

**“ORPHANS WITH LIVING PARENTS”.
CHILDREN’S LONELINESS IN RUSSIAN NOBLE FAMILIES
(THE SECOND HALF OF THE XIX – BEGINNING
OF THE XX CENTURIES)***

Valentina A. VEREMENKO, Olga A. SEMENOVA

Pushkin Leningrad State University (Russia)

e-mail: v.a.veremenko@yandex.ru, ivanova.olga.al@mail.ru

Abstract: *The article examines the relationship of children and parents specific to the Russian noble families. The greatest attention is paid to the evolution of the status of children. The state of the child, although living in a full family, but being in care of nannies or governesses, in the separate residences, is being studied. An analysis of the evolution of children’s status is given – from their „uselessness” to the moment when they and their interests are placed at the centre of family relations. In their study the authors come to the conclusion, that during the XIX century the main „disease” of the noble family was the psychological condition of children – loneliness, in which „orphans with living parents” were growing up. Only at the very end of the XIX century, nobility parents begin to acknowledge the value of a child.*

Keywords: *Russia, XIX- XX centuries, noble family, parents, orphan, child psychology, loneliness of the child.*

Rezumat: *„Orfani cu părinți în viață”. Singurătatea copiilor în familiile nobile ruse din a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX. Articolul examinează relația dintre copii și părinți specifică familiilor nobile din Rusia. Cea mai mare atenție este acordată evoluției statutului copiilor. Este studiată condiția copilului care, deși trăiește într-o familie completă, este îngrijit de bone sau guvernante, în reședințele separate. Se analizează evoluția statutului copiilor – de la „inutilitatea” lor și până la momentul în care ei și interesele lor sunt plasate în centrul relațiilor de familie. În studiul lor, autorii ajung la concluzia că, în secolul al XIX-lea, „boala” principală a familiei nobile a constituit-o starea psihologică a copiilor - singurătatea, în care creșteau „orfani cu părinți vii”. Abia la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea, părinții nobili încep să conștientizeze importanța unui copil.*

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Résumé: *“Des orphelins avec des parents vivants”. La solitude des enfants des familles nobles russes de la seconde moitié du XIX-ème siècle – le début du XX-ème siècle.* L'article ci-joint examine la relation entre les enfants et les parents, spécifique aux familles nobles de la Russie. On y accorda la plus grande attention à l'évolution du statut des enfants. On y étudia la condition de l'enfant qui, quoiqu'il vive dans une famille complète, les nourrices et les gouverneurs le soignent, dans des résidences séparées. On y analysa, aussi, l'évolution du statut des enfants – de leur “inutilité” jusqu'au moment où ceux-ci et leurs intérêts commencèrent à être placés au centre des relations de famille. Dans leur étude, les auteurs arrivent à la conclusion que, le XIX-ème siècle, l'état psychologique des enfants – la solitude dans laquelle on élevait “les orphelins avec des parents vivants” – représenta “la maladie” principale de la famille noble. A peine à la fin du XIX-ème siècle, les parents nobles commencent à apercevoir l'importance d'un enfant.

INTRODUCTION

An important component of Russian society modernization, that took place in the second half of the XIX – early XX century, was a radical change of the noble family life. Evolution was carried out in two main directions. On the one hand, the nature of marriages changed. If in the middle of the XIX century parents of the bride couple acted as organizers of a new family, and it was created as an intergenerational union, then at the end of the century an increasingly important role was played by the personal choice of the spouses, and the marriage was supposed to be built not on the principles of house holding and economic expediency or family necessity, but on the basis of emotional intimacy and „love”.

On the other hand, evolution was subjected to the status of a child in a noble family. Occupying the lowest position in the family hierarchy, driven into remote rooms, the noble children of the mid-XIX century by the efforts of advanced pedagogy got to the beginning of XX the right to express their own „I”. Supporters of the concept of „free education” not only demanded the observance of the interests of children, but also the promotion of these interests – in family, in school, and in society as a whole – to the fore¹, with the goal of creating by the educators „conditions for spontaneous self-development of the child's

¹ В. А. Веремёнко, *Выращивание революционера: концепция «свободного воспитания» в элитных школах России конца XIX – начала XX века* [Raising a revolutionary: the concept of "free education" in elite schools of Russia in the late XIX – early XX century], in "Самарский научный вестник", 2018, no. 1(22), с. 165-171.

personality, which do not distort the potential possibilities inherent in it”.² A significant part of the „new parents” from the nobility-intellectual families actively supported these ideas, in practice forming a new reality – „child-centric families”.

At first glance, these two messages, which put the emotional relations between family members to the base of family life, democratized its structure, were in no way contradictory. And love that binds parents was even more evident in their joint concern for children, in their active participation in their lives. However, this was the case if love between the spouses persisted, and if it passed? If there is no love, then the marriage built on its basis could no longer continue. Yet, how to combine this thesis with the idea of the supremacy of children interests? This dilemma was first seriously discussed in Russian society at the end of the XIX – beginning of the XX century, symbolizing the transition to a new type of family relations.

Thus, the purpose of this article is to analyse the evolution of the relationship between parents and children in the noble families of Russia in the second half of the XIX – early XX centuries. Evolution, in which, despite the gradual change in the status of children in family, the problem of child loneliness continued to persist.

Historiography of this topic is extremely small – the evolution of noble motherhood at the turn of the XIX-XX century, mainly in the part of caring for small children, was considered by N. A. Mitsyuk.³ Various aspects of relationship between parents and children of the nobles were investigated by one of the authors of this article.⁴

The main materials for revealing the problem of child loneliness in the noble families of post-reform Russia were the sources of personal origin, largely

² С. А. Ганина, *Концепция свободного воспитания: опыт социально-философской рефлексии феномена детства* [The concept of "free education": experience of socio-philosophical reflection of the childhood phenomenon], in "Общество. Среда. Развитие (Terra Humana)", 2012, no. 1, с. 185.

³ Н. А. Мицюк, *Рождение матери: субкультура материнства в высших слоях общества индустриальной России* [Birth of a mother: subculture of motherhood in the upper strata of the society of industrial Russia], Смоленск, 2015.

⁴ В. А. Веременко, *Дворянская семья и государственная политика России (вторая половина XIX – начало XX вв.)* [Noble family and state policy of Russia (second half of the XIX – beginning of the XX century)], Изд. 2-е, испр. и дополн. СПб.: Изд-во «Европейский дом», 2009. 684 с; Eadem, *Дети в дворянских семьях России (вторая половина XIX–начало XX вв.)* [Children in noble families of Russia (second half of the XIX – beginning of the XX century)], СПб.: ЛГУ им. А.С. Пушкина, 2015, 204 с.

unpublished, clerical documents of the "Commission of Petitions for the Highest Name" of the second half of the XIX century. Fiction in the style of realism is used not accidentally. Its value as a source lies in the ability to reflect the mentality of its time and concrete nation, to contribute to the reconstruction of certain historical types of behaviour, thinking and perception.

"NO LOVE – NO PROBLEM..."

CHILDREN AND PARENTS IN A TRADITIONAL NOBLE FAMILY

In a traditional noble family, prevailing in Russia in the middle of the XIX century, parental involvement in the upbringing of children was of an episodic nature, and assumed the most general control, as well as organization of career of the young man and marriage party of the girl.

Children of early age were in care of fosterers and nurses, usually serfs. Parents rarely interfered in the order they established, limiting themselves (at best) to several visits to the nursery per day, or by polling the servants of everything was all right. Babies, sent in order not to interfere „to the distant rooms”, in turn, knew little and were afraid of their parents considering them as „strangers”.⁵ As a result, the emotional attachment of the child did not extend to the parents, but to the nannies. They became the most significant people for noble children. In hundreds of memoirs of noblemen kind words, addressed to his nurse, can be met. Such, for example, as M. S. Nikolaeva: „... All of us, except sister Elizabeth, are obliged to the good nurse, that we grew up in fear of God, in respect of parents, are all pretty well built up, without any outstanding physical defects”.⁶ Separation from the nanny, with transition to the care of a tutor (governess) and, especially, with admission to an educational institution, became for the noble children the main experience of childhood. And they tried, after returning home, to take the dearest person to themselves. There was even a certain tradition to give to a just-married noble girl with a dowry, among others, her nanny, who became the main assistant and confidante in a new house for the young housewife.⁷

At the age of 3-5 years, the child switched to the „use” of a governess or tutor. Various popular guides, quite adequately reflecting the place of home tutor

⁵ Отдел рукописей Российской национальной библиотеки (ОР РНБ) [Department of Manuscripts of the Russian National Library], Ф. 601. – *Половцовы*, Д. 1195, Л. 78.

⁶ М. С. Николева, *Черты старинного дворянского быта. Воспоминания* [Features of ancient noble life. Memories], in "Русский Архив", 1893, no. 10, с. 159.

⁷ ОР РНБ, Ф. 601, Д. 1196, Л. 3.

in the house, argued that „the governess generally to some extent replaces the mother for children; so she must constantly be with them, caring not only about their education, but also about their physical well-being”.⁸ Mutual contacts of parents with their children who have left infancy, as before, did not differ with special frequency. As a rule, they assumed several „ritual” actions. In the morning children were brought to their father and mother, to greet. Sometimes during the day, if there were no guests in the house, and the parents were not very „busy”, the whole family met at the table. Finally, in the evening, the wish for „good night” was realized, and in special solemn occasions a common prayer was performed.⁹ For a reason in the course of the early childhood memories of the mid-XIX century, as in the preceding decades, father rarely appeared, and the image of mother „beautiful, distant, smelling perfume”, glancing into the nursery for a minute to kiss children before leaving for the ball, reception or elsewhere, rather comparable with a fairy, an unearthly being than with loved and close person.¹⁰

A rather typical picture of the „orphanhood” of children with parents in a noble family is painted by I.S. Turgenev in the „Noble Nest”: „Liza passed the tenth year, when her father died; but he did little about her. He was busy with affairs, constantly preoccupied with the increment of his financial position, bilious, harsh, impatient, he did not hesitate to give money to teachers, tutors, clothes and other children's needs; but could not stand, as he put it, to babysit with squeakies, Marya Dmitrievna [mother], in fact, did not much more than her husband deal with Lisa, although she bragged at Lavretsky that she had raised her children alone; she dressed her like a dolly, at her guests stroked her on head and called her into her eyes a clever girl and a darling – and only: the lazy lady was tired of all constant care. During the life of her father, Lisa was in the hands of a governess...”¹¹

F. M. Dostoevsky also did not ignore the topic of „fathers and children”, deepening into the inner world and childhood memories of his protagonist Arkady Makarovich in the novel „Adolescent”, he shows the relationship of parents to their son: „I was like a discarded and almost from birth placed in strange people... When my mother gave birth to me, she was still young and nice, and so, he needed her [father], and the screaming child, of course, was a nuisance at all, especially in travel. That's why it happened that until the twentieth year I hardly saw my

⁸ *Жизнь в свете, дома и при дворе* [Life in society, at home and at the court], Репринт, Москва, 1990, с. 94-95.

⁹ ОР РНБ, Ф. 326, Д. 15, Л. 2.

¹⁰ ОР РНБ, Ф. 601, Д. 1196, Л. 2-3.

¹¹ И. С. Тургенев, *Дворянское гнездо* [Noble Nest], Москва, 1983, с. 209.

mother, except for two or three cases in passing". And memories about his father further reflect the system of relations that was developed in society – „Versilov, my father, whom I saw only once in my life, for a moment, when I was only ten years old... who gave birth to me and thrown me in society, still not only didn't know me at all, but even never repented in it (who knows, maybe about my very existence he had a vague and inaccurate concept, since it later turned out that it was not he who paid money for keeping me in Moscow, but others)".¹²

Indicatively, despite the fact that both father and mother did not engage in their children equally, it was believed that in case of widowhood, a man himself cannot cope with children and he must attract any woman to their upbringing. This problem could be solved in several ways. It was not uncommon for the head of the family to invite a widowed or unmarried relative to his house; as a housekeeper, he had to supervise governesses and nannies. Noble memoirs contain numerous colourful descriptions of „aunties”, engaged in the upbringing of children of „dead sisters” (kinship with whom in fact could be very remote). And since the position of „dependents” required „working off”, then, as a rule, they really cared about children entrusted to them, becoming really close people for the latter.¹³ For example, for Misha Danchich it was a true tragedy when due to the repeated marriage of his father – the palace doctor K. M. Danchich – a kind and caring „aunt”, who lived in their house on the rights of „housekeeper” for over 15 years, left the family.¹⁴

On the other hand, children could simply be sent from home in order to save their father from this „burden”. Such a situation was often played out in children's Christmas literature: „Petr Savich..., decided to write to his wife's relatives in Siberia, asking them to come to Petersburg as quickly as possible and take Kolya [his son] on care. He admitted himself incapable of bringing up his son”.¹⁵ Finally,

¹² М. Ф. Достоевский, *Подросток* [Adolescent], <https://www.litres.ru/fedor-dostoevskiy/podrostok/> (Accessed on 17.04.2018)

¹³ В. А. Веремёнко, «Дура в доме» – женская домашняя прислуга в дворянских семьях России второй половины XIX – начала XX вв. [“Fool in the house” – female domestic servants in the noble families of Russia in the second half of the XIX – early XX centuries], in “Альманах гендерной истории «Адам и Ева»”, 2013, no. 21, с. 244-245; В. В. Каминский, В. А. Веремёнко, «...Я вышла замуж за любимого...» мемуары О. М. Меницкой-Зоммар (01.03.1874-31.01.1967) [“... I married a loved one...” Memoirs of O. M. Menitskaya-Zommar (01.03.1874-31.01.1967)], in “История повседневности”, 2017, no. 1, с. 118-119.

¹⁴ ОР РНБ, Ф. 163, Д. 313-324.

¹⁵ *Рождественские рассказы для детей, с рисунками. Вып. Второй. Два брата*

father’s repeated marriage was very often presented as a way of solving the issue of children from a previous marriage.¹⁶

At the age of 10-12 a significant part of teenagers went to schools. In traditional families preference was given to the closed educational institutions, which were believed to guarantee the „future” of children, providing boys with necessary knowledge to obtain a „place”, and girls with so much needed for a „profitable party” „purity and innocence”. This practice began to be negatively assessed in the noble-intellectual environment only in the last decade of the XIX century, when teachers began to talk about the consequences of separation of children from the family, which were deeply traumatic for the child's mind: „Parents, relatives and in general those people who, putting children in state institutions, were glad that they sold them off their hands, were guilty, and thought that if he is full, dressed and does not need anything else; but they are convinced of this, and they cannot even understand that such a life without leaving can lead to bitterness, so perhaps they are not to blame, because looking at everything deeply is not the quality of every person”.¹⁷

Before that period, many parents specially emphasized their detachment from children. This position is perfectly illustrated in L.N. Tolstoy novel „Anna Karenina”: „Children? In Petersburg children did not prevent their fathers from living. Children were brought up in institutions”.¹⁸

It is characteristic that even children sent to „institutions” rarely missed their parents. In numerous memoirs written both by the Cadets and the Institutes, the conditions of entry and life in an educational institution, relations with the administration, teachers and classmates are necessarily characterized, and even the place of „guests” is located.¹⁹ In the memories of house, „freedom”, nannies and aunts

[Christmas stories for children, with drawings. Vol. 2. Two brothers], СПб., Изд. ред. детского сада и Б. Белова, 1871, с. 15-16.

¹⁶ ОР РНБ, Ф. 163, Д. 313-324; ОР РНБ, Ф. 601, Д. 1196.

¹⁷ ИРЛИ РАН, Ф. 732, Оп. 1, Д. 121, Л. 19.

¹⁸ Л. Н. Толстой, *Анна Каренина* [Anna Karenina], Москва, 1985, с. 684.

¹⁹ В. А. Веремenco, *Особенности школьного быта дворян в государственных закрытых учебных заведениях России (вторая половина XIX – начало XX вв.)* [Specifics of the school life of noblemen in state restricted access educational institutions of Russia (second half of XIX – beginning of XX centuries)], in “Вестник Череповецкого государственного университета”, 2014, no. 8/61, с. 33-36; *Кадеты, гардемарины, юнкера. Мемуары воспитанников военных училищ XIX века. История воспитания* [Cadets, midshipmen, junkers. Memoirs of pupils of military schools of the XIX century. History of Education], <https://coollib.com/b/248625/read> (Accessed on 04.04.2018);

appear. And the child missed them, not the absent parents. And when the experiences were mentioned, in a context where there were no places for older members of the family: „Left alone in the corps, I did not cry, despite the terrible longing that seized me; I did not cry only because there were no tears in my character”.²⁰

In general, characterizing the „orphanhood” of noble children in a traditional family, their attitude to their parents, it is worthwhile to turn again to the „encyclopaedia of Russian life” – a novel by L. N. Tolstoy „Anna Karenina”: „Vronsky never knew a family life. His mother was in her youth a brilliant secular woman, who had during her marriage, and especially after, many affairs known to the whole world. His father he almost did not remember and was raised in the Pages Corps...

He did not respect his mother in his soul, and did not report himself he did not like her, although according to the concepts of the circle in which he lived, according to his upbringing, he could not imagine others relations to the mother, as highly submissive and respectful...”²¹

“LOVE AND HATRED”.

CHILDREN – „ORPHANS” IN SEPARATE FAMILIES: A NEW REALITY OF THE LATE XIX – EARLY XX CENTURIES

In post-reform Russia a new form of marriage, based solely on romantic attachment and community of personal interests of the family, begins to shape in the noble environment. It spread widely to the 1880s, and by the beginning of the XX century such a marriage became the only way to start a family, which was approved by society. Being married „love-match”, young people dreamed of maintaining an emotionally close relationship. High demands on the behaviour of a partner in family, unwillingness to put up with his „unworthy actions” significantly complicated interpersonal relations of the spouses. If love is gone, and it was „a stranger” near, then the family, formed according to the „inclination”, was expected by hard lines. In most cases, unrealized dreams of „personal happiness”, which became such a significant part of a person's life, spilled out in desire to create a new family, even if not consummated, but being built „on love”.²²

В. М. Боковой, Л. Г. Сахаровой, *Институтки: Воспоминания воспитанниц институтов благородных девиц* [Boarding schoolgirls: Memoirs of pupils of noble maidens institutes], Москва, 2001.

²⁰ В. Г. Бооль, *Воспоминания педагога* [Memoirs of the teacher], in “Русская старина”, 1904, no. 3, с. 620.

²¹ Л. Н. Толстой, *Анна Каренина...*, с. 75, 79.

²² В. А. Веременко, *Дворянская семья и государственная...*

For the first generation of Russian nobility, who survived the „revolution of feelings,” the fate of children, who mostly continued to be educated according to the traditional pattern, with the minimum participation of their parents, was not a really important reason to deny personal happiness. So, thinking of her son, after leaving her husband for Vronsky, Anna spoke of suffering, but „separation from her son, whom she loved, did not actually torture her the first time... Anna rarely thought of her son”.²³ Her son Serezha was told that his mother died, explaining to him „that she died for him, because she is not good...”. But he not believes in this, „during the walks was looking for her... Every woman, sonsy, graceful, with dark hair, was his mother. At the sight of such a woman, a feeling of tenderness rose in his soul, such that he gasped and tears came to his eyes”.²⁴ Serezha knew that there was a quarrel between his parents that he would stay with his father, and „tried to get used to this idea”.²⁵

In the case of family breakdown, children were often not needed for both parents. Such collisions were often played out in literary works of the last quarter of the XIX century. Thus, in the novel „Alien Sins” by A. K. Sheller-Mikhailov²⁶, it is told about the destruction of family because of betrayal, the uselessness of „native” children neither for father nor mother, „orphans” with living parents and their upbringing by the aunt, who was trying to create a new world for children.

The novel begins with descriptions of relationship between parents – mother Eugenia Aleksandrovna Khryumina and father Vladimir Arkadyevich Khryumin. Family drama, wife does not love her husband, has a lover (from whom she is pregnant) and is ready to leave her husband and two of her children, the boy Eugeny and the girl Olya, for the sake of a new life with a loved person. After Eugenia Alexandrovna left the family, children stayed with their father, who did not love them, because „they were the children of a woman who “spoiled his life”... For the father, Eugeny and Olya were a heavy burden, „he never loved them and he was not sad to be in separation from them”, he would like to adopt them out, „but he did not have facilities to give them anywhere to a full board in a good family. Truly, they could be put somewhere for a cheap fee, but „society”... what they say in the „society”, if they know that he almost dropped his „legitimate”

²³ Л. Н. Толстой, *Анна Каренина...*, с. 444.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 683.

²⁶ А. Шеллер-Михайлов, *Чужие грехи* [Alien Sins], СПб., Тип. Императорской академии наук, 1880, http://az.lib.ru/s/shellermihajlow_a_k/text_1880_chuzhie_grehi_oldorfo.shtml (Accessed on 05.05.2017)

children". Vladimir Arkadyevich was not worried about children with their feelings and emotional experience; he cared about „status”, opinion of „society”. He threw hatred of his wife on children, considering them „the culprits of his needs and deprivations”.

Then the plot unfolds so that father gives children to their aunt Olympiada Platonovna. And only here in the new house, children receive love and care, everything they were deprived of in their own family, living with parents. The main character, boy Eugeny, through his internal dialogues and dialogue with his aunt Olympiada, characterizes his life with parents: „<...> His mother was absent for days, often he did not see her even five minutes a day, sometimes in the tone of a capricious girl she told children that „they bored her”, that they have to stop bothering her, that they have to go to the nursery, but he did not even think of the question: „does his mother love him?” He did not see and did not know any other relations of mother to children, and therefore he considered as natural these relations, existing in their family. Father, when he was not traveling abroad, lost his temper, screamed, got angry with children, nagged at them for every little thing, almost never caressed them, but it was also such a routine, such a constant event that children almost got over...”.

The materials of activities of the Commission of petitions²⁷, where requests submitted to the Emperor came for consideration, indicate that such stories were not an artistic exaggeration, but quite ordinary reality. The case of Captain Peter Gardenin, considered by the Commission of petitions in 1899, looks typical. The plot of this life drama is surprisingly similar to the novel above. After the couple estranged their daughter stayed with father. But the officer had neither financial opportunity, nor special desire to engage in a girl. The request to take care of the child was expressed by elderly relatives: the girl's grandmother – wife of Adjutant-General V. K. Gull and 2 grandmothers – state lady Countess E. N. Adelberg and the wife of Major-General Countess E. A. Adelberg. With the mediation of Commission officials, father agreed to hand over his daughter temporarily to the care of her grandmother, Countess Eugenia Aleksandrovna Adelberg, until the girl reached the age „when she could be placed in an institution of his choice”. But he set the conditions: „1/ that the mother of a minor must be completely eliminated from the care of spiritual and physical development of the child; 2/ that he, Gardenin, preserved a right to see his daughter at the place of her stay with grandmother at

²⁷ А. М. Семёнов, *История формирования Комиссии прошений в России* [History of formation of the Commission of petitions in Russia], *XX юбилейные Царскосельские чтения: материалы междунар. науч. конф.*, 20-21 апр. 2016 г., 2016, с. 91-95.

all times, when only he recognizes it necessary and possible; 3/ that he... was given the right to take his daughter to his place for a temporary stay up to three months per year; 4/ that the choice and change of nannies and governesses had to be carried out with his knowledge and consent; 5/ that he receives detailed information about the child on a monthly basis and 6/ that in case of any deviations from the normal course of the child's life he... must be immediately notified of this...”.²⁸ Thus, with both living parents „orphan” Irina appeared in the house of grandmothers...

Thus, by the end of the XIX century against the backdrop of the growth of personal happiness value in the nobility of Russia, the practice of separate living of the spouses was spread, in which the interests of children were almost not taken into account, and the parents were much more concerned with their problems than with the emotional experiences and hurts of their children.

“ALL FOR THE SAKE OF CHILD”.

DISPUTES ABOUT CHILDREN IN THE NOBLE FAMILIES OF RUSSIA

As the gaze on parenthood in Russian noble family changed under the influence of a complex of economic and social reasons, more and more often mothers were involved in the matter of raising their own children, actively participating in the care of infants and in education of the elder.²⁹ In the most advanced families fathers also sought to spend time with their children, playing with them, checking their homework, conducting serious conversations... Unwilling to be part of their children’s universe, fearing for their psychological health, many parents preferred education of adolescents in open educational institutions. Increasingly, the interests of children have become a priority in dealing with questions of the family's place of residence, diet and table menu, nature of summer holidays. The mutual affection of representatives of the older and younger generations increased.

In this situation, the question of whether it is worth preserving the appearance of family for the sake of children’s tranquillity proved to be much more important for many noble spouses than observing public decorum or career problems – „We [V. V. Rozanov] received and receive many private letters regarding divorce – letters, sometimes telling long family stories, which are filled with pleas for divorce, then with fear of divorce... A husband who has lived in unhappy

²⁸ Российский государственный исторический архив (РГИА) [Russian State Historical Archive], Ф. 1412, Оп. 212, Д. 47, Л. 3, 4, 17.

²⁹ В. А. Веремenco *Дети в дворянских семьях России...*; Н.А. Мицюк, *Рождение матери...*

marriage for ten years, but does not consider it possible to dissolve it, because there is a daughter who is equally loved by his wife and him, writes to us”.³⁰ All the more, since the beginning of the XX century even the divorce of an officer for adultery, with declaration him the guilty party and discussion in the judicial session of the Spiritual Consistory of the „act itself”, had little effect on his career promotion.³¹

In many diaries written at the turn of the XIX-XX century and belonging to the pen of noble spouses (especially women) standing on the threshold of break-up, it were the children and their interests that acted as the main deterrent to the final decision. So, a caring mother and well-known artist Catherine Kavos, who nursed herself and cared for her children, having already made the decision to live separately with her husband Eugeny, with whom she had lived at that time for 15 years, finally changed her mind. And she was not stopped by the opinion of others around – in her environment, separating was a universal phenomenon, and not by material problems – as a portraitist she had a wide clientele and orders brought a quite steady income. But children... She did not trust her innermost feelings even to the diary, describing only the fear of possible influence of her intensions on children: „I became bad and made so much dark, sinful, criminal that I could not tell anyone, anyone and could not write this in the diary myself. I know that I must live for children and must be strong and good morally. But I consider myself unworthy, unworthy to live in moral way and my touch to them sometimes hurts my heart. Then, with this inner pain I lose my heart and have less force – to engage in them”.³²

But there also were such „advanced” parents in the nobility, who, although they raised children themselves, cared for them, yet they did not want to give up their personal happiness for them. On the other hand, they were unable to leave and forget about their children too. In this situation in the late XIX century a new line of family conflicts emerged – disputes about children. Separate living parents sought to regulate not only the material aspects of keeping children, but also tried to agree on the rules of their personal relationships.

Not infrequently it was not possible to reach an agreement peacefully, and then separate living noble spouses turned to the Commission for petitions for mediation. Sometimes even officials of this department could not convince parents

³⁰ В. В. Розанов, *Семейный вопрос в России* [Family issue in Russia], http://dugward.ru/library/rozanov/rozanov_sem_vop1.html#otkry (Accessed on 15.04.2018)

³¹ See, for example, the case of М. Д. Бонч-Бруевич in В. В. Каминский, В. А. Веремченко, *М.Д. Бонч-Бруевич — один из основателей Красной армии: страницы биографии* [М. Д. Bonch-Bruevich — one of the founders of the Red Army: pages of biography], in “Новейшая история России”, 2018, no. 1, с. 57-69; РГИА., Ф. 1412, Оп. 213, Д. 87.

³² ИРЛИ РАН (Пушкинский дом), Ф. 445, – Е.С. Зарудная-Кавос, Д. 16.

to give children the opportunity to maintain relations both with their father and mother. For example, L.S. and M.V. Baranovsky did not invent anything for it but to share the children – son left with father, and daughters stayed with mother.³³

A vivid reflection of new relations in noble families can be the „family case of Princes Prozorovsky-Golitsyn”, which was examined in the Commission of petitions in 1896-1901. The main reason for discord and break of the couple's relations was the strongest love of both parents for their daughter, which turned into jealousy for each other. Father – Alexander Alexandrovich constantly coddled little daughter, „allowed her everything she wanted”, mother – Maria Petrovna – tried to teach her to order. As a result, „any, even a reasonable remark made by the mother to the girl, always aroused displeasure from the Prince, which he uttered in extremely harsh form”. Officials of the Commission who studied the circumstances of the case stated that „...the Prozorovsky-Golitsyn spouses attach only minor importance to the issue of establishing a separate life and mainly seek to limit each other's parental rights, having in mind primarily the child's benefit... Thus, the whole matter boils down to the solution of the question: which one of the spouses should be recognized as the most desirable educator of the child?” At the same time, officials were constrained to admit that the most relevant to the child's interests would be *„the removal of the young Princess Mary from the sphere of direct joint influence of both warring parents [our emphasis – V. V., O. S.] and her placement, for upbringing and education, into a closed educational institution, ... with granting both parents equal rights to date with her”*. But since the girl was only 5 years old at the time of commencement of the trial, until she reached adolescence she had to take turns to live with her mother and father, in the estate, in Tsarskoe Selo, abroad (it is characteristic that choosing their place of residence parents had to take into account interests of the child, and not the reverse). Supervision of the princess was entrusted to one tutor, who carried out the order not of the parents, but a special tutelary council composed of relatives of both spouses.³⁴

CONCLUSIONS

During the XIX century the main „disease” of the noble family was the psychological state of children – loneliness, in which „orphans with living parents” grew up. For many generations the relationship between parents and children had

³³ РГИА, Ф. 1412, Оп. 214, Д. 15.

³⁴ РГИА, Ф. 1412, Оп. 226, Д. 140, Л. 123-124, 181, 222-223; РГИА, Ф. 1412, Оп. 226, Д. 142, Л. 34-61.

a formally-traditional nature, which did not include personal participation. And if there was a conflict between parents on the basis of adultery, then children were not needed at all.

Until the last decades of the XIX century the problem of isolation of children in noble families was not standing, it was not simply noticed. It was a habitual way of life. Therefore, there are not so many memoirs that would reveal this topic. But family relations were described in the works of Russian classical literature of the late XIX century, which described the tragedy of relations between parents and children, who little knew each other, and consequently could not love.

Only at the very end of the XIX century, noble parents begin to recognize their children, and at the same time, fear of separation and desire to keep them near appears. For some parents, especially for mothers, it was the danger of separation from children, and not the opinion of society, family-clan interests or even material factors, that becomes the main obstacle to leaving the family. The other side of this process is the wide spread of disputes about children, in which the separate living spouses sought to resolve numerous controversial issues from the place of the child's permanent residence, conditions of meetings with him of a separately living parent, to organizing the life and keeping children. Truly, not always in the course of such discussions, interests of the child were taken as a basis, very often parents, above all, cared about achieving *their own* material and soul comfort.

As the number of separate living families increased, the number of children living apart from one or even both parents upraised. But if in the second half of the XIX century „orphans with living parents” did not know about the distorted state in which they were staying, did not expect that it is possible to live differently, then at the beginning of the XX century „new children” wanted from their near ones, above all, emotional closeness, wanted and even demanded love and care. As a result, such “orphanhood” was perceived much more painful than before, especially if there were full, friendly families nearby. Loneliness of children with living parents was first recognized as a social problem in the noble environment in Russia at the beginning of the XX century, which symbolized the transition to a new form of family organization.