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SOCIAL DISJUNCTION:
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1860-1921

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ABSTRACT

Social Disjunction:
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by

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This thesis will examine the development of the institutions and traditions of the Russian state and peasant society to illustrate the abiding presence of nineteenth century Russia in the twentieth century. By analyzing contemporary works of social, military, and institutional history, it will look at the First World War as the cauldron within which the legal-administrative structure of the state and the military authority hierarchy finally dissolved. It will show the degree to which systemic disruptions affected the structure of society. This thesis will demonstrate how the efforts of all three administrations--tsarist, liberal, Soviet--were conditioned by exigencies of war and the decline of political authority. It will conceptualize peasant/state relations within the context of this decline and highlight the inexorable logic of peasant/state cooperation and conflict for the 1890-1922 period.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

By 1921 a fundamental change in the nature and function of power defining relations between the state and rural society had occurred. No longer did *obshchestvo* (official society) or *pravovoe gosudarstvo* (legitimate government) mean legitimate authority to the *narod* (common people). The reordering of rural-state power relations, however, was not a simple function of the twentieth century but had antecedents imbedded in Russian history. This thesis will examine those antecedents. It will identify the existence and historical development of two legal-administrative systems in Russia, one representing official-central-urban society and the other representing customary-peripheral-rural society.

The Russian state was never able to devise a legal-administrative system that incorporated the peasant population with its peculiar institutions into state and civil society. Peasant society was isolated and remained generally outside official Russia. In only two important areas--military and agrarian policy--official Russia was forced to interact with peasant society. Peasant conscripts were needed to fill the ranks of the largest army in the world, and rural agriculture remained the lifeblood of the Russian state. This thesis will examine and evaluate the nature of peasant-state interaction.

The administration of the Russian state fell with the

autocracy in 1917, but the disintegration of the official legal-administrative system was neither an abrupt nor a simple process. Massive disorganization and bureaucratic confusion co-existed with industrial growth and with sincere attempts at agrarian and military reform. This thesis will look at how both confusion and reform played out in the countryside.

B. Methodology

The last two decades have seen a surge in Russian peasant studies. Teodor Shanin's The Awkward Class presented Russian peasant society as particular, complex, and more defined and diverse than previously thought.[1] Peasant studies since Shanin have illuminated many facets of rural Russia's cultural and institutional life. Roger Bartlett, Barbara Clements, Ben Eklof, Sheila Fitzpatrick, Esther Kingston-Mann, and Diane Koenker have edited some of the newest volumes devoted either exclusively or in part to peasant economics, institutions and culture.[2]

Other works focus on a particular institution of peasant society or deal with peasant society reacting to events in a larger national context. Dorothy Atkinson's book on the Russian peasant commune unwraps the object of tremendous debate in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[3] George Yaney scrutinizes the development of the Russian 'system' by examining the evolution of domestic administration and the

expansion of bureaucracy. He describes how peasant society interacted with the official administration. His frame of reference is institutional, however, he deals with peasants only peripherally.[4] David Macey, Francis Wcislo, and George Yaney write on the major efforts of the Russian government to 'reform' their backward rural society.[5] Robert Johnson, John Bushnell, David Goodman, and Allen Wildman study peasant society through the lens of a particular institution, either the military or the industrial urban nexus.[6] Orlando Figes examines the interaction between peasants from the Volga valley and the Bolsheviks during the years surrounding the Civil War.[7]

A new book written by Lars Lih has been particularly important for this thesis. In his work *Bread and Authority*, Lih examines the breakdown of the central political authority of Russia in 1914 and illuminates what he calls "the reconstitution of a stable successor regime in 1921."[8] He spans 1917 with the traditional Russian concept, 'time of troubles,' and shows that all three regimes acting during the years of war and revolution were equally unsuccessful in stopping political anarchy and social chaos. Lih attempts to conceptualize group reaction to breakdown by using the dilemma of Hobbes's choice to predict participant response, i.e., "support the central authority if it has a chance of being effective, but sabotage the central authority and look out for yourself if it appears to be ineffective."[9] Lih's focus is

not Russian rural society and he includes all social units as participants, but I think his Hobbesian analysis is particularly apropos in characterizing peasant reaction to the state during the years of official disintegration.

This thesis will examine the development of the institutions and traditions of the Russian state and peasant society to illustrate the abiding presence of nineteenth century Russia in the twentieth century. It will look at the First World War as the cauldron within which the legal-administrative structure of the state and the military authority hierarchy finally dissolved. It will show the degree to which systemic disruptions affected the structure of society. It will demonstrate how the efforts of all three administrations--tsarist, liberal, Soviet--were conditioned by exigencies of war and the decline of political authority.

Chapter Two will examine the peculiar Russian legal-administrative system(s) noting the dual nature of official and unofficial structures--the differences between the state administration and institutions of peasant self-government. This chapter will indicate that the autonomy of the peasantry was not only historical but officially sanctioned and remained a key element in the survival of the peasantry through the years of war and revolution.

Chapter Three will look at the nature of the rural economy--agricultural production, land tenure patterns, productivity, and cottage industry--and will show that the

peasant's resilience and adaptability enabled the rural economy to survive the market disruptions at the national and international level, particularly during World War One. This chapter also examines the breakdown of the relationship between the Russian state and peasant society as 'things fell apart' over the issue of food supply.

The peasant soldier was a critical factor in the dissolution of the tsarist government and in the revolt in the countryside. Chapter Four will examine the pre-war tsarist army, an institution that harbored the most arcane and conservative traditions. The government made several attempts to reform the military as Russia prepared for the inevitable European war. This chapter will look at the reform process and examine the factors effecting changes in peasant soldiers' perceptions and attitudes. It will also show how politics fed anarchy and dissolved the hierarchial authority structure in the military.

In October 1917 a new legal-administrative system germinated in urban Russia. Informed by Bolshevik political ideology and driven by a new social order, this system formed the administrative structure of the Soviet state. Chapter Five examines how this change in official Russia affected rural society and the degree to which the Bolsheviks succeeded in incorporating peasant populations into the new Soviet state.

CHAPTER 2. THE LEGAL-ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

> ...the peasant's conception of the state is exceedingly vague. Under the old regime he knew there was a tsar, he knew he had to go to the army and perform a host of other disagreeable and dangerous duties. But he did not understand the function and purpose of the state, for the state in which he lived was not an outgrowth of his needs, and could never, therefore, become a part of his life. [10]

The reasons why the Russian peasantry was excluded from participation in the legal administrative order of the Russian state and kept enserfed longer than peasants in Western Europe, are part of a larger discussion on the comparative "paths" of social development. Suffice it to say that the tendency in Russia was to maintain the historical separation between peasant and the rest of society, to block the liberties beginning to define human social organization by the end of the eighteenth century in Western Europe, and to reinforce the traditional social and legal framework supporting the peasantry. The Russian state had for centuries attempted to define by legislation a social and legal organization for the peasantry, but peasants remained inexorable.

> "Kaluga dough," wrote Konstantin Kavelin in the middle of the nineteenth century, [is like the Russian peasant,] malleable enough in form but possessing its own weight, texture, mass and resistance--above all resistance. Composed of elements that do not change readily under pressure alone, Kaluga dough can be shaped and molded but it also seeps through cracks or spills over edges or simply bursts out of confining partitions. No society is a water tight container, least of all one spread out over the "thinly settled Russian plain."[11]

During the nineteenth and into the early years of the twentieth century, peasant society was viewed by Russian liberals and conservatives, 'Westernizers' and 'Slavophiles,' as one elusive, essentially homogeneous, and powerful mass, incredibly primitive in its understanding of the 'modern' world and existing within a tradition bound by powerful, indigenous peasant institutions. The peasant *soslovie* (estate) was huge, making up the bulk of the population in Russia at all times. No political discussion in Russia could ignore such a major portion of the population. As a group, however, the peasantry was inarticulate in any measurable sense, and its mentalite' frustrated and baffled government officials and intellectuals alike.

Peasant culture (cultures) preceded the peasant estate (soslovie) and developed autonomously. It was highly diverse, depending on geography, ethnicity, belief system, and the like. Although there would be common characteristics among Russia's village--some uniformity of social behavior and norms--particularism, characteristic of pre-modern societies,

would prevail, making village society resistant to the homogenization process demanded by modern states and cultures. The peasants' concept of the monarchy, their religion, and their law, was a product of their own self-awareness and self-interest, which were regionally and ethnically determined. But there were some historic continuities, particularly when it came to the peasant and his/her relation to the world outside the village.

> [The peasant] has no part in making the laws that govern him. He seldom knew when laws were made, until he was told of them by officials, or until he violated them and was punished for the violation....Law in the eyes of the mouzhik is something terrible, mysterious, incomprehensible, that in the name of which the government terrorizes, abuses, mutilates, whips out arrears in taxes, exiles to Siberia, disembowels corpses, pulls down houses, kills stock, drafts into the army, drives children to school, compels vaccination, etc., ad infinitum.[12]

Russian peasants were compelled by the state to function under the aegis of a legal system that they didn't understand and that was outside the law that structured peasant life and government within the village. This structure was unique and shaped all inter-governmental (and intra-governmental) relations involving the village and the state.[13] The 'upper-level' or official Russia was not only separate from 'lower-level' or village Russia in culture and custom, but the two strata in Russian society were held to different legal systems and their business was adjudicated in different courts. This difference was not one system of laws imposing itself on another system but evidence of two distinct legal orders

existing side by side.

Consistently and consciously Russia forced itself into development postures that were intolerable to its institutions. The sanctity of system translated itself into aspirations that would not wait for the gradual adjustment of habits. The development of 'official' law in Russia can be seen as an escape from reality: what became official law in Russia was not sanctified by the bulk of the population. The policies of modernization created during the latter half of the nineteenth century might have granted legitimate self-government to the peasantry or might have served to bring the village under the direct authority of the center. Instead, the Russian government tried to do both and ended doing neither. This would haunt the central government and inspire many attempts to explain, codify, and absorb within a central legal system the customary law of the villages.[14]

Obychnoe pravo (customary law) and *zakon* (official law) served separate constituencies, the village and the state. As manifestations of separate mythologies, each group found its law binding; they acted in concert and obeyed the dictates of their law even when it went against their self-interest. There was of course some legal interpenetration. Peasants responded to official tax regulations by paying taxes. Village law also required collective responsibility for these taxes. Peasants went into the army because according to "official" law they were obliged to be conscripted. Even so,

the village selected the inductees according to traditional values incorporated into their customary law.[15]

Awareness of the law, however, can structure a framework of dependence. Russian peasants believed the "myth of the tsar" but only within the context of what they perceived as justice. Officials could not manipulate the myth of the tsar against what the Russian people (*narod*) perceived to be its interests. Indeed, the great insurrections of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and Pugachev's first of all, showed that this myth could be manipulated against the regime.[16] What will be shown rising out of the era of the Great Reforms--from the emancipation of 1861 through the agrarian reforms of the twentieth century and culminating in the confusion generated by the First World War--was a social matrix of groups responding to separate and sometimes contradictory legal frameworks. What will be sustained through the years of War, revolution, and civil war will be the customary law of the village.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, a series of reforms were undertaken by the central government. These reforms, however, did not transform either the customary legal traditions or the value system of the villages. Essentially the reform process which began in the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth century was an invasion, an attempt by the government(s) to meet economic, diplomatic, and military challenges posed by European powers

by transforming rural productive capabilities and expropriating the increased revenues to pay the cost of economic progress.[17]

By 1861 the Russian government had unwittingly assumed responsibility for the peasants by "emancipating" them.[18] The liberation of the serfs was neither the concerted product of a single man or group of men. The dominant characteristic of the reform decrees, beginning with the Liberation Statute of February 19, 1861, was continuous vacillation, a series of reluctant disorderly gestures by men who knew that they had to go somewhere but were unsure of the direction.

Prior to the Liberation Statute, unofficial peasant courts existed among the serfs.[19] Unregulated by the central authorities, peasant courts traditionally dealt with domestic and economic disputes within the villages. The post-emancipation attitude of the government ministers was that peasant society should be allowed to develop on its own but with the help of the *zemstvos* (elected district councils) and *volost* (smallest administrative unit in tsarist Russia) law courts established in 1864. These new courts did not replace the unofficial peasant courts but in many cases acted as the 'court of last resort' or 'court of appeals.' The official juridical values of these volost courts were to be based on the juridical customs of the peasantry.[20] At the same time, however, while maintaining customary law in the villages the ministry also felt the need to impose <u>on</u> village society

certain reforms based on juridical principles emanating from 'official' sources. Most of these reforms had to do with economics--more taxes, more efficient use of land--or military service. Included were unofficial obligations of the peasantry to become more 'moral,' more 'loyal' and 'better' (i.e. sober and orthodox) citizens of the Russian Empire. No one in the government, however, knew how to enforce these unofficial responsibilities as heretofore moral guidance (as well as economic obligation) had been the responsibility of the landowners. Emancipation removed the peasantry from the personal rule of the gentry, allowing the peasants to look out for themselves without direct interference from the landowners while at the same time placing them under new obligations to the state.

How was the state to regulate the activities of the peasantry? A police organization had come into being in the 1830s under Nicholas I. Policemen were the first salaried officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs based in the villages. These *stanovye* (policemen) were charged with preserving village order according to official law. After the Statute of Liberation the authority of the policeman was reduced and his authority (but not his person) was replaced by the *mirovye posredniki* (arbitrators), who were to preside over the changes in rural society. The dismal failure of both of these positions to function inspired the Statute on Land Captains of 1889. This new patriarchal guardian was designed

to be explicitly independent from the restraints of peasant custom and explicitly invulnerable to interference by the central bureaucracy. These land captains (*zemski nachalnik*), as the police and the arbitrators before them, were unable to avoid becoming essentially bureaucratic clerks, but they did represent to the village a new kind of invader.[21]

The only thing these various officials had was power; they had no real control over village affairs. Due to the tremendous number of rules emanating from the central government and the small number of officials hired to go out into the rural areas to enforce them, most of the regulations were ignored. However, the police, the arbitrators, and/or the land captains technically had the authority to enforce the rules **any time they wished**, and the peasants, of course, knew it.

> What effective limit could there be to the authority of an official who was legally responsible for the moral condition of the peasants under his jurisdiction, especially if the peasant way of life, including its customary legal order, was largely immoral in the light of the government's regulations? [22]

The more the government tried to impose its sense of conformity on peasant society, the more imbedded non-conformity became. Partly this was the government's own fault. Even when the volost court system was linked to the general system of courts within Imperial Russia by the *Polnoe sobranie zakon o* (Complete legal code-revised 1912) and rural Russia saw the creation of a rural supreme court to which

volost court decisions could be appealed, the reform arbitrarily permitted the use of either local custom or the general criminal and civil code as the bases of law.[23]

> Because the estate character (*soslovnost'*) of the peasants' administrative structure has been so extended, the peasants, 80% of the empire's population, are entirely segregated from other strata of society and in many ways constitute a distinct, vast state within the state. This segregation...could not but have produced a series of consequences that at present constitute unconquerable impediments both to the successful development of the peasants themselves and to the structuring of a local administration that can aid the government in satisfying local public-state needs (*mestnye obshchestvenno-gosudarstvennye nuzhdy*).[24]

During the latter half of the eighteenth century, Russia's domestic administrative boundaries were firmly established as the defining territorial units until the Soviet period. Overall, the contiguous Russian Empire was divided into fifty *gubernias*. These gubernias, in turn, were subdivided into approximately 360 *uezds*. At the gubernia level the central authority resided in the governor, and, progressively more important by the twentieth century, in a collective of uezd administrative figures and bureaucrats from the tsar's ministries.

The smallest unit of peasant self-administration in some areas of European Russia was the commune or agricultural community.[25] Due to the historical development of land tenure and the way even hereditary property was transmitted, peasants tended to work a series of small intermixed strips of arable land that had been divided up among the members of the

commune. The quality of the land (rocky, swampy, etc.) was proportioned equally among the peasant households. The quantity of land was distributed according to the number of workers in the peasant household.[26] Peasant populations living in central European Russia and in the North, whether on gentry estates, state-owned properties, or on land held in 'household' tenure, generally lived in communes. Peasants living in the western part of Russia were generally not part of any communal organization.[27] Peasant communes (and their members) on gentry land were considered the property of the landowners. These landlords had total control over activities within the boundaries of their estates. Seignorial authority provided the peasants with the list of their fiscal and military responsibilities, and was certainly capable of coordinating their farming activities, but the commune leadership played a critical role in the collective management of peasant affairs.[28]

After emancipation, the central government attempted to provide the villages with new institutions that would help them conform to new post-reform legal and fiscal standards. The smallest administrative unit was to be called a "rural society." The *selskoe obshchestvo* (peasant/village/rural society) was to consist of peasants that had lived together on the same estate, an entire village, or even an amalgamation of villages. Selskoe obshchestvo was an urban government epithet.[29]

The duties and functions of the rural societies were within the traditional purview of the commune.[30] Generally the pre-emancipation communes and the post-emancipation rural societies were identical. The use of the term 'rural societies' seems to have caused administrative confusion more than anything else, although there was some attempt made to distinguish rural agriculturalists from non-landowning residents. Legally, it seems, even when old communes fell within the jurisdiction of the new rural societies, the communes retained legal responsibility and control of their old members.[31]

Male heads of the village households made up the *skhod* or village assembly and elected a *starosta,* who performed the tasks of everyday governing for a term of three years. The village assembly elected a *sborshchik podatei* (tax collector) and *desiatskie and sotskie* (policemen), who, serving under the *stan* police or the land captains, acted independent of the village government. The skhody also selected a number of delegates who would serve on the township or *volost* assembly.

The volost historically had been the smallest administrative unit of the central authorities. It linked self-governing, independently owned, non-redistributional communes. The post-emancipation volost would now include one or more neighboring villages within an uezd and have between 300 and 2,000 revision souls under its authority. The volost assembly itself normally performed no explicit function, but

it did meet annually to elect the volost government. This government consisted of a *starshina* (volost elder) and a *sud* (court), which consisted of four member judges. Volost government officials served three year terms. The starshina had a *pravlenie* or regular administrative board that was supposed to act as a consultative body. The makeup of the pravlenie included all the starosta and sborshchik podatei of the villages within the particular volost. Needless to say, all this was sufficiently complicated to necessitate the hiring of a *pisar* or clerk.

The authority of all these peasant officials (and restraints on this authority) lay in nothing more than customary practice. The laws shaping peasant society were not only patriarchal, varied from volost to volost as well. In his area of authority, the volost starshina could be a tyrant over the weak. Yet he was helpless before influential families, tavern keepers, money lenders, and horse thieves, or anyone who was perceived by the village as having more *vlast* or power.

> For the overwhelming majority of the *narod*, the zemstvo is only one part of a towering structure known as *nachal'stvo*--less important, surely than the *ispravnik*, and not as stubborn as the *stanovoi*, but that is all.[32] N.A.Shishkov

The creation of the zemstvo was designed to create an administrative structure integrating all levels of society within the Russian state. Whether the zemstvo was created as an expression of the state or of the state theory of self-

government represented a continuing controversy. In any event, the zemstvo largely felt itself isolated from both governmental institutions and local society and steadfastly continued to represent the "old dualism of societal interests and state interests." [33]

The zemstvo assembly was the representative body at the uezd level. Initially thirty to fifty delegates were to be elected every three years from groups defined not by their class, but by the kinds of property they held: (1) rural property owned privately--congress of landowners, (2) urban property owned privately--congress of town voters, or (3) communal property held by rural societies--congresses of electors from the village communities. The new election agreement of 1890 grouped the voters not only by property qualifications but also by *soslovie* (estate). These changes meant that a number of categories formally having representation were eliminated.[34] For the peasants this meant that they no longer participated in the electoral process as private landowners but only as members of village communities. Additionally, their choice of delegates had to be confirmed by the governor of the gubernia. Thus, even while the government said it was trying to enlist and enfranchise the peasantry, it was doing its utmost to make peasant influence in representative bodies negligible.

By including peasants in the zemstvo assembly, the state was expressing a reservation about the wisdom of peasant

self-government. The zemstvo was to stand above the volost in the administrative hierarchy and was to theoretically serve as a critical link between state and society. Once the grip of the landlord had been released from the village, peasant participation in the zemstvo, in the formation of social policies and the development of tax structures, would legitimize zemstvo policies. The problem the central government faced in legislating this participation was how to come up with a formula, which, while eschewing the mention of social estates, would bring peasants into the zemstvo assemblies but would also guarantee the predominance of the nobility. In fact, the imperial government was never able to come to terms with peasant representation in the zemstvo, and peasants were equally unable to identify their interests within this institution.[35]

Zemstvos would symbolize the democratic ideals of the Russian liberal. Liberals envisioned that the peasantry, given the proper institutional setting, would develop organically into a civil society with participatory local government. The state, these same liberals imagined, would be transformed into a modern liberal *Rechsstaat* or *pravovoe gosudarstvo*, a state unified around one central legal system. This expectation epitomized the worst fears of the central government--both because the central authorities were afraid of allowing the peasantry a larger enfranchisement, and because the highest levels of government were afraid of the

same liberal tendencies replicating themselves in a national zemstvo. In actuality, though, these fears proved unfounded, for the zemstvos represented a symbiotic bond between the autocracy and the gentry.[36]

Some ministers in the tsarist government tried to inculcate within a rationalized administrative structure a system that they reluctantly perceived as archaic--namely the autocracy, but the regime proved unwilling to sacrifice control and authority in order to stimulate a truly integrated society. Arbitrary use of authority and power, irrational institutions, and legal and administrative duality resulted in anarchy and increasingly weakened the legitimacy of the state.[37]

On February 26, 1903, a manifesto proclaimed Nicholas II's intention to take positive action to contend with what the government considered were the inadequacies of peasant institutions. Initially the promised reforms were not intended to destroy communal ownership. The reforms would enable peasants to migrate to new lands or simply to enclose their allotments. The disposition of the peasant commune had been central to discussions within the government on land reform and the modernization of agriculture. Years of investigation and a myriad of commission reports, however, had produced no clear agenda. The only consensus was that the commune and its system of land tenure represented everything 'backward' and wrong about Russian agriculture.

Between 1903 and 1905 a major shift in government thinking took place.[38] The "undesirable aspects of the commune" had eradicated any thought of its preservation as an institution. Peasants working land under communal tenure "neglected the soil." Communal tenure was unprofitable, both for the peasant and for the nation. "Ascribing the desire of the peasantry for a quantitative rather than a qualitative economy to the impermanence of communal land use" government officials stated that if the peasants actually owned the land as their private and permanent property the problem of "too little land would cease to exist for the majority of peasants now complaining of it." Facing the same conundrum it had battled in the emancipation legislation--how to transform society without losing control--the government was unsure how to proceed.[39]

It would be impossible in any short order to wade through the morass of laws and decrees to illustrate the confusion and incoherence of the land reform acts begun March 4, 1906, and lasting until the onset of the First World War. The fundamental problem was that two separate legal languages were being spoken.[40] The reform process also suffered from the ongoing disputes within the bureaucracy between those who advocated the preservation of the existing social order, by force if necessary, and those who attempted to change it. Those ministers wanting legitimate reform could see the growing social and political instability and knew maintaining

nineteenth century reality with twentieth century rhetoric would be ineffective. The struggle perverted real reform. Philosophical schism and bureaucratic obfuscation was evident throughout the emancipation and land reform processes. These tendencies toward ministerial confusion and official schizophrenia would become magnified during the First World War.

CHAPTER 3. NATURE OF RURAL ECONOMICS

A. Pre-War Rural Economy

In pre-industrial societies land is usually the vehicle whereby wealth and status is accumulated.[41] There was no active land market in Russia prior to 1861, but with emancipation came the privilege of engaging in economic transactions--such as buying land--without the permission of the landowning gentry. Newly freed peasants were given a portion of the former estate in the form of an allotment which they were to 'redeem' or buy over time from the noble. Peasants were to farm the land to feed themselves and their families. The surplus produce went to pay their redemption fees and their taxes.[42] However, with the exception of the south-western region of European Russia--land annexed from Poland in the eighteenth century--land in the Lower Volga, and land near the Urals, ex-serfs were not given enough allotment land to allow for a minimum of subsistence *even according to the official standards of the time*.[43]

Solutions to the problem of land shortage could take any number of forms. Peasants could rent or buy more land with money from their production surplus. Peasants in high density areas could settle in areas of lower density or they could move to urban areas where they would perform non-agricultural

work. Land yields could be improved so that peasants could subsist on the smaller plot. Peasants participated legally and illegally in all three solutions when they could, with or without the support of the government. The government dealt with the problem of land shortage in a variety of ways, culminating in the land reforms discussed above.

But just how much arable land was there, who owned it and how did ownership change after emancipation in 1861 and the reforms in 1906? The availability of land by type was roughly as follows:

Table 3.1 Arable land, Meadows/Pasture, Forest by Region[44]
(based on the land census of 1905)

Categories of land	European	Caucasus	Asiatic	Total
	(in millions of acres)			
Arable land	558.9	33.5	810.0	1,042.38
Meadows/pasture	62.4	4.6	27.8	94.8
Forest	445.8	20.0	853.5	1,319.22
Tot. productive	1,067.1	58.1	1,691.3	2,456.4

It is readily apparent that Russia had a tremendous amount of arable land, but certain parts of it were becoming highly overpopulated. What confounded settlement outside of high density areas were government internal passport policies, which restricted the freedom of colonization. Moreover, when government ministers first enacted a resettlement policy in the 1890s, the bureaucratic process was so complicated that it

is a wonder that any peasant migrated at all.[45]

The statistics for changes in landownership after 1905 are unreliable, but the distribution of land by social category is roughly as follows:

Table 3.2.
Distribution of land among various categories of ownership [46]
(millions of acres)

Categories of land	1861	1877	1905	1917
State and public institutions		449.01	417.69	397.44
Non-peasant private ownership		240.30	221.40	170.10
Peasant allotment	301.32	315.09	316.26	
Private Peasant owned land		13.50	66.69	499.5

In 1878 the land census registered 1,017.5 million acres suited for agricultural production (including forests) and in 1905 and again just before the war the land census gives the area as 1,066.9 million acres. Therefore, peasants cultivated thirty-two percent of the arable land in 1878, thirty-five percent in 1905, and forty-six percent in 1917.

Of course, these figures do not take into account the population growth in the empire, which increased from seventy one million in 1861 to one hundred seventy one million by 1913.[47] Population growth became a problem not simply because there were too many Russian peasants, but because they seemed to live in the wrong places. Population density was a problem

in St. Petersburg/Petrograd and in Moscow, where the nascent industries were unable to absorb the increase both from population growth and immigration, and in those agricultural regions that were already sated in terms of grain yield per person.[48]

The quantity of land per peasant also does not take into consideration traditional land cultivation practices, where one third of peasant land remained fallow as a result of three field crop rotation practices. Land ownership figures also do not show the amount of land rented by peasants. These transactions may or may not have been recorded but, in any event, consolidation of gentry farms in the late nineteenth century would have made less land available for peasant rental.[49]

> The vast majority of the peasants adhere to and uphold their traditional conceptions of the rights of labor...because of the historical conditions which molded their ideas of right and wrong. These conditions and conceptions, the absence of trading in land, landlessness and land poverty, the attitude toward property in land and toward the rights of labor, account for the peasant's conviction that he has an inalienable right to the land. My washi, a semlia nasha. [We are yours, but the land is ours.][50]

The essential issue remained. Whether fact or fancy, the peasant felt that the land rightfully belonged to the peasant cultivator. This thought fueled peasant desire for a general land redistribution and inspired acts of protest--trespassing on private estates and destroying property,

seizing fodder and pasture land, and cutting down trees in private or state forests. These protests varied in intensity and form depending on the region (for instance agricultural workers on the large estates in the Baltic, in Little Russia, and in the South-West primarily went on strike), but importantly, land became symbolic of the divisions in tsarist society and the backwardness of Russia's economic base.

Statistics on the productivity of land during the tsarist period are speculative and not particularly critical to the discussion here. Russian agricultural productivity has frequently been interpreted as being in crisis for a series of reasons. Many pointed to the redistributional peasant commune, which attempted to equalize yield potential among its members by continually redistributing land among its members. Others blamed the three field system for poor yields. However, there is evidence that peasants were applying improved techniques to fallow land, that many peasants lived in communes where land allotments were stable, and that by the turn of the century agriculture as commodity production had changed the focus of production. In these settings, whatever the quality or type of yield, agriculture was responding to the growth of the market.

Commercial agriculture in Russia was primarily the marketing of grain, primarily wheat. Grain, had been marketed since the eighteenth century, but high prices in the 1880s saw the development not only of the grain export business but a

push for increased rolling stock to transport these exports to market. Russian intellectuals debated over whether it was advisable to 'squeeze' agriculture to promote industry through export earnings. Research by Paul Gregory, however, shows that the growth of agricultural productively was low relative to most of Western Europe (see Table 3.3). Nevertheless, retained cereal crops (that is grain kept by the peasant household for survival) seemed to be growing. In other words, Russian exports by themselves may not have provided a significant surplus for the development of industry, but Russian peasants, while poor, did not seem to be getting any poorer until the First World War, when the export market collapsed.

Table 3.3 Selected economic and social indicators, Russia and other countries, 1861 and 1913[51]

	population (millions)	National income 1913 rubles(mil.)	Per capita national income
Panel A. 1861			
Russia	74	5,269	71
United Kingdom	20	6,469	323
France	37	5,554	150
Germany	36	6,313	175
United States	32	14,405	450
Italy	25	4,570	183
Panel B. 1913			
Russia	171	20,266	119
United Kingdom	36	20,869	580
France	39	11,816	303
Germany	65	24,280	374
United States	93	96,030	1,033
Italy	35	9,140	261
Austria/Hungary	50	9,500	190

The most striking fact regarding productivity trends in agriculture is that up until the First World War peasants produced eighty-six percent of the total cereal production (on forty-six percent of the land) and controlled seventy-five percent of the grain marketings.[52] Even allowing for regional differentiation, peasant control of grain production was extraordinary.

> *Kustarnichestvo*--work done by primitive methods; amateurish, inefficient work.[53]

> Come autumn or summer early in the morning on a market day. On the roads that lead from the countryside to Moscow you will see a strange spectacle. You will see row upon row of wagons loaded down with grass, hay, wood, potatoes, and other vegetables, and driving or walking beside them women talking loudly among themselves as their hands move and their fingers flash. They are knitting stockings. You will see women carrying sacks with jugs full of milk and cream, knitting as they walk.[54]

Estimates for the number of rural craftsmen range from four to fifteen million persons in the 1880s.[55] Both *kustar* and *remeslo* were terms applied to crafts (kustar) such as knitting or trades (remeslo--usually applied to men's handiwork) such as blacksmithing.[56] These peasants lived and farmed in the villages. The production of crafts usually developed out of surplus production for household use or to fulfill a community need. The surplus was usually sold in the local markets. Kustar production also included craftwork (sometimes with materials provided by the merchant) and either sold directly to merchants or collected by middlemen who in turn brought the work to the cities for sale. It also

described the rural extension of the urban factories that found it cheaper to give peasant women work to "put out" than pay for the identical work to be done within the factories.

Kustar work tended to be done in rural regions where farming was poor and outside earnings represented an economic necessary. It also developed in regions that were relatively close to urban markets. Kustar development responded to economic crises as well as household differentiation. It acted as a barometer for the natural economy. If peasants had surplus to sell or trade for manufactured goods, they did so. When needed commodities were unavailable or there was no surplus from agricultural production, kustar production increased. According to census data, by the turn of the century the four to fifteen million peasants involved in some kind of kustar production had dropped drastically. One can assume that the demand for peasant handcrafts had disappeared, that peasants did not need to provide kustar labor, or that kustar production simply went undetected by census officials.[57]

By 1913 over fifty percent of Russia's national income was derived from agriculture.[58] Although the growth of agricultural productivity did not keep up with industrial growth or the growth of the economy as a whole, its per capita values were no lower than those of Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom.

What this investigation shows, therefore, is that up to

the First World War the Russian peasantry as a group was not caught in a spiral of decreasing economic returns. This does not mean to say there were not regional problems and specific regional hardships. However, in tracing the causes of the "revolution" beginning in 1915, one needs to qualify long-term economic depression and focus instead on the immediate antecedent of the war and a deeply rooted sense of peasant injustice.

B. Major Changes in Economic Production due to the War

The First World War had a tremendous effect on the Russian economy. The Western frontier, the Baltic, and Black Sea routes were closed to export trade. Only the seasonally frozen routes of the White Sea (Archangel) and Vladivostok allowed export cartage to Western Europe. Furthermore, an export embargo imposed by the Russian government January 26, 1914, diminished grain exports by almost half. By 1915-1916 only five percent of the 1909-1913 export average was reached, and by 1917 cereal exports became insignificant.[59]

The war also restricted private trading in land. The Ministry of Agriculture ordered the completion of land reform projects already approved, but budgetary restraints and a shortage of specialists in the field (presumably some of them were conscripted) inhibited the process. With so many

villagers away in the army, the government was reluctant to initiate the consolidation of new peasant strips.

However, several major changes in the way grain and been grown and marketed at first concerned and then panicked the Russian government. The Russian landed gentry, which owned the large estates and produced primarily for the market, lost peasant labor and draft animals to the army, and after the first three years of the war was cultivating 40.5 million acres less. Though peasants were cultivating 35 million acres more, less of their produce was available to the government.[60]

Although internal grain markets were disrupted, grain productivity generally was not. Even though peasants also lost labor and livestock to war requisition, they proved better able to adapt to changing conditions. Russian grain reserves amounted to 8 million tons at the start of the War. They would rise to 16.4 million tons by mid-1916, and eventually fall to 12.7 million tons by mid-1917.[61] There was enough grain in the Russian countryside to fulfil the demands of the army for the entire war. However, the Russian government would have to procure it effectively.

C. The Structure of Food Supply--The First Fissure

The Tsar issued full instructions for mobilization of the Russian army and navy on July 18, 1914. On August 1, Nicholas II gave total responsibility for supplying the armed

forces to the Ministry of Agriculture (MZ) headed by A. V. Krivoshein.[62] This was initially a paper arrangement, for the Russian army traditionally acted as its own requisitioning agent. Officers bought or commandeered at will buildings, supplies, horses, and civilian laborers often without consulting any 'official' administrative body or even checking with their superiors.

The procurement hierarchy was relatively simple: military districts would provide the Ministry of War with a list of their needs. The Ministry of War would order whatever supplies it might require for a definite period and would receive and distribute the supplies it got. The MZ was to purchase and collect the supplies and deliver them where directed. The problem in all of this was that the federation of military districts tended to exaggerate local needs and to overemphasize the importance of the front, ignoring the rear. Front-line units had no compunction in redirecting the movement of supplies for their own use.[63]

Within a few months, however, to establish better and more reliable communication networks, Krivoshein appointed a purchasing commissioner for each gubernia. These individuals were not new agents but were regular officials within the MZ's reform organization and experienced rural officials. They were to be unofficially supported in the supply work by local bank inspectors, officials of the Ministry of Finance, the food supply section of the Ministry of the Interior, managers of

state bank granaries, and of course, the zemstvo institutions.

In February 1915, the government introduced a food embargo. Under this decree, military commanders had the power to prevent the removal of any supplies needed by the army from being marketed outside a given gubernia. The embargo also allowed the army to fix prices for food and fodder and gave it the authorization to force the sale of supplies (at a 15% price reduction) if the owner refused to sell them voluntarily. With guaranteed military markets, MZ commissioners had unlimited power to buy at fixed prices or requisition at even lower rates if necessary.

Although initially successful in securing visible stocks of foodstuffs, these practices eventually disrupted the whole economic exchange base of the country. Productive gubernias withheld supplies while waiting for higher prices. Consuming gubernias had to pay the increasingly higher prices or go into prohibited markets to get the supplies they needed. By Spring 1915, it became obvious that some kind of central coordination of the supply problem was desperately needed and that the civilian population, producers and consumers of grain, would have to be included in the process of military procurement. This meant, of course, demilitarizing the procurement process.[64]

In June 1915, the Duma created a series of Special Councils: the Special Council on National Defense under the Ministry of War, the Special Council on Transport under the

Ministry of Transport, the Special Council on Fuel under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Special Council of Food Supply under the Department of Agriculture.[65] All the Special Councils were organized under the same principles: they were chaired by their respective Ministers; they included representatives from all government departments, the Duma, the State Council, and any public organizations--such as the Union of Zemstvos and of Towns and the War Industries Committees--devoted to the work of supplying the needs of the army. The designated objective of each Special Council was the 'discussion and coordination' of all matters concerning supply. The chairman of each Special Council was given a variety of plenipotentiary powers in dealing with the military and the local authorities. The responsibilities of the Special Councils were similar to those enjoyed under the prior purchasing arrangement. Now, not only were the armed forces to be provisioned but the entire Russian population as well. Since the Russian army had the veto power over any decisions by the Special Councils, however, attempts to demilitarize the procurement process were unsuccessful.

Interdepartmental coordination was non-existent. Special Councils failed to hold joint sessions or form joint committees. By December 1915, the job of coordinating the entire supply operation was given to a special 'mini' Council of Ministers called 'Conference on the Supply of Foodstuffs and Fuel to Needy Localities.' This Conference stipulated

that all the Special Council commissioners at the gubernia level were to meet with their respective provincial governors and to resolve the food supply issue. Soon this 'mini' council structure reproduced itself in much smaller territorial units down to the uezd and district zemstvo. Bureaucratic chaos became endemic. After the February Revolution looking back on the situation in 1916 the new Minister of Agriculture, Andrei Shingarev, stated:

> I do not know who is in charge of the food supply, for I do not know to whom to turn with this question. I do not know the condition of the food supply, for no one can make sense of the problem, I do not know who will solve it, for no one knows to whom the matter has been entrusted.[66]

The army had always attempted to feed itself through district commanders and military purchasing agents. In August 1914, the MZ was given the responsibility of feeding the army. In June 1915, the Special Council of the Food Supply (under the auspices of and chaired by the MZ) was made responsible for coordinating the feeding of the army. By December 1915, the Duma created the Special Conferences on the Supply of Foodstuffs and gave them the authorization to organize foodstocks and feed the army. The Union of Zemstvos including the representative uezd zemstvos cooperated and competed with the bureaucracies and bought and stockpiled food with the intention of feeding the army. All of these organs had varying degrees of arbitrary authority which they exercised simultaneously. Despite all these efforts, by the end of 1916 food shortages were apparent.

> The troops must be provided with food, no matter where the main attack is planned for. The stocks of supplies in the base and food depots, which are not exhausted, must be made good again. Instead of having a monthly reserve we are depending on daily deliveries. We are not getting what we should get, and we are living on short rations.[67]

In response the government established procedures to transport grain from producing to deficit areas. With the inexorable logic of a wartime economy, the government was moving towards a policy of state regulation. The division of the grain market--fixed prices for the government and competitive prices for civilians--proved unworkable and provided the impetus for a grain monopoly.[68]

The passive role played by the Conference under the MZ had changed by late 1916. Ungovernable inflation and uncontrollable local agencies pushed the new Minister of Finance, Aleksandr A. Rittikh, into imposing emergency measures by fixing prices and establishing quotas. Problems appeared almost immediately. Prices were fixed, but prices for the same item varied from region to region, and some regions had no price ceilings on an item that was fixed elsewhere. Embargoes did little more than isolate a region and destroy all vestiges of markets. The local commissioners had wanted a unified price structure which would take account of local needs. Instead a grain levy (*razverstka*) was imposed on the villages, and local commissioners were ordered to devote their full attention to collecting it.

The system of grain requisitioning illuminates the

essential features of the tsarist government's rural policy--the complete lack of coherent planning, the proliferation of a multiplicity of ill defined institutions with conflicting charters, and the lack of any sustained consideration for peasant needs. Food supply policy produced a rupture between the peasant and the government. Peasants (or some of them) had grain, and the government had to find a way to buy, coerce, or steal it so that its war effort and its industry would not starve.[69]

Food supply policy under the Provisional Government placed all food and fodder grains under the direct control of the state. Grain was to be surrendered at fixed prices. If grain was not surrendered, it was to be confiscated. The 'liberal' government attempted to exercise state control over articles manufactured in the cities and needed by the grain producer. The government also attempted to increase production and reduce food consumption by instituting grain rationing in the countryside. All these programs were equally unsuccessful.[70]

A food-supply dictatorship was inaugurated in the spring of 1918, six months after the Bolshevik takeover in October. The new government did not rely on the voluntary field organization of zemstvo officials. Instead it built a strict centrally controlled organization supplemented by a detachment of urban workers. Initially the Bolsheviks intended to extract grain from the villages in exchange for providing the

peasants with needed industrial items at low fixed prices. The People's Commissar of Food Supply, A.D. Tsiurupa, was confident that the peasant was coming to a realization that in order to get important industrial items from the cities he first had to give up agricultural produce. Tsiurupa was hopeful that the peasant was beginning to be aware of the need of a *smychka*, a worker-peasant alliance. However, ultimately the Bolshevik government was forced to rely on extortion and other non-voluntary methods of grain extraction. Tsiurupa knew that "there are only two possibilities: either we perish from hunger, or we weaken the [peasant] economy to some extent, but [manage to] get out of our temporary difficulties."[71]

No government from 1915 until 1921 had been able to manage food supply successfully. No government could convince producing peasants that loyalty to the state was reason enough to donate their surplus to feed the nation. Food supply policies initiated in the First World War had been aggravated by deteriorating political, social, and economic conditions. Government officials knew the peasant was only reluctantly going to cooperate against his interests.

Were there any political or cultural reasons why food-supply problems were so recalcitrant, so resistant to solution now? Russians had dealt with peasants and famine for centuries. However, unlike the ecologically caused famines of the early nineteenth century or the economically generated

famines of the 1890s, the famine hysteria from 1915 occurred at a time when sufficient grain was on hand to feed everyone in the Empire. There was a problem of transporting the grain from where it was grown to where it was needed, but this was not so much the cause of the shortages after 1915 as an effect of the general evaporation of markets. Ironically, the food shortage was induced by some of the very factors which were supposed to have prevented it--price fixing, embargoes, quotas. Individuals, regiments, and towns held on to any grain in their possession in order to make a profit from it or to protect themselves from a possible shortage. By the end of 1915, grain disappeared from the market reinforcing general food anxiety.

Russia had difficulty with any chain of command system. Authority could be delegated to a minister or a peasant council; authority could just as quickly be un-delegated by someone higher up the hierarchical ladder. There was no legal appeal available. The Russian government would occasionally attempt to follow an enlistment method based on democratic models that provided peasant councils with benefits offsetting participation in government. In Aleksander Chayanov's language, the government would encourage "ants collecting for a common good." Russia, however, had no experience with horizontal links connecting social elements traditionally independent of each other. No civil society was able to provide a sense of community or loyalty past the village

volost. The tsarist government--capricious, imperious, and fundamentally impotent--feared hunger, but it feared public organization even more. Before he was finally removed, Minister of Internal Affairs, A. Protopopov, arbitrarily closed down many local food supply commissions. Rittikh had gambled that the war would end soon and that peasants would cooperate. The war didn't end soon and the peasants had nothing invested in state cooperation. The tsarist government by February of 1917 had finally forfeited its right to rule.

The Provisional Government made no changes in local administration that might have won the support of the peasantry because it was too cautious and too unsure of its agenda. It also feared the vote of so large body of enfranchised citizens. Mentally it was always counting rural ballots. As a result, the peasantry initially greeted the fall of the tsar with enthusiasm, donating grain to the officials of the Provisional Government and attempting to be react positively to these new local administrative authorities.[72] Peasants hoped that these new officials (or old officials with new names) would act in the peasant interest. When they realized that both tsarist policies and institutions remained intact in the countryside, support for 'the liberal experiment' was short lived. Of course, the problem of using former tsarist officials in the rural administrative network was recognized by the Provisional Government, but due to a shortage of experienced bureaucrats

the authorities felt that they had no choice. By the time elections were held in August-September 1917 to form new democratic organizations in the countryside, peasant disillusionment with the government was profound.[73]

The Bolshevik party supported peasant aspirations for land by official decree and sought in the process the destruction of feudal relationships, which it saw as characteristic of rural society in Russia. Bolshevik policy, however, also required the destruction of capitalistic development, which was a long-held aspiration for most peasants. Though the Bolsheviks knew their constituency was a radicalized working class and that their policies had traditionally been uninspiring to peasants, they did recognize the need to operate "in accordance with the fundamental aspirations of the broad masses."[74] Nevertheless, Bolshevik policy failed to achieve organic links between the working class and the peasantry, and the relationship that the party encouraged between the producers and the consumers was not based on mutuality (the productive needs and identified aspirations of the different levels of society), but on the coercive policies of the state.[75]

The problem of food supply is illustrative of a unique process developing in the countryside. While the constituent groups in urban Russia were politically heading for the "painful evolution" from a "society of *sosloviia* to one of classes,"[76] the peasantry would develop no sense of itself as

a class. Karl Marx addressed the ambiguity of the peasantry with their localized interests:

> Inasmuch as millions of families live in economic conditions which distinguish their way of life, interests and culture from those of other classes, rendering them antagonistic to the latter, they constitute a class. But inasmuch as their connections are merely local and their identity of interests hasn't found expression in a community, a national association or a political organization, they don't constitute a class.[77]

The food supply crisis would magnify the localized nature of the peasants. Peasants, their market structures destroyed and their village institutions isolated and attacked by the larger administrative system, would retreat to collective individualism, economic subsistence, and community solidarity. "The peasants had little notion of belonging to any wider grouping than their own volost'."[78]

Grain requisition under all three governments did much to expand the rupture between the peasants and the state. The grain monopoly imposed by the tsarist government not only imposed economic hardship on the producer peasant, it eroded the moral authority it held in the village community and heightened the sense of the siege mentality already building in the countryside. The levy system initiated by the tsarist government was in place by winter 1916.[79] The government was unable to withstand the demoralization that the razverstka policy produced. The entire quota stipulated in the 1916 order was to be delivered to holding stations within six months. The autocracy fell four months before this quota was

met.

The Provisional Government made few changes in the organizational structure of food supply organization, but it tried to inspire local committees to take control of all grain from its sowing to its sale to the army. Physically and psychologically isolated from the village, however, these committees were unable either to persuade or force peasants to comply with government directives. The Provisional Government was unable to reconcile the demands of the grain producer with the rest of Russia. Peasants wanted a steady and affordable supply of articles of prime necessity and high prices for the grains they produced. The government wanted to keep grain prices low and was unable to meet consumer demand for manufactured goods. Spiraling inflation, underproduction, a transportation and distribution system in shambles: all created a situation that forced producer peasants to pay more for the goods they needed. As a result, peasants again withheld grain from the government and rejected its efforts to control rural areas.[80] Throughout the Summer and Fall of 1917 peasants seized privately owned estates and *khutor* farms.

The Bolshevik party created rural soviets shortly after seizing power. Volost' zemstva became volost' soviets; village assemblies became village soviets. Due to a paucity of personnel, tsarist technical officials and specialists were transformed into political cadres, providing guidance to the peasants on the new land law.[81] Up until the advent of the

civil war in May-June 1918 and the initiation of a food-supply dictatorship, there had been sporadic forays into the countryside to confiscate grain. Essentially, however, peasants were left alone and sold their goods through whatever market structures could be re-initiated. The Bolsheviks had neither the resources nor the personnel to impose vigorous collection on the peasant. Requisitioning and coercion gradually became policy only after other methods proved unsuccessful.

The Bolsheviks' agrarian policy had the effect of strengthening rural communes and providing the basis for opposition to later coercive policies. Although the Bolsheviks wanted to avoid confrontation with the peasantry, they ended by galvanizing peasant determination to separate from the rest of Russia and seek refuge in their own rural economic enclaves.[82]

By 1917 peasants were negotiating local exchanges on their own. Volost soviets had no communication with other volost soviets during the early soviet period. Ignoring the 'official center', they sought to provision only their own territory. The peasantry had become alienated from the volost zemstva during the extracting years of the grain monopoly. The activities of the volost soviet simply reinforced peasant suspicion.

CHAPTER 4. THE TSARIST ARMY

A. A Village in Uniform

The reforms initiated by the Minister of War, Dmitri Miliutin the 1860s were only partially successful in overcoming the efforts of traditionalists in the military establishment to maintain the status quo. The discussion surrounding this reform reflected to a large extent the debate surrounding emancipation legislation. Before emancipation, it seemed appropriate that a serf society should have a serf army as well. However, while serfdom was no longer considered relevant for rural society, the military would support the existence of soldier 'serfs' for a much longer period--in some ways up until the creation of the Red Army. Reform attempts were, thus, constantly perverted. Miliutin attempted to institute a mandatory program of education within all units of the army. However, even before he retired in 1881, he had acquiesced to pressure and allowed literacy instruction to become only optional. The new Minister of War, Petr Vannovskii, believed that education was actually harmful for soldiers. After 1902 when mandatory literacy courses were reinstated, staff officers routinely created fictional reports recounting bogus classes offered to the soldiers.[83]

Military reform during the Duma period was even more

complex. The War Ministers from 1905-1914, A. F. Rediger and V. A. Sukhomlinov, both revered military tradition along the lines of the nineteenth century chief of the General Staff Academy, M. I. Dragomirov. Both opposed reform for reform's sake and defended the vested interests of the establishment. Both also supported policies aimed at modernizing Russia's support structures and encouraged the country's industrialization. In the pre-World War I reform phase, ironically, the 'young Turks' of the military generally opposed reform, particularly as applied to the army's internal social policies. Leading Russian Army officers positioned themselves to sustain their personal power and opposed all military reforms which might challenge it.[84]

The Russian peacetime army was unlike any other major European army. Up until the end of the tsarist period, it was still a village in uniform. While, it was understood by some that a restructured military policy was the only way to create a modern army and that a rationalized and efficient military was needed before a comprehensive defense plan could be implemented, most consistently resisted attempts to change the internal social construction of the army.[85]

Probably the most enduring legacy given to the soldier was the army mentality--the language of military obedience. This language was not far from the peasants' own understanding of subordination. The two cultures of serfdom, the world of the *pomeshchik* (landowner) and the world of the *muzhik*

(peasant) were slowly becoming obsolete everywhere but in the military. The army replicated serf society, but in a rather unique way. After the 1880s soldiers were no longer quartered in peasants' huts scattered about the countryside but housed in cities in times of peace or in proper barracks during war. Soldiers also were no longer responsible for producing all their own food. By 1914, many of the outward trappings of a modern army had been drilled (or beaten) into the recruit and he looked the part of the modern soldier.

However, one cannot extend the case of 'modernization by way of military service' any further, for life in the Tsar's army was still a most un-modern experience. The Russian soldiers' duties were still primarily of an economic nature and had little to do with the military life of his unit. Even though soldiers no longer farmed regimental plots or cared for regimental cattle, they were still hired out in the villages during harvest. What the regiment could not produce on its own it had to pay for in cash, and soldiers earned the money working in the civilian economy, a practice known as *vol'nye raboty*. Work-life in the military was thus cyclical, moving through the seasons with rhythms well-known to the men from their former village lives.

Soldiers were not only employed on farms, but also within the expanding non-agricultural labor markets. Railroad construction and road building, for example, would have soldier labor detachments within the work force. Up to forty

percent of the soldiers in a given company were often engaged in such activities including service to the officer corps and general corp entertainment. The soldier was viewed as an economic unit, a critical part of the regimental economy, whose soldierly functions were generally little utilized. Between economic obligations, private service, and guard duty, men available for training exercises were few, generally ten out of a hundred at the most. Though a reform process was ostensibly pushed up to the First World War, the focus of these reforms were primarily strategic. Little money went to training the Russian soldier or to relieving him from his extra-regimental economic duties.

If the Russian regiment functioned much as an old feudal estate, it was because after providing it with some initial working capital the central government expected the military unit to be self sufficient. The regiment exemplified the old landed estate not only economically but socially. Officers looked upon their men as barely human and extorted from them money and services beyond even the general regimental economics.[86] However, while economic exploitation was one way of defining the relations between officers and men, social distance was an even more striking characteristic of those relations within a military noted for its institutionally sanctioned segregation.

This relationship between officers and men had a crude caste mentality about it. Social divisions did not exist

because the officers came from the upper-levels of society and were simply replicating their civilian life. The army had always been a vehicle for social mobility in Russia and since the state could not afford to pay its officers very much, it was generally unable to recruit any but the poorest nobility to its service. Social attitudes were thus defined even more starkly. If the soldier acted the part of the 'serf' in the feudal relationship, the officer, no matter what his original status in civilian life (even were he a peasant), acted the role of 'master'.

The tsarist officer corps was thus notorious for everything but leadership and efficiency. Socially isolated from civilian life, given to widespread habitual drinking, prone to a highly inflated sense of his own position, no doubt bred and nurtured by his military education, officers, particularly those who did not have an outside income, often engaged in petty theft and graft. Western memoir literature details the dissolute life of the Russian officer. The relationship between the officer and the soldier, therefore, proved not a representation of a civilian reality but a distortion of what an ambitious officer and a generally fearful and passive peasant perceived to be their roles.

The Duma period of 1905-1914 saw a number of attempts to change the social structure of the military. Russia's loss in the Russo-Japanese War raised the issue of military reform. General Alexei N. Kuropatkin, commander in chief of the

Russian armed forces, who was initially made scapegoat for the defeat, blamed everything from lack of patriotism to technical shortcomings. The government tended to support his position that nothing was fundamentally wrong with the internal structure of the army, and thus there emerged no clear consensus on reform. Distracted by the domestic revolution of 1905-06, the Russian government was no position to engage in a massive critique of the army. Even among supporters of internal military reform, no consensus emerged about what was wrong with the army and how best to repair it. Subsequent reform efforts were equally ambiguous and inconclusive.

In 1906 the Minister of War, General Rediger, introduced a comprehensive scheme for the reorganization of the army. One facet of this program provided a reduced term of 'active' service for all recruits. Theoretically this would produce a larger pool of trained soldiers. The actual length of military service was dependent on the particular unit to which a soldier was consigned, but generally a newly conscripted soldier would spend three to four years in active service and then ten to twelve years in the auxiliary reserves. These reserve units were further divided up into two ranks according to age and terms of previous service. The first group were young and theoretically well-trained and would gather annually for maneuvers to maintain their value as support or replacement troops during war. The second rank of reserves were generally men exempted from service due to physical

disabilities or because of their family situation or social status in the village.[87]

In 1908, Rediger also set forth his *Malaia programma* (little reform plan) which specified an improved classification system for recruits, revised regulations for general mobilization, and a reduction in the number of officer's servants (presumably in to free up more soldiers for front-line training). In March, 1909, Vladimir A. Sukhomlinov replaced Rediger as war minister and reform energies turned to rewriting the plans for mobilization and the creation of a new defense plan in light of the expected eventuality of a war with Germany and Austria-Hungary.[88]

Much has been made of the *Bolshaia programma*, or Great Reform of the Russian military, and in money expended it did provide the army an increase in recurrent expenditure and a large capital grant. The Reform also provided a large sum to the navy to be expended mainly in modernizing its Black Sea Fleet. The year between 1913 and 1914 saw further significant increase in capital expenditures. By 1914 the Russian army was receiving more money than the German army.[89]

Table 3.4

Ordinary Defense-Expenditure, 1909-1913
(mil. rubles, rounded)[90]

	1909-10	1910-11	1911-12	1912-13	1913-14
Army:	473	484	498	528	581
Navy:	92	113	121	176	245

Approved Extraordinary (Capital Grants) Defense Allocations
(mil. rubles, rounded)

	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
Tot.	80.6	50.4	30.5	28.4	87.6	85.8

One of the most crucial changes promised by the Bolshaia programma was an increase in the number of peacetime soldiers and an increase in the number of back-up units for front-line divisions to be used in case of war.[91] These support units, however, were poorly trained or, having served in the past, had forgotten most of their training and had no experience with modern equipment. Officers in the field were hardly interested in expending time working with these divisions or wasting needed supplies to equip them.[92]

The mythology surrounding Russian participation in World War I was created by the British press and exemplified wishful thinking on the part of the Allies, who saw hope for a quick resolution to the war in Russia's enormous population. Millions of peasant soldiers, the 'Russian steam roller,' would mass on the eastern front, and Germany would be overrun

by Russia's inexhaustible supply of soldiers.[93] The reality, however, proved different. The initial units greeting the Germans often out performed the enemy, but, inexperienced, were being killed at a faster rate than they could be replaced. As the war dragged on, replacements came from the last major resource of Russian manpower--the poorly trained reserve units and new draftees from the villages. By fall of 1916, Russia drafted half a million men, the bulk of whom were disgruntled family men, "who rioted at induction centers, jumped off troop trains, balked at training exercises, and were universally regarded by military men as more a liability than an asset."[94] Despite years of reform effort and the expenditure of billions of rubles, the internal economic and social characteristics of the regimental units proved a fundamental liability. Despite initial enthusiasm and expectations, the Russian steam roller was beginning once again to resemble a rickety bus.

B. Radicalization in the Army: The Second Fissure.

The Russian soldier held views on the state, the army, and the tsar that derived from his village of origin. Patriotic feelings towards the state or the army were non-existent. Russian peasants and their soldier counterparts venerated the Tsar-*Batiushka* ('little' father) because he sanctioned their way of life. The hierarchial authority

structure in the army was as unimportant to the peasant drafted in the military as the rural police and the *pomeschchick* (landowner) was to the peasant in the village. Years of abuse by superiors had not instilled in the soldier respect for officers nor a sense of duty to defend his fatherland.

The Russian fatherland, of course, consisted of many nationalities and most were represented in the ranks. Variations in nationality, education, regional affiliation were relatively consistent throughout most army units. Several notable military units--one Polish division, several Latvian brigades, and the Cossacks--contained a single ethnic group, but the tsarist government generally followed a policy of ethnic dispersal throughout the army.

Even within military units made up of disparate elements, soldiers responded to the stress of mobilization by finding identification with a peer group, usually a military unit, regiment, or division. The powerful bond of loyalty constructed in these units left members little inclination to dissent from the group once a consensus was reached. Even under the threat of severe punishment, soldiers hid their guilty compatriots or covered up offenses.

Although there was little variation in attitude within these closely bound military units, the units themselves could vary considerably. Collectively, soldiers responded to a wide variety of influences--the peculiarities of their officers,

the proximity of the German army, the availability of food and other supplies, the amount of time they had been mobilized without relief, their exposure to propaganda (of either the left or right variant), and, of course, the frequency and tenor of the letters from the villages. Regiments were considered 'old regime' or 'radicalized' depending on these reactions, and typically they could reverse their opinions radically when confronted with new situations or even rumors.

Two issues, however, would provide a sense of solidarity among the lower ranks. One of the most important was the availability of food. Like the peasant in the village, the soldier feared hunger even before it occurred, and as fear became reality during the course of the war, the soldier connected his own hunger with the potential hunger of his village and the family he left behind. This fear led soldiers to desert or to refuse to return to their units after a leave. It even produced instances in which soldiers led their villages in insurrections against local landowners.

Another issue producing solidarity in the ranks was a growing sense of empowerment in opposition to the authority structure of the military, a structure that would be dismantled by the February Revolution. Without necessarily espousing any political ideology, soldiers were aware that the revolution meant an unqualified overturn of officer authority and the creation of a new government sympathetic to their aspirations for peace and land. Petrograd and those urban and

naval centers within striking distance of the capital were the first to understand the implications of the revolution. The 'rotten triangle,' areas--the naval base of Kronstadt, the military suburbs of Tsarskoe selo, Oranienbaum, Vyborg, Helsingfors, Reval Pskov, Dvinsk and Riga--initiated the most complete usurpation of military authority. Also, because of their proximity to the capital, these military units exhibited the political influence of 'radicalized' workers and antiwar socialists. An important manifestation of this politicization was the creation of the Soldiers' Section of the Petrograd Soviet and revolutionary 'Order (*prikaz*) Number One.'[95]

> In all companies, battalions, regiments, parks, batteries, squadrons, in the special services of the various military administrations, and on the vessels of the Navy, committees from the elected representatives of the lower ranks of the above-mentioned military units shall be chosen immediately. (The first resolution for Order #1, prikaz from the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, March 1, 1917)[96]

Although a product of political radicalization, the Order's social implications would prove far more significant as indicated by the following reactions.

> Order Number One was disseminated rapidly and everywhere along the whole front and in the rear, because the ideas which it embodied had developed for many years, in the slums of Petrograd as well as in the remote corners of the Empire, such as Vladivostok. They had been preached by all local army demagogues and were being repeated by all the delegates who visited the front in vast numbers and were provided certificates of immunity by the Soviet. (General A.I. Denikin)[97]

> It was clear to me that this order. . .smashed at one blow the machinery with the aid of which we, generals and officers of the Army, had succeeded in maintaining subordination and imposing our will on millions of resentful armed men deeply disillusioned by the war. (future Red Army Commander Bonch-Bruevich)[98]

The news of the February revolution reached the trenches through reluctant communicators. The euphoria of the front soldier was dampened only by his suspicion of those passing on the information. The abdication caused rejoicing, but the change in government hardly inspired the reaction that Order Number One roused. Soldiers were particularly angered by the sense that officers were using their authority unjustly. Now soldiers were given official permission to challenge the structure of authority and to have an elected committee of peers to lay down rules for officers and men alike. Order Number One and the changes it implied signaled the disintegration of the old command structure of the army.

Disintegration in the official command structure did not create overnight a disciplined politicized organization. Only gradually did Russia's soldiers and sailors evolve from a confused, disorganized, mutineering mass, into an institutionalized force. Disobedience to orders, desertion, and fraternization with the enemy headed the list of problems confronting military commanders in early spring 1917, and nearly all the unrest was quite traceable to the breakdown in orderly patterns of authority.

Originally inspired by the liberal aims of the

Provisional government, by August 1917 soldiers at the front eventually showed a marked distrust of all politics, even revolutionary politics. The war and the food shortages remained. Promises made by the liberal revolutionary government such as land reform and the calling of the Constituent Assembly were being put off. Soldiers were beginning to realize that if they wanted to influence politics at the rear they would have to become organized.

Soldiers had only limited identification with the educated and propertied representatives running the Provisional government. They did not understand the objective of democratic government to invest power in institutions nor did they have the patience to wait for leaders to create the necessary legal pre-institutional framework. On the other hand, the soviet representational structure appeared simple, direct, and expedient. However limited their understanding of center politics, soldiers heartily approved soviet power's ability simply to decree peace, land, and bread. Soldiers wanted the war to end and the Bolsheviks were willing to oblige.

> When we talk about the *narod*, we mean the nation; when they talk about it, they understand it as meaning only the democratic lower classes. In their eyes, what has occurred is not a political but a social revolution, which in their opinion they have won and we have lost. (written by a dejected Pavlovskii officer 1917)[99]

The revolution, however, had for the soldier as for the peasant primarily a social agenda. Of course the war had to

end, but once over demobilized soldiers and their peasant families had the same desire to own additional land, the same wish for a smallholding that they had before the war. Peasant social agenda was not part of Bolshevik ideology.

The soldiers' attachment to the land and to their village culture was expressed in many ways during the years of the war. They participated in or led agrarian revolts against landlords. They left their military units and returned to the villages during harvests and when rumors circulated about a potential land distribution. Upon demobilization, they settled back into village life, took up positions as heads of households, and obtained positions of leadership in the village skhod. A wedge that had divided the peasant and the soldier from the state had been destroyed with the signing of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918; by May a new wedge was forming.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

A. The Peasants and the Soviet State 1917-22

With the Decree on Land issued in October 1917, Soviet power provided peasants with legal sanction for the confiscation of gentry property by the village commune. Some rural communities even dated the 'revolution' by the seizure of the local gentry estate.[100] The Bolsheviks initially chose to view these confiscations as the activities of the 'equalizing poor,' and they generally disapproved of letting villages divide up land on their own. However, the government did not interfere with either the act of distribution or with the justification that peasants gave for it.

By Summer 1918, the new Bolshevik government initiated what was to be the first in a series of food procurement campaigns. Although the characteristics were different, each campaign had two things in common. They were designed to take food products from producing peasants and distribute them to non-producing consumers.

Peasants viewed Bolshevik procurement policies as simple expropriation, and one of their weapons for fighting back was economic subterfuge. They reduced their productivity to subsistence levels, hid grain, fed cereals to their livestock, and sold surplus produce on the black market. The Bolsheviks

had hoped that villages would be sympathetic toward a genuinely revolutionary government. Peasants' support of Soviet power, however, stopped abruptly after land and peace.

With the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918, the Bolshevik government made peace with Germany and ended Russia's involvement in World War One. By Summer 1918 Russia was embroiled in civil war. Peasants were inclined to support Red Army 'guerrilla' units and defend the revolution locally against the White Army. However, they did not understand the need for a civil war in distant regions, and refused to cooperate with military conscription. Once the White Armies had been defeated and peasants no longer feared the resurgence of the landlord, they took up arms against Bolshevik attempts to subrogate village autonomy with Bolshevik authority.

'Peasant Wars' broke out against the Bolsheviks in response to an increase in the tax burden, the growth of the trade deficit between the rural grain producer and the urban worker, and the intrusion of Bolshevik *kombedy* (poor peasant committees) into village politics. Most importantly, peasants fought the Bolsheviks for *volia* (freedom), for their right to be left alone. Peasant support of the Bolsheviks had never extended to an understanding of any new authority relationship; nor did it include recognition of a new social order.

In the early 1920s the Soviet government passed a series of laws changing its previous rural policies and providing

guidance for a 'new' course of land settlement.[101] The important ideals incorporated within this 'basic law' were village autonomy, individual freedom, and household solidarity. In some ways the new land code harkened back to the language and form of the tsarist reforms of the nineteenth century. In other ways the code seemed to be simply restating the customary law of the villages. It postponed, however, Bolshevik fantasies on the possibility of collective labor in the countryside.

By February 1921 the Politburo had retreated from the food procurement campaigns, replacing them with a food tax only on the surplus.[102] The Bolshevik government also put aside its fundamental dislike for 'free markets' and allowed 'local economic circulation' of surplus peasant production.[103] Black markets, a constant feature of economic life during the civil war, had reluctantly been decriminalized.

The relations between the Bolshevik state and the peasantry were unresolved by the 1920s, but the two were no longer actively warring. Bolsheviks no longer tried to reorganize village government and were content with a less provocative role in rural life. Although some villages still contained kombedy, kombedy played no leadership role. Village administration was the responsibility of the household elders.

Party affiliation in the local administrative bodies remained complicated.[104] The *volost* or regional soviets now included more Bolsheviks, but whether these new delegates were

elected because of their socio-economic standing in the village community or simply because no one else wanted the job--it would be hard to say.[105] Even so, Bolshevik political attitudes rarely entered village life. Peasants generally viewed volost soviets as agencies of government taxation and organs of Communist rule, and did their best to ignore them.[106]

By 1922 tradition and the rhythm of the agricultural cycle again measured time in the countryside. Work and leisure depended on needs and tasks and were indivisible from each other. Holy days and feast days were the only interruption in the usual village routine. The Bolsheviks tried to replace the old holidays of the Orthodox Church with new ones: International Labor Day on May 1, and, of course, the anniversary of the October Revolution on November 7. These new holidays, however, held little for peasants. They did not replace existing church days and were noticed only if they provided a new opportunity for eating and drinking.[107]

The head of the household remained the oldest male, though cracks were beginning to show in the patriarchal armor, and the power and authority of the elder was not quite as autocratic and absolute as it had been in tsarist days.[108] Women had legal redress for their grievances, but this movement was not new to 1917. It was part of a continuum dating back to the 1860s.[109]

Peasants were permitted to market their produce legally,

but this did not change their dependence on a relatively primitive technology. The main unit of production remained household labor, and although more progressive farming methods would eventually be adopted, the new Soviet regime would not see major increases in grain yields in the 1920s.[110]

The Soviet government was committed to a conception of the rural landscape as a hostile sea of capitalist market relations. Socialist doctrines had consistently been unable to transform the mentalité of the peasant community. However, the government needed rural products, so it set aside its ideological concerns. It backed down from its coercive rural policies and suspended its use of administrative force. The Bolshevik government was unable to challenge the communes' rural authority and so that rural authority remained.

The civil war had proved the peasants politically impotent, but political helplessness on a national level was not new. The weapons with which peasants fought in 1921 were also not new. The burning of manors and rebellion against authority had been a factor in peasant life for centuries. Economic subterfuge as a revolutionary weapon had been refined, however, since the first attempts at government grain requisition in 1915, and it was not a response peasants restricted for Bolsheviks. Peasants had fought for the right to work the land and for freedom from interference by others. By the end of the civil war, which culminated six years of sometimes violent activity, it looked momentarily like they

had succeeded in obtaining both.

The countryside was as difficult to govern after 1921 as it had been before 1917. War and revolution had strengthened the village commune; the 'gains' made during the years of the Stolypin reforms had all but been rescinded. The economic power of village grain had challenged the Soviet economic policies as it had challenged the policies of the tsarist ministers; the power of grain had forced the legalization of markets. State administrators in regional and village soviets were peasants, many of them ex-military. Unlike bureaucrats under the tsar, most were illiterate, untrained in government, poorly disciplined, and inclined towards localism, but for the time being they belonged to the village and not to the state. For a time the state under the Bolshevik party struggled with its misconceptions of rural society and consolidated its power at the center. For a time rural society was left to its own resources.

Though the peasantry was extensively weakened physically and morally by the privations of war and revolution, the sense of peasant separateness and a belief in the autonomy of the peasant community vis-a-vis the state survived. The collapse of the Russian state did not extend to the villages. The logic and functionality of peasant action and practices, customs and institutions stubbornly persisted.

ENDNOTES

1. Teodor Shanin, *The Awkward Class*, (Oxford, 1972).

2. Roger Bartlett, editor, *Land Commune and Peasant Community in Russia* (New York, 1990); Barbara Clements, editor, *Russia's Women* (Berkeley, 1991); Ben Eklof, editor, *The World of the Russian Peasant* (Boston, 1990); Sheila Fitzpatrick, editor, *Russia in the Era of NEP* (Bloomington, 1991); Esther Kingston-Mann, *Peasant Economy, Culture, and Politics of European Russia* (New York, 1990); Diane P. Koenker, editor, *Party State and Society in the Russian Civil War* (Bloomington, 1989).

3. Dorothy Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune* (Stanford, 1983).

4. George Yaney, *The Systematization of Russian Government: Social evolution in the Domestic Administration of Imperial Russia, 1711-1905* (Urbana, 1973).

5. David A.J. Macey, *Government and Peasant in Russia 1861-1906* (Dekalb 1987); Francis Wcislo, *Reforming Rural Russia* (Princeton, 1990); George Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize: Agrarian Reform in Russia, 1861-1930* (Urbana, 1982).

6. John Bushnell, *Mutiny amid Repression* (Bloomington, 1985); David Goodman, *From Peasant to Proletarian* (New York, 1982); Robert Johnson, *Peasant and Proletarian* (New Brunswick, 1979); Allan Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army* (Princeton, 1987).

7. Orlando Figes, *Peasant Russia, Civil War: The Volga Countryside in Revolution (1912-1921)* (Oxford, 1989).

8. Lars Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia 1914-1921* (Berkeley, 1990).

9. Ibid., 232.

10. Marius Hindus, *The Russian Peasant and the Revolution* (New York, 1920), 145.

11. Concept credited to S. M. Solov'ev. Alfred J. Rieber, "The Sedimentary Society," in ed. Edith W. Clowes, *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1991) 345.

12. Marius Hindus contributes these thoughts to A. Nastyrev, who he says made a special study of peasant attitudes toward law. Hindus, *Russian Peasant and the Revolution*, 147.

13. Yaney, *Systemization of the Russian Government*.

14. Peter Czap, Jr., "Peasant Class Courts and Customary Justice in Russia, 1861-1912," *Journal of Social History*: 149.

15. Rodney D. Bohac, "The Mir and the Military Draft," *Slavic Review* 47 (Winter 1988): 653-666.

16. Daniel Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston, 1976), 23.

17. The characterization of the reform movement as an invasion by the government is found in George Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*.

18. Macey, *Government and Peasant in Russia, 1861-1906*; Wcislo, *Reforming Rural Russia;* and Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*.

19. Discussions of peasant class courts can be found in Michael Confino, "Russian Customary Law and the Study of Peasant Mentalities,"*The Russian Review* 44 (1985); Peter Czap Jr.,"Peasant-Class Courts and Peasant Customary Justice in Russia," *Journal of Social History*; C.A. Frierson, "Rural Justice in Public Opinion: The Volost' Court Debate 1861-1912," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64 (October 1986).

20. Peter Czap, Jr. "Peasant Class Courts," 151-158.

21. Land captains were given two charters: they were to govern their territory in explicitly formal independence from all other government agents except the governors, and they were given broad executive and legislative powers over all who were attached to their volost. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 49-143.

22. Korkunov, *Russkoe gosudarstvennoe pravo*, vol. I,479. in Yaney *Systemization*, 233.

23. Cathy Frierson discussed the problems inherent in inculcating or absorbing rural legal institutions and laws within the greater Russian legal system. The debate among the ministers in government centered around two themes. One theme established the need to eliminate the 'guardianship' of the peasantry and bring them fully into the legal structure. The other theme felt that the peasantry formed a distinct class and as such their culture should remain distinct from the urban areas. Their laws, therefore, should reflect the traditions of the village. C.A. Frierson, "The Volost' Court

Debate,"*The Slavonic and East European Review* 64 (October 1986): 526-545.

24. Wcislo, *Reforming Rural Russia,* 74-75.

25. The *obshchina* (commune) should not be confused with the *derevnia* (village). A commune could include several villages or be part of a village. Most typically, however, the village encompassed one commune. The village was the address (If you asked a peasant where he was from he would answer with the name of his village not his commune.) Also, land was under the purview of the commune; village administration was obviously under the purview of the village community. The reason for this situation may lay in the pre-emancipation mode of ownership by the landowners or in the way a main village may have 'colonialized' and created a new village. The new village could have its own local assembly but could stay within the land use unit of the original commune. Moshe Lewin, "The *Obshchina* and the Village," Roger Bartlett, editor, *Land Commune and Peasant Community in Russia* (New York, 1990), 20-35.

26. Communes' existence and spread were in response to taxation practices of the tsars. Because it was easier, the government levied the tax on the community as a whole; the community decided what part of the total burden each household member was to share. The redistributive practice seems to be in response to taxes and to an increase in population. Dorothy Atkinson, "Egalitarianism and the Commune," in ed. Roger Bartlett, *Land Commune and the Peasant Community in Russia* (New York, 1990), 7-19.

27. Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune*, 1-19.

28. The manor and the commune were complementary, but not interdependent. In the western part of Russia, serf holders imposed their own schemes of organization on the land without reference to communes. In central European Russia the commune developed alongside serfdom, taking a broader or more limited role according to the degree of immediate control exercised by the estate owner. One could assume that these patterns of leadership would be maintained after emancipation as much as possible. Ibid.

29. In looking at the terms used by educated Russians to describe peasant institutions, it is interesting to note how some changed over time reflecting how peasants were viewed. The classic example is the word *obshchestvo,* which was used in Russia to describe 'society' as a binary opposite to *narod* (people) even though the expression *selskoe obshchestvo* came to be used by the government to describe the rural government agency. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,

obshchestvo came to mean not just *ne narod* (or not of the people) but 'aristocratic' society. By the end of the nineteenth century, *obshchestvo* lost most of its connection with the aristocracy and eventually evolved into *obshchestvennost*. It had been expanded to include a less elite social group and thus, indicated a change in political attitudes and public consciousness. The word had become more descriptive of the English 'public' or 'civil society.' This evolution is particularly interesting because 'rural society' and civil society were very different entities in Russia. Abbott Gleason,"The Terms of Russian Social History," in Edith W. Clowes, editor, *Between Tsar and People* (Princeton, 1991), 15-27.

30. Discussions of pre-emancipation and post-emancipation village organization can be found in Atkinson, *Russian Land Commune*; Sergei M. Kravchinskii (Stepniak), *The Russian Peasantry*, New York: 1888); Macey, *Government and Peasant in Russia*; Yaney, *Systematization of Russian Government*; *Urge to Mobilize*. Specific discussions on the structure of the peasant *obshchina* can be found in Alan Kimball, "The Russian Peasant Obshchina in the Political Culture of the Era of Great Reforms:" *Russian History/Histore Russe* 17 (Fall:1990).

31. Atkinson, *Russian Land Commune*, 26.

32. N.A.Shishkov, "Nashe zemstvo, ego trudy i nedochety," Vestnik Evropy, 1901, no.9, p. 322 in Terence Emmons and Wayne S. Vucinich, editors, *The Zemstvo in Russia* (Cambridge, 1982), 229, n.10.

33. Kermit E. McKenzie, "Zemstvo Organization and Role within the Administrative Structure," in Terence Emmons, editor, *The Zemstvo in Russia* (Cambridge, 1982), 31-78.

34. Ibid., 41-44.

35. There were several "peasant" zemstvos, however, notably in the four gubernia in the north and northeast: Olonets, Vologda, Viatka, and Perm. Analysis of these provinces suggests that not only was there a shortage of local nobles to fill "noble" posts, but that due to a scarcity of land captains, peasants were relatively free to invest in 'civic spirit.' These facts probably suggest that given freer and more access to zemstvos, peasants may have been more responsive to them. Dorothy Atkinson, "The Zemstvo and the Peasantry," in Terence Emmons, editor, *The Zemstvo in Russia* (Cambridge, 1982), 79-132.

36. Carsten Pape, "On the Margins of Utopia?: Zemstvo Liberals and the Peasant Commune," *Russian History/Histore Russe* 11 (Summer-Fall-1984): 224; Figes, *Peasant Russia, Civil War*, 36-40, 168-9.

37. The incompatibility of the two concepts, a modern industrial economy and autocracy, is exemplified by Russia's Finance Minister Sergei Witte, who believed state power could accelerate the modernization (ie. industrialization) process by acting as a catalyst of rational industrial development. That Witte's policies bore fruit can be seen in the increased rate of domestic capital accumulation in the first decade of the twentieth century. However, that no institutional or legal foundation had been laid for dynamic modernization was evident as the infrastructure sustaining that modernization collapsed after three years of war.

38. The decree of March 12, 1903, freed the communal peasants from the collective responsibility of paying taxes but provided no legal means to assess (or collect) new taxes. It did, however, leave the commune itself intact. A decree of December 12, 1904, indicated that peasant institutions were to be integrated into the legal system of the Empire, but this time no language was included to protect the commune. Finally, in a note to Minister of the Interior, I.L. Goremykin on March 30, 1905, the tsar indicated that "measures had to be taken to develop methods of land use *for the peasants that correspond to changing economic conditions*." (italics mine) Yaney, 230.

39. The quoted comments were taken from the committees of the "Special Conference on the Needs of Agriculture," collected and edited by Aleksandr Rittikh and published in 1903 under the title *Krest'ianskoe zemlepol'zovanie* (St. Petersburg, 1903), ed. Vernadsky, *Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917* (New Haven, 1972),761.

40. For example, the law of November 9, 1906 stipulated that a peasant head of household in a repartitional communal village could claim his strips as personal property if he wished. It also stated (since the peasant could not fence off his "strips" from his neighbors) that this peasant could demand from the *skhod* his strips in a consolidated plot if he so wished. This would be fine, of course, if the village called for a general redistribution. If not, and redistributions were not frequently called, the best the government could do was to support the would be consolidator if the removal of the 'plot' did not create a hardship for the village as a whole. This scenario is particularly interesting because the whole image of the 'separator' was a major threat to the economic and social stability of the village. After years of studying the peasants, the central government still

had not come up with a way to separate the Russian peasant from his village and make him a productive "English" farmer.

41. In Russia landholding was complicated somewhat in that estates (land) was granted by the tsar to a noble for services rendered. This land came with peasants/serfs attached to it--serf labor was an essential part of the rural economy. The land also came with the obligation to pay taxes and provide peasants for the military. Even after 1801 when Alexander I opened up landowning to non-nobles few others participated. The land purchased had to be free of serfs but since serfs were not free to move off the land without the nobles permission there was very little available or free land to buy. In other words in Russian society before emancipation, land reflected Russian social organization more than its economic possibilities.

42. Peasants did not become full owners of the land apportioned to them; the land was given to the village communities (these rural societies), which were expected to distribute it among the members based on traditional repartitional methods. The Russian state indemnified the landowners in government bonds for the lands given to the peasants. The peasants were required to pay the interest on these bonds by their annual redemption payments. The peasants could either accept the whole grant of land (and hereby accept the redemption payment) or they could accept only one quarter of the grant, in which case no redemption payment was expected. Alexis N. Antsiferov, *Russian Agriculture During the War* (New York, 1968),19.

43. In the 1840s the minimum allotment for subsistence was set at 5 *dessyatiny* (1 dessyatiny=2.7 acres). Later during the reform process the figure had risen to 10-15 dessyatiny per 'soul.' Peter Gatrell, *The Tsarist Economy 1850-1917* (London, 1986), 110.

44. Figures adapted from Antsiferov, *Russian Agriculture During the War*, 18.

45. In the 1880s Alexander III first initiated the legislation to govern resettlement. The provisions that were set forth are considered the precursors to the Stolypin reforms. The legislation passed in 1889 stated that no peasant could settle on state lands (and Siberia was considered such) without permission from the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Agriculture. The peasant could also not leave without the permission of his village which was complicated by the knowledge that the migrating peasants land *and the taxes and redemption debt* that had been accumulated would be assumed by the village. Once the necessary permissions had been acquired the peasant had only *two months* total to sell his property and

get on the road or the whole process was canceled. Additionally the migrating peasant had no choice in land he was to settle on or farm when he got to the end of his government prescribed travel route; he had to accept the land that was given to him. Needless to say most peasants who were determined to make it in Siberia went illegally and settled wherever they wanted. They knew that it would cost the government far more to catch them in Siberia and sent them back to their villages than to just leave them alone. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 124-129.

46. Antisferov, *Russian Agriculture During the War*, 20-21.

47. Paul R. Gregory, *Russian National Income 1885-1913* (Cambridge, 1982), 155-156.

48. The most densely populated provinces outside of Petrograd and Moscow were Podolia, Kiev, Poltava, Kharkov, Kursk, and Riga, with 136 to 157 persons per square mile. The provinces of Volhynia, Bessarabia, Ekaterinoslav, Chernigov, Orel, and Voronezh had from 113 to 134 persons per square mile. Antsiferov, *Russian Agriculture*, 12, n.4. The discussion of the 'vector' of peasant immiseration is long and unresolved. Scholars such as Teodor Shanin believe that the peasant was impoverished by the end of the nineteenth century and fortunes declined thereon. Other scholars, most notably Paul Gregory, indicate that the values pointing to immiseration are more complex.

49. Gatrell, *Tsarist Economy*, 113.

50. Hindus, *Russian Peasant*, 168.

51. Gregory, *National Income*, 155-156.

52. Gatrell, *Tsarist Economy*, 139.

53. B. O. Unbegaun, gen ed. *The Oxford Russian-English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1984).

54. Rose Glickman, "Peasant Women and Their Work," ed. Ben Eklof, *The World of the Russian Peasant* (Boston, 1990), 50.

55. Gatrell, *Economy*, 154.

56. Glickman, "Peasant Women," 50-60

57. Kustarnichestvo filled in for the manufactured goods becoming increasingly unavailable from the cities after the Bolshevik revolution. If peasants resorted to kustarnichestvo when economic conditions were tough one can assume that they resumed many of their handicraft traditions during the

shortages caused by the First World War as well.

58. Gregory, *National Income*, 73.

59. Antsiferov, *Russian Agriculture During the War*, 201-203.

60. Antsiferov, *Russian Agriculture During the War*, 144.

61. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 409.

62. There seems to have been no good reason why the ministry of agriculture was assigned this job other than it (and Krivoshein as well) had been the primary administrative body involved in the "Stolypin" agricultural reforms. Presumably the MZ had been working with the peasants during the reforms and it was assumed that the MZ and its "agencies and specialists" would not only want to be involved in grain distribution, but by having a better relationship with the peasants, be more successful in acquiring peasant cooperation.

63. The problem of military interference in the supply process is discussed in K. I. Zaitsev, "Food Supply in Russia During the World War," ed. Struve, *Food Supply in Russia During the World War* (New Haven, 1930), 3-37; Yaney, *Mobilize*, 400-462.

64. The blame for this economic disruption cannot be dumped solely at the feet of the army, of course. Civilian authorities were extremely willing to facilitate the army's arbitrary actions. With the elimination of grain exports to Germany and the prohibition of vodka manufacturing in force, the grain producing regions were looking at the demands of the army with relief. Patriotism and profit became easy partners. See Golovine, *Army*, 154; Yaney, *Mobilize*, 414-417; Lih, *Bread*, 12n14; Zaitsev, "Organization," 8.

65. This information and the data relating to the organization of food supply is provided by K. I. Zaitsev, who was formerly the Assistant Administrator of the Special Council on Food Supply and head of the Department of Municipal Economy in the Ministry of the Interior under the Provisional Government. K.I. Zaitsev, "Organization."

66. *Izvestiia Glavnovo Komiteta*, no.50.118. cited in Thomas Fallows "Politics and the War Effort in Russia: The Union of Zemstvos and the Organization of the Food Supply, 1914-1916," *Slavic Review* 37 (March:1978): 87.

67. Nicholas N. Golovine, *The Russian Army in the World War* (New Haven, 1931), 171-172.

68. Millers, as private individuals, were able to buy their grain at competitive prices, but were required to sell their flour to the government at the fixed price. The flour left over, therefore, had to be sold at increasingly higher prices in order to compensate them for their losses. It is easy to see that the moderate prices available to the army existed at the expense of the civilian population.

69. Up until the period of the First World War, famine had been predominantly a rural or urban poor phenomenon. Famine or fear of famine would know no ideological or class boundaries during and after the war. All three governments--the reactionary monarchy of Nicholas II, the 'liberal' administration of the Provisional Government, and the revolutionary social democratic dictatorship--had to deal with the hunger of some portion of the Russian population. All three attempted similar strategies. Under the tsar, the razverstka was a way of simply ensuring that the surplus regions would provide the army with grain. The language of the grain levy tried to arouse patriotism by indicating that the sacrifice of the producers was for the army and called for by the exigencies of the War. No mention was made of providing for the needs of the cities. The ministry had already taken into account the manifest hostility of the peasantry toward the urban elements of the population. Zaitsev, "Organization," 89.

70. Graeme J. Gill, "The Failure of Rural Policy in Russia, February-October 1917," *Slavic Review* 37 (June:1978): 241-258.

71. Lars Lih, "Bolshevik Razverstka and War Communism," *Slavic Review* 44 (1986): 672-688.

72. Graeme Gill, "The Failure of Rural Policy," 241-242.

73. Ibid.

74. John Channon, "The Bolsheviks and the Peasantry," *Slavonic and East European Review* 66 (October:1988): 596.

75. Both Lenin and Bukharin saw the need to establish direct links between town and country. These ideas were developed by Bukharin in the middle 1920s but died a political death. At any rate, Bukharin saw the need for the development of a new Soviet village 'culture' based in new civil institutions within the village and replacing the old traditional 'bureaucratic culture or serf culture.' "Bukharin saw the organizers of this struggle not as armed men in jackboots but as 'cultural invaders' (*kulturtregery*)--educators bearing practical theory--working with the peasantry to construct a culture capable of meeting the productive and social needs of the whole peasantry, not just of the richer sections, and

capable of developing the civil community to a point where it could bring under control the coercive, centralizing and bureaucratic forces within the Soviet state." Mark Harrison, "Chayanov and the Marxist," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 7: 96.

76. Leopold H. Haimson, ed. *The Politics of Rural Russia* (Bloomington, 1979), 10.

77. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Moscow, 1962), 334.

78. Roger Pethybridge, "Social and Political Attitudes of the Peasantry in Kursk *guberniya* at the Start of NEP," *Slavonic and East European Review* 63 (July 1983): 375.

79. The entire quota, as stipulated in the order of December 17, 1916, was to be delivered to holding stations for the use of the nation within six months. The new decree had used the same vague and indefinite language that had characterized the food supply system as a whole. Since the districts had the option of either attempting to enforce the levy or to procure the necessary grain on the free market, there was little incentive to adhere to the levy timetable until the last minute (if at all). Also since there was no confidence in the provincial centers that the levy scheme was either fair or possible, there was tendency to dilute the quotas all the way down the hierarchial line. In other words the provincial conferences (if they didn't reject the levy altogether and 9 out of 30 provinces did) reduced the quota to 89% of the stipulated amount. The district conferences reduced this amount to 63%, etc. By the time the levy quota had come down to the producer, 75%-80% of the grain required by the MZ had blown away. Zaitsev, "Organization," 95-96.

80. Gill, "Failure of Rural Policy," 252.

81. Channon, "The Bolsheviks and the Peasantry," 597.

82. From early September 1917 through 1918 the peasantry in the Kursk Guberniya took matters very much into their own hands. Not only did they aggressively seize land, killing and sacking the gentry estates and ignoring the influence of the newly established Kursk Soviet, but they created their own export networks for their grain, terrorizing the local railway administrators into collaborating and stealing grain from outside localities to add to their export quantities. This kind of rural anarchy was the excuse used to justified Bolshevik intrusion into the villages. Pethybridge, "Peasantry in Kursk."

83. John Bushnell, *Mutiny Amid Repression*, 7-11.

84. Thomas Wilfong, "Rebuilding the Russian Army, 1905-1914: The Question of a Comprehensive Plan for National Defense," (unpublished PhD dissertation), 170-175. It is not only important to illuminate the rather unique alliances made during this particular reform process but to point out the misrepresentations, deliberately extended in memoir literature, written by emigre officers after the Revolutions and Civil War. Most of these works picture Rediger and Sukhomlinov as ineffectual and conservative bureaucrats, who enriched themselves but did little for the army. These accusations, Wilfong asserts, were mostly self-serving apologies.

85. John Bushnell, "Peasants in Uniform: The Tsarist Army as a Peasant Society," ed. Ben Eklof, *The World of the Russian Peasant* (Boston, 1990), 101-114.

86. John Bushnell, "The Tsarist Officer Corps, 1881-1914: Customs, Duties, Inefficiency," *The American Historical Review* 86 (February-December:1981): 753-780.

87. Wilfong, "Rebuilding," 69-72.

88. The development of the defense plans known respectively as Numbers 19 and 20. The first plan was coordinated by the War ministry and General Ir. N. Danilov (chief of staff under Sukhomlinov). The second--a revision forced on Sukhomlinov by critics in the Duma, the State Council, and the Council of Ministers--was a fascinating and an ultimately fatal decision for Russia. Plan 19 prepared for war against Germany, responding to an accurate assessment of the German Schlieffen Plan. Plan 20 largely provided for two alternate mobilizations. One responded to a German attack against Russia with a holding action sending two smaller armies against Austria-Hungary, and another mobilization plan responded to a German attack against France, which specified a main attack on Austria-Hungary and a holding action against Germany. Plan 20 was a political compromise and a military disaster. There was never any intention to use both these mobilizations schemes simultaneously; doing so was an ultimately fateful decision for Russia. Ibid.

89. Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front* (New York, 1975), 29.

90. Ibid., 28.

91. Wilfong, "Rebuilding," 162.

92. Stone, *Eastern Front*, 30.

93. Golovine, *The Russian Army in the World War*, 53-55.

94. Allen Wildman, *The End of the Tsarist Army* (Princeton, 1987), 98.

95. Wildman, *End of Russian Imperial Army*, Vol.1, 182-201.

96. Ibid., 187.

97. Ibid., 230.

98. Ibid., 231.

99. Ibid., 245.

100. Orlando Figes, *Peasant Russia, Civil War,* 62.

101. Ibid., 94.

102. Lars Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia 1914-1921*, 228.

103. Ibid.

104. Bolshevik support for the rural poor who were to wage 'class war' against the 'kulak grain hoarders' had found bitter opposition in the villages. At the Workers' and Peasants' Non-Party Conference in Alekseev, February 1920, Kadantsev, one of the peasant delegates expressed his views regarding party affiliation this way:
"Not everyone calling himself a communist can be one, the Bolsheviks say; for example, a man with two horses cannot be a Communist. That sort of reasoning explains why the people cannot get on with the Bolsheviks." Figes, *Peasant Russia, Civil War*, 241.

105. Ibid., 223.

106. Regional soviets would attract many of the dislocated, marginal, and landless elements of rural society who were seeking to break away from the confines of traditional patriarchal organization. These elements would form the bulk of the 'new' communists driven by bureaucratic careers and not Bolshevik ideology.

107. Helmut Altrichter, "Insoluble Conflicts, Village Life Between Revolution and Collectivization," Sheila Fitzpatrick, editor, *Russia in the Era of NEP* (Bloomington, 1991), 192-209.

108. V. P. Danilov, *Rural Russia Under the New Regime*, Orlando Figes, translator (Bloomington, 1988), 230.

109. Beatrice Farnsworth "The Soldatka: Folklore and Court Record," *Slavic Review* 49 (Spring: 1990): 58-73.

110. Only once in the 1920s did the yields reach pre-war levels. Danilov, *Rural Russia*, 276.

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