

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIA:
INTERDEPENDENCE AND INTERCONDITIONALITY
(RETROSPECTIVE OUTLOOK)**

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Abstract: Problems of the country's self-identification, interrelation between both society structure and dynamics of its economic development are reviewed. Author's vision of the specific social structure of Russian empire is given. A hypothesis about cyclic nature of the stratification processes is presented. Features of transformation processes in Russia from the second half of the 19th century to the first half of the 20th century are analyzed.

Key words: stratification, society, Russia, economic development.

Social upheavals in the XX century (Revolution of 1905, the civil war of 1917, NEP, collectivization, industrialization, etc.) did not come to pass due to the permanent global crisis, as many researchers consider, but because of the fact that the state and the society could not respond to the challenges of time and cope with the process of modernization and self-identification¹. Seeking the best ways of transition from a traditional society to an industrial one initiated by the government has found no response among the general public. Single new features appeared as results of regular transformations have come into a conflict with the heritage of the preceding transformations. Global, extremely painful changes in the mentality of separate layers of population as well as the society in general went on.

Any living organism (and a society is no exception) is known to possess an inherent instinct of self-preservation during the revolutions, wars and troubles and this is what ensures the preservation of statehood. People's behavior during the Great Terror of the Soviet people is a good example of this situation. People tried to survive under abnormal living conditions, being guided solely by biological instincts and drives; that sometimes would be achieved at the cost of rejecting all moral norms. In part, this guaranteed their loyalty to power by any means including distancing from politics. Abnormality and illogicality in the existence of the Soviet society is clearly demonstrated in a distinct political trend of outcasting the representatives of "old estates" (so-called "formers") from the new Russian society. Pre-revolutionary engineering and technology intellectuals along with scientists of different fields, without whose activities any country would not be able to develop effectively, were also put in the same category with them. Moreover, a substantial number of persons who have come out of "pre-revolutionary experts" belonged to power structures of the Soviet society as ministers, secretaries of social committees, etc. But this social group was a silent unit, like the vast majority of other Soviet citizens. This example shows the "biological" basis of transformation processes (in contrast to European - socio-economic), typical for Russia in the first half of the XX century.

¹According to A. Toynbee's theory, the society must answer to Logos challenge [29].

Great cataclysms that would occasionally make Russia shake are associated with the times of America's development by European settlers. Russia all the time turns out to be the new "wild continent" on the same geographical space with the new rules of the game and there is no time for the mentality to "adapt" to the new circumstances. The society takes old and outdated relic techniques of power and political methods of manipulations with it, carrying them over into a new transformed country and changed conditions believing that they must work efficiently in a completely new environment.

A number of researchers believe that the conflict of tradition and modernity (modernization) is a characteristic feature of Russian society, which can be regarded as a defect of the system transformation. We can assume that each crisis is a crisis of Russian society's development. By itself, it does not lead to revolutions, but creates the preconditions for them or only for such a possibility [24]. They become a reality because of external circumstances - military defeats, challenges of wars or transitional periods (as it was during the First World War). But the most important thing in their implementation is a bitter struggle for power between the public opposition, based on general population's dissatisfaction with governmental structures and worsened living conditions.

One cannot ignore the fact that the mentality of Russians is associated with traditional peasant ideas based on communal and Orthodox vision of life by rural laymen. Until the First Russian Revolution, a Russian peasant² believed that all people are equal before God and the Tzar, and everybody should be equal in the community: members should have equal rights, duties and wealth, etc., any deviations leading to sin and loss of respect: "Wealth is a sin before God, and poverty is a sin before people" [20, p. 330]. And it is not only that the peasants constituted over 90% of the population of the Russian Empire, but also the fact that the mentality of industrial workers reflected the paradigm of peasant consciousness, in which way the life of a lobar rural community was built on, as well as the life of partially handicraft guild and bourgeois community. This mentality has provoked and then spontaneously moved the Russian riot in 1905. It has been skillfully used by the Bolsheviks in the period of the Great October Revolution and during the collectivization and, in our opinion, it is one of the reasons for the Soviet Union to break down.

Types of society stratification

According to a popular belief, some social distance between people (social positions) takes place in the social stratification and a hierarchy of social classes is established. Thus, an unequal access of society's members to certain socially significant though limited resources is fixed by establishing social filters at the borders that separate the social strata. E.g., the segregation of social groups can be based on the level of income, education, power, consumption, labor conditions and the way of spending leisure time. Dedicated social groups in the society are estimated by the degree of social prestige, expressing social attractiveness of this or that particular position [12].

According to contemporary sociologists, the simplest stratification model is dichotomous - a division of a society into the elite and the masses. In some of the earliest archaic social systems, a breakdown of a society into clans is accomplished simultaneously with setting up the social inequality between them and within them. The incorporation of social positions in certain social hierarchy goes on during the process of amplification (structuring) of the society [12]. So the castes, estates, classes and strata

² A famous Russian economist M. Tugan-Baranovsky also noted hostility to "factories and the growth of industrial capitalism" as another feature of the "agrarian class" [30, p. 520].

(most scientists consider the strata to be a part of social structure, combining some common social characteristics, such as property, professionalism or other ones) appear. A social class structure of European society was typical for Europe from IV to XIV century. It is characterized by a rigid hierarchy. There were three main classes: the clergy, the nobility and the peasantry. An active dissolution of classes started in XIV century.

Nowadays scientists distinguish three main models of the stratification systems: western, eastern, or oriental, and mixed. The western model can be schematically represented in the form of geometric shapes, in which the ruling class is approximately equal to the number of the lower class in numerity, and the largest class is the middle class. The oriental model can be shown as a pyramid: groups constituting it differ in the amount of power, wealth and prestige, and the most numerous is the lower class. Essentially, it is the most ancient system of stratification. It was set in India about five thousand years ago and preserved till today in a slightly modified form. A difficulty to overcome the borders between strata which makes it virtually impossible to move from one to another (the lack of social mobility) is the main feature of such system.

The social stratification is stable enough, and when boundaries between strata break down due to some reasons, new elements of social system emerge, so the risk for people to become a disorganized mass as well as prerequisites for social upheavals and revolutions comes up.

Modern concepts of social stratification models are complex and multi-layered (polihotomic), multi-dimensional (carried out on several axes) and variable (sometimes admit the existence of a set of stratification models): licenses, quotas, certification, identification of status, rank, privileges and other preferences.

P. Sorokin, the founder of sociology in Russia, defined the division of a society into groups as a result of labor differentiation and the inequality of people as a consequence of these groups' relationship to gained public products. It was him who drew researchers' attention to the phenomenon of social mobility. According to the definition of this scientist, "any transition of an individual or a social object or value, created or modified by the activities of one's social position to another is called social mobility" [26].

However, not all social agents moved from one position to another. There is a situation when social positions move in the social hierarchy themselves; this movement is called "positional mobility" (vertical mobility), or within the same social class (horizontal mobility). Along with the social filter that builds barriers for social movement, there are "social elevators" significantly accelerating this process (in a crisis society - revolution, war, conquest, etc., in a normal and stable society - family, marriage, education, property and so on). The degree of freedom to move from one social layer into another determines a society (closed or open) in many ways.

As noted above, classes, or social strata are formed depending on the position of a group of people in the space of four coordinates, which are such parameters as income, power, education, and prestige. We believe that the very concept of a stratum must be correlated with the concept of "culture" in the modern society. C. Jung wrote that "culture is a way of thinking" [13]. Apparently, in XXI century this issue will become a predominant characteristic of strata in thriving countries and will determine its identity and new ways of development.

The structure of post-Soviet society has been sufficiently studied. We should pay attention to these specific groups that are unique to the present-day Russian society and know no equals in other countries. Thus, the "estate" of new formation may include professional and industry corporations - monopolies (such as Gazprom) and/or professional groups, attached to a source of public resources. The existence of such corporations is a reality of

the social division in contemporary Russian society. It is obvious that their members have a common interest related to their position in the country and the success of their corporation. The overall level of salaries in such corporations is much higher than in other industries. Specific morality and terminology characteristic to such communities has been established, e.g., corporate ethics, or culture.

One can single out yet another phenomenon of the society - the "silent minority" whose members do not want to accept the society's modern morality (a version of rejected people). This is a "class" of people who cannot and sometimes do not wish to publicly express their position. Certainly, this is the fault of the society itself. This phenomenon is a fact of social silence. The author considers it as a doubtless reproach to the modern society (an analogy with characters of V.G. Korolenko's story "Without language" [16]).

Therefore, social equality and justice, transparency and fairness of elections, independence of courts, overcoming corruption, etc. are the most pressing and vital issues nowadays.

An urgent need to improve the education system, the main function of which is to create and form the elite required for the effective development of society is the key socioeconomic problem in Russia, as well as in the former Soviet Union. The USSR was unable to establish economic and moral incentives for the elite brainpower, and as a consequence, to enter the informational world. Reserves of socialistic modernization were not constructively used. Russia has made a global blunder in the 1990s not having used the experience of previous upgrades and positive aspects of the Soviet society (e.g., science and education). The elements of a market-based economy were not consistently integrated into the society (e.g., the competition working for the benefit of the society's). Unwavering confidence in the private property was another mistake, especially when it comes to agriculture. Subsistence farming, various forms of non-professional, sometimes semi-criminal activities truly became survival means for the population of post-Soviet Russia. Soviet middle class had vanished without forming a new one, on which the state could rely on.

Belonging to a particular stratum incurs subjective and objective components, as well as the mobility from one stratum to another. The more such movement depends on the level of income and holds the power and the less this process is affected by the prestige and professional education, the more primitive and rigid the structure of the society becomes. The lack of social mobility leads to irreversible social explosions. The dominance of income and power in the society structure early in the history was consistent with its survival but in post-industrial societies it is a sign of a deep structural degradation. The symptoms of such degradation are known, e.g., the fact that not real qualifications and skills but formal diplomas represent a person's education.

The related dynasty in the administrative system of present-day Russia is very common. They have been replenished "from outside" and members who got to them from other strata and their children inherit the status originally due to social mobility, but one generation later the hereditary members constituted its main core. Thus, in the Soviet period, a number of prestigious social groups with a set of privileges has eventually emerged despite the ideological guidelines and the policy of proletarianization, the existence of the Institute of Red Professors and admission to educational institutions in accordance with the origin. E.g., the degree of saturation in descendants coming from their environment was significant among scientists and humanists as well as those working in medicine and education. This process has especially increased in the last decades before the Soviet Union's breakdown. The traditions of nepotism, or clanism, in the military and diplomatic circles

were very strong (over 2/3 members of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs had immediate and/or extended family in the same system by the time of perestroika).

The new Soviet estates were bound by mutual commodity-money relations of support and service in connection with a tradition of "everyone is connected to everyone". In each class, there was a part that provided for (the powerful) and served (the powerless) other classes and was able to earn additional income — wages, salaries, compensations, etc.

It is worth adding that the prestige of professionalism was substituted by the prestige of income and belonging to government agencies. Neither professional job status nor the level of education or skill have become determining factors in the contemporary Russian society yet.

We believe the above mentioned facts make the spread of blood-related dynasties in academic establishments responsible for the organization of science and performing analytical and predictive functions and state development especially dangerous. These problems, according to some historians, are of crucial importance for Russia, as in the last few centuries a recurrent series of social crises, based on periods of building a power hierarchy and its subsequent destruction has been observed in the Russian state [23].

Contradictions between social groups in any society are determined by the disharmony between cultural, political and economic values and priorities shared by them. In multiethnic countries, the modernization triggers the exacerbation of the national question. As a result, there is an increase of social tension and conflict in the society. Moreover, the faster and more successful an upgrade goes on, the higher the level of conflict and political instability is. Russia is no exception. The society eliminates a social minority, "taking away" their own language, which they could use to discuss their internal problems, coordinate the interests and express identity. Modern European societies developed mechanisms of if not solutions, but mitigation of such conflicts, which unfortunately was not created in Russia. Thus, in our country, an active process of social stratification based on the property status is in progress, increasing the social instability of society.

Stratification of the Russian state - from the Great Reforms (1861) to the Great Terror (1937)

Russia existed in the traditional (agrarian) society for a long time, and one of its features was the social class structure.

There are several points of view on the social order in Russia, both in Russian and in foreign historiography [10]. V.O. Klyuchevsky supposed that a caste system had formed during the country's social, political and economic development only by the XVIII century. The state contributed to the formation of classes exactly as much as it was necessary during the true-to-life development of historic events [14]. As a result of the Great Reforms in 1860-1870, a caste system gradually began to break down because of the fact that estates started to transform into classes.

There is no doubt that, until the Council Code of 1649, certain social groups differed primarily by their duties. In this document, rights (privileges) of service-class people were fixed in order to consolidate their permanent obligations before the state and their permanent residence. However, the declaration of the Council Code does not say anything about the existing social structure in Muscovy (Moscow State). Under the conditions of "universal serfdom" any group with established traditional rights, not to mention their legislative consolidation, did not exist. In Russia, there was a "class" of subjects, or patrials, whose life standards were governed by traditions, communal life and dependence on the master; the Crown could just as well serve as the latter. The formation of the noble class

apparently can be dated around the time when Catherine the Great signed the Charter to the Nobility, which gave certain rights ("Freedoms") in addition to duties. The final formation of other classes is related to the later period. Stratification and formation of the estates went simultaneously.

Belonging to the estate, rights and responsibilities of its each member were associated in Russia with family affiliation and were anchored by traditions and since 1832 — by the Laws of the Russian Empire (Vol. IX - «The laws about states»). The law defined four main classes: the nobility, clergy, city and rural laymen [4]. These estates never constituted a single entity, and were stratified by their legal positioning. This stratification of the society was based on many aspects, such as property, place of residence, religion, etc. Superior status was given to the nobility class. It was traditionally considered as support of the throne and of the state. One of law articles stated: "The nobility, the first pillar of the throne, belong to higher class and almost every noble belongs to most educated class of people. Devoting their lives almost entirely to state service, nobles are one of the most reliable guns of the government even when they are not in service" [4]. The social mobility was complicated even in the XIX century, but nevertheless it was a true fact of Russian history. Thus, a writer, scientist and public figure N.G. Chemyshevsky, being the son of a priest and having risen to the grade of a titular counselor, "passed" into the nobility class. After the arrest and the punishment of the civil ceremony, he "was expelled" from it, but after his return from the exile his rights and social status have been restored. Estates in Russia legally ceased to exist in 1905 because of the publication of the Manifest of Nicholas II, but the inherent structure of estates outlook changed slowly and more painfully.

By the beginning of the XX century, Russia was still far from the rule-of-law, but trends of humanization, legal support to social life and the state government could already be seen in the second half of XIX century, since the Great reforms of Alexander II.

Before the fall of the Russian Empire, the nobility was at the leading position in governmental institutions in terms of quantity. The state supported them, and not only economically. A special network of elite schools in Russia was intended for noble children. It included Alexander's (Tsarskoye Selo) Lyceum, the School of Law, Page Corps, the Institute (Smolny) for noble maidens and other educational organisations³.

Withdrawal and exclusiveness of the nobility, markedly slowed down the rates of economic development in Russia. Its indirect confirmation is the experience of Western European countries, in some of which the constitutional monarchy had already been established by then, resulting in social mobility becoming typical for the society.

Russia, according to historians, was not only a place for unprepared experiments, but also a place of weighed reforms. So, Catherine II created a Legislative Commission, regarded by the author as the first committee to release peasants from serfdom. The government realized the need to abolish personal dependence, but the implementation of these royal wishes took more than a hundred years. Later Nicholas I, while initiating reform of state peasants' release also wanted to do it with privately bound serfs, but he could only entrust his heir, Alexander II, with doing it.

It was only in the 60s of the XIX century when a number certain circumstances had matched - the defeat in the Crimean War, financial collapse, the inconvenience before educated Europe, the growth of social discontent. Only then preparations for real reform and their implementation started. The extreme situation in the country was felt not only by the emperor but also by the most progressive public. It is confirmed by the rhetorical

³ The author notes that children of bureaucratic establishment had the same educational privileges in the Soviet Union.

question of Petrashevsky Circle: "How long will we maintain a shameful serfdom before educated Europe?" Guilt for the country's retardity was typical for many segments of Russian population, but especially for liberal intelligentsia.

The reform of 1861 brought up an issue of the land new management, introduction of the best practices of agricultural science into farming. After the abolition of serfdom in 1861 and during the years of transformations of the local government, courts and other spheres of public life, a lot of things in Russia had changed. But not the caste hierarchical ranking. People were not legally equal. Their position was legally assigned to a certain social group - class.

Abolishing serfdom was the most important event of Alexander II's reign, for what he received a honorary title of the Liberator. He also launched other reforms which had brought Russia closer to a constitutional monarchy - the rule-of-law state. Among them were the reform of Zemstvo, judicial, military, financial and other reforms. Censorship rules were markedly changed. The abolition of serfdom gave rise to Russia's economic rejuvenation. In 1861-1913, the rates of economic development became comparable with European ones⁴. The national income increased by 3.8 times over those years and per capita income - by 1.6 times (Table 1). These changes took place despite the enormous population growth. The annual population increase in the empire equaled 2 million over these years. Significant progress in all spheres of life was obvious. All sectors of the economy were developing, although differently. The greatest success was observed in the industry. From 1881-1885 to 1913, Russia's share in world industrial production increased from 3.4% to 5.3%. However, the agriculture progressed at average European rates, in spite of the institutional difficulties [11, 18, 19].

Table 1

Main indicators of Russian social and economic development in 1851-1914 (without Finland) [11]

Years	Population, millions	GEP per capita, \$*	Education**		Average life interval, years
			literacy, %	learners, %	
1851-1860	73.5	701.0	14	1.4	27.1
1861-1870	78.4	675.9	17	1.9	27.9
1871-1880	91.7	666.4	19	2.3	28.8
1881-1890	110.6	679.9	22	2.5	29.7
1891-1900	125.8	790.7	28	3.5	31.2
1901-1910	147.6	928.1	33	5.5	32.9
1913	171.0	1036.0	40	7.9	36.0

* in US dollars of 1989; ** excluding Poland and Finland.

A number of researchers believe that such an evolutionary development that is accompanied by accumulation of wealth is incompatible with a revolution. But, ironically,

⁴ In the present article the author does not aim to discuss the cyclic development of economy but rather focus on common trends of the country's economic development.

the second half of XIX - beginning of XX century in Russia was marked by strong growth of the "liberation" movement, which had extremely revolutionary forms. The same trend was typical for the late XX and early XXI centuries. One of the main reasons for the dissatisfaction with the current regime in all population categories was "social immaturity" of Russian society.

The transformation of Russian society in 1861-1914 developed according to a "social conflict" scenario, while there was nothing its participants, especially the revolutionaries, would not had tried to get if they wanted it. The terrorist attacks against autocracy were justified by part of liberals. They spoke and wrote that they found the assassins of Alexander II "belonging to the best Russian people".

Permanent social tension in the country played a mobilizing role for the opponents; it was later ingeniously used by V.I. Lenin. The leader of the Bolsheviks believed that the conflict between the classes promoted internal solidarity in the party and thus would save the group. He, as well as I.V. Stalin later did, consciously searched for internal and external enemies and skillfully manipulated the imaginary and real contradictions.

In Russia, peasants, workers, a significant part of the nobility and the merchant class, and, above all, intelligentsia (not belonging to the gentry by birth) were in opposition to the Crown administration. As shown by subsequent events, the economic achievements had not have enough time yet to sufficiently change the lifestyle and the mentality of the population. Unfortunately, the opposition had increased their activities so much that it resulted in the revolution of early XX century. One explanation for this situation suggested by the author is that there was an active process of the society's transformation.

Consequently, a new social group appeared in Russia, which can be called "oppositional liberal intelligentsia". This definition is not synonymous to "intellectual", as it was characterized by rigid and demanding mindset directed against the government and an intention to build the world on the new just social basis. The entire liberal community in Russia originally featured a critical attitude to the real political and social system. The nature of such ideas and values was called "ideology of public apostasy" by F.M. Dostoyevsky. Up to 1917, similar views were shared by various circles of the country, and a considerable number of people fetishized the revolution which could only lead, in their view, to the country's social transformation. This was written by S.L. Frank while he was in exile: "At that time, the overwhelming majority of the Russian people from the so-called intelligentsia lived by single faith, had single meaning of life: that faith best defined as a belief in revolution. Russian people - so we felt - suffer and die under the weight of obsolete, degenerated, evil, selfish, arbitrary power... The main thing, the main point of the aspirations lays not in the future and its creative work, but in the denial of the past and present. That is why the belief of that stage cannot be defined either as a belief in political freedom, nor even faith in socialism, but by its inner content, it can only be defined as the belief in revolution, in overthrowing the existing order. And the distinctions between parties expressed not nearly a qualitative difference in their world perception, but rather the difference in how much they hated the existing and in the repulsion from it, - the quantitative difference in the degree of revolutionary radicalism" [8].

The clarification for most of this social group took place only after the Bolsheviks came to power. P. Struve wrote that the intelligentsia "would play off lower strata against the state and historical monarchy, which, despite all its faults, vices and crimes, still represented and maintained the unity and integrity of the state" [25]. S. Frank noted that Russian liberalism was infused with pure negative motives and was far away from positive public activities. Its dominant mood was sulking in the name of abstract moral principles against the government and the existing management order, outside the living consciousness

of the tragic difficulties and responsibility of any power. A well-known sentence of F.M. Dostoevsky about that time reads as follows: "Our entire liberal party passed the case without being involved or even touching it, they just giggled and denied" [6]. Ignorance and lack of knowledge about specific historical conditions made Russian liberals absolutely helpless in periods of social exacerbation at the slightest contact with social elements.

The love to people demonstrated by the intelligentsia was not only an ideological overstatement, but also a politically dangerous delusion that was discovered in the process of the revolution. The community spirit, which Russia failed to overcome during short life of its starting collapse, did not include respect either to the personal material welfare of individual community members, or to any individual selection, exclusiveness, being special and "elevated" above others and the "rural world", as well as individual life itself. "Peasant mentality" determined Russian history of XX century and apparently still has its influence in XXI century. This was well understood by L.D. Trotsky and was taken by I.V. Stalin while implementing collectivization. The communal mentality promoted the Bolshevik power, because they managed to "forecast" it and to use in their own interests.

Accelerated modernization had led to social deformation. Community peasants altogether were no longer able to become individual farmers within one or two generations. Anti-peasant policy only contributed to the rise of marginal social environment, very receptive to radical propaganda and irresponsibility. E.g., in December 1910, among about 2 million people constituting the capital's population more than 1 300 000 were peasants. The vast majority of them worked at the city's factories and enterprises or as servants or clerks. Their readiness for any irresponsible social action was clearly shown by the events of February - March 1917. A potential risk of marginalization of the masses, due to a dramatic change in the social system, was prophetically described by F.M. Dostoevsky: "Godless anarchism is near — our children will see it. The International has ordered the European revolution to begin in Russia, and it will, as we have no resistance — neither in administration nor in the society. The rebellion begins with atheism and robbing all the wealth, then they will start overthrowing the religion, destroy churches and turn them into barracks and stables, flood the world with blood and then get scared themselves" [7]. This brilliant insight of the writer had been frightening the Bolsheviks even after his death, so they banned his works, including a great masterpiece "Demons", from reprinting.

Unfortunately, the writer's visionary prediction has come true in many ways. Formally, in Soviet Russia, one of the very first decrees proclaimed the equality of all categories of the population [5]. But, the actual practice of the Bolshevik's policy showed Russia had emerged (returned) for the next cycle of social development: the whole population represented a single (rather monolithic) class, or more exactly, a structure of the country as earlier in Muscovy; the state became classless⁵. It makes no sense to absolute these processes and try to confirm they were fully identical. But their common essence is the same — the community, religion (in the Soviet period, the idea of God has been replaced by the fetishization of I.V. Stalin), the absence of significant social differentiation, etc. Differences, like those applicable to taxed population in XVI century, were in responsibilities, but not in rights, despite the presence of the most democratic Constitution of 1937 [28].

A comparative analysis of society's structure, provisionally called non-estate, demonstrates three fundamental differences. Firstly, the lack of rights of individual population categories in the Soviet Union compared with the royal period was more significant. Thus,

⁵ According to official Soviet ideology there were two classes in the US SR: workers, collective farmers and a social stratum called «Soviet intelligentsia».

according to the sources [16] in 1930-1953 through the camps and colonies of the GULAG was about 17.8 million people, incl. 3.4-3.7 million for political reasons. Secondly, as a result of Cultural Revolution, a creative Soviet person was formed (a significant contribution to this process had been made by Great Patriotic War and Khrushchev thaw). It is necessary to take into account the fact that the cultural changes were dictated by the need to develop economy, firstly heavy industry. Top representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia did not fit into community-Stalinist ideology and practice of Soviet Russia. That subsequently accelerated the crisis of the 1990's. And, finally, another round of social stratification came much earlier. According to the author, in Brezhnev's period, Soviet society was sufficiently vague, although rural population remained predominant.

Agrarian reforms in Russia in the XX century and their consequences

At the turn of XIX and XX centuries Russia could be called an agrarian country, while the industry and handicraft in the country had been increasing rapidly since late XVIII century. The great reforms of Alexander II gave a stimulus to the development of this economic sector. Thus, since the 1880s, economic growth rates in Russia were higher than in Europe. With fast population and economic growth in the country there was a marked increase in the welfare of all classes, including the main and most massive - the peasantry. One indication of this process is that peasants would readily purchase land. During 1862-1910, the peasants bought 66.15 million acres of land, paying 971 million rubles. The amount of grain held by farmers for their personal consumption increased by 34% [19].

Living conditions and behavioral standards and norms for different population categories were changing. Social norms had become blurred. Many social ties were being destroyed. The social control over a person by the community as well as by the administrative structures was lessening. With the general increase in prosperity inflated human needs and the real possibilities to satisfy them came to a contradiction. Economists and the Russian public, as well as the government, could not miss the changes taking place.

The tension increased as the general welfare, individualism, personal freedom, civil rights and culture rose while the censorship weakened. The reforms of P. A. Stolypin⁶ were intended to create a "great Russia" by sorting out / mitigating contradictions in the society. The Agrarian Reform in Russia, while maintaining the landlords institution, promoted the development of agriculture and the economy in general eventually helping to strengthen statehood. P. A. Stolypin pursued a policy of providing farmers with government- subsidized loans, and eliminating communal land ownership. He tried to make a statesman out of every citizen of Russia, not only of the elite. Thanks to all of these, Russia entered the top five of progressive countries of the world.

Again, in a try to modernize the country, Tzarist government evaluated Stolypin's reforms quite objectively and feared the destruction of rural communities (historical support of autocracy) and proletarianization of peasantry. The government prevented the formation of a social category of wealthy peasants, which Stolypin considered a support for autocracy. Regretfully, before the First World War Stolypin's reforms had almost been stopped.

During the war, the instability in the Russian society has reached a critical level. That was directly connected with deteriorated living conditions, military defeats and related enormous losses — all of that eventually became, in our opinion, the key reason for the monarchy to fall. It was betrayed by everybody from generals to some representatives of

⁶ The activity of P. A. Stolypin as well as his reforms have been sufficiently studied but there is no common opinion regarding their significant to date [17, 22, 27].

the royal dynasty. The Bolsheviks "picked up" the abandoned power and retain it, deftly using peasant dissatisfaction with the existing regime. The agrarian issue in XX century was of no less importance to Russia than in XIX century.

A clear imbalance emerged between the agrarian subculture existing in the country early in XX century and rapidly progressing structures of an industrial society. This circumstance had direct political and economic consequences. In the first third of XX century, several political and economic models were developed to solve this problem and, in fact, it was not only about economic concepts - models of optimal economic reconstruction and concentration of material resources. They inevitably became political - self-fulfilling or self-locking programs of forecasting.

The most important were: 1) "Stolypin's" reform — in the evolution terms, it represents a system of horizontal reformatting (intrasystem) relations based on the rapid increase in the proportion of competition between economic operators, and 2) "Stalin's" total collectivization — in fact, homogenization - elimination of the horizontal structure and replacing it with the vertical, of the command chain; 3) A.V. Chayanov's concept (an attempt to give free rein) of restructuring relationships among farm households based on the development of the cooperative movement.

In the beginning of XX century, A.V. Chayanov [1, 2, 3] was the first one who discovered and described mechanisms of the formation of agrarian subculture (civilization) and clearly demonstrated that its establishment was closely related to the interplay of ethnic, cultural, personal features of the peasantry, and specific ecological and geographical conditions, within which it was developing.

A.V. Chayanov emphasized that the farm, which is based on family's labor, remains the constant component of all economic systems, that is, the farm is relatively stable and self-sufficient. The most part of it does not disappear, but is retained as a special productive power. This led the prominent economist to the idea of a national organization of the food supply chain — from the purchase from farm producers to the distribution to consumers. Chayanov highlighted two sides in the cooperation: the first is organizational and economic - a cooperative as a company; and the second is social - cooperation is the form of social movement. Speaking about a cooperative enterprise. A.V. Chayanov emphasized that it is not a self-sufficient entity, but an entity that serves its owners and their interests. This is what will be later called "the corporate ethics". Chayanov's theory seems, to some extent, analogous to Stolypin's methodology aimed at progressive evolutionary transformations, but is radically different from it in its content.

Later on A.V. Chayanov, in a memorandum drawn up at request of Politburo commission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (CC AUCP(B)), identified two main types of the evolution in agriculture, formed by the First World War: American and Oriental. The main characteristics of the first were cheap land, relatively expensive labor, extensive effortless farming with large capital investments and widespread mechanization. Distinctive features of the second one were expensive land, cheap labor, labor-consuming super intensive agriculture system with almost complete absence of mechanization. The agrarian evolution in the United States of America proceeded in unique conditions parallel to the development of market economy system. In contrast, the agriculture in the Russian Empire was a conglomeration of area-dominated trends in either American or Oriental type. The demographic structure of the country was formed regardless of market areas, since main factors determining the population density were soil fertility and the degree of military threat in a particular area. The dynamic development of the market system begun in the second half of XIX century has led to appearance of areas with their population density higher or lower than it was economically justified because

the existing demographic imbalance was too high to be quickly eliminated by migration processes. Mainly in the northern (industrial) regions of the empire, the agrarian sector developed more in line with Chayanov's "Oriental" model and in the southern and south-east parts - with the "American" one [1,3].

Russia's historical fate was destined to link the agriculture not with the names of P.A. Stolypin and A.V. Chayanov, but with that of I.V. Stalin. Under his leadership and active participation, total collectivization was carried out in the country. It well suited the general mechanism of mobilization type of economy, and supplied the regime with financial resources for the rapid increase of the country's military and political potential. However, a chain of long destructive social, political, economic and gene pool consequences, which turned out to be too deep, led to the systemic crisis in a few decades. The policy of total collectivization was accompanied by a significant decrease in the number of cattle, gross collection and falling yields of grain and other crops (Tables 2, 3, 4) [21].

Table 2

Crop production per capita in Russia, the USA, Germany and France, kg

Country	1831-1840	1887-1888	1913	1921	1929	1939
Russia	432	475	727	502	422	448
Germany	209	314	468	283	387	355
USA	853	1109	980	1026	875	784
France	332	420	434	382	432	442(1937)

Table 3

Crop export, in average, million tons

Country	1820-1829	1850-1859	1880-1889	1909-1913	1920- 1929	1930-1939
Russia	0.279	1.530	6.980	10.192	0.846	1.945
Germany						
USA	0.180 (1827-1836)	1.100 (1857-1866)	4.700 (1877-1886)	4.042	7.930	
France	0.201	0.212	0.021	0.043	0.046	0.473

Table 4

Number of cattle, million heads

Country	1830	1850	1880	1890	1900	1913	1920	1929	1939
Russia	19.0	21.0	27.3	25.5	31.7	32.0	45.9	58.2	53.5
Germany	9.8	11.3	15.8	17.6	18.9	21.0	16.8	18.0	19.4
USA	8.1	31.1 (1870)	43.3	60.0	59.7	56.6	70.4	58.9	66.0
France	6.7	12.2	13.0	13.6	14.5	14.8	13.2	15.6	14.2

The main outcome of the collectivization, as we believe, was the transformation of individual farmers into collective farmers, the most numerous component of lacking rights "all-class" mass in Stalinist Russia, and their wide-scale genocide.

We may conclude that in Russia, the driving factor for the development for more than three centuries was the Power, which primarily sought to maintain a high military status of the country. This explains its repeated attempts to modernize the economy at the expense of peasantry. Hence, in our opinion, it was a failure to resolve the agrarian issue.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the social stratification of the society was initially linked to its distribution within four basic coordinates: power, property, education, social status. Effects of the reforms, including social ones, implemented by power structures, were sometimes unpredictable and opposite to expectations. It was the social immaturity that a researcher B.N. Mironov [21] called "the social adolescence" that led the Russian Empire at the beginning of the XX century, and then the Soviet Union in the 1990's to systemic crises. Only social development relevant to the economic needs of the society can ensure a stable development in its every sphere.

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СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ СТРУКТУРА И ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ РОССИИ: ВЗАИМОСВЯЗЬ И ВЗАИМОУСЛОВЛЕННОСТЬ (РЕТРОСПЕКТИВНЫЙ ВЗГЛЯД)

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Аннотация: рассматриваются вопросы самоидентификации страны, взаимосвязи между структурой общества и динамикой его экономического развития. Представлен авторский взгляд на специфику социальной структуры Российской империи, выдвигается гипотеза о цикличности процессов стратификации. Анализируются особенности трансформационных процессов в России во второй половине XIX—первой половине XX века.

Ключевые слова: стратификация, общество, Россия, экономическое развитие.

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