FINAL REPORT TO
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THE FAMILY

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PREFACE

This report is one of 13 separate papers by different authors which, assembled, will constitute the chapters of a Festschrift volume in honor of Professor Vera S. Dunham, to be published by Westview Press. The papers will be distributed individually to government readers by the Council in advance of editing and publication by the Press, and therefore, may not be identical to the versions ultimately published.

The Contents for the entire series appears immediately following this Preface.

As distributed by the Council, each individual report will contain this Preface, the Contents, the Editor’s Introduction for the pertinent division (I, II, or III) of the volume, and the separate paper itself.
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I. Trends in Soviet Society

The non-coercive aspects of social control in the Soviet Union have comprised a very strong leitmotif in Vera Dunham's work throughout her career. Most evident in her pioneering work, *In Stalin's Time*, her focus on state-society interaction has also been apparent in numerous scholarly articles and lectures. Professor Dunham has used the phrase "Big Deal" to describe one important use of positive social control under Stalin.

The Big Deal refers to the Soviet regime's tacit alliance with the new "middle class" of engineers, administrators, and managers who were vital to the rebuilding effort after World War II. Rather than relying on coercion, as might be expected in the aftermath of the Great Purges of the 1930s, the regime tried a new tack. This amounted to an accommodation of the personal, materialistic longings of this group of people whose expertise and skills were in critical demand. The goal of the Big Deal was to garner support of these experts and administrators by offering the incentives they wanted most: housing, consumer goods, and leisure time. The conversion of these private aspirations to acceptable public values was the key component of the Big Deal.

While Professor Dunham's analysis of the Big Deal has been confined to the postwar period, the use of accommodation by the regime to deal with the middle class was evident already in the mid-late 1930s and extended well beyond the immediate postwar years. This characteristic of the Soviet system tends to go unnoticed, however, especially in studies of the Stalinist era. Recent refer-
References to the Soviet Union as the "Evil Empire" have also clouded the existence of other than the negative aspects of social control. However, as the revolutionary ethos recedes further into the background, the use of positive levers to attain many economic and social goals has become more important. Paradoxically, positive, materialistic levers have been used to bolster the political stability of a political system whose very legitimacy is based upon a radical restructuring of society. A thorough examination of the implications of this paradox, an examination continued in the essays that follow, is Professor Dunham's primary contribution to the study of Soviet society.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

This paper reviews the data available, and the explanations offered for the breakdown of the family in Soviet society.

As Soviet people put together their economy and their family lives, so traumatized by the Great Patriotic War, writers and researchers began to reveal among their compatriots a personal life of emotions, sexual involvements, and individual aspirations under what had come to be a veneer of official prudery and regimentation. It came as no surprise when someone finally reported a "sexual revolution" in the U.S.S.R. This revolution marked an erosion of traditional morality, and a wider assertion of free choice in behavior and family ties among the Soviet population at large.

According to the ideological boiler plate in comments on the Soviet family, the growing evidence of family breakdowns associated with people's assertion of personal freedom of choice marked not the demise of family life in Soviet socialist society, such as threatens capitalist society, but the family's entry into a transitional period, between traditional ways and the advent of the ideal communist family. In that family,

Prepared by the staff of the National Council
marriage would be based "not on material calculation" and egotism but on "mutual love, respect and friendship of all family members."

The idea of a distinctive "new Soviet family" has justified the Soviet turnabout, dating back to 1935, from mere tolerance of the family as a temporary necessity to "strengthening the family" as the "primary cell of Soviet society." Soviet experts mince no words about the harm that breakdowns in that social cell do to the size and upbringing of the labor force. Experts' research, as well as other sources of information and one's own observations convey the message that family breakdowns are but symptoms of irreversible changes in the Soviet way of life, bringing with them, in turn, crucial transformations of family values and needs of Soviet spouses, especially on the part of what one could only anachronistically call "the distaff side."

One senses behind the breakdowns and divorces the influence of changes which lie beyond the reach of either superficial palliatives or legal compulsion. It is much easier to forbid a family to open a private store or service enterprise or to crush human rights or feminist groups than it is to compel spouses to stay together who do not want to. Spouses' assertion of individual choice appears to spring from irreversible changes in the family milieu: the loss of the old firm economic, communal and religious bonds tying generations and spouses together, and the virtually total involvement of women in work beyond the family in the Soviet Union, outside certain enclaves
of tradition in areas of indigenous, non-European settlement in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

These changes and the permeation of new values out from an avant garde and from other industrialized nations, especially in Soviet cities but also ever more in the villages too, have wrought changes also in the psychology of men and women as lovers, husbands, and wives. A lifelong commitment to marriage and one family has been devalued, divorce made conceivable, even acceptable or welcome, to ever more people. An ever higher priority is given to the satisfaction of personal needs in marriage -- and outside marriage or in new marriage, if need be. As women have become more independent economically and psychologically, they have put much higher demands on their husbands and their marriages and now take the lead in initiating divorces.

Soviet researchers will be the first to admit that they have yet to develop a viable "theory of marital conflict." As do some U.S. analysts, all Soviet sociologists state, at least in print, that the present troubles of the Soviet family are transitional, as "survivals" of old patriarchalism and crudeness fade and new ideals have yet fully to take hold. The family is adapting not disintegrating. The reason the Soviet regime is concerned is that the longer the adaptation takes, the more demographic damage will be wrought by divorce and breakup. Also, in both the U.S. and the USSR, predictions about the family depend on one's viewpoint. Traditionalists like the U.S. Moral Majority, or the ethnologists in the USSR nostalgic for
the old peasant family bonds, see two alternatives: either return to old ways, or the end of the family as a viable social unit, with grievous social consequences. Empiricists in both countries expect the family to adapt to its new environment. As a prerequisite they see the need for a new level of preparation and knowledge about marriage among newlyweds and a new consensus over the meaning of equality for men and women in modern life.
CELL MUTATION IN SOVIET SOCIETY: THE FAMILY

Peter H. Juviler

As Soviet people put together their economy and their family lives, so traumatized by the Great Patriotic War, writers and researchers began to reveal among their compatriots a personal life of emotions, sexual involvements, and individual aspirations under what had come to be a veneer of official prudery and regimentation. It came as no surprise when someone finally reported a "sexual revolution" in the USSR. This revolution marked an erosion of traditional morality, and a wider assertion of free choice in behavior and family ties among the Soviet population at large.

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**Breakdowns**

Vladimir Soloukhin's topical vignette of the talk at a Soviet gathering sums up what is happening. It is the talk of guests invited to their summer cottage by Tamara Vetlugina and her husband, Sergei, "who holds a rather important position in one ministry (it is not important which, there are more than a hundred of them)."

The company, gathered to celebrate the Vetlugins' silver wedding anniversary, chatter about "marriages that come into being instantly and instantly break up," while ZAGS registers in two years 70 divorces for every hundred marriages. Zealous defenses of the family as "the primary cell of the body politic" get all but drowned out in the jocular but pointed complaints about bossy and possessive women (a husband may not dance with another woman or drop in on a movie alone when he feels like it any more, without catching it from his wife), and the responses: "Without us you'd get nowhere." How often might one hear the same things in talks with Russian friends: rampant infidelity and permissiveness these days, uppity women who smoke more and more while men are dropping the habit, chucking their men and raising their kids on their own "and not only because they are deserted." And, a voice from the past, but a hardy "survival": women's natural talent lies not in the arts and the professions, where men have always excelled, "not in mathematics or trade union organizing," and her fulfillment not in "emancipation" but "women's
strength lies in their feminine essence, and only in that.... But once you have full equality, then what--more divorces than marriages."⁶

Literary exposes like this one prompted a critic in the party newspaper, Pravda, to lament, more wistfully than censuriously, that literature, films and the stage can no longer present credible images of romantic, true, and abiding love. "The problem in truth exists, and literature, we note, senses it. The stories mentioned here, the situations described in them, are fully true to life. Unfortunately the number of divorces is not yet diminishing, many marriages exist only on paper, and we often encounter cynical, self-serving (potrebitel'skiy) attitudes of men and women. A. Lunacharskii* wrote that 'men and women will one day create a great poem of love.' Evidently that day has not dawned yet." Too many people live their singles lives in hedonistic bachelorhood. Each bachelor of thirty represents possibly one or two fewer children born than had they married at normal ages. Then there is the woman who dreams once in a while of being "not a member of the mestkom** but simply a woman," and who will begin the next day all over again "running from store to store, making the arrangements" for meetings, exchanging reproaches, family arguments and as a result the steadily increasing alienation from her husband."

Themes like the not-too-committing "open marriage" will be familiar to the U.S. reader. So will the theme of the professional absorbed in his work who has just so much time and attention and no more for his wife and two sons.⁷

Stalin silenced social researchers, but allowed to literature passing glimpses of war's psychic scars. Vera Dunham has pointed to signs in Soviet

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*Anatoly Lunacharskii (1873-1933), critic and revolutionary, People's Commissar of Enlightenment, 1917-1929.

**District trade union committee
writing, during the late 1940s and early 1950s, of the strains on conjugal relations imposed by wartime separation and readjustments between reunited spouses. Vera Dunham shows us at the same time that people tended to settle down after the war to try to rebuild their lives and to acquire middle class comforts, complete with treasured pink ornate lampshades. Divorce data published after Stalin register the lowest recorded divorce rate, of 0.4 per thousand, in 1950, and only one divorce for every 29 marriages (See Table 1). Not even labor camp separated a country woman from the Ukrainian region of Khmelnik and her husband, a former collective farm chairman.

He organized a gang which looted stores in a neighboring district and distributed the booty among members of their collective. He was picked up, quite by chance (the village had kept the whole affair strictly to themselves), and sentenced to twenty-five years in a camp at Kharkov. At the time of his arrest he and his wife had one child. His wife waited patiently while he waited out his sentence and came to visit him every six months, as the regulations permitted her to do. As a result of these brief reunions they had five more children by the time he was released.... By defying the barbed wire and the watchtowers, their love was able to endure and their family at last to be reunited.

One must not forget that by no means all marriages survived a spouse camp confinement. Moreover, millions of mothers remained single, in incomplete families, because of the unfavorable balance of males and females after the war. Untold numbers of people circumvented the protracted, complex and costly divorce proceedings under the edict of July 8, 1944, entering new, unregistered, therefore legally unrecognized marriages.

Divorce rates began to soar after Stalin, though under the same stringent law of 1944. Rates by 1955 had increased to one and a half times the 1950 level. Between 1955 and 1965, rates increased another 270 percent (Table 1).
What can explain this greatest leap in divorce rates since the revolutionary period?

Table 1

Registered Marriages and Registered Divorces* and Percent Urban Population, USSR, Selected Years, 1940–1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR (Narkhoz) v 1979 godu, pp. 7, 35; Narkhoz v 1984 godu, pp. 5, 32.

Probable contributors to family breakups include a steady increase in urbanization, liberalized divorce court practice, and the decline over time in the cost of divorce relative to salaries (Table 2).

Table 2

Minimum Divorce Registration Fees for Court Divorces Compared with Average Salaries, USSR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Minimum Fees</th>
<th>Average Year</th>
<th>Monthly Wages</th>
<th>Fees as Percent of Wages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1944-65</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>104</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>100.2</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>184.8</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**per 1000 inhabitants

**rubles
Simplifications in divorce procedure effective January 1, 1966 prompted a large one-time leap in divorce rates, from 1.6 in 1965 to 2.8 in 1966. Rates stayed around that level through 1972, but then began to rise to a recorded peak of 3.6 in 1979. The rate in 1984 was lower, 3.4, meaning about 931,000 divorces in the USSR. But the ratio of divorces to marriages reached a new high of 35 percent. Soviet divorce rates now hover at a level higher than that in any other industrialized country except the U.S., where they are over 5.0.

No wonder that Soviet analyses of trends in the family grow more sombre, and less boastful. In 30 years, 1950-1980, in sum, registered divorces increased nine times, an amount beyond the reach of legal changes alone. The ratio of divorces to marriages increased tenfold; the birthrate fell almost ten points and the population's natural increase (births minus deaths per thousand inhabitants) dropped to one half. During the same decades the urban share of the population nearly doubled. And it is in cities, especially those of European settlement, where most of the highest divorce rates are registered. In 1974 when the national divorce rate was 2.9, it reached 5.2 in Moscow.

Soviet cities have divorce rates roughly comparable to those in U.S. cities, or in some cases higher, as they are in the case of the three largest cities in the two countries, for example in 1979:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leningrad</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiev</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The divorce rates of the 25 largest U.S. cities range from 2.8 in Boston to 8.2 in Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston; for the 27 cities of the USSR which are republic capitals or over one million in population, from 2.1 in Erevan to 6.8 in Alma Ata.
Rural divorce rates average about 40 percent of urban ones. But the "epidemic of divorces" is spreading from the cities out to the villages. Slowly but steadily, high divorce rates are becoming the norm, outside enclaves of tradition and family solidarity in border republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia, and in scattered pockets of non-European settlement in the RSFSR.19

Divorces provide symptoms of breakdown in the family. Urbanization sets the stage for it and for the changes in spouses' motives, values and needs that loosen family bonds.

**Motives: What They Tell the Judges**

When spouses petition for divorce, they must list their motive, as proof that the family has broken down. The motives cited to a Moscow court are representatives of a wider picture.20

(see Table 4, page 8)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motive</th>
<th>Of Wives (345)</th>
<th>Of Husbands (155)</th>
<th>Both Spouses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(percent)</td>
<td>(percent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness of spouse</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incompatibility</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infidelity</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent Quarrels</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance of another family</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of feeling of love</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse's jealousy</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unavoidable separation</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical incompatibility</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse's irresponsibility</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meddling of parents and relatives</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various illnesses</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fictitious marriage</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of, lack of wish to have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other motives</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Separated by occupation of the petitioners, the divorce cases of blue collar spouses show drunkenness and alcoholism as a much more frequent motive (59.5 percent) than it is for white collar spouses (17.5 percent). White collar petitioners are more likely to cite incompatibility and frequent quarrels. All told, the main motives for divorce offered to the judges are drunkenness, incompatibility (neskhvostvo karacterov), infidelity, frequent quarrels, the appearance of another family, loss of a feeling of love. Especially striking, when comparing husbands and wives, is the fact that two thirds of the divorces are by the wives, motivated they say, by their husbands' drunkenness and alcoholism as by far the leading provocation to divorce. 21 Husbands are much more prone than are their wives, it appears, not only to alcohol abuse, but also to outside liaisons (witness the high male figure for second family) and to making an issue of not having children (though overall this is not a prominent motive).

Searching behind the court-registered "motives" for divorce, Soviet experts aren't ready to produce an over-arching "theory of marital conflict." 22 But as in Western research, the Soviets return over and again to three basic changes, associated with Soviet economic and social development, when seeking "causes" for climbing divorce rates and family instability. Urbanization erodes social mores and community controls supportive of permanent family ties. New values give family and marriage less priority and other forms of involvement more than they once had. Third, strains arise in marriage due to conflicts between the needs of husband and wife. All three changes--urbanization, new values, and new strains growing out of new needs--tie up with changes in the role of the family and of women. The family's economic role has declined, in many parts of the USSR, with the separation of productive
work from families there. Women's near-total employment adds a new work role to that of homemaker. This all devalues the family as a unit of support (though not entirely). Spouses are more likely, by far, than in Stalin's day, to be strangers in a strange place when they marry, to bring into their marriage values not protective of it, and needs not compatible with conjugal harmony.

Strangers in a Strange Place

This heading is not to be taken literally. It does imply, though, that as compared with the life of small towns and villages, city life brings anonymity, loss of community control. Gone is the family's voice in whom children shall marry. Marriages tend to be hasty and between persons who were strangers before the wedding and who remain strangers in important ways.23

Of 175 grooms questioned when applying for marriage licenses at the Moscow Wedding Palace and ZAGS offices, just under half, 48 percent, said they had courted their brides less than a year.24 Yet the shorter the pre-marital acquaintance, the more likely an early divorce.25 The newlyweds hardly know one another, then come the shocks and disappointments: "We can't get along," "My wife can't cook," etc. And the hasty marriages end in hasty divorces.26 Moscow's newlyweds in their first marriages are "grown up children, says the head of the Department of Marriage and the Family of the Moscow City Soviet. Only one fifth of those young newlyweds surveyed knows the rudiments of planning a family budget.27 No wonder the most intense divorce rates, by length of marriage, occur in the earliest years; a half to two thirds of all marriages that break up legally end in divorce within the first four years of marriage.28
Noting Western findings that pre-marital conflicts can mean trouble for the marriage, a Moscow researcher found similar evidence of high rates of unresolved conflicts among fiancees she questioned: over "lack of understanding by the partner (31 percent of grooms and 39 percent of brides), "inattentiveness" (15 and 18 percent, respectively), "spending too much time with friends" (8 and 11 percent), "drinking too much" (each 14 percent). Surprisingly 70 percent of the grooms and 60 percent of the brides could not name any pastime or interest shared with their partners. One in five of the couples questioned disagreed over the groom's belief that he should be head of the family while the bride preferred an equal division of authority (although the majority of couples favored an egalitarian family). No less serious, 52 percent of the couples disagreed over the question of "to what degree the wife should devote herself to her family and to what extent to her work." In 41 percent of the couples the women gave a higher priority to professional activity than the man would like them to. This is not far from the proportion of disagreement found in U.S. two-career families.

The task of adjustment to marriage for "green" young couples is further complicated by the difficulties they often encounter in getting a place to live, housing in a room, let alone an apartment, that affords them any privacy. More than 70 percent of newlyweds in Volgograd file for divorce during the first year of their marriages. The leading reason given to Komsomol questioners was the unavailability of housing, whether state housing, or a room rented on the side from private parties. Students and graduating specialists sent on first assignment have particular difficulties. Neither college administrations nor officials at worksites show much concern; housing newlyweds
is for them the least of their troubles. Moving in with parents is often not possible, or if possible, not always good.\textsuperscript{33}

Another inauspicious side of marrying in the Soviet Union, other than haste and immaturity, used to be the drab way in which marriages were registered, which they must be to have legal effect. "Only marriage registered in state civil registration offices create the rights and obligations of spouses."\textsuperscript{34} Beginning with the first Wedding Palace in Leningrad in 1959, the authorities have tried to make the wedding a more meaningful substitute for religious ceremonies, as part of its general campaign promoting Soviet secular rituals.\textsuperscript{35} Ceremony or no ceremony, ZAGS registration offices are enjoined please not to open their books for registering marriages at times when divorces also are being registered.\textsuperscript{36}

After the registration of marriage, with or without a ceremony, the newlyweds must adjust to each other's outlooks on marriage, and on the extent to which it is an exclusive, special, important part of their lives.

\textbf{New Values}

"New values" does not mean that these outlooks were unheard of until recently in the USSR. Rather, it means that these new outlooks, once considered unconventional among younger people before and during marriage, have become a part of the new Soviet outlook on life, at least in today's generations of teen-agers and younger married couples no longer touched by familist traditions still strong in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and among non-European indigenous families in the Russian Republic.

Near the end of our opening scene, the anniversary guests turn from arguments over whether infidelity is inherent in humans or the product of "looseness and irresponsibility," to toast a glowingly happy young couple, the
parents of two children, and their recent arrival, Nastenka. The husband, Valya, is the son of the celebrants of the silver wedding. His madonna-like wife, Masha, is cradling Nastenka in her arms. But the narrator realizes that Valya cannot be Nastenka's father because her eyes are brown, his and Masha's, blue.

As the scene ends, Masha senses the narrator's suspicion. She lowers her eyes for a split second "and the light in them goes out."

The Mashas of this world, and all the other bearers of new values about sex and marriage (again, not literally new, but new in their conventionality) become grist for the mill of the recently revived Soviet sciences of sexology and sociology, notably for Igor Kon of Leningrad, who works in both fields. Kon's analysis puts changes in Soviet mores squarely in the context of "cultural change" universal in all industrialized countries, socialist and capitalist. In both there has been a loss of sexual inhibitions in dress, speech, and emotional self-expression. The family sociologist Kharchev, part-scientist and part-moralist still, in what he writes, sees all of this loss of inhibition among Soviet youth as a result of "a sharp deterioration in the conditions of socialization of the younger generation," in modern urban life. Both Kon and Kharchev see a growing contradiction between the acceptance of extra-marital sex by both men and women, as Kon says at an earlier age than in the past, on the one hand, and the lamentable state of education on sex and marriage in the past, on the other. Kon counters his adversaries, the opponents of sex research and education in sex, with the ripostes, that to understand is not to condone, that Marx and Engels inveighed against "philistine false modesty" and that as Goethe said, "what man does not understand he does not control." The separation of sex from marriage is a
Western concept, but is happening in the USSR. Only 7 percent of a sample of 3721 respondents in 18 higher schools across the USSR associated their sexual intimacies with prospective marriage. The rest had sexual relations out of love, for pleasure, for emotional closeness. There is a lot of drinking at youth gatherings and parties. That, too, washes away inhibitions. But, incidentally, nothing washes away the inhibitions even of the sexologists, when it comes to homosexuality and lesbianism. In print homosexuality is something in the criminal code as a felony, and then only between men.

The analysts do discuss the high rates of pre-marital conception of first born children among younger women. Younger or older, most women know little or nothing about contraceptives. Besides, they don't trust Soviet contraceptives and find them inconvenient and hard to get. The authorities may still need to be convinced that the birthrate does not depend on the availability of contraceptives anymore. In the end, many women resort to abortions. Twenty percent of all abortions in 1963 were had by unmarried women. The rest of the women become single parents or marry before or after the birth of their child. In Perm', a Urals industrial town of nearly a million inhabitants, one survey showed 32.5 percent of all babies to be conceived extra-maritally: 12.5 percent to unmarried mothers, 19.6 percent to mothers marrying before or after the birth of their child. Among young women 17-19 years old, 52.9 percent of their firstborn children were conceived before marriage, and 29.2 percent of the children conceived before marriage by women between 20 and 24 years old.

The connection for the Soviet researchers is clear. A revolution in mores and pre-marital conduct has promoted high rates of pre-marital conceptions among young women entering marriage. But pre-marital pregnancy is a "high
risk" factor. It shortens courtship and pre-marital adjustment, it puts financial burdens on young couples,\textsuperscript{47} to say nothing of the element of compulsion in such a situation.\textsuperscript{48}

One way out of all this for the Soviet equivalent of the moral majority, among researchers and writers on the subject, is to return to the strict moral code of pre-marital chastity, fidelity and marriage as a lifelong union upheld by Russian peasant ancestors. People like Kon and even colleagues more ideological in their writing argue that this is impossible. In any event, one of the writers argues, not the moral code held the peasant family together, but what that code reflected—the economic indispensibility of the family and children as a productive unit.\textsuperscript{49}

Economic development and past Soviet policies both have undermined the economic and religious foundations of the large, stable family. Personal happiness and satisfaction no less than custom and need define the value of marriage to Soviet spouses of today. Its stability depends in part on the satisfaction of their needs and their demands as individuals.

Spouses' Needs and Demands

Over and over again one hears in the Soviet Union: the family for most of us is no longer a place where we fulfill economic needs and religious morality. Marriage and the family we value, rather, in terms of how they fulfill our personal needs for emotional gratification and a comfortable home life.\textsuperscript{50}

No less a theme is many women's demand for equality of satisfaction in family life, and their intolerance of husbands who are dunkards or indifferent husbands or fathers.\textsuperscript{51} An indication of women's declining dependence on men is the high proportion not only of women among divorce petitioners but also of mothers. Among the roughly two thirds of females among urban petitioners,
three quarters of them have minor children. It appears that at least half of
the court divorces in rural areas are initiated by women. Their income from
farm work and garden plots fortifies their growing sense of independence and
self-reliance, to say nothing of the war years when women, children and old men
kept the villages and farms going. 52

For many women, as men, marriage is no longer a focus of total or lifelong
personal commitment. Among a sample of Leningrad women married 3-7 years, 40
percent accepted their husband's infidelity as "fully possible" and, no less,
their own right to an affair with a man they fancied other than their
husband. 53 The author of a popularized book on marriage deplores the fact that
divorce has become fashionable, even "prestigious." It shocked him no less to
catch sight in "a solid institution professional preoccupied with problems of
divorce" the slogan "Divorce--Blessing or Misfortune," and to hear a colleague
lecture on divorce as part of the "inevitable process" of the "adaptation of
the family." 54

Women's growing sexual and emotional emancipation, writes a distinguished
sociologist and the country's leading non-medical sexologist, "heightens their
demands for a satisfying sex life. As a result they are more frequently
dissatisfied with it, and for that reason more ready to contemplate divorce." 55

The impressive fact that more women than men possess college diplomas
creates problems too. As did the women in Marilyn Rueschmeyer's interviews
with dual-career families in the U.S., so do Soviet women find themselves "torn
between public duties and family ones." Combining them puts a heavy strain on
psychic and physical resources. 56 The head of a district bank wrote The
Literary Gazette recently to advise professional women not to accept promotion
to a leading post in administration, science or the arts unless prepared to
give up family life, and unless "there is a reliable backup on the home front in the form of parents or relatives." The author of the response to this letter from "L. I." confessed that she saw no sure solution to the problem of the place of women in contemporary society." Who is the happier of two sisters she knows, she asks, the older sister devoted to a world renowned scholar and their four children, or the younger sister devoted to her career as a world famous singer, divorced, and raising her daughter alone?

"L. I." writes on: "Sometimes one may read about women for whom everything is wonderful at work and at home, everything is in order, comfortable, the children get only fives ("A's"), etc. Forgive me. I don't believe it. For one to devote oneself to work, someone must be covering the home front." The commentator in turn shared L. I.'s disbelief. "I must admit," she responds, "that I also don't believe much in such idyllic harmony (even when "the home front is well covered") when it comes not to rank and file blue collar and white collar women but women in leadership posts or highly creative women of unusual talent..."57

A photograph in an article on wedding ceremonies shows a groom carrying his bride in his arms and pausing before three strips laid out on the carpet. The strip to the left is marked "patriarchy." The strip to the right is marked "matriarchy." The strip in the middle is marked "mutuality," and is the one down which the groom is supposed to carry his new wife.58

But family role models are no longer clear, as they were in the days when the husband was "head of the family, breadwinner and determiner of its social status," and the wife was "keeper of the hearth, mistress of the household and upbringer of the children."59 The popular literature, especially that written by women, extols equality in family decisions and obligations. Article 53 of
the Soviet Constitution proclaims that "spouses are fully equal in family relations." True, the younger the family, the more likely there is to be an equal division of authority in it. But we saw earlier that newlyweds often disagree on the subject of headship in the family and on women's equal right to devote themselves to their careers. In its greeting to women on Women's Day, the Central Committee of the CPSU emphasizes women's essential contribution both to the economy and to the family. "Women are justly called the soul of the family," it intoned in 1982. "Raising your children as idealistic, work-loving, honest people, you train the country's worthy and reliable next shift."

The one model individual advanced in the greeting is that of the devoted mother of the late Secretary General, Leonid Brezhnev, that is, a woman of the generation of great grandparents. It is unlikely that many Soviet women have obtained a clear picture of their social roles from the contradictory role models presented them in the Soviet press.

A visit to "Academic Town" of the Siberian Branch, USSR Academy of Sciences, outside Novosibirsk, left an impression that senior scientists' wives generally were content to focus their lives on their comfortable homes, tend the garden and wash their husbands' shirts. The head of one institute there said that his daughter and her friends saw things differently. They wanted to make their careers, not simply to support their husbands'. Living conditions in Academic Town are relatively privileged, and the population relatively stable. Yet for every two marriages entered in the ZAGS registry of Academic Town there is one divorce—at a rate only slightly lower than is the ratio of divorces to marriages in nearby Novosibirsk.

Research in Moscow prompts the conclusion that the one material factor where conceivable change in the near future could increase family stability and
low divorce rates is the achievement of a division of household labor satisfactory to both wives and husbands. Only this outcome can reduce what both American and Soviet researchers find to be an increase in family tensions when women go out to work. Of the happily married women, in stable families in the Moscow survey, 14.3 percent were dissatisfied with the household division of labor. Of the unhappily married women in unstable families in the Moscow survey, 50 percent were dissatisfied with the household division of labor. Another source of household burdens on the marriage other than lack of help to the housewife can be the great difficulty of obtaining a babysitter so that the married couple may go out on their own together in their free time. Parents remain the chief source of help with babysitting. Hence the researcher suggests that housing allocations allow for parents to live near their married children (something the children want), and where that is not possible, for the government to assist in establishing babysitting cooperatives. Rodzinskaia comes to the important conclusion that no increase in the standard of living will of itself contribute to stabilizing the family. What will do it is the spouses' capacity for harmonious cooperation, mutual understanding and adjustment as well as outside help from parents or services in caring for young children at home during the evenings or weekends when the spouses wish to go out together.

As it is now, the typical Soviet woman works virtually a "second shift" at home, in addition to her stint at the workplace. On the one hand, Soviet women are just about fully employed. On the other, they carry out a still disproportionate share of the difficult task of keeping house in the Soviet Union. The double burden falls particularly heavily on working wives with one or more children. They spend approximately twice the time on homemaking that
their unmarried sisters do, and more than twice the time on the average, than their husbands. There are professional families know to this writer where the husbands do more than their equal share of housekeeping and parenting. But repeated results of Soviet research and a total of two years spent in the Soviet Union convince this writer that my helpful friends are in the minority, as yet. Husbands often take the "sparrow's share" of the work themselves, leaving the lion's share to their increasingly tired, nervous and prematurely aging wives. When Soviet (and not only Soviet) women's liberation in daily life matches their liberation under law, the family will come closer to a new basis of harmony and stability.

Conclusions

One senses behind the breakdowns and divorces the influence of changes which lie beyond the reach of either superficial palliatives or legal compulsion. It is much easier to forbid a family to open a private store or service enterprise or to crush human rights or feminist groups than it is to compel spouses to stay together who do not want to. Spouses' assertion of individual choice appears to spring from irreversible changes in the family milieu: the loss of the old firm economic communal and religious bonds tying generations and spouses together, and the virtually total involvement of women in work beyond the family in the Soviet Union, outside certain enclaves of tradition in areas of indigenous, non-European settlement in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

These changes and the permeation of new values out from an avant garde and from other industrialized nations, especially in Soviet cities but also ever more in the villages too, have wrought changes also in the psychology of men and women as lovers, husbands, and wives. A lifelong commitment to marriage
and one family has been devalued, divorce made conceivable, even acceptable or welcome, to ever more people. An ever higher priority is given to the satisfaction of personal needs in marriage—and outside marriage or in a new marriage, if need be. As women have become more independent economically and psychologically, they have put much higher demands on their husbands and their marriages and now take the lead in initiating divorces.

Soviet researchers will be the first to admit that they have yet to develop a viable "theory of marital conflict." As do some U.S. analysts, all Soviet sociologists state, at least in print, that the present troubles of the Soviet family are transitional, as "survivals" of old patriarchalism and crudeness fade and new ideals have yet fully to take hold. The family is adapting not disintegrating. The reason the Soviet regime is concerned is that the longer the adaptation takes, the more demographic damage will be wrought by divorce and breakup. Also, in both the U.S. and the USSR, predictions about the family depend on one's viewpoint. Traditionalists like the U.S. Moral Majority, or the ethnologists in the USSR nostalgic for the old peasant family bonds, see two alternatives: either return to old ways or the end of the family as a viable social unit, with grievous social consequences. Empiricists in both countries expect the family to adapt to its new environment. As a prerequisite they see the need for a new level of preparation and knowledge about marriage among newlyweds and a new consensus over the meaning of equality for men and women in modern life.
Notes


11. Ibid.

12. Narkhoz v 1979 godu (Narodnoe khoziastvo SSSR v 1979 godu (M.: Statistika, 1980), 65. Divorce rates in Moscow were 3.8 in 1959, or 3.5 times the national rate. V.S. (Vestnik statistiki), 1 (1965), 93.


22. Ibid.

23. Kharchev, Brak i sem'ia v SSSR (1979), 228-30, 343.

24. T. A. Gurko, "Vliianie dobrachnogo povedeniia na stabilnosti molodoi sem'i," SI, 2 (1982), 90. Couples were questioned April to June 1981 when applying for marriage licenses in Moscow's Wedding Palace and ZAGS registry offices.

25. Among a sample of 342 students and engineers 71 percent of those divorced knew their spouses less than a year; of those not divorced, 71 percent knew their spouses more than a year, before getting married. Kharchev, Brak i sem'ia v SSSR (1979), 217.


28. For the USSR, percentages of marriages divorced in 1980 which lasted less than a year—3.5, 15.7 after 1-2 years, 37.9 after 3-4 years, 27.3 after 5-9 years. V.S. 1 (1981), 74. But these figures overstate the duration of marriage owing to the delay between breakup and registration of divorce. Gurko, "Vliianie dobrachnogo povedeniia..." 89. In Belorussia, 33.1% of couples divorced after less than a year of marriage, 33.1 after 1-4 years, 16.6 after 5-9 years. V. Perevedentsev, 270 millionov (M.: Statistika, 1982), 23.


30. Ibid., 90-92. 78 percent of grooms and 89 percent of brides favored equal authority. In four percent of couples, both favored an authoritarian family.


34. Fundamentals, Article 9, part 3. In villages and new settlements, an official of the local Soviet performs the functions of ZAGS.


36. It used to be not unknown for ZAGS registrations to take place in an entryway to a shoemaking shop, to a village Soviet or collective farm administration, and open to register marriages at the same time as deaths and divorces. Kulazhnikov, Pravo, traditsii i obychai, 126.


38. Kharchev, Brak i sem'ia v SSSR (1979), 116-17.

39. Ibid., 207; Kon, "O sotsiologicheskoi..." 114-15.
40. Ibid., 114.

41. Ibid., 116-17.

42. Kharchev, Brak i sem'ia v SSSR (1979).

43. Article 121 of the RSFSR Criminal Code specifies up to five years' deprivation of freedom for homosexual relations between men, up to eight years sentence if they are by violence. Uгolovnyi kodeks RSFSR (M.: Iuridicheskai literatura, 1978).


47. Gurko, "Vliianie dobrachnogo povedeniia..." 91.

48. Kharchev, Brak i sem'ia v SSSR (1979), 206.

49. Bazdyrev, Prostoye uravnenie, 77-78; Kon, "O sotsiologicheskoi interpretatsii..." 120.


52. See Gusev, note 21. According to the same survey made by the USSR Supreme Court, 77.4 percent of the women among persons initiating divorce had children. In a sample of rural divorce cases women initiated about half. V. P. Kolokol'nikov, "Brachno-semeinye otnosheniiia v srede kolkhoznogo krestit'iansvta," SI, 3 (1976), 83.

53. Kharchev, Brak i sem'ia v SSSR (1979), 199. See also Bazdyrev, Prostoye uravnenie, 88.

54. Ibid., 79.