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Land Possession - Between Collectivism and Individualism.

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1. Introduction, terminology and institutional framework.

It has been said that the geography of Russia discourages individual farming¹. Both in pre-revolutionary Russia and in the former Soviet Union, we find a strong tradition of collectiveness related to property rights and organization of farming. Before the 1917-revolution the land commune (where peasants held land in communal tenure) was the dominating institution in the countryside, and during most of the Soviet period the agriculture was organized in state- and collective farms. There were, of course, geographical distinctions; in parts of the western and southern regions like the Baltics, Belo-Russ and west-bank Ukraine², we find that, prior to the revolution, individual property relations were more prominent. After 1929/30, agriculture throughout the Soviet Union was organized based on collectiveness, based on different principles though, and there were little room left for elements of individualism. This paper focus on collectivism and individualism in tsarist Russia and former Soviet Union, and relate it to the development in Ukraine today.

Ukraine, like most of the former Soviet republics, has abandoned state ownership as the only acceptable type of ownership of real property. Today Ukraine has opened up for new structures of ownership and property rights. From my "western" point of view, my immediate reaction was to expect a development towards individual, private so-called family-farming. The signals we have got so far, indicates that the old patterns of collectivism and individualism might influence on the choices people of today make in connection to the new opportunities of becoming landowners and farmers.

Collective, individual, state and private are key concepts and terms in this paper. Related to ownership and property rights, they could be seen along a line where we find state ownership as the ultimate collective in one end, and individual, private ownership at the other end. In between we find various other forms of collective, individual, state and private property relations. Some of them will be close to state ownership, other to individual, private ownership. The position along the line explain their inner relationship with each other and the degree of "collectiveness".

The concepts of "property right" and "ownership" in the western sense are not easily applied to Russia. Sevatal, 1994 says: "The concept of "right", associated with or linked to the concept of "property" and attributed to individual citizens, seems to have been very poorly developed, or not at all. (...). Property seems to have been largely attributed to authority. The autocracy seems to have been ideologically justified in an ethos that placed the common good

¹ Pipes, R. 1974, p. 16.

² Some of these territories did not come under Soviet control until after WW II.

and the welfare of the state, above the welfare of the individuals. To bestow property rights in the form of individual, hereditary ownership, independent of the state, to for instance the peasants, were contradictory to this ethos." It is important to notice the fact that, except for the period 1861 - 1917, the Russian peasants have generally not been allowed legal title to the land. Almost all land was considered the property of the prince, later the Tsar. In 1785 the nobility were granted ownership rights by Catharine the Great, and in 1861 the reforms following the emancipation of the serfs bestowed the peasants with the right to own land. This right were removed after the 1917-revolution when the state became the sole owner of land. In this paper "ownership right" is used in connection to legal title, while "property right" refers to different tenure systems and other rights in land.

To be able to understand the strong traditions of collectiveness connected to property rights and ways of farming, it is necessary to mention two institutions that have been dominating large parts of the Russian countryside and peasant society for several decades. One is the joint family, the other is the land commune (*mir* or *obshchina* in Russian). There has been written a lot about these institutions, I will describe them only briefly. It is also necessary to mention the most important agricultural system, the three field system.

The joint family was the traditional type of peasant family in Russia, prevalent until a century ago. It consisted of father, mother, minor children and married sons with their wives and offspring. The head of the joint family was usually the father, in Russian called *bol'shak*. He had the final say in all family matters and matters concerning the agricultural work. The quality of the peasants performance depended in large measure on the intelligence and authority of the *bol'shak*. All property were held in common and the joint family was said to be economically very advantageous. The joint family was supported by the authorities and the landlords which preferred to deal with the head of the household rather than its individual members. The landlords did not have to worry about peasants unable to work, they were taken care of by their families³.

The land commune. There were two main types of land communes in Russia regarding property rights. The most important, and the one best known was the redistributational commune. Under this communal tenure a peasant's dwelling and garden plot were considered permanent, hereditary household property, but arable fields belonged to the commune and were redistributed from time to time among the member households, according to the size of the household or labour force. Each family worked its own land separately, but the three field system made it necessary to coordinate field activities. In the second type of land commune, peasants held land in a form of hereditary tenure. It gave the peasants permanent possession of their arable lands as well as their dwelling plots. Land redistribution was not performed in these communes, but land division due to inheritance had led to the same pattern of small intermixed strips that were found in the redistributational commune⁴. The origin of the land commune is debated, but modern investigators believe that peasant households in fifteenth-century Muscovy ordinarily held their fields in hereditary tenure, cultivated them independently and had the right to sell, buy or dispose of them freely⁵. The unit for administrative and fiscal purposes were called *volosts*, and consisted of neighbouring households and settlements. Peasants within a *volost* were taxed collectively, and shared the right to use certain local lands.

³ Pipes, 1974.

⁴ Atkinson, 1983.

⁵ Atkinson, 1983.

The commune was collectively responsible for the taxes of all its members. Taxes and feudal obligation were based primarily on land, and the commune apportioned the total tax burden among its member households according to the amount of land held by each. The tax base was shifted in 1679 from land to households in an attempt to extract more tax. The peasants reaction was to consolidate their households, and in 1722 Peter the Great introduced a direct tax on individual "souls". Before the late seventeenth century there seems to have been little communal land redistribution among households even in the northern regions where communes remained strongest. Once the tax was fixed and more or less equal for all individual households, the commune could no longer adjust the tax load in proportion to landholdings, but had to adjust landholdings in proportion to the tax. One consequence of the redistributions was what could be called an "equalization" of the size of the holdings within the commune. The practice of redistribution became widespread in the late seventeenth century and by the middle of the eighteenth century it was dominant in central Russia⁶. The dissemination of the redistributive commune varied in different parts of the country. In central European Russia it was more or less universal. The western regions had long been influenced by foreign rulers, and communal tenure was either absent or very weak in the Baltic region, White Russia and west-bank Ukraine. It seems that the upper east-bank Ukraine has been affected by their neighbours across the river. Each descendant of the original settlers were recognized as having a fixed share of the village land. In time, the shares came to vary widely in size as they were sold, bought and subdivided among heirs. The peasant holdings in this area remained unequal, and during the eighteenth century came to be recognized as hereditary⁷.

The three field system. The dominant agricultural system for several decades (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries) was the three field system. One third of the arable land was used for summer crops, one third for winter crops, and one third was always kept fallow. All the fields belonging to a village were divided into groups according to quality of the soil, distance from the village, water supply and so on. Each field was then divided into sections (called *kliny*), one for summer crop, one for winter crop and one kept fallow. The sections were divided into strips which were distributed to the households. The land kept fallow and cropped fields was used for grazing livestock. This required a common crop and a common system of crop rotation. The three-field system intensified the need for organization in agriculture. It turned out that both communal organization and seignorial authority were capable of coordinating field operations, and both the commune and the serfdom developed alongside the three field system⁸.

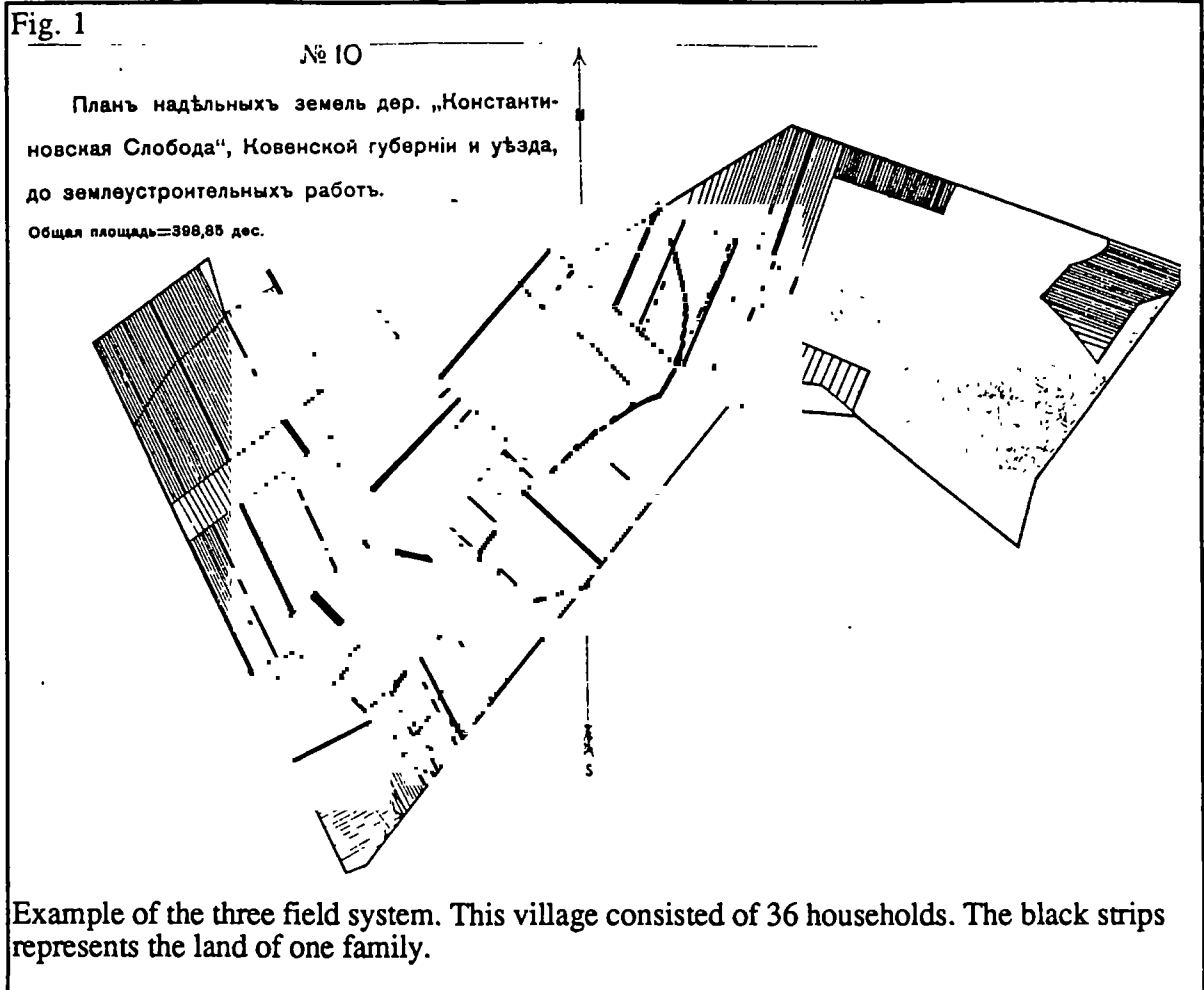
2. Individual and collective property rights in tsarist Russia.

For a majority of Russian peasants, the collective element was present in most parts of their lives. The land was owned collectively (or the right to use the land), the main decisions regarding crops and coordination of farm work was made by the commune and the household consisted often of several married couples. On the other hand, the dwellings and garden plots were individual household property and each family worked its own land separately and owned the produce of its work. The individual elements seem to have been connected to the household and not so much to the individual persons. The minority of peasants held their land in hereditary tenure and could dispose of their land more freely, especially concerning alienation. Because of the three field system, cooperation and coordination of field work and crop rotation

⁶ Atkinson, 1983.

⁷ Atkinson, 1983.

⁸ Medvedev, 1987.



was necessary also in the hereditary commune. The collective elements were present here, although not as pronounced as in the redistributive commune. In the lives of the Russian peasants, elements of collectivism and individualism were present at the same time, although not equally dominant.

2.1 Abolition of serfdom.

In the period immediately following the emancipation of the serfs, we see a strengthening of the commune⁹ and the collective elements. As mentioned earlier, Russian peasants prior to 1861 had no formal title to the land. The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 opened up the possibility for peasants to become legal owners of their land. But the ownership was not individualized; the government entrusted the ownership title to the peasants' allotment to the commune rather than to the individual household or individual person. This was done for several reasons. The commune was the only provision for local government that was at hand at village level. The emancipation freed the landlords from responsibility for peasants' taxes and without the

⁹ The emancipation legislation used the term "rural society". The new legal entity could consist of an entire village, part of a large village, several small villages or separate neighbouring peasant landholders using some land in common or having other economic relations. (Atkinson, 1983) I will in this paper, continue to use the term commune.

commune it would be very difficult to collect dues from the peasants. The government also feared that the free peasants would abandon the soil and roam the countryside in search for other work. In order to prevent this, the commune was retained where it had already existed and was introduced where it had been unknown¹⁰.

Because the emancipation legislation recognized communal tenure, the peasants was in effect now bound to the commune. As before, the commune was collectively responsible for the tax, but in addition it was now also collectively responsible for the payment of the allotment land. (The land bought by the commune from the landlords.) The land was allotted to the peasants as communal (redistributional) or hereditary property according to the local form of tenure. Communal tenure (with allotment of land and corresponding taxes as its primary characteristics, redistribution secondary) was accepted as the basic form of peasant landholdings by the Editorial Commission. Transition to private property was recognized as a future possibility, and hereditary tenure was legally recognized as an intermediary stage along such a path. Hereditary tenure could be adopted by a two-thirds vote of communes were it had not previously existed. A two-third majority vote was also necessary to carry out a land redistribution¹¹.

How was the relationship between the peasant and the commune? In many ways the commune was "forced" on the peasant. The emancipation legislation stated that the households was not merely granted a share of communal land, but was obliged to accept it. It was very difficult to leave the commune, and an departure would have to be done on very unfavourable economic conditions. In theory, a householder could redeem his house and garden plot alone and renounce an allotment, but it was difficult in practise. The peasant had to renounce all claims to the commune's allotment land in addition to paying half of the redemption assessment on his allotment. He had to pay all current taxes and obtain consent of the head of the household. Even if he managed all this, the commune could refuse to accept the other half of the redemption assessment, and in this way prevent him from separating from the commune. Only if he paid of the entire redemption assessment could he claim his fields as permanent hereditary property, or he could take his leave. Peasants in hereditary tenure communities could leave at any time if they could find someone to assure the redemption payment on their allotment. This was not easy since the payments generally exceeded land rental costs. Few peasants were able to redeem their allotment or leave the commune under such conditions, up till 1892 only 125000 had done so¹². A new law in 1893 forbade any withdrawal from the commune, even if all the redemption assessment was paid, unless authorised by two-thirds of the membership.

At the end of the nineteenth century it became more and more obvious that the commune did not act as the stabilising force the government had hoped for, and that it stood in the way of economic and agricultural progress. The peasants were discontent for several reasons. Redemption assessment on top of heavy taxes made it very difficult for the peasants to meet their fiscal obligations. Hardworking and enterprising commune members had to bear fiscal responsibility for the indolent, inept and alcoholic ones. A very large increase in population

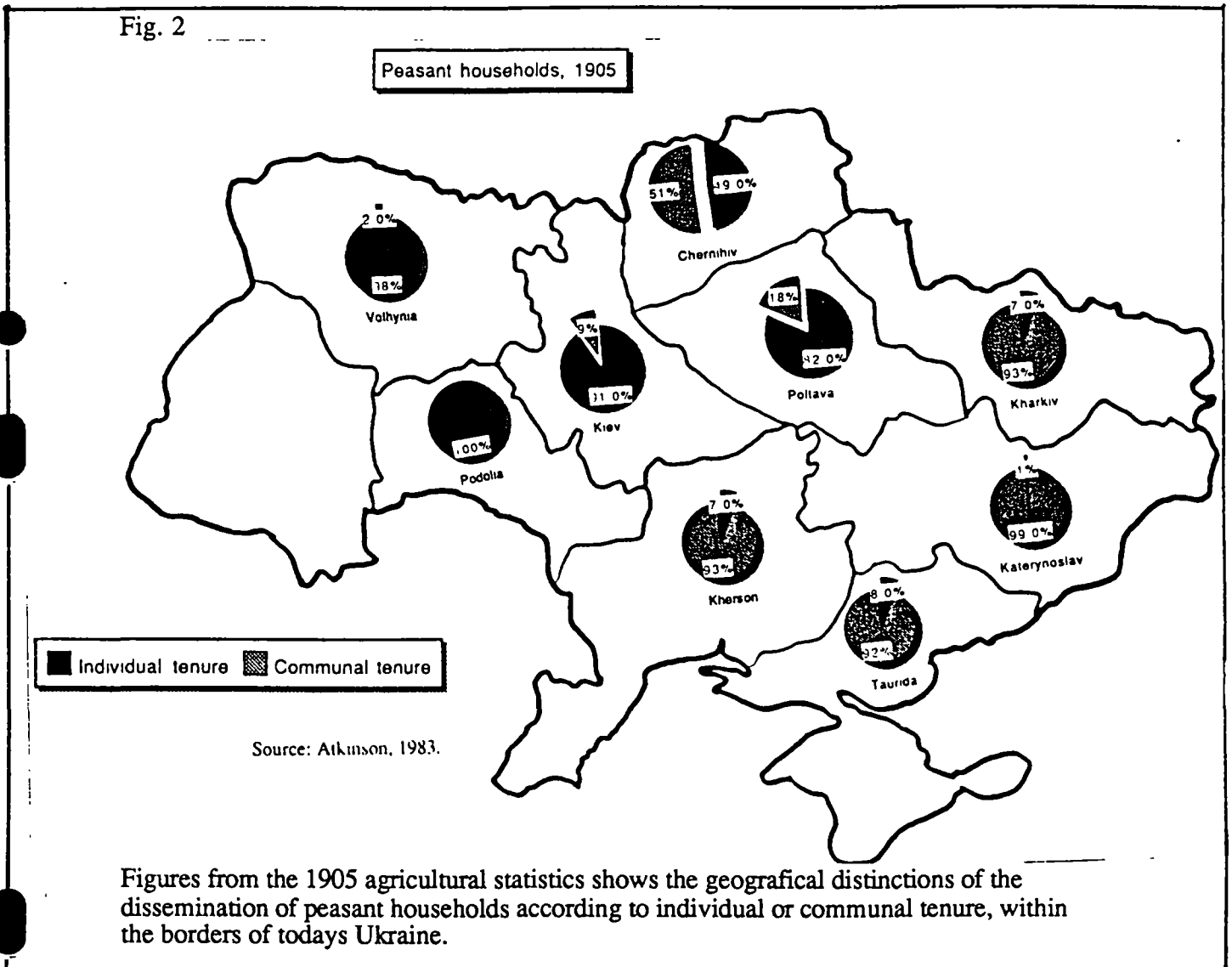
¹⁰ Atkinson, 1983.

¹¹ Atkinson, 1983.

¹² Atkinson, 1983.

contributed to worsening the situation. This, among other factors¹³, brought forward a crises in the Russian agriculture, which, in turn, was decisive for the outbreak of the 1905-revolution. When the government got the situation under control, it undertook a belated agrarian reform.

Fig. 2



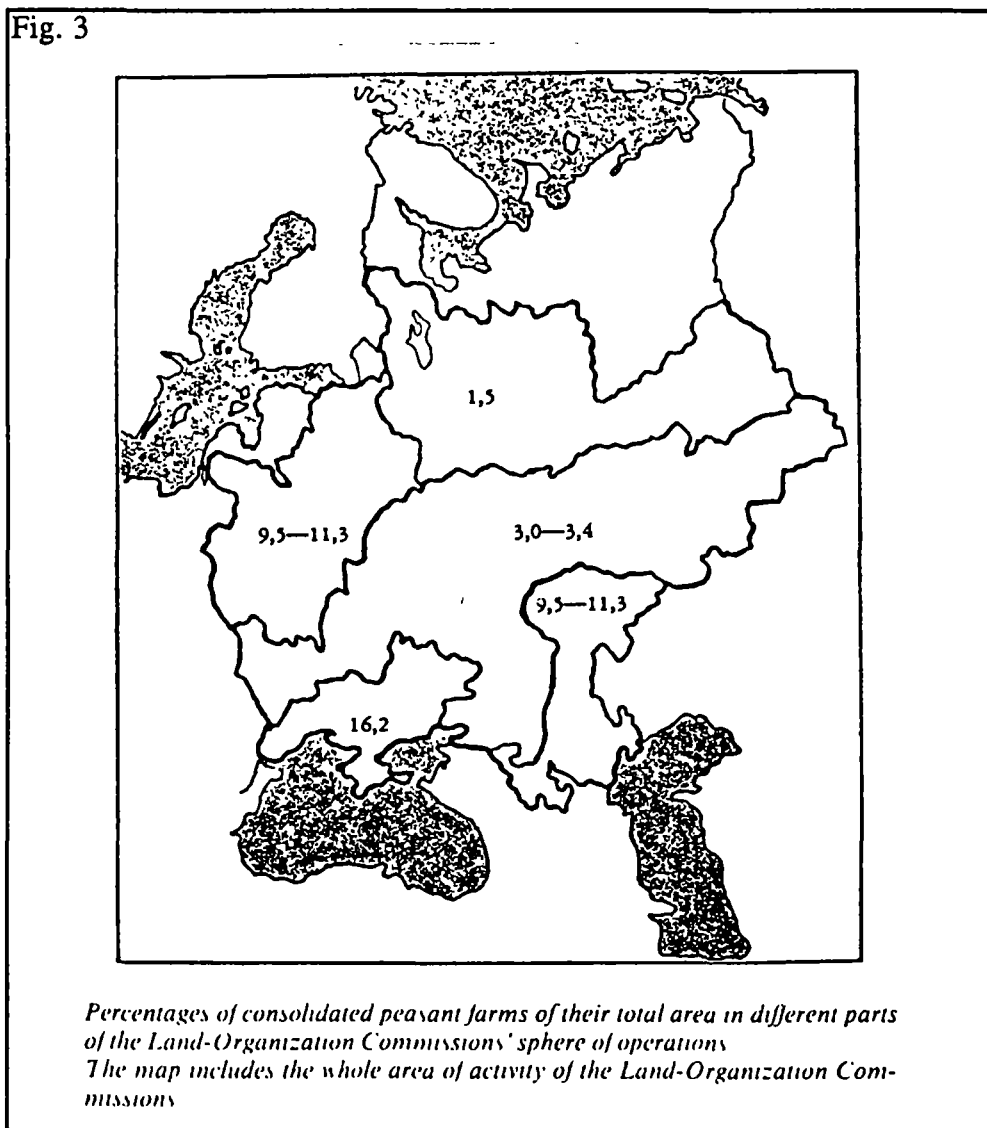
2.2. The Stolypin reforms.

Already in 1903, the mutual responsibility of commune members for state taxes was abandoned, and in November 1906 came the first decree which initiated the Stolypin reforms¹⁴. The first reform proposal provided that all peasant holders of allotment land were to be able to claim it as their personal property and would be free to leave the commune at will. It also provided for the physical consolidation of lands converted from communal to hereditary tenure. The redemption payments were abolished and so were the commune's authority over peasant

¹³ One of these other factors was the dissolution of the joint family. As soon as the personal authority of the landlord had been lifted of the peasants, the joint family split up their common properties and broke up into individual households. This was a drawback concerning rural productivity which the peasants were aware of, still they not only didn't want to live under the same roof at their kin, but also preferred not to work jointly with them. (Pipes, 1974)

¹⁴ The reforms are named after the Russian Prime Minister at that time, Peter Stolypin.

movement through passport control. The second reform of June 1910 dissolved all the communes which had not redistributed land since the emancipation. These were mostly in the central, northern and western parts of the country where the villages were small and poor and the soil required substantial investment to increase its fertility¹⁵. May 1911 came a third decree which simplified consolidation and leaving the commune in any part of the country. Peasants leaving the commune could register their allotment as their own private property even if it was still fragmented into strips. They could sell parts or all of their land if they wished to move.



Individualization could mean merely what I have called a “juridical “ individualization; an individualization of the ownership in the legal sense and introduction of full title, without consolidation of strips. The “physical” individualization (which, of course, also included the juridical elements) could be limited to the consolidation of strips, or it could be the establishing of isolated farmsteads. By 1915 about half of all the households in Russia had become private owners of their allotments. Land title had been given to 6 to 7 million owners (the head of the household was considered the sole property owner) and between 1.2 and 1.5 million peasants

¹⁵ Medvedev, 1987.

had been able to consolidate their holdings into separate farms¹⁶. The peasants throughout Russia were not equally interested in the reforms. This is illustrated by Kofoed in fig. 3. We see that the southern and western regions are much more responsive to the opportunities of individualization and consolidation.

The Stolypin reforms opened up for private, individualised ownership and farming in a way that had never been seen in Russia before. The peasants reacted, in my opinion, fairly positive to these new opportunities. Far from everybody choose to consolidate his property, but the process had started, and I think it would have accelerated if it had not been disturbed by the war and the revolution. It seems to me that many authors on this subject expected a rapid change, and when this did not occur, it is interpreted as lack of interest or reluctance from the peasants. Processes shaping new conditions regarding ownership and property rights, takes time (unless forced on the population, like the 1930-32 collectivisation).

3. Collective and individual property rights in the Soviet Union.

Lenin's decree on nationalization of land Oct. 1917 made an end to pomeshchik land (land that belonged to the nobility) and also transformed communal ownership of land into the leasing of land which now belonged to the state. The leases had no time limit and there was no guarantee that the peasant would retain the full ownership of his produce. The land decree stated that all private property rights were abolished and the land became the property of the state. The land of the nobility was to be confiscated and distributed to the poor peasants. The decree did not entail legal approval of the peasants redistribution of land. Nevertheless, redistribution of pomeshchik land was rapidly completed. Again, no entity apart from the communes, possessed the authority and power to control events in the countryside¹⁷.

3.1. War communism and NEP

War Communism and food requisitions made the kulaks¹⁸ return to the communes, which could give them some protection. The amount of individually cultivated land fell. The government wanted more productive peasants and a segregation of the more prosperous households. It introduced a "new version" of the Stolypin reforms, and the legislation from 1922 encouraged consolidation and separation from the village (commune). According to the Land Code, peasants could choose between communal and consolidated forms of agriculture. The post-revolutionary communes were in a better position than the communes after the emancipation of the serfs, because they also disposed of forests, meadows, and pastures and some local industries and rural trade. Consolidation without the right to sell, buy, or rent land was not successful at first and was also opposed by the commune. But the peasants could see that the consolidated fields were more productive. Number of applications grew, and in 1925 the proportion of land under individual, consolidated tenure had reached the pre-revolutionary level in some provinces. Most applications came from poor peasants, the kulaks were afraid to leave the commune. In 1927 there was a change in the official attitude. A draft

¹⁶ Medvedev, 1987. Kofoed, 1985.

This seems to be considered a very low number by some authors of this subject, and taken as "proof" off that the peasants were not interested in leaving the commune. But it must be taken into consideration that land consolidation work is very comprehensive, for instance, field work like land surveying and land valuation can only be done during the summer season and requires trained personnel.

¹⁷ Medvedev, 1987.

¹⁸ Kulak - term used for the better off peasants and turned into the main enemy during collectivization

resolution envisaged the collectivization of agriculture. Attempts were made to restrict the trend towards consolidation and separation of individual households. "Those who were in favour of collective agriculture realized that it would be more difficult to sell the idea of collectivization to individual consolidated farmers who had developed psychological links with their own land than to the land societies." (Medvedev, 1987.) The initial idea was to transfer communes into peasant cooperatives. Instructions came from Moscow to prevent individual consolidation. In 1928 the practice was suspended and peasants whose applications were still in the pipeline were labelled kulaks.

3.2. The situation after forced collectivisation.

The forced collectivisation put an effective stop to the expansion of individual, private farming, and changed almost everything in the countryside. The resistance was hard in Ukraine and other regions with a high percentage of individual farmers¹⁹. The collective farm (*kolkhos*) and the state farm (*sovkhos*) now became the dominant organization in Soviet agriculture and remained in this position until the disruption of the Soviet Union. After the collectivisation, the collective farms dominated in number and percentage of arable land,²⁰ but over time more and more collective farms were converted into state farms, mostly for economical reasons. The number of farms, both collective and state, declined as a consequence of amalgamation. The land which formed the collective farm belonged to the state and was leased to the collective farm for permanent use.

During 1939 and 1940, the Soviet Union annexed the western parts of the Ukraine and Belorussia, the Baltic States, part of Finland and Bessarabia. The new western regions were primarily agricultural with successful private farming. Collectivization in the new territories was even more painful than it had been in Russia in the early 1930s. The communal system had long disappeared or it had never existed, and the peasants owned their land individually. In the Baltic states most peasants lived on individual scattered farms, which made the introduction of collective farms very difficult.

The peasants in the state farms were considered workers, and had a fixed salary. They were entitled to vacations and pensions. The collective farms were in principle, a producer cooperation and the peasants were members of this cooperation. Their income were dependent on the performance of the collective, but the collective were not free to dispose of its produce. "According to the rules, the first obligation of the *kolkhos* was to the state. As soon as harvest began, the first priority was to deliver grain to the state in accordance with the procurement quotas, and the quotas were very high. The second priority was to create seed reserves, supplies for feed grain and insurance reserves, and to pay the Machine Tractor Stations (MTS) in kind for any work that had been done. Only then could the rest of the harvest be distributed among the *kolkhoznik* families." (Medvedev, 1987). Under Khrushchev the system changed, and the collective members started to get some of their income in monthly wages. At the end of the Soviet era, there were little difference between state farm workers and collective farm

¹⁹ In a book from 1947 called "Forced labour in Soviet Russia" by D. J. Dallin and B. I. Nicolaevsky there is a chapter about classification of the prisoners, and one group of political prisoners are "peasants under suspicion of individualistic tendency, and therefore not wanted on the collective farms. Most of them are peasants from the Ukraine (...)."

²⁰ In 1940 about 93 percent of all arable land in the country was cultivated by the *kolkhosy*. By 1985 their share had fallen to 40 percent. (Medvedev, 1987.)

members as regards wages.

Each member family had the right to a small plot for personal production. The size of these personal plots varied from 0.1 to 0.5 hectares. Workers on the state farms were also allowed from 0.1 to 0.15 hectares each for private cultivation. There were restrictions on the number of animals each family could hold and draft animals were totally forbidden. The personal plots did not belong to the household. They remained the property of the collective farm, and if all members of a household stopped working on the farm, the plot could be taken away from them. In the communes and land societies individual plots had never been considered part of the communal land, and their absorption by the collective farms was a serious source of discontent. Personal plots were also provided for the urban households, either through their employer or membership in a garden association.

Soviet agriculture was characterized by a "large scale" socialist sector and a "small scale" private sector. This structure of very large socialist enterprises and very small private enterprises has been kept more or less the same from the time of forced collectivization until now. There have, of course, been some changes, amalgamation and conversion of state and collective farms are already mentioned. The personal plots have also been the targets of various campaigns; sometimes reduction of area and livestock, sometimes encouragement to keep more animals and to increase the private production.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, there were signs indicating a slow turn towards more individualization. The peasants could organize themselves in so-called contract collectives which turned out to be profitable for the peasants, but it did not raise the overall production. Regarding the personal plots, a decree from 1981 abolished the limit on number of livestock that could be privately owned and gave the households the right to lease extra land from the socialist sector to grow fodder. Urban allotments virtually became private property which could be inherited. In 1982 came a law that allowed citizens to own one draft animal, this was considered a breakthrough since draft animals were means of production, and all such should belong to the state.

One might wonder why the Soviet leaders allowed private agriculture at all. It is not in accordance with the communist principles (in a 1919 decree it had been stated that "Nobody shall have the right to introduce private animals, birds or household gardens.") and the peasant was considered to be not a worker, but a member of the petty bourgeoisie, whose secret wish was to become a landowner. All throughout the Soviet period, the authorities have held a zig-zag course towards the private sector. "(...) on one hand [we find a] instinctive distrust and dislike of private plot activities (...) and on the other a periodically suppressed realization of dependence on the private sector's contribution to total agricultural output." (Hedlund, 1989.) There were many reasons for the authorities to allow the private plots, but the most important turned out to be the economical reasons. The private plots produced almost the total amount of vegetables and fruit, and a substantial part of dairy products, meat and poultry. Soviet agriculture were in fact dependent on the private sector to be able to provide the population with enough food.

During the Soviet period the collective elements have been very strong. The "collective line"

was strongly supported by the authorities, one could even be sent to labour camps for being to "individualistic". Private ownership of land was totally absent, and in most of the period large agricultural enterprises dominated the production. The ordinary peasant had little influence on his own working situation; he worked as a member of a brigade, and the decisions regarding the work performance of each brigade were taken above the head of him. The peasant did not own the produce of his own work, and his share of any surplus was highly dependent on the effort of the other brigade members. Nevertheless (or maybe because of this), the elements of individualism that existed connected to the personal plots became very important. It must not be forgotten that virtually all of the rural households were entitled to a plot, and by that got experience in individual farming. Those who did not have a plot were in any way dependent on the private sector for their supply of fruit and vegetables and maybe also meat and milk. I think it is correct to say that most of the population had some kind of relationship to the private sector, and that they depended on it in different ways.

4. Development in Ukraine today.

As what is written above have shown us, "(...) both collective and individualistic principles have been present and at work [both in tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union]. The principle of "collectiveness" combined with strong authoritarian government have had the upper hand. A striking feature seems to be a lack of practical balance and coexistence between collective and individual types of ownership; something like the pragmatic evolution of suitable types of ownership, so important in the West. (...) It is unclear to what extent collective values may be predominant in the various rural societies. One should normally expect them to be, taken into account the historical traditions, the heavy rhetorics in the last two generations, and the important role of the collective farm in providing service and security at local level." (Sevatdal, 1994.)

One of the intentions of this paper is to see if it possible to trace some of the patterns of collectivism and individualism in the Ukraine today. The development towards privatization has not come very far, and it is of course too early to draw any conclusions. On the other hand, it should be possible to make some "qualified guessing" and put forward working hypothesis.

The Ukrainian government has made an important decision; private ownership rights to land and other means of production will be introduced (and are being introduced at this moment.) The legislation to support private ownership is not completed, but the Ukrainian Supreme Rada has adopted a Land Code. I will not go in detail about the Land Code, I am not that familiar with its content, but I will give an account of some of the main points. The land of the state and collective farms will be transferred to them as their property with the right to distribute the land among the members (both workers and pensioners) in equal parts (shares) with the right to separate the plots to create independent farms, small cooperatives, associations. This land is to be regarded as private property, i.e. when it comes to inheritance and sale. The State will hold back, in funds, some of the land that has been used by the state and collective farms. One is the Reserve Lands; between 7 and 10 % of the land used by the collective and state farms are to be transferred to this fund. The purpose of the fund is to provide land for citizens that are not workers or members of state or collective farms. They can obtain land plots for different purposes such as creation of individual farms, collective gardening, kitchen-gardening, house construction, cottage and garage building. Another fund, the State Land Reserve, is created to

provide for the expansion of individual subsidiary plots, and create new ones. This fund will take over up to 15 % of the land from the collective and state farms²¹. The Land Code opens up for several parallel lines of development. One is a functional reorganisation of the state and collective farms, i.e. the particular divisions and departments will emerge as separate enterprises, both functionally and in the legal sense. This could be favourable because one could use the existing machinery, constructions and infra-structure. One other line could be the establishing of family-farms. In spite of economical and practical difficulties, the number of family farms are increasing steadily. In the beginning of 1992 it was registered 2098 family farms, in October 1993 the number was 26 048²². A third line could be a further development of the existing private plots. Such a development has been provided for through the State Land Reserve Fund. Besides, a large part of the rural population will, according to the Land Code, be entitled to their private plot as well as a share in the state or collective farm.

The choice between a collective and individual way of farming are now to some degree in the hands of those who are to become the new land owners. Will their decisions be influenced by the historical traditions of collectiveness and individualism? It is possible to get some indication from surveys carried out in Ukraine the last five years.

4.1. Presentation of surveys.

The first survey is presented in an article by Alessandro Bonanno, Andrei Kuznetsov, Simon Geletta and Mary Hendrickson, 1992 : "To Farm or Not to Farm: Rural Dilemma in Russia and Ukraine." The article brings up the question of identification of behaviours of people directly involved in agricultural production. The study presented in the article asks who among collective and state farm workers will more likely be involved in private farming in the post-Soviet society. Data were collected summer 1991 in to areas in southern Russia and eastern Ukraine (Donetsk). The desire to be involved in private farming is assessed by two variables; 1) decision to expand or reduce the private plot and number of animals, 2) decision to buy or lease land for private farming. The analysis focus on human capital, prior experience of working in private farming and the emerging ideology of private ownership. The analysis finds a correlation between human capital and the two variables. This could be an indication that a number of young, educated rural residents who are active in the work force, are willing, at least in principle, to become involved in some forms of private farming. Involvement in small-scale private farming had a negative (marginally significant) bearing on the decision to expand the family operation and no relation to the decision to buy farm land. Ideological commitment displayed no relation to the decision to expand the family operation, but had a significantly positive, yet weak association with the decision to buy or lease land for farming.

The second survey is a graduate level course thesis in organisation and leadership by Dagunn Onsaker Berg, Eli Forthun and Knut Skarsem 1992.: "Possibilities of Family Farms and Workers Cooperatives as Models for Agricultural Organization in Ukraine." As the title says, this thesis tries to reveal the attitudes towards family farms and workers cooperatives among agricultural workers. Data was collected autumn 1992 at three state farms in central Ukraine. People were grouped according to whether they wanted to obtain land for private farming or not, and whether they were "farmers at heart" or "speculants". The survey showed that 56% of the respondents did not want land, 20 % wanted land and 23 % didn't know. 50 % of those

²¹ Onischenko, 1994.

²² Pribytkova, 1994.

who wanted land stated the reason to be business or money. The main obstacle for obtaining land was lack of money for investments, many wanted land, but did not see how they could manage to work it. Of the people with an opinion on private ownership almost 75 % were in favour, only one person stated that he was not in favour of private ownership. Regarding family farms 15% were not in favour, and 42 % didn't know. The general view on workers cooperative; 64 % were positive, 20 % negative, 16 % neutral.

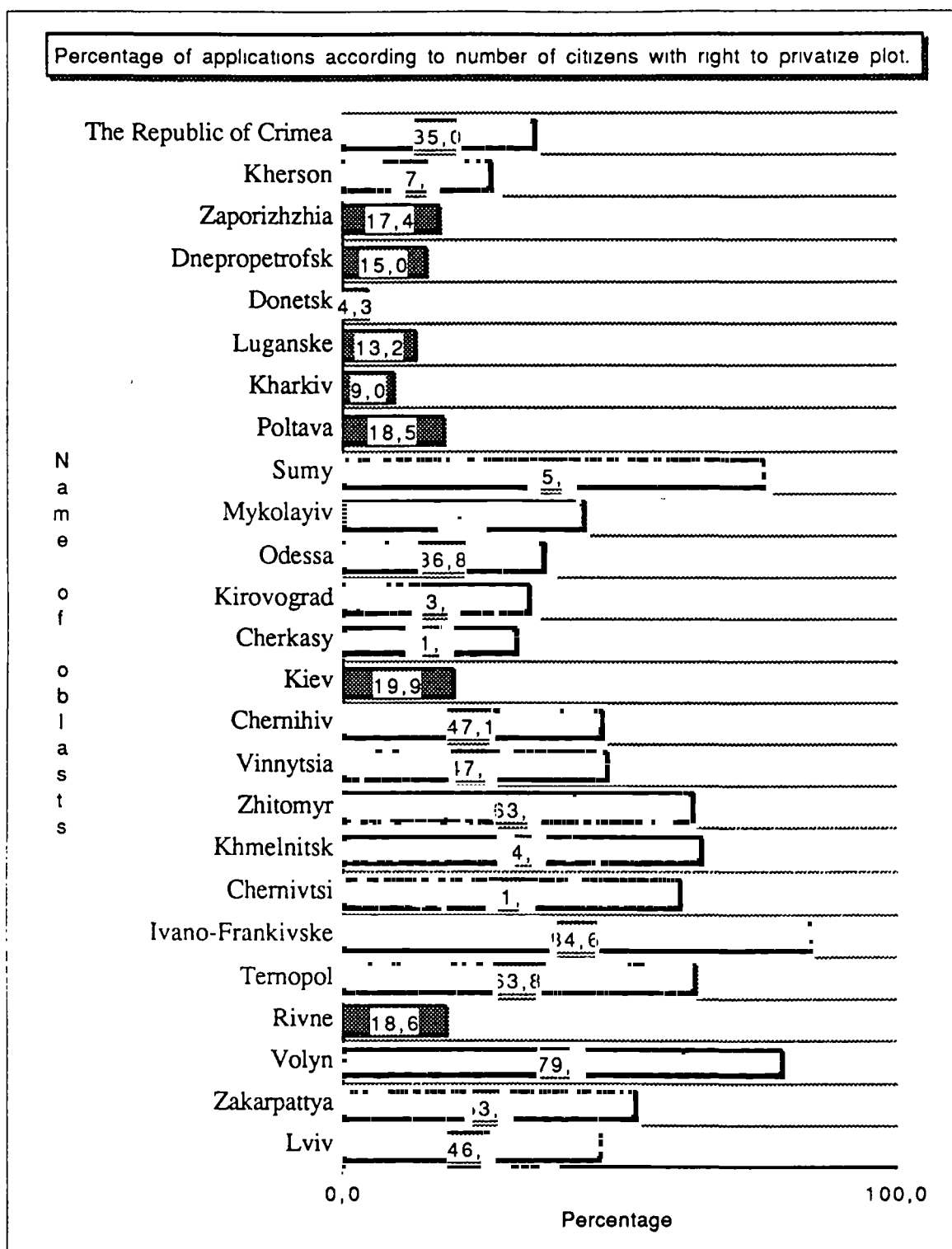
The third survey is also a graduate level course thesis in organisation and leadership by Ola Kristian Dille, Signe-Lise Dahl, Solveig Lothe and Mari Pran, 1992 : "The reorganisation and transformation of Ukrainian agricultural production. Social and cultural prerequisites for private farming." The questions asked in this survey is very much the same as in the previous (almost identical questionnaires were used), but this time asked among students at an Agricultural Institute in central Ukraine. Data was collected autumn 1992. This survey showed that 20% of the respondents did not want land, 40 % wanted land and 40 % didn't know. The main reasons for wanting land were independence, money reasons and production for sale. The main obstacle for obtaining land was no confidence in the future, not wanting farming as life style, lack of knowledge and then, in 4.th place, lack of money. Of the students with an opinion on private ownership 68 % were in favour, 10 % were against and 23 % were neutral. Regarding the organization of agriculture 21 % preferred state farms, 36 % independent cooperatives, 11 % stock holding companies and 32 % family farms.

The fourth survey is a research undertaken in the framework of the Norwegian - Ukrainian project "Rural Development and Social Change in Ukraine." (Pribytkova, 1994) Among its goals was to find out about the attitude of peasants to different forms of property, including private plots, their attitude to privatization of land and participation in this process. The results show that about two thirds of the respondents were positive towards privatization, either privatization off all state- and collective farm lands, or parts of it. The preferred organization seems to be some kind of worker cooperatives, since of the 48 % who had a wish to take land as private property, only 10 % wanted more than 1 ha. Only 2.7 % would like to be private farmers themselves and only 5.4 % would like their children to be private farmers. Regarding the private plots, about half of the respondents had privatized their private plot, and about 25 % would like to increase its size. Only 3 % would like to get rid of their plot.

These four surveys can only give us some hints about the future development, they cover only very limited areas and the number of people involved are low. My interpretation of the surveys is that the general attitude towards privatisation is positive, and that a large part of the people questioned would want a development towards private and individual farming, but they don't see this as an realistic possibility for themselves. It feels more safe to remain in the state- or collective farm.

In addition to the surveys presented, I have got information about the process of privatization of land parcels by citizens of the Ukraine by October 1st 1994. This information is in the form of statistics provided by the Land Use Organisation Institute in Kiev. I present part of these statistics because I believe that peoples eagerness to privatize their plots and get legal title to them, can tell us something about their attitudes towards private ownership, and maybe something about their preferences regarding collective or individual ownership. As can be seen from the diagram, people in the western *oblasts* (county), where individual tenure were almost enerådende prior to the revolution, have been more eager to privatize their plots. The average

Fig. 4



for Ukraine as a whole is 34 %, while the average for western Ukraine (Lviv, Zakarpattya, Volyn, Rivne, Ternopol, Ivano-Frankivske, Chernivtsi, Khmel'nitsk, Zhitomyr and Vinnytsia) is 58 %. The average for central Ukraine (Kiev, Chernihiv, Cherkasy, Kirovograd, Odessa and Mykolayiv) is 35.5 % and the average for eastern Ukraine (Sumy, Poltava, Kharkiv, Luganske, Donetsk, Dnepropetrofsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Crimea) is 24 %. We find the

same pattern here regarding collectiveness and individualism as we found in the 1905 statistics .

Based on these rather vague indications, I must admit, I will put forward the working hypothesis that patterns of collectivism and individualism reappear and will influence on the choices people of today make in connection decisions regarding ownership and property rights. This paper is the first step in a discussion who will be continued in further development of the hypothesis.

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