

## **The Labor Market and Employment of Population in the Russian Empire of the 19th Century (According to the Materials of the Vyatka Province)**

I. V. Maslova and V.L. Mikheicheva  
Department for the General and National History, Yelabuga Institute,  
Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazanskaya St. 89, 423600 Yelabuga,  
Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation

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**Abstract:** The study is dedicated to investigation of the issue of employment of the population of the Vyatka Province of the Russian Empire in the 19th century. Analysis of the archive documents, statistical data and periodicals allows specifying the main trends of development of the labor market and the sphere of employment of population of the Vyatka Province in the 19th century among which we have distinguished: the agricultural industry, handicraft and seasonal works, domestic industry, trade and manufacturing. In the study, the comparative research method was used that allows comparing the statistical data obtained. The use of the historical re-enactment method reconstructing the image of the economic development of the Vyatka Province. For objective evaluation of the data obtained the historical retrospection method is used. That peculiar feature of the economic development of the Vyatka Province in the middle of the 19th century was prevalence of the agricultural sector with the poorly pronounced private landholding which determined the trend of formation of demand and offer of the working force. At the labor market, the workers prevailed that dealt with the agricultural production, handicraft works whereas the number of workers employed in the industrial and trade spheres remained to be insignificant. The result of the economic modernization of the second middle of the 19th century was the change of the labor market that was affected by the social and economic policy of the region and the state in general. By the end of the 19th century, the process of overcoming of the economic underdevelopment of the province started by means of enhancement of self-conscious and the entrepreneurial initiative of separate persons: inhabitants of town and counties in general. The workers were gradually involved in the sphere of industrial production, sales of products within and beyond the province boundaries which was promoted by the vigorous activity of the merchantry and petite bourgeoisie that allows enhancing the basis of the population employment. At the end of the 19th century, the new social groups established: the proletariat and bourgeoisie the appearance of which fundamentally changed the situation at the labor market.

**Key words:** Employment of population, labor market, Russian Empire, the Vyatka Province, domestic industry (craft), industry, trade

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Now a days, the issue of investigation of the population employment appears to be especially topical. The development of the market economy is accompanied by competition not only at the market for products and services sales but at the labor market as well. In order to improve their competitiveness the workers need to get vocational education, develop their skills. Besides, the acute unemployment issue makes those who lost their work undergo re-training to get new professional skills that would allow finding a new position at the labor market.

In the 19th century in the Russian Empire, the process of acceleration of the rates of market economy development proceeded. The 19th century was marked for the Russian Empire by the development of capitalism that brought along a number of changes: arranging the industrial production. In the second half of the century, the process of merging of the new production forms using the workers' labor at the factories and plants with the old forms representing the domestic and handicraft industry with the use of the hand labor was observed. The socio-economic changes caused growth of the population needs; the labor market started developing while offering new kinds of occupation and working places.

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**Corresponding Author:** I. V. Maslova, Department for the General and National History, Yelabuga Institute,  
Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazanskaya St. 89, 423600 Yelabuga, Republic of Tatarstan,  
Russian Federation

The use of the materials of the Vyatka Province allows forming the general idea of the rates of the economic development of the empire as a province was the largest unit by the number of population the citizens of which applied their labor in different kinds of manufacturing.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In the study, the researcher used the following research methods. The comparative method allows comparing the statistical data obtained. The use of the historical re-enactment method reconstructing the image of the economic development of the Vyatka Province. For objective evaluation of the data obtained, the historical retrospection method is used.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Russian Empire is one of the largest states of Asia and Europe of the 10th century. This century became the turning point for the economic development of the empire. During this period, overlapping of different forms of the population occupation could be observed, the people dealt with peasant crafts, mechanical arts, small commodity production, were employed at manufactories, factories and plants. The result was the accelerated process of modernization that affected the development of occupational labor.

The Vyatka Province is one of the largest administrative-territorial units of the Russian Empire that located on the territory of the modern Volga region on the shore of the large rivers Vyatka and Kama. The Vyatka Province occupied the area of 1531065 km<sup>2</sup> extending from the North to the South for 442 km and from the West to the East for 738 km (Anonymous, 1870). The first general census of the population of the Russian Empire showed that in the state there were 125680682 of both men and women 16785212 of which lived in the urban communities; 13% of the population (Mescharsky, 1904). The Vyatka Province occupied one of the first places by the number of inhabitants in the empire. The census in the 1897 counted 3030831 inhabitants whereas, for example in the Moscow province 2430581 persons lived. However, the urban population was inconsiderable in number; 95642 which made only 3% of the total number of the province citizens. As far back as in 1858, according to the Committee on Statistics, in the Vyatka Province there were 2123904 persons, i.e., the increase in population over 38 years made 907000 persons (42.7%) (Anonymous, 1860b).

Such a densely inhabited province featured, a wide range of occupations for its citizens. However, most of occupations were related to agricultural activities. A small number of urban citizens in the Vyatka Province spoke for prevalence of the agricultural industries that did not require concentration of population in the larger centers; only a small number of workers were employed in the industrial production. The leading peasant occupations still were farming and stock breeding. They performed corn farming in each county of the Vyatka Province; for most province citizens this kind of occupation was the principal income notwithstanding the low soil fertility. In the first half of the 19th century, this was related to the serfdom of peasants and in the second half of the century to low urbanization rates and slight development of industrial production. Along with corn farming, the rural people were occupied in stock breeding (cows, sheep, pigs and goats (Anonymous, 1859). In order to provide for their own needs, they performed the by-works: wood sawing, wood works, weaving nests and Russian basts, production of wooden sledges, etc.

Peasantry was the most numerous class of the Russian Empire, in 1897 in the Vyatka Province, there were 2945109 both male and female peasants. Their by-works made the basis for development of the professional activities that further on penetrates into the working environment and during the modernization of the economy were concentrated in the large-scale factory and plant production.

Along with farming and stock breeding, the peasants of the Vyatka Province pursued the domestic industries and seasonal works. The popular works of the peasants of the Vyatka Province were: barge haulers, cabbings, cattails works, cutting and delivery of forest materials, timber works and wood-sawing, works at factories and plants and in the pay of the private persons during the winter time, production and finishing of bricks, smith work, etc.

Being a barge hauler implied working on float boards and river crafts. Although, the number of them reduced following the development of the steam ship construction industry. Among barge haulers there were: pilots, firemen, water pumpers, heads, secondary haulers, etc. The haulers' labor was heavy and not well-paid, this is why, it was the only alternative to gain additional income in the absence of other methods. The cattail works implied weaving of basts. The industry contained differentiation of labor into swinglers, makers and needlers. These works were performed by children at the age of 10-15 years and women (Romanov, 1876).

The domestic crafts were similar to mechanical arts. For example, among the domestic and other craftsmen

there barge haulers, bakers, forge-men, woodmen, fishermen, etc. The distinction consisted in the fact that the craft labor was professional, the craftsmen made products following the market demand. The urban craftsmen were controlled by the handicraft authority that represented a municipal or county authority that managed the handicraft industry. The handicraft authority united the craftsmen in the workshop organizations. For example, in the district town Slobodskoy in 1868, there were four workshops uniting the craftsmen: forge-men, 180; shoe-makers, 126; copper works related to metal-processing, 94; leather-dressing, 396 (6).

In 1884 in Vyatka, there were 69 kinds of craft activities among which there were: kvass-brewers, the specialists in brewing the Russian Kvass from bread and malt; glove-makers, craftsmen making gloves; waggonwright, specialists in the cab production; locksmith, craftsmen making locks and repairing them, etc. Totally, there were 1975 workers in the city that pursued handicrafts and learnt to do that.

In the conditions of the capitalism development, the demand for the skilled work at the industrial enterprises and workshops for manufacturing of quality products arouse. The ministries, province and municipal administrations were interested in the development of vocational education. The reason was striving for developing also the other forms of production aside from the agricultural industry turning Russia out of the vestiges of feudalism. The authorities attempted to teach the former peasant serfs the professional skills in order to distract them from the agricultural industry and forward them towards the market for goods and services. For this purpose in the towns and counties of the Vyatka Province at the initiative of the authorities, nobility, merchants and local population the workshops by kinds of handicrafts were opened: weaving, basket-making, fisheries, potteries, wood-working, etc. In 1899 in the counties of the Vyatka Province, there were 47 workshops.

Some part of population of the Vyatka Province was gradually, involved in work at the large industrial facilities. Most often the starters of the small and medium enterprises were merchants and lower middle class. In the Province Town Vyatka most of plants belonged to merchants and lower middle class. These classes were the first ones to master the fundamentals of capitalistic relations and sought for getting running the production of the goods that were in short supply in the province. During the period of the 1818-1879's in Vyatka, there were: in 1818, soapery of the bourgeois Ivan Repin; 1836, oil pressing factory; 1856, tannery of the merchant Ivan Poskrebyshev, etc. However, the plants did not run for long and the products manufactured were consumed by the local population mostly.

The number of factories in Vyatka hardly increased. In 1856 in Vyatka, there were 11 plants and by 1879, there were 13 of them (Spassky, 1881). In the county, Town Kotelnich, the development of the industrial production started later, only from the second half of the 19th century, however, the production of the local factories and plants was distributed also outside of the province. Thus, one of the large enterprises was the tannery of the merchant of the 1st guild M.I. Kardasheva that was put into operation in 1854. The plant consisted of the five units with the total number of workers up to 100 persons. The plant produced different kinds of the Russian leather, i.e., prepared leather. The plant production enjoyed popularity in the army. Later on Kardashev opened the salo-melting and candle plant where 10-15 workers were employed. Production of the tannery and wax plants of the merchant A. Vershinin was sent to Nizhny Novgorod, Simbirsk and other towns of the Russian Empire (Glushkov, 1862).

In the second half of the 19th century in the Vyatka Province, the chemical industry started developing that made gains. One shall especially note the activity of manufacturers of the Ushkov's merchant dynasty the products of which were widespread not only in the Russian Empire but was also known beyond its boundaries. At the initiative of Kapiton Yakovlevich Ushkov together with the Moscow merchant of the 1st guild in 1850 in the Yelabuga Country of the Vyatka Province, the Kokshansky chemical plant was started. Having got to know that bichromate used for tanning was not produced in the Russian Empire but bought in England, Kapiton Yakovlevich decided to start producing it. The raw material was extracted in the Urals. Literally, 5 years after the products of the supreme quality were spread over the entire state and exported abroad: to Germany, England, etc. (Fayzrakhmanov, 2012). In 1860, the Ushkovs obtained permit from the Ministry of Finance for development of the gold placer mines in the Perm province. Soon afterwards the Bondyuga chemical plant (close to the villages of Bondyuga and Pyany Bor), the glass-manufacturing and potash plants, the flour-mill were constructed. The merchants were also engaged in trade: they sold the products made, tea, bread, sugar. The results of their active manufacturing-trading activity were: participation in the international fairs in Paris, Vienna, etc.; the silver and the gold medal for the quality of products (1860, 1867 and 1872); the right of using the national state emblem on the products made; by the year 1909 at the Ushkovs' plants there were 782 workers with the total volume of products to the amount of 704600 rubles (Ligenko, 2001). Thus, the Ushkovs succeeded in building their business at the domestic and international markets.

The factory-plant production of the Vyatka Province was evolving. In 1858 in the province there were 377 factories and plants, in 1868 there were 460 and in 1871, 814 of them (Anonymous, 1860a). That means that during the period of the 1858-1868's the number of enterprises increased by 83 plants, as far back as in 1871, there already were 814 of them. Such rates of growth were higher than for the previous decade. This was pre-determined by the abolition of serfdom, the municipal and county reforms.

The labor market enhanced along with the development of the factory and plant production. The workers of different specialties were employed in the production. The industry needed the in order to improve the quality of the products manufactured. The average figures of those employed at a single enterprise may be derived. In 1858 in the province, there were 377 factories and plants with the total number of workers reaching 10981, therefore, on the average, about 29 workers were employed at a single plant. In 1884 at 525 factories and plants 17535 workers were employed, i.e., about 33 workers fell on a single enterprise (Anonymous, 1884). However, these are the average figures only. As was noted above, enterprises were not large, they involved 10-15. Only some large plants provided work for over a hundred of workers among which there were the Ushkovs' plants, Izhevsk and Votkinsk, etc.

Enterprises needed skilled labor; this is why they provided educational services for training of the skilled specialists. For example, at the Izhevsk ordnance plant a literacy school was opened. The opening of the school was necessitated by the direct needs of the plant: writers, general clerks, competent task masters and supervisors among which there were no workers were demanded (Izhevsk, 1895).

Along with changes in the form of production, the trade continued developing that ensured sales of the products and services produced both the agricultural products and the products made by craftsmen and manufacturers.

Domestic trade was not restricted to fairs and farm markets, the stores and small shops appeared. For example, in 1803 in Vyatka the stone bazaar was constructed that consisted of 113 stone shops. As far back as in 1856, there were: 164 stone shops, 55, wooden ones, 8 stone stores and 1 wooden one. According to the Register of trading facilities in the Vyatka Province for the year 1887, in the province towns there were: drug stores 16, stores 85, wholesale wine and beer warehouses 85, grape wine shops 135, refreshment rooms 16, book shops 15, commercial baths 19, hotels and taverns 142, etc. At that most of the trading facilities of the Vyatka Province were concentrated in Vyatka 107 facilities among which there were the grape wine shops mainly 31 and most stores were located in the town of Kotelnich 27. Totally,

in the towns there were 577 facilities that provided services of different kind and ensured the employment of population (Herzen, 1887). The trading between the provinces was performed along the rivers. The Vyatka Province used the two channels: trading with the Arkhangelsk harbor, i.e., rafting along the Northern Dvina and Volga where primarily the raw materials were forwarded: grain, tow, flax seed, potash, etc., along the Vyatka and Kama rivers (Anonymous, 1841).

The fairs persisted, the seasonal markets at which merchants and manufacturers from different provinces arrived. The famous fairs of the Vyatka Province were: the Alexeyevskaya in the town of Kotelnich, Semenovskaya in Vyatka, Troitskaya in Urzhum, Spasskaya in Yelabuga, Nikolskaya in Glazov, etc. In 1874 in the province, there were 147 fairs, only 20 of them were held in the towns (Sudovikov, 2005). The Foreign trade was performed by merchants that were selling the products manufactured by factories and plants, agricultural industry and handicrafts which demonstrated the result of activities of workers in the Vyatka Province beyond the Russian Empire.

**Summary:** The peculiar feature of the labor market of the Vyatka Province in the 19th century was prevalence of those employed in agricultural industries, domestic industries and handicrafts whereas the number of workers of the industrial and trading spheres remained to be insignificant. The agricultural sector with the poorly pronounced private landholding still prevailed in the region. Nevertheless, the process of overcoming of the economic underdevelopment of the province started by means of enhancement of self-conscious and the entrepreneurial initiative of separate persons: inhabitants of town and counties in general proceeded. The workers were gradually involved in the sphere of industrial production, sales of products within and beyond the province boundaries which was promoted by the vigorous activity of the merchantry and petite bourgeoisie that allowed enhancing the basis of the population employment and as far back as by the end of the 19th century, the two new classes had been established that underwent changes in the social structure of the Russian society proletariat and bourgeoisie.

## CONCLUSION

In the 19th century, the Vyatka Province featured a wide range of the population occupations. As time went on the agricultural, handicraft, industrial and trading activities were developed in the province. At the same, the rates of the economic development of the Vyatka Province in the 19th century were not high despite the great number of hands. The capitalistic relations were developing gradually but only starting from the second half of the century.

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