N. Semanov, *Peterburgskie rabochie nakanune pervoi russkoi revoliutsii* (Moscow, 1966), pp. 6-17, esp. p. 7, n. 4.

Russian Empire in 1897. Textile mills could be found in many parts of Russia, but the industry was heavily concentrated in the cities and factory villages of the Central Industrial Region, an area encompassing six provinces in the heart of European Russia. Metalworking, the second largest employer of factory labor, accounted for about 414,000 workers at the end of the 1890s.<sup>5</sup> This industry was centered in Petersburg province in the northwestern region of the country and, to a lesser extent, in Moscow province.<sup>6</sup>

Both the textile and metalworking industries in Russia were distinguished by their unusually high concentration of workers per enterprise; in both branches there were many firms that employed more than one thousand workers. But here the similarities end, for the composition of the labor force in the two industries differed greatly. Whereas textile mills relied mainly on unskilled and semiskilled labor, there was a predominance of skilled workers in metalworking plants at the turn of the century. As many as four out of every five workers in some metalworking enterprises belonged to the ranks of skilled labor. Furthermore, the textile mills employed a large number of women and children; the labor force in metalworking, by contrast, was almost entirely male.

There were many differences between metal and textile workers—differences that are described in the selections that follow. Yet these two groups of workers shared one common characteristic that distinguished them from other segments of the urban laboring population. Most metal and textile workers were employed in enterprises that the government classified as “factories,” and by the end of the nineteenth century factory workers were subject to a special set of laws and regulations setting them apart from the rest of the labor force.

As early as 1835, the tsarist government enacted legislation regulating the terms and conditions of factory employment, but implementation and

<sup>5</sup>*Chislennost' i sostav*, I, pp. viii-ix. Included in the Central Industrial Region were the provinces of Moscow, Vladimir, Tver, Iaroslavl, Nizhnii-Novgorod, and Kostroma. Some definitions also include part or all of Tambov, Riazan', Tula, Kaluga, and Smolensk provinces.

<sup>6</sup>For a valuable discussion of the Petersburg metalworking industry, see Heather Jeanne Hogan, “Labor and Management in Conflict: The St. Petersburg Metal-Working Industry, 1900–1914,” Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1981, Chs. 1, 2.

enforcement of this law proved ineffectual.<sup>7</sup> A similar fate befell the law of 1845, which banned factory night work for children under twelve years of age. In 1882, new legislation was promulgated restricting the work time of children and juveniles in factory enterprises. This law also established a Factory Inspectorate whose responsibilities included surveillance of firms to ensure compliance with government legislation. In 1885, additional laws were enacted prohibiting children under seventeen years of age and women from night work in cotton, linen, and wool mills. Further legislation the following year expanded government regulation of the labor contract, strengthened criminal sanctions for violations, and enlarged the role of the Factory Inspectorate.

A decade later, widespread labor unrest in St. Petersburg prompted the government to enact another major labor law. The legislation of June 2, 1897, restricted the length of the workday in factory enterprises to a maximum of eleven and a half hours for all adult workers on weekdays and to a maximum of ten hours on Saturdays and on the eves of holidays. Although overtime work was subsequently ruled permissible, this law—together with its predecessors—gave factory workers a degree of protection and regulation that was not extended to any other segment of the laboring population.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, factory workers, with their special juridical status, occupied a growing place in the manufacturing sector of the Russian economy. But in some branches of manufacturing, factories were still relatively undeveloped, and most production was carried on in small workshops based on traditional artisanal trades. Artisanal workers represented a broad and amorphous group in Russian cities around 1900.

<sup>7</sup>On the history of labor legislation in Russia, see Tugan-Baranovsky, *Russian Factory*, Chs. 5, 10; Zelnik, *Labor and Society*; I. I. Shelymagin, *Zakonomatel'stvo o fabrichno-zavodskom trude v Rossii 1900–1917* (Moscow, 1952); V. Ia. Laverychev, *Tsarizm i rabochii vopros v Rossii (1861–1917 gg.)* (Moscow, 1972); Gaston V. Rimlinger, "Autocracy and the Factory Order in Early Russian Industrialization," *Journal of Economic History*, 20 (1960); Jacob Walkin, "The Attitude of the Tsarist Government Toward the Labor Problem," *American Slavic and East European Review*, 13 (1954); Theodore von Laue, "Factory Inspection Under the 'Witte System': 1892–1903," *American Slavic and East European Review*, 19 (Oct. 1960), 347–362; Lynn Mally, "Russian Workers and Factory Legislation 1882–1900." Seminar paper, University of California, Berkeley, Spring 1978.

No official data are available on the total number of artisanal workers in the country as a whole, though in key cities they represented a very sizable and diverse group. Thus, in St. Petersburg around the turn of the century there were 150,709 artisanal workers compared with 161,924 in factory enterprises. In Moscow, the country's second largest urban and manufacturing center, artisanal workers (151,359) outnumbered the factory population (111,718).<sup>8</sup>

Within the artisanal labor force, the largest single group was employed in the apparel trades. The 1897 census reported that there were 346,000 garment workers in the Russian Empire as a whole, nearly all of them employed in small firms that did not qualify as "factories" within the terms of government regulations. In cities such as St. Petersburg and Moscow, about one out of every three artisanal workers was employed in the apparel trades.<sup>9</sup> Other large contingents of artisanal workers could be found in leather and shoemaking, woodworking, printing, metal and machine tool building, and in the skilled construction trades.

The large and variegated group of artisanal workers in urban Russia included many craftsmen who labored for long hours under sweatshop conditions in subcontracting shops and garrets, as well as a much smaller contingent employed in workshops that retained many of the features of preindustrial handicraft production. Among the latter group were some craftsmen who still belonged to an artisanal guild at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Introduced into Russia in the early eighteenth century by Peter the Great, Russian guilds never attained extensive jurisdiction over production and distribution or the exclusive corporate privileges of their counterparts in Western Europe.<sup>10</sup> When industrialization gathered momentum in the second half of the nineteenth century, Russian guilds maintained their

<sup>8</sup>Bonnell, *Roots of Rebellion*, Table 1.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, Tables 2 and 3. The studies devoted to tailors include E. A. Oliunina, *Portnovskii promysel v Moskve i v derevniakh Moskovskoi i Riazanskoi gubernii. Materialy k istorii domasnei promyshlennosti v Rossii* (Moscow, 1914); S. M. Gruzdev, *Trud i bor'ba shveinikov v Petrograde 1905-1906 gg.* (Leningrad, 1929); N. Shevkov, *Moskovskie shveiniki do fevral'skoi revoliutsii* (Moscow, 1927).

<sup>10</sup>On the origins and history of Russian guilds, see Zelnik, *Labor and Society*, pp. 12, 15; and K. A. Pazhitnov, *Problema remeslennykh tsekhov v zakonodatel'stve russkogo abso-lutizma* (Moscow, 1952).

juridical status but suffered a steady decline. By 1900, only 28 percent of the artisans in St. Petersburg still belonged to a guild, and a mere 16 percent in Moscow.<sup>11</sup> For most handicraft workers at the turn of the century, therefore, guild organizations and regulations had little practical consequence.

Whereas the government regulated the terms and conditions of labor for factory workers, artisanal groups lacked comparable protection at the beginning of the twentieth century. This situation, discussed in Oliunina's study, had especially grave consequences for those employed in the large apparel industry where pressure for increased production led to the proliferation of subcontracting shops producing on a putting-out basis for wholesale and retail marketing firms.

Apart from the large segment of factory and artisanal workers there was a substantial group employed in sales and clerical occupations. These occupations can be divided into five major subgroups: salesclerks, cashiers, bookkeepers, clerks, and apprentices. Although their number in the Russian Empire cannot be ascertained on the basis of available data, in St. Petersburg there were more than 109,000 sales-clerical workers at the turn of the century and in Moscow about 86,000. Salesclerks represented the largest single category, with nearly 60,000 in St. Petersburg and more than 40,000 in Moscow.<sup>12</sup> Thus, approximately one-half of the sales-clerical

<sup>11</sup>*Remeslenniki i remeslennoe upravlenie v Rossii* (Petrograd, 1916), p. 32. Only journeymen and apprentices are included in this calculation; master artisans have been excluded because most were workshop owners.

<sup>12</sup>Bonnell, *Roots of Rebellion*, Table 6 and Ch. 1. My data on the number of sales-clerical workers, based on the municipal censuses conducted in St. Petersburg in 1900 and in Moscow in 1902, are considerably lower than figures found in various Russian and Soviet studies on the subject. The principal works on sales-clerical groups include D. V. Antoshkin, *Ocherk dvizheniia sluzhashchikh v Rossii* (Moscow, 1921); S. S. Ainzhaft, "K istorii professional'nogo dvizheniia torgovo-promyshlennykh sluzhashchikh," *Vestnik truda*, 2 [39] (1924): 222-230; V. M. Anufriev, P. I. Dorovatskii, and N. I. Roganov, *Iz istorii profdvizheniia rabotnikov torgovli* (Moscow, 1958); A. Belin [A. A. Evdokimov], *Professional'noe dvizhenie torgovykh sluzhashchikh v Rossii* (Moscow, 1906); M. Gordon, ed., *Iz istorii professional'nogo dvizheniia sluzhashchikh v Peterburge. Pervyi etap (1904-1919 gg.)* (Leningrad, 1925); K. Muromskii, *Byt i nuzhdy torgovo-promyshlennykh sluzhashchikh* (Moscow, 1906); M. Rozen, *Ocherki polozeniia torgovo-promyshlennogo proletariata v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1907).

workers in these cities were employed as salesclerks in retail, wholesale, industrial, and cooperative firms. About 90 percent of them were male.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, expansion of the economy led to a proliferation of commercial establishments. Just as there was a growing concentration of capital and labor in large factory enterprises, so the world of commerce witnessed the appearance of the first large retail establishments: department stores such as Muir and Merrilees. Similar trends can be discerned in other facets of commerce. But despite growing concentration, most transactions at the turn of the century still took place in small shops, sprawling public markets, street stalls, and by means of vendors and peddlers whose horse- and hand-drawn carts formed a colorful part of the urban landscape.

#### APPRENTICESHIP

Around 1900, most Russian workers had been born in the countryside and had spent their early years in a village. The sojourn from the countryside to the city or factory was a familiar occurrence in European Russia.<sup>13</sup> Rural poverty, overpopulation, and land scarcity drove peasants from their native villages in search of work; still others migrated in the hope of finding opportunities for a better life. Departure from the countryside frequently took place for the first time at an early age. The reminiscence of one such journey by Kanatchikov opens this volume. A sixteen-year-old peasant from a village in Moscow province, Kanatchikov entered a factory apprenticeship in 1895.

At the turn of the century, an apprenticeship system existed in virtually

<sup>13</sup>On this subject, see Barbara Anderson, *Internal Migration During Modernization in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Princeton, 1980); Robert E. Johnson, *Peasant and Proletarian: The Working Class of Moscow in the Late Nineteenth Century* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1979); Joseph Crane Bradley, Jr., "Muzhik and Muscovite: Peasants in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Russia," Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1977; Reginald E. Zelnik, "The Peasant and the Factory," in *The Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Russia*, ed. Wayne S. Vucinich (Stanford, 1968); Theodore von Laue, "Russian Peasants in the Factory, 1892-1904," *Journal of European History*, 21 (March 1961): 61-80; Theodore von Laue, "Russian Labor Between Field and Factory, 1892-1903," *California Slavic Studies*, 3 (1964): 33-64.



all skilled occupations, occupying a far more important place in working-class life than is generally acknowledged in the literature and exerting a formative influence over workers' conceptions of class and status in Russian society. Apprenticeship remained mandatory in virtually all artisanal trades and in numerous other skilled occupations carried on in a factory setting, in sales establishments, and in other sectors of the economy.

Many different types of workers served an apprenticeship in tsarist Russia, though the nature and conditions of this training were far from uniform. Kanatchikov's apprenticeship in patternmaking, like most craft training in a factory setting, proceeded on a more or less informal basis over a two-year period. At the end of that time, Kanatchikov had become sufficiently adept to demonstrate his mastery of the patternmaking craft and qualify as a skilled worker.

Apprenticeship in apparel and other artisanal trades and in sales occupations generally began earlier in life than factory training and lasted for a longer term. As disclosed by Oliunina and Gudvan, it was not unusual for ten-year-old boys and girls to serve an apprenticeship in workshops or commercial firms. An oral contract concluded between parents and the shop owner committed these children to the employer's tutelage and authority for a period normally lasting from three to five years. When this term had been completed, an individual was entitled to perform adult work. The traditional certification procedure in artisanal trades, involving a formal demonstration of craft skills, applied only to the small minority of guild members at the beginning of the twentieth century.

For tailors, salesclerks, and many other artisanal, commercial, and service occupations, the function of apprenticeship had undergone a subtle but important change in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Shifts in production processes, an increasingly complex division of labor, and the spread of subcontracting and commercial activity induced many shop owners to rely increasingly on the unpaid labor of apprentices as a surrogate for adult labor while at the same time diminishing the instructional aspect of apprenticeship.

Whereas some peasant youths entered an apprenticeship when barely into their teens, there were many others between the age of twelve and fifteen who performed unskilled factory work without the prospect of advancing to a more skilled and specialized occupation. As in Western

Europe, child labor was especially prevalent in the textile industry where many production tasks could easily be accomplished by boys and girls.

For youths recruited fresh from the countryside, early entry into the labor force had diverse effects. Those who entered an apprenticeship were more likely than others to find themselves inducted into the adult subculture of the factory or shop and to develop, albeit gradually and perhaps tenuously, a new self-image that corresponded to their growing skill as "a patternmaker," "a tailor," or "a salesclerk." To a far greater extent than child and juvenile laborers in factories and mills, young apprentices developed an awareness of their position as urban workers, a self-image still comparatively rare in Russia at the turn of the century. As a result of these experiences, youths such as Kanatchikov began to acquire a new identity as urban workers, in contrast to the peasantry from which most had come.<sup>14</sup>

The process of identity formation was, of course, extremely complex in a society that officially discouraged the creation of a permanent stratum of urban workers, disengaged once and for all from their peasant roots. Thus, a great many workers maintained some connection with the countryside at the beginning of the twentieth century, and nearly all of them had to come to terms in one way or another with the vexing problem of their continuing ties to the village—its traditions, expectations, and social networks. The way in which a worker dealt with this problem depended, in large measure, on the position that he or she occupied in the *urban* work hierarchy.

#### STRATIFICATION OF THE LABOR FORCE

Peasants entering the workplace for the first time encountered a highly stratified arrangement. Above them stood various authority figures. The factory director, as described by Pavlov, wielded vast power over his employees, controlling the destiny of hundreds or even thousands of individuals. The shop owner was no less powerful, however, and within the confines of the workshop or sales firm the employer could be a merciless tyrant—a situation noted by Oliunina and Gudvan. In addition to bosses

<sup>14</sup>For an extended discussion and analysis of Kanatchikov's evolution as an urban worker, see Reginald E. Zelnik, "Russian Bebels: An Introduction to the Memoirs of Semen Kanatchikov and Matvei Fisher," *Russian Review*, pt. 1, 35 (July 1976): 249–289; pt. 2, 35 (Oct. 1976): 417–447.

and managers, many firms (both large and small) employed intermediary figures of authority that included supervisors and technical personnel, foremen, assistant foremen, and work crew leaders. In a factory, the foreman occupied a unique place in the worker's everyday life. As Timofeev puts it, "The foreman represents that lever . . . which presses on the worker the hardest."<sup>15</sup> Workers were thus subordinated to many different types of direct and indirect authority at the workplace.

The labor force itself was highly stratified, primarily along the lines of skill and occupational specialization. Hierarchical subdivisions existed among various industries and trades. In St. Petersburg and Moscow, the sharpest contrast in the factory milieu was between the two major industrial groups: metalworkers and textile workers. "The world of the textile factory is completely different from that of the large metalworking plant," Timofeev observes, ". . . [and] these two groups of workers should never be confused."<sup>16</sup> Status differences between the two groups were keenly discerned by contemporaries, as illustrated by the recollections of another Petersburg metalworker, Aleksei Buzinov:

Metalworking plants and textile mills were concentrated in our Nevskii district. At that time [about 1900], the difference between metal and textile workers was like the difference between the city and the countryside. . . . Metalworkers considered themselves aristocrats among other workers. Their occupations demanded more training and skill, and therefore they looked down on other workers, such as weavers and the like, as an inferior category, as country bumpkins: today he will be at the mill, but tomorrow he will be poking at the earth with his wooden plough. The superiority of the metalworker and everything that it implied was appreciated by all.<sup>17</sup>

Each industry or occupation also had an internal labor hierarchy. At the summit stood a small but highly skilled substratum such as metal pattern-makers, fabric cutters in the garment industry, and clerks in fashionable retail stores catering to a prosperous and exclusive clientele. Below them were ranged a variety of skilled occupations—metalfitters, lathe operators, and smelters in metalworking, tailors employed in custom-made men's and

<sup>15</sup>See below, p. 75.

<sup>16</sup>See below, p. 73.

<sup>17</sup>A. Buzinov, *Za Nevskoi zastavoi. Zapiski rabocheho* (Moscow, 1930), p. 20.

women's tailoring shops, clerks in jewelry shops, and machinists in textile mills. They were followed by semiskilled and unskilled workers.

The labor force in skilled occupations was further subdivided into apprentices (*ucheniki*) and qualified adult workers. In artisanal trades, the latter group was further subdivided into journeymen (*podmaster'ia*) and master craftsmen (*mastera*). This arrangement still remained in effect at the turn of the century in both guild and nonguild workshops despite the fact that most journeymen could anticipate only lateral mobility and not vertical ascent into the ranks of workshop owners.

Prior to the 1880s, several designations for adult factory workers were utilized by the government, factory management, and the workers themselves. The term *masterovoi* (derived from the guild designation *master*) referred to the skilled worker whereas *rabochii*<sup>18</sup> applied to semiskilled and unskilled workers alike. Among skilled metalworkers the word *rabochii* had such pejorative connotations that it was often used as a term of opprobrium.

Workers attached enormous importance to these designations and were bitterly opposed when factory management sought to alter them by eliminating the category of *masterovoi*, reclassifying skilled groups as *rabochie*, and applying the term *chernorabochie*<sup>19</sup> to the remainder. One such episode is discussed at some length by Timofeev, but the workers' preoccupation with matters of status differentiation emerges from all of the selections below. Social interaction among individuals was determined, in large measure, by one's position in the status hierarchy. Thus, Kanatchikov recalls that when he was still a mere apprentice, the metalturner Rezvov would not condescend to socialize with him. This situation changed, however, when Kanatchikov himself became a fully qualified craftsman.

Highly attentive to nuances of difference among occupational specializations, Petersburg metalworkers responded to a 1908 survey with a list of

<sup>18</sup>The word *rabochii* is etymologically a descendant of the Old Church Slavonic word *rab*", meaning servant, servitor, or slave; see Max Fasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1950–1958), "Rabochii." The unpleasant connotations of the word, which still carried a distant echo of *rab*" or slave, may have contributed to the workers' resistance to this designation.

<sup>19</sup>The prefix *cherno*, meaning "black," was affixed to the word *rabochii* to signify the lowest position within the ranks of workers.

more than one hundred separate occupational categories to identify their place in the industry.<sup>20</sup> That workers keenly felt these differences can be documented from memoirs such as Buzinov's account of his apprenticeship at the Nevskii shipbuilding plant in St. Petersburg in the late 1890s:

The more I grew into the factory family, the clearer became to me its heterogeneity, even within the boundaries of one plant. Soon I began to realize that workers in the machine shop—the metalfitters and lathe operators—looked down on me. After this, the inferior position of workers in the “hot” shops—the smelting, rolling, and blacksmith shops—became obvious. . . . I was especially struck by the absence of equality among workers. Now it seems a minor matter, something not even worth remembering. But at the time, it painfully wounded my pride. I didn't want to be worse than the others. I thought that if only I could master the skills of metalfitting and lathe operating, everything would fall into place.<sup>21</sup>

The hierarchical subdivisions within the laboring population acquired particular significance for contemporaries in part because the minority of skilled workers stood out so sharply from their unskilled and semiskilled counterparts. In appearance and demeanor, skilled workers exhibited their differential status. Kanatchikov describes the urbanized patternmakers who wore fancy clothes and whose bearing conveyed their consciousness of their own worth. In a similar vein, Oliunina observes that tailoring shop workers and subcontract workers dressed quite differently. Whereas the former wore suits, stylish boots, and different coats according to the season, the subcontract workers could often be found wearing nothing but a calico shirt, faded pants, and long underwear.

The visibility of status differences shaped the ways workers thought of themselves and related to others, as well as their treatment by managerial personnel. The external appearance of the job applicant, Timofeev reports, affected the foreman's disposition. “His form of address will depend on your clothes. If you are well dressed, he might address you politely.”<sup>22</sup> There were many pressures on workers, moreover, to discard their peasant

<sup>20</sup>*Materialy ob ekonomicheskom polozhenii i professional'noi organizatsii Peterburgskikh rabochikh po metallu* (St. Petersburg, 1909), pp. 94–96.

<sup>21</sup>Buzinov, *Za Nevskoi zastavoi*, p. 21.

<sup>22</sup>See below, p. 87.

attire and to assume the clothing and demeanor of the urban milieu. A worker newly arriving in the city from the countryside could not fail to discern the status and dignity associated with an urbanized appearance. Kanatchikov recalls that "skilled workers looked down on me with scorn, pinched me by the ear, pulled me by the hair, called me a 'green country bumpkin' and other insulting names." Workers (including some skilled elements) who retained their peasant clothing—they "wore high boots, traditional cotton-print blouses girdled with a sash, had their hair cut 'under a pot,' and wore beards that were rarely touched by the barber's hand"—were called "gray devils" by their more urbane and sophisticated co-workers.<sup>23</sup>

Even in the remote factory villages of the Central Industrial Region observed by Pavlov, workers were highly sensitive to exterior propriety and eager to purchase perfume, fine soap, fashionable jackets, and patent leather shoes. These pressures mounted in occupations that required regular contact with the general public. Thus, workers in sales and clerical jobs required attractive urban attire to obtain and maintain their employment, a situation that drove some women to seek supplementary income through prostitution.<sup>24</sup>

By the turn of the century, a growing group of workers in all sectors of the economy had succeeded in acquiring specialized skills and an appearance and demeanor that betokened their status and position in the world of the factory or shop. Yet a majority of these skilled and urbanized workers remained tied in various degrees to their native villages. The persistence of these ties represents a distinctive feature of the formative period in the development of the Russian working class.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RURAL-URBAN TIES

The relation between the worker and the village assumed a variety of forms, ranging from permanent urban workers with no ties whatsoever to the countryside to semipeasant workers with ongoing ties to their native villages. In general, workers with the highest levels of occupational special-

<sup>23</sup>See below, pp. 47–48.

<sup>24</sup>On prostitution, see Richard Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism, 1860–1930* (Princeton, 1978), pp. 182–185.

ization and skill were the least likely to have continuing ties to the countryside.<sup>25</sup> Seasonal industries such as tailoring present a partial exception to this pattern since many skilled tailors departed annually for their villages when production subsided. Even here, however, the rate of seasonal return to the village was lower among the relatively more skilled retail tailoring shop workers than among subcontract workers.

The number of permanent urban workers was steadily increasing by the turn of the century. Data for Moscow show that Moscow-born workers comprised a minority of the labor force in 1902 (7 percent of the factory workers, 10 percent of the artisanal workers, and 20 percent of the sales-clerical employees). A considerably larger group had migrated to Moscow and spent ten years or longer in the city (34 percent of factory workers, 37 percent of artisanal workers, and 34 percent of sales-clerical employees). Combining the two groups, we find that 41 percent of the factory workers, 47 percent of the artisans, and 54 percent of the sales-clerical employees either were permanent residents or had spent a decade or more living and working in Moscow by 1902.<sup>26</sup>

Some of the workers, moreover, may have lived in more than one city. Kanatchikov is a case in point. After working for several years in Moscow, he moved to St. Petersburg, where he remained for fifteen months until illegal political activities led to his arrest and exile. There were numerous workers with a history of interurban migration,<sup>27</sup> and though it is not possible to establish their exact number, these workers typically spent a prolonged period in various urban centers and had relinquished most of their ties to the countryside. De facto if not de jure, they had become a permanent part of the urban population.

Transitional workers with attenuated ties to the countryside comprised a

<sup>25</sup>By way of illustration, 65 percent of the highly skilled Moscow typesetters had no ties to the village in 1907. Among the less skilled lithographers and bindery workers, only 24 percent and 28 percent, respectively, had relinquished their connection to the village; see V. A. Svavitskii and V. Sher, *Ocherk polozheniia rabochikh pechatnogo dela v Moskve (po dannym ankety, proizvedennoi obshchestvom rabochikh graficheskikh iskusstv v 1907 godu)* (St. Petersburg, 1909), pp. 8–9.

<sup>26</sup>*Perepis' Moskv 1902 goda*, chast' 1, vyp. 2 (Moscow, 1906), p. 10.

<sup>27</sup>In 1907, one out of six Moscow typesetters had worked in two cities, and one out of sixteen had spent time in three; Svavitskii and Sher, *Ocherk polozheniia*, p. 11.