
DISCUSSION PLATFORM

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An attempt to analyze the development of capitalism in Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries from the perspective of the revolutionary period

Annotation. The problem of capitalism development in Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is analyzed from the point of concept of the revolutionary period. Revolutions in one country constitute a revolutionary period (hereinafter referred to as RP), which is an integral system having its own laws. Specific revolutions should be treated as manifestation of revolutionary processes within RP. Depending on RP's timing and nature, there are three main groups of countries, with Russia being in the third group. Despite development of separate heavy industries and intensive railway construction, Russia was dramatically behind the leading Western countries in terms of quality. In Russia, capitalism existed not as a system, but as a way of life, and did not have any potential of development. This should be kept in mind whilst assessing the current state of the 'capitalist' system in Russia and the prospects for its further development.

Keywords: capitalism in Tsarist Russia, monopolies in Russia, the Russian Empire in the early 20th century, geopolitical space, peasant village community in Russia, Stolypin reforms

Introduction

Even though the study of the nature of capitalism in Tsarist Russia – or the Russian Empire – in the late 19th and early 20th century attracted enough attention among the Soviet historians in the 1950s and 1970s, this question is still problematic. Most importantly, the problem mentioned above and the assessment of the current state of 'capitalist' Russian economy and possible ways of its further development are closely related. Here, we keep in mind the systematic nature of the process of historical development. Each of its stages would be a system deployed in time. The same applies to the epoch of revolutions of early modern period.

Revolutions (and subsequent counter-revolutions) in one country constitute a revolutionary period (RP), which is an integral system having its own laws. Specific

revolutions should be treated as manifestation of revolutionary processes within RP. RP ends when the society creates conditions that exclude the possibility of any revolutionary events¹.

Depending on RP's timing and nature, there are three main groups of countries: countries of the first generation (CFG), countries of the second generation (CSG), and countries of the third generation (CTG). CFG include England, the USA, France, i.e. the countries where RP began first. In England, RP ended with the Glorious Revolution, also called the Revolution of 1688; in France – with the establishment of the French Third Republic; in the USA – with the end of the civil war. In CSG, which include most European countries and Japan, RP began in the middle of the 19th century and ended after World War II. For CTG, such as Russia, China, Turkey, Iran, and Latin American countries, RP was limited to the framework of the 20th century. In Arab countries, RP began only after World War II and will end no earlier than the mid-21st century. The Arab Spring should be seen here as manifestation of revolutionary processes.

In RP, all political regimes to some extent have features of dictatorship. Any attempts to liberalize power during RP generally led to the emergence of classical dictatorships. The obviously democratic Weimar Republic, which was in a state of permanent crisis during the entire period of its existence, led to the National-Socialism dictatorship. A similar situation was in Russia after the February Revolution and in Spain in the 1930s.

In CFG, the industrial revolutions had independent nature. For CSG, they were mostly due to the enlargement of the European Economic Space, already established by the mid-20th century. In CTG, there were no industrial revolutions; there was industrialization under the direct leadership of the state. This was typical, to a greater or lesser extent, for all CTG.

In CTG, capitalism did not exist as a system, there was a capitalist way of life, which, compared to any system, does not have any potential of development. The absence of a capitalist system predetermined weakness of the bourgeoisie in CTG, not only in the economic but also in the political sphere. The bourgeoisie could not organize its dictatorship during the revolution and could not offer any slogans that would have attracted people.

CTG showed strong financial dependence on more developed CFG and CSG. Whereby, providing loans was usually filled with political content. Internal weakness

¹ Kondorsky B.M. Use of the concept of a revolutionary period for the analysis of the most important political phenomena and events. *Political Science for the Challenges of Modern Politics*. Moscow, 2015, pp. 289–290.

Kondorsky B.M. Revolutionary period in China. *Society and the State in China*. V. XLV. Part 1. Moscow, 2015, pp. 134–150.

leading to international weakness, tied the politics of CTG to other countries' interests.

Main part

The nature of the study of the development of capitalism in Tsarist Russia as conducted by Soviet historians in the 1950s and 1970s was very ambiguous. It goes without saying that all the publications, to some extent, were based on the works of Vladimir Lenin, especially considering the fact that starting since early 20th century and until 1917, he paid great attention to this issue. However, it should be noted that, being a brilliant politician², Lenin, in our opinion, turned out to be a mediocre economist. It is also important to remember that, per the views of Marx and Engels, the socialist revolution was possible only in countries with developed capitalism and existing working class. Therefore, Lenin, to substantiate the possibility of a socialist revolution in Russia, needed to consider capitalism in the country through the 'prism' of its sufficiently 'high level of development'.

Analyzing the development of capitalism, we usually assume that prior to the reforms of 1861, feudalism, or at least its vestiges, existed in Russia and had decisive influence on the development of the economy; but then capitalism began to develop rapidly. "Feudalism, which remained the dominant system in Russia for many centuries, has given way to capitalism³". The time after completion of all the reforms became a turning point in the process of consolidation of capitalism⁴. Russia was recognized as a country with "an average level of development of capitalism⁵".

Foreign specialists paid special attention to the high rates of industrial development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries⁶. However, Russia mostly remained an agrarian country. Industrialization was incomplete. Russian capitalism has just begun to rise⁷. Per the level of national income per capita, Russia remained one of the poorest countries in Europe⁸.

It was necessary to find the place of Russia among other countries in terms of the developmental level of capitalism. One can recall the idea of K.N. Tarnovsky regarding the countries of early and late capitalism, which brought Russia closer to semi-colonial and colonial countries, such as India, with no free competition in the latter

² Payne R. *The Life and Death of Lenin*. Moscow, 2002, p. 9.

³ Ryndziunskiy P.G. *The Establishment of Capitalism in Russia*. Moscow, 1978, p. 284.

⁴ Druzhinin N.M. *The Russian Village at the Turning Point*. Moscow, 1978. p. 188.

⁵ Mints I.I. *The History of the Great October*. V. 1. Moscow, 1967, p. 41.

⁶ Goldsmith R.W. The economic growth of tsarist Russia in 1860–1913. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 1961, no. 3, p. 441–475.

⁷ Blackwell W.L. *The Beginning of Russian industrializations 1800–1860*. N.Y., 1968, p. 198.

⁸ Falkus M.E. *The industrialization of Russia, 1700–1914*. Leningrad, 1972, p. 12.

case⁹. I.F. Gindin identified three types of capitalist relations: Western European, Central European and Russian-Japanese¹⁰.

The concept of I.I. Dolutskiy regarding three echelons of countries, depending on the nature of the onset and development of capitalism, is also exceptionally interesting. It almost completely coincides with our concept of three main groups of countries (CFG, CSG and CTG). The only exception is that Russia belongs to the second echelon. Hence, the author formulates several conclusions concerning Russia that we do not quite agree with. This concerns the fact that I.I. Dolutskiy denied the concept of multistructurality of the Russian economy, weak development of capitalist relations in the agrarian sector and the dependent nature of Russian capitalism¹¹.

The situation in the agrarian sphere was paid the main attention to. The general nature of the agrarian formation was determined by capitalism prevailing in the country¹². Despite existence of feudal remnants, the landowner economy was believed to be in the state of irreversible capitalist evolution. In the internal system of landowner economy in European Russia, the capitalist industrial management was occupying a dominant position¹³.

It should be also noted that the emphasis has been put on the study of involvement of peasants in the commodity-money relations¹⁴. It was considered that the trend of formation of the single commodity market indicates the establishment of a capitalist way of production in the country back in the 1880s¹⁵. The growth of commodity production of grain in the 1880s–1890s meant restructuring of the agrarian sector according to the capitalist principles¹⁶.

⁹ Tarnovsky K.N. The problem of the interaction of socio-economic structures of imperialist Russia at the present stage of the Soviet historical science development. *Questions of the History of Capitalist Russia*. Sverdlovsk, 1972, p. 27.

¹⁰ Gindin I.F. The concept of capitalist industrialization in Theodor von Laue's works. *Questions of History*, 1971, no 4, pp. 204–232.

¹¹ Dolutskiy I.I. Russia in the early 20th century: Typical and distinctive. *Reforms of the Second Half of the 17th – 20th Century: Preparation, Conduct and Results*. Moscow, 1989, pp. 83–107.

¹² Anfimov A.M. *The Economic Situation and the Class Struggle of the Peasants in European Russia. 1881–1904*. Moscow, 1984, p. 3.

¹³ Koval'chenko I.D., Selunskaya N.B., Litvakov B.M. *Social and Economic System of the Landowner Economy of European Russia in the Era of Capitalism*. Moscow, 1982, pp. 223–224.

¹⁴ Koval'chenko I.D. On the bourgeois character of the peasant economy of European Russia in the late 19th – early 20th century. *History of the USSR*, 1983, no. 5, p. 73.

¹⁵ Koval'chenko I.D., Milov L.V. *The National Agricultural Market. The 18th – Early 20th century*. Moscow, 1974.

¹⁶ Nifontov A.S. *Grain Production in Russia in the Second Half of the 19th Century*. Moscow, 1974.

The role of the state in the development of capitalism in Russia is another important issue in this matter. Per I.F. Gindin, Russian industrial capitalism was largely imposed in the country within a short historical period without any restructuring of the lower chains in the economic structure, necessary for it¹⁷. Other researchers in their turn believed that the Tsarist bureaucracy restrained the development of capitalism¹⁸. However, one thing does not necessarily exclude the other.

Foreign historians also paid a lot of attention to the role of the state in the industrial development of Russia. They believed that the development of Russian industry was the result of industrialization, led by the Tsarist government and Sergei Witte. Moreover, per A. Gerschenkron¹⁹, industrialization took place at the expense of funds ‘pumped out’ from the rural areas. Per A. Kahan, the state should have played a less active role and should have relied on private initiative and free market mechanisms²⁰. However, J. McKay believed that industrialization led by the state was mainly limited to the railway construction²¹.

The State Bank of the Russian Empire, which was completely under the government control, played an exceptional role in the financial sphere. Acting as a stabilizing factor, it saved banks that were on the verge of bankruptcy and supported the mostly patronized industrial enterprises. At the close of the 19th century, the State Bank of the Russian Empire increased the number of industrial credits, but this mainly concerned trade and especially grain commerce²². Commercial banks that began to appear at the time did the same²³.

The 1899–1903 crisis served as a starting point for the process of merging between the banks and the industry. Significant volumes of shares of the enterprises weakened by the crisis turned out to be in their joint portfolio²⁴. Monopolistic associations appeared in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, relying on the power of

¹⁷ Gindin I.F. V.I. Lenin on the socio-economic structure and political system of capitalist Russia *V.I. Lenin on the Social Structure and Political System of Capitalist Russia*. Moscow, 1970, p. 244.

¹⁸ Ryndziunskiy P.G. The Establishment of Capitalism in Russia: 1850s – 1880s. Moscow, 1978, p. 286; Shepelev L.E. *Tsarism and Bourgeoisie in the Second Half of the 19th Century*. Leningrad, 1981, p. 24.

¹⁹ Gerschenkron A. *Economic Backwardness in historical perspective*. Cambridge, 1962, p. 132.

²⁰ Kahan A. Government policies and industrialization of Russia. *The Journal of Economic History*, 1967, vol. 37, pp. 460–477.

²¹ McKay J. *Pioneers for profit. Foreign entrepreneurship and Russian industrialization*. Chicago, Leningrad, 1970, p. 9.

²² Bovykin V. I. *Russia on the Eve of the Great Achievements*. Moscow, 1988, p. 82.

²³ Shepelev L.E. *Joint Stock Companies in Russia*. Leningrad, 1973.

²⁴ Bovykin V.I. *Russia on the Eve of the Great Achievements*. Moscow, 1988, p. 82.

banks. They established absolute dominance in the economy of the country, taking over the whole branches of Russian industry²⁵. Monopolies concentrated over 80 % of production of certain products in their hands (syndicates ‘Prodamet’, ‘Med’, ‘Prodvagon’)²⁶.

Another equally important subject of discussion was the question of multistructurality in the Russian economy²⁷. Normally, this ‘multistructure’ was viewed as the result of specificity and contradictory nature of Russian capitalism²⁸. This resulted in raising a question regarding the ‘Russian’ way of capitalist development, which is fundamentally different from what has happened in the Western countries²⁹. The problem of this ‘multistructure’ became a subject of discussions at the conference held in May 1969 in Sverdlovsk. Most of the speakers supported the concept of multistructure of the economy in Tsarist Russia, despite different approaches to this problem³⁰.

Since the mid-1980s, many specialists began to share their views on the nature of capitalist development in Russia with regards to the changing political situation in the country³¹. It was argued that capitalism in industry and agriculture had significant potential for its progressive development³². Abroad, there were optimistic (even too optimistic) views as well. P. Gregory believed that Russia entered the era of modern economy growth during the period from 1885 to 1913. This growth was interrupted by the outbreak of World War I³³. The emphasis was placed on how good life was in Tsarist Russia, as well as on industrial achievements of Russia at the time³⁴. A popu-

²⁵ Bovykin V.I. Revolution of 1905–1914. Moscow, 1965, p. 10.

²⁶ Khromov P.A. *Essays on the Russian Economy during the Period of Monopoly Capitalism*. Moscow, 1960, p. 14.

²⁷ Tarnovsky K.N. On the sociological study of the capitalist principle of production. *Questions of History*, 1970, no. 1, P. 226.

²⁸ Gindin I.F., Ivanov L.M. On the uneven development of Russian capitalism in the early 20th century. *Questions of History*, 1965, no. 9, p. 125.

²⁹ Gefter M.Ya. Pages from the history of Marxism in the early 20th century. *Historical Science and Some Contemporary Problems*. Moscow, 1969, p. 21.

³⁰ *Questions of the History of Capitalist Russia: The Problems of Multistructure*. Sverdlovsk, 1972.

³¹ Bovykin V.I. *Russia on the Eve of the Great Achievements*. Moscow, 1988, p. 82; Mints I.I. On Perestroika in the research of the Great October. *Questions of History*, 1987, no. 4, pp. 3–9.

³² Bovykin V.I. *Financial Capital in Russia before World War I*. Moscow, 2001, p. 20.

³³ Gregory P. *Economic Growth of the Russian Empire*. Moscow, 2003, pp. 20–21.

³⁴ Mironov B.N. *The Welfare of the Population and Revolution in Imperial Russia: the 18th – early 20th century*. Moscow, 2010, pp. 662–664.

lar idea was that before the revolution, Russia was an economically healthy, rich country with fast development³⁵.

For full understanding of specific features of capitalism in Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, it is necessary to refer to the theory and history. In the 18th century, feudalism in Russia no longer existed as a formation, same as in France in the 16th century. Peasants as an economic class within the framework of feudal formation turned into enslaved communities of purely social nature. Corporate serfdom appeared. Certain peasants came under strong authority and custody of the village community (or ‘obshchina’) and could not take any important decisions without its sanction³⁶. This means that the subject of enslavement was not the landowner but rather the village community itself.

If in the feudal period, the peasant communities were integral part of the feudal state, during the estates hierarchy, there was a process of its autonomation and isolation from the external world (the state). A peasant community became self-sufficient, when peasants started satisfying the major part of their material and spiritual needs on their own³⁷. It transforms into a kind of a ‘black box’.

In France, as well as in England, the emergence of capitalism was a long process that lasted for several centuries with the following disintegration of the peasant class. ‘Enclosure’ led to the fact that the bankrupt peasants became partly paupers and partly hired workers. Thus, the process of initial accumulation of capital began. In the 16th-17th centuries, the appropriation of monastic lands, plundering of the state property and seizure of drained bogs made the situation even worse. The backslides were observed even in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when based on the acts of the British Parliament, millions of acres of land were passed into the hands of landowners and the bourgeoisie³⁸.

In Russia, capitalism did not have its own roots, which was typical for CTG. It can be described as ‘Russian’ capitalism, which has several features that significantly distinguish it from the Western-style capitalism. In CTG, the factor of civilization played a much greater role than in the Western countries (CFG and CSG). Collectivism, communalism, priority of spiritual values over material ones, as well as principles

³⁵ Kozhinov V.V. *Mysterious Pages of the History of the 20th Century*. Moscow, 1998, pp. 44–45.

³⁶ Mironov B.N. *Social History of Russia during the Period of the Empire*. Vol. 1. St Petersburg, 2000, p. 434.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 425.

³⁸ Druzhinin N.M. Features of the genesis of capitalism in Russia in comparison with the countries of Western Europe and the United States. *Modern and Contemporary History*, 1972, no. 4, p. 16.

of social justice, were typical for the Russian civilization³⁹. The social justice really mattered. In the West, justice was defined by laws of economic system and not by the social one. Civilizational differences repelled the bulk of the population from capitalist social relations. The community ethics rejected the protestant one.

Russia was special in terms of the exceptional role of the state in the industrial sphere and its capitalism implanted ‘from above’. The government, represented by S.Y. Witte, sought to control the sphere of private economic activity⁴⁰ as much as possible, which was typical to other CTG. Moreover, Witte banked mostly on attracting foreign capital, believing that Russia was not China, and foreign capital would never replace the national one⁴¹. The state orders that put the private owner in dependence on the state played an important role too⁴².

Capitalism in Russia (as well as in other CTG) existed as a way of life, not as a system. The market of capital and not the one of goods constituted the basis of capitalism. To establish the capitalist system, we need certain critical mass of capital, so that an independent ‘chain reaction’ would follow later. This did not happen in Russia. The capital of only one American corporation – ‘The United States Steel Corporation’ – equaled the aggregate capital of all industrial and trading companies in Russia⁴³. In Japan, which was close to Russia in terms of several parameters, the capitalist system formed based on total mobilization of internal reserves with the most active participation of the state⁴⁴. On this basis, we should include Japan into CSG. Russian landowners, who received about 10 billion redemption payments⁴⁵ after the reform of 1861, did not invest them into the development of the economy, as Japanese landowners did, but simply ‘squandered’ this money.

Railroad construction and the attention that the government paid to it led to the rapid development of individual industries in Russia in the late 19th century. This applied to metallurgy, machine building (production of locomotives and wagons) and coal mining. Such a situation took place in England in the first half of the 19th century and in France in the mid-19th century. Therefore, it turned out that Russia in terms of the level and quality of capitalist development at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries corresponded to the periods in Western countries mentioned above.

³⁹ Ol'shtinsky L.I. *Soviet Society*. Book. 1. Moscow, 2014, p. 29.

⁴⁰ *History of Russia in the 19th – early 20th century*. Moscow, 1998, p. 470.

⁴¹ Werth N. *History of the Soviet State*. Moscow, 2006, p. 19.

⁴² Ol'shtinsky L.I. *Ibid*, p. 26.

⁴³ Utkin A.I. *World War I*. Moscow, 2001, p.19.

⁴⁴ *History of the Economy*. Moscow, 2000, p. 209.

⁴⁵ Koval'chenko I.D. Stolypin reform. *History of the USSR*, 1991, no. 1, p. 57.

Foreigners saw import of capital into Russia as a form of financing for the national industry, which ultimately led to purchase of their goods⁴⁶. In the years 1881–1900 only, Russia paid 2.5 billion interest, which was 1.5 times higher than foreign capital inflow⁴⁷. One should also note that only fifth part of foreign investments went to the shares of domestic and foreign companies⁴⁸. The share of Russia in the global debt was 31 %⁴⁹.

Before the war, the structure of the existing branches of industry, in comparison to Germany, was essentially archaic. Such industries as electrical, chemical, pharmaceutical, optical and machine building were very weakly developed. The automobile industry and aircraft building had just appeared in Russia. The same applied to the structure of its exports. Half of the exports were cereals, followed by timber flax and various livestock products⁵⁰. The cardinal differences between Russia and Western countries concerned the level of added value. The cost of production per capita in the US exceeded that in Russia by almost 20 times⁵¹.

The government was sympathetic to the foreign capital, especially the French one. Before the outbreak of World War I, Russian securities at the Paris Bourse were worth 8.5 billion rubles. France accounted for up to 80 % of the total external debt of Tsarist Russia. The economic dependence inevitably led to the political one. The growing financial dependence of Tsarism led to the fact that, in the Franco-Russian Alliance, Russia turned from an equal partner into a dependent satellite⁵². Its dependence on the foreign capital also assumed some external liabilities. The Western powers sought to use Russia in their own interests, involving military alliances to fight their rivals on the world stage⁵³.

The Russian national trading market and capitalist market as the scope of relevant laws did not belong to the same category. And the former could not be the reason for the latter. Cardinal differences exist between the simple commodities market and the capitalist market⁵⁴. The former is established by the integration of regional markets

⁴⁶ History of Russia in the 19th – early 20th century. Moskow, 1998, p. 159.

⁴⁷ Gregory P.R. Russian National Income. 1885–1913. Leningrad; N.Y., 1982, pp. 97–98.

⁴⁸ Bovykin V.I. Financial Capital in Russia before World War I. Moscow, 2001, p. 34.

⁴⁹ Zaval'ko G.A. The Concept of 'Revolution' in Philosophy and Social Sciences. Moscow, 2005, p. 172.

⁵⁰ Bovykin V.I. Financial Capital in Russia before World War I. Moscow, 2001. P. 32.

⁵¹ Mendeleev D.I. To the Cognition of Russia. Compositions. Vol. 21. Moscow; Leningrad, 1952, p. 484.

⁵² Bovykin V.I. From the History of the Outbreak of the First World War: The Relationship between Russia and France in 1912–1914. Moscow, 1961, pp. 59–68.

⁵³ Ol'shtinsky L.I. Soviet Society. Book. 1. Moscow, 2014, p. 28.

⁵⁴ Koval'chenko I.D. Agrarian market and the nature of the agrarian system of European Russia in the late 19th – early 20th century. History of the USSR, 1973, no. 2, p. 43.

and is associated with the circulation of goods regardless of the production mode. The capitalist market should be treated as a kind of economic system having its own binding laws, as a political (economic) category, as a market of capital in the first place.

Herein, we should understand the differences between commercial or merchant capital and the capitalist (financial) one. We should also distinguish between simple trading profits and capitalist profits, which, under normal (traditional) capitalism, are of a very limited size. For the existence of commercial capital, “no other conditions are required than those necessary for simple commodity and monetary circulation”⁵⁵. Here again, we would like to draw attention to a very important point that simple commodity production and capitalist production are based on different principles. A developed commodity market does not mean developed capitalism yet.

The nature of social consciousness of the Russian bourgeoisie was specific and different from the Western countries. Here we can mostly speak about entrepreneurs rather than capitalists (which is not the same thing). As an example, merchants were still engaged in entrepreneurial activity in the pre-reform period. A ‘fully-featured’ capitalist appears only within the framework of a capitalist system, and not the way of life.

In Russia, there was no revolutionary bourgeoisie in the Western European sense of the word⁵⁶. The Russian bourgeoisie, which appeared due to the forced state construction, turned out to be completely counter-revolutionary in the revolution of 1905.

Whilst in the industrial sphere, we can refer to the emergence of capitalism in Russia (only as a way of life, not as a system), this would not be correct if we speak about the agricultural sphere and peasantry. Let us look at the definition of a ‘kulak’ (a richer peasant), which many researchers have tried to present almost as a farmer-capitalist. A ‘kulak’ should be considered as someone who was engaged in the entrepreneurial, capitalist economy, exploiting other peasants either as hired laborers (farm laborers) or through pawnbroker’s business⁵⁷.

Let us now consider these statements from the political (economic) point of view. A ‘kulak’ was an entrepreneur but not a capitalist or even a bourgeois. The nature of his consciousness was not much different from that of an ordinary peasant inside the village community. The exploitation of a farm laborer was more of a social nature than of an economic one. In capitalism, an agricultural worker, who had proletarian consciousness, entered into an agreement with an employer based on the laws of capitalist production arranged in the appropriate legal form. A farm servant (‘batrak’)

⁵⁵ Marx K., Engels F. *Compositions*. V. 25. Part 1. Moscow, 1961, p. 357.

⁵⁶ Tyutyukin S.V., Shelokhaev V.V. *Marxists and the Russian Revolution*. Moscow, 1996, p. 74–75.

⁵⁷ *History of Russia in the 19th – early 20th Century*. Moscow, 1998, p. 289.

(especially if this concerned a ‘kulak’ from his own village) entered an agreement based on the social and traditional laws. Often, in case of any misunderstanding, the village community itself acted as a judge.

A Russian peasant perceived land as something common to everybody, given by God⁵⁸. This led to complete rejection of private ownership of land, with the demand to cancel its sale. The bourgeois view of property as a source of wealth was alien to that of a peasant⁵⁹. Land was considered common property of all those who cultivated it.

The relations between a landowner and a peasant were that of enslavement nature. Landowners gave land for cultivation in exchange for villein-socage and sharecropping. It should be noted that since 1861 until the end of the 19th century, the rents tripled⁶⁰. In Russia, the vast majority of landowner estates was cultivated by peasants with their livestock and own tool. The hungry, bonded peasant rent predominated due to the need for land. Such a system was profitable to the landowners⁶¹. The landowner economies did not intend to accept the capitalist development and postponed this process in the peasant environment.

The monetary form of rent often meant the provided work given in exchange for this rent. With such payments for short-term rent, the landowners kept a huge share of the manufactured product to themselves. This share, if converted to bread, would reach one third of the harvest. With such amounts of rent, the monetary form of rent was also a way of sharecropping. Instead of capitalist profit dominating over rent and defining its boundaries, the rent occupied a dominant position and determined the limits of the profit⁶².

Stolypin’s attempt to destroy the peasant communities eventually ended in failure. This was mostly because people responsible for it did not know the Russian village at all. As a result, Stolypin’s policy – for many various reasons – could not really suit any group of people, neither liberals, nor right-wingers, nor leftists, nor the Tsar himself⁶³. Stolypin tried to solve the problem by destroying the peasant communities and by relocating the redundant population to the eastern regions of the country.

⁵⁸ Kabytov P.S. *Russian Peasantry in Early 20th Century*. Saratov, 1990, p. 60.

⁵⁹ Mironov B.N. *The Welfare of the Population in Imperial Russia*. Moscow, 2010, p. 670; Mironov B.N. *Social History of Russia during the Period of the Empire*. Vol. 1. St Petersburg, 2000, p. 328.

⁶⁰ Dubrovskiy S.M. *The Peasant Movement in the Revolution of 1905–1907*. Moscow, 1956, p. 18.

⁶¹ Anfimov A.N. *The Large Landowner Economy of European Russia*. Moscow, 1980, pp. 365–367.

⁶² Anfimov A.N. *Land Rent in Russia in the Early 20th Century*. Moscow, 1961, p. 191.

⁶³ Tyutyukin S.V., Shelokhaev V.V. *Marxists and the Russian Revolution*. Moscow, 1996, p. 135.

However, the peasant communities survived, and the farmer did not become the central figure of the Russian village.

As the result of Stolypin's reforms, it was not possible to create a class of wealthy peasants in the village close to Grossbauer, even because Germany also had landowners and peasants. First, the liberation of peasants in Germany began half a century earlier. However, most importantly, in Germany, capitalism existed as a system that obliged both landowners and Grossbauer to follow its laws in the process of management. Otherwise, they could simply go bankrupt.

In case of capitalist monopolies, any monopoly has two components: a corporate component, when the interests of its participants are of social nature and subordinate to consciousness; and a capitalist one, that exists within the economic system with objective laws, independent from consciousness. In Russia, there was clear domination of the former, corporate component of monopolies. The main purpose of emergence of such associations was keeping monopoly prices.

The economic policy of the Tsarist government during the period of imperialism was not transformed into a policy of monopoly capital⁶⁴. The government supported the first monopolies, because they related to the railway construction. In the 1890s, the government used the railway construction to accelerate the development of machine building and metallurgy in the south of the country. The government artificially supported the plants with incomplete capacity utilization. In the period of industrial upsurge, state orders served as means of pressure to reduce the prices. Therefore, in the 1890s, the government began to pursue its antimonopoly policy. During the crisis that followed, the support of large staggering and bankrupt enterprises, banks and their associations took place again. This means that the relationship of the government with monopolies was situational; the government either provided support or distanced itself from monopolies⁶⁵.

It is worthwhile to note that monopoly associations in Russia were mostly created by people who did not have the capitalist but rather traditional consciousness; this was different for the Western countries. Landowners-latifundists took an active part in creation of such syndicates as 'Krovlya' ('Roofing') and 'Med' ('Copper'). They owned hundreds of thousands of dessiatinas⁶⁶ of land and in monopolized production saw the only way to preserve the profitability of their enterprises without fundamen-

⁶⁴ Gindin I.F. Politics of the Tsarist government in relation to industrial monopolies. *On the peculiarities of imperialism in Russia*. Moscow, 1963, p. 88.

⁶⁵ Gindin I.F. Politics of the Tsarist government in relation to industrial monopolies. *On the Peculiarities of Imperialism in Russia*. Moscow, 1963, p. 100–101.

⁶⁶ A dessiatin (Russian: *Десятина*) is an archaic land measurement used in tsarist Russia that equals to 10,926.512 square metres.

tal modernization and reorganization, which required huge investments⁶⁷. Thus, the monopolistic union of sugar refiners, which appeared on the initiative of noble entrepreneurs, was headed by representatives of the titled nobility⁶⁸.

Conclusion

The emergence of monopolies marks the beginning of the imperialist period of capitalism development. From the point of RP concept, only those countries, where RP has already ended, could become subjects of the geopolitical space. In the early 20th century, those were the United States, Great Britain, and France. These countries became the real winners in World War I. Even in Germany (as a country in RP), the imperialism was external. France acquired colonies in Africa and South-East Asia as sources of raw materials and markets and was engaged in the export of capital. At the same time, Germany, mostly for prestige, took wherever possible the third-rate colonies and was engaged in the construction of huge surface fleet (trying to draw near Britain in this respect) that showed its complete uselessness during the World War I⁶⁹.

The lack of geopolitical subjectivity led to the situation where the countries in RP did not have a certain position in the geopolitical space, as they did not have anything to rely on. As a result – there was absence of a certain foreign policy, adventurism, blue-sky thinking. In Russia, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries a similar situation was typical for the Russian Far East. The lease of the Liaodong Peninsula and the construction of Port Arthur, given the enormous funds invested in its construction⁷⁰, had little to do with the objective interests of the country in this region. This ultimately led to the war with Japan, which cost Russia 2.5 billion rubles.

In terms of foreign policy, we cannot define Russia as a real imperialist country. Russia was not ready to face the world war that began in 1914. It is enough to say, that there were less military units with heavy artillery in Tsarist Russia than not only in the leading Western European countries, but for instance in Romania. Russia produced much fewer machine-guns than Britain or Germany. Due to insufficient devel-

⁶⁷ Vyatkin M.L. *Mining and Metallurgical Ural in 1900–1917*. Moscow, 1965.

⁶⁸ Kamenetskaya I.M. The emergence of monopolies in the sugar beet industry. *History of the USSR*, 1965, no. 6, pp. 110–121.

⁶⁹ Kondorsky B.M. The nature of military and socio-political conflicts within the framework of the revolutionary period. *Memory and Time: The Impact of Wars and Armed Conflicts of the 20th Century on the Russian Society*. Penza, 2016, pp. 244.

⁷⁰ Levitsky N.A. *The Russo-Japanese War*. Moscow, 1938, p. 14.

opment of the material base, Tsarist Russia could not live up to ‘imperialist’ goals without any outside assistance⁷¹.

Thus, according to the main parameters indicated above, Russia was a typical CTG, with capitalism formed by the beginning of the 20th century as a way of life, not as some kind of an economic system with its own laws. Herein, we should focus on the fundamental differences between the ‘social’ (society) and ‘economic’ (economic system) concepts. A bourgeois is a social concept; a capitalist is an economic category. The exact same person, as a bourgeois, should spend money to maintain their prestige and image in accordance with the situation in the society; whereas as a capitalist, they should invest their capital into business in accordance with the objective laws of the economic system.

In Russia, as well as in other CTG, the state actively intervened in the economy and kept the situation in industry under its full control even during the crisis of 1899-1903. The same applies to monopolies that were completely dependent on the policy of the government, in contrast to real imperialist countries. This was similar to Japan, where, at the first stage of development, the state played an exceptionally important role in the formation of all basic industries. The main difference was that Russia was not able to organize total mobilization of resources, being dependent on the landowner estates.

Despite the existence of feudal relations between the landowners and the peasants in both Germany and Russia, Russia was never able to follow the ‘Prussian path’ because of the patriarchy of peasant communities and traditional consciousness. The evolutionary way of transforming a German peasant into an agricultural proletarian was more an exception rather than a rule in Russia. A peasant community was a completely different ‘world’ with its own laws. The history showed that the destruction of traditional consciousness was an extremely painful and long process. The elements of capitalism in the village were exclusively external. The absence of a capitalist system with its binding laws led to the fact that Russian landowners chose the capitalist way of management on their own initiative and not due to the circumstances that had nothing to do with consciousness, as it was in Germany.

The constant shortage of capital forced the state to take regular loans abroad (mainly from France). However, in the sphere of economy, this did contribute to the emergence of capitalism as a system at all, and put Russia in a dependent position in the sphere of foreign policy, which led to Russia’s entering a war with Germany, despite absence of any serious contradictions with this country.

⁷¹ Maevskiy I.V. On the dependence of Russia in World War I. *Questions of History*, 1957, no. 1, pp. 71–72.

If in terms of quantitative parameters (only by individual sectors), Russia was close to leading industrial powers, by qualitative ones, such as production per capita, products costs, yields of main agricultural crops, it was far behind. Russian capitalism was completely dependent on both internal and external factors. So how can we possibly talk about its self-development based on the laws of the capitalist system?

In Russia, as well as in other CTG, RP ended in the 1990s. It fell mainly on the years of the Soviet power, which means the ‘Soviet’ basis of the political and economic system became the ‘foundation’ for the ‘new house’ that was being built at the time. The superstructure is to correspond to its basis. Moreover, we cannot change it at will, without destroying the country itself. In China, it became obvious back in the 1980s and 1990s and led to the successful development of the country. At the same time, in Ukraine, the disregard of the ‘Soviet’ basis led to a permanent crisis that has lasted for quarter of a century. This is enough to say that Ukraine’s share in the world’s industrial production decreased 50 times during this time⁷². The current attempts to change it at will might ultimately lead to complete collapse of the country.

As mentioned above, CTG, including Russia, have their own features within the framework of political and economic systems that are very different compared to those in CFG and CSG (Western countries). All those problems that Russia has been experiencing for the past 25 years mostly relate to the attempts to build the economy per the Western patterns. Here we should remember that, in Russia, it is impossible to build the Western-type capitalism, which is not ever possible in any CTG. Within the framework of the world system, CTG feel themselves ‘not in their element’. Therefore, these countries need to focus on creating their own space – political, economic, and financial – in foreign policy and international relations.

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⁷² Stavitsky A.V. ‘The end of history’ of Ukraine: Already close. Available at: <http://skepticist.livejournal.com/215927.html>

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