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“In Accord with State Interests and the People’s Wishes”: The Technocratic Ideology of Imperial Russia’s Resettlement Administration

Peter Holquist

In 1920, Gennadii Chirkin was assisting the Soviet state in its efforts to exploit and colonize Russia’s north. At the very same time, at the opposite side of the Eurasian isthmus, Aleksei Tatishchev was implementing land reform and food supply policy in the Crimea for General Petr Wrangel’s anti-Soviet government. These two men served opposing sides in Russia’s brutal civil war. Yet their agendas were more similar than one might suppose. In fact, both were close colleagues who had cooperated intensively for more than a decade in guiding imperial Russia’s program of colonization and resettlement. While the measures they pursued in 1920 were intended to further agendas of the Red and White camps, respectively, the goals and content of their programs extended aspirations fostered in their earlier service for the Russian imperial state. The trajectories of their careers underscore the degree to which an anticommmercial, technocratic ethos animated imperial and wartime policies and demonstrates continuities both in ideology and personnel across the 1917 divide.

In this article I focus on the institutional culture of the organization in which both men served, Glavnoe upravlenie zemleustroistva i zemledeliia (GUZZ, the Main administration of land management and agriculture). Within this department, both men had served in the Pereselencheskoe upravlenie (Resettlement Administration), responsible for overseeing the imperial government’s colonization programs. Alfred Rieber has sketched a compelling case for how specific ideologies came to emerge within particular ministries in late imperial Russia.¹ “While bureaucratic politics has

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1. Alfred Rieber, “Bureaucratic Politics in Imperial Russia,” *Social Science History* 2, no. 4 (Summer 1978): 399–413; Alfred Rieber, “Interest-Group Politics in the Era of the Great Reforms,” in Ben Eklof, John Bushnell, and Larissa Zakharova, eds., *Russia’s Great Reforms, 1855–1881* (Bloomington, 1994), 58–83; Alfred Rieber, “Patronage and Professionalism: The Witte System,” in B. V. Anan’ich, ed., *Problemy vsemirnoi istorii: Sbornik statei v chest’ Aleksandra Aleksandrovicha Fursenko* (St. Petersburg, 2000), 286–98. See also George Yaney, *The Urge to Mobilize: Agrarian Reform in Russia, 1861–1930* (Urbana, 1982), 133–38; on “institutional culture” generally, see Isabel Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, 2005), 93–98.

received recognition,” he argues, “its precise form and content remain ill-defined.”² Discussing the Finance Ministry in particular, Rieber noted that while it did not enunciate a formal ideology, there nevertheless existed “a fairly consistent set of propositions which gave prominence to the role of the state in stimulating and guiding, but also restraining, capitalism of a Western European type.”³ Rieber argues that officials in the technical ministries in particular developed an independent sense of identity and purpose: “There is the same sense of moral identity as experts, the same dedication to introducing science or special knowledge into life, the same corporate pride in achievement and mastery of problems.”⁴ These observations are fitting, not only for the Finance Ministry, Rieber’s focus, but equally for GUZZ—which became the Ministry of Agriculture—because it was a technical ministry par excellence. The technocratic, etatist agenda of this ministry was an important feature of state policy in the last years of the imperial regime and throughout the years of World War I. It continued to inform the policies of both the anti-Soviet and Soviet sides during the Russian civil war. This technocratic ethos proved to be a crucial bridge for many specialists to service with the Soviet state.

The Institutional Culture of GUZZ and Its Resettlement Administration

GUZZ, and the Resettlement Administration subordinate to it, had emerged in the reforms following the 1905 Revolution. GUZZ evolved from the Ministry of Agriculture and State Domains (1894–1905), itself an heir to the Ministry of State Domains founded in 1837 under the statist reformer Count Pavel Kiselev. The Resettlement Administration had been founded in 1896 within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but with the 1905 reforms, the restructured GUZZ acquired the Resettlement Administration.⁵ Moved from one of the most paternalistic ministries, the Resettlement Administration entered a ministry steeped in the ethos of progressive state reformism.⁶ And as the main instrument for Petr Stolypin’s reform program, the new GUZZ immediately became a prominent and lavishly funded agency.

The men heading GUZZ and its Resettlement Administration were a tight-knit group deeply committed to their cause. The staff of GUZZ and the Resettlement Administration’s central office—Aleksandr Krivoshein, Aleksandr Rittikh, Grigorii Glinka, Chirkin, Nikolai Gavrilov—were men who had moved up within specific government channels in the 1890s and

2. Rieber, “Bureaucratic Politics,” 401, 402.

3. Rieber, “Patronage and Professionalism,” 289–90.

4. *Ibid.*, 291; cf. Richard Wortman, *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness* (Chicago, 1976), 134, on the emergence of a “moral identity” and professional agenda among Russia’s jurists.

5. B. V. Anan’ich and R. Sh. Ganelin, eds., *Upravlencheskaia elita Rossiiskoi imperii: Istoriia ministerstva, 1802–1917* (St. Petersburg, 2007), 379–416.

6. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 133–38, 228–29; Judith Pallot, “The Stolypin Land Reform as ‘Administrative Utopia’: Images of Peasantry in Nineteenth Century Russia,” in Madahavan K. Palat, ed., *Social Identities in Revolutionary Russia* (New York, 2001), 118.

who held to the long-standing Russian political tradition of progressive statism. The trajectory of their careers from the post-1905 reform projects through war and revolution demonstrate an abiding commitment to technocratic agendas. These men belonged to a generation of officials who had come of age in the 1850s and 1860s. Almost all had completed some form of higher education, “usually at the law faculties of Moscow or St. Petersburg University or the Imperial School of Jurisprudence,” or the prestigious Alexander Lycée.⁷ Education in the Alexander Lycée and other such institutions provided future state servitors not only with an “old boys’ network” but also with training in the disciplines of statistics and political economy. Most important, it cultivated an ideal of state service.⁸ Increasingly, these agents of the Ministry of Agriculture conceived of themselves as “*specialists*: that is, their *formal* roles derived solely from their practical knowledge of applied sciences.”⁹

The driving force in GUZZ was Krivoshein, who served as deputy director or director for more than two decades. For much of this period, his deputy was Rittikh. They were part of a cohort of agricultural reformers.¹⁰ Both had been deeply involved with Sergei Witte’s attempts to restructure peasant agriculture before 1905 and then became key lieutenants for Stolypin in his reform efforts after 1906. After Stolypin’s assassination in 1911, Krivoshein became a leading figure within the Council of Ministers. In particular, he advocated a “new course,” urging the government to cooperate with educated society.¹¹ Georgii Gins (George Guins) recalled that “the Resettlement Administration was interested in popularizing its activities. . . . I want to emphasize that these kinds of government publications represented a new epoch, which began after the first revolution of 1905–1906 and the foundation of the State Duma.”¹² After Krivoshein’s dismissal in late 1915, and after two other short-time appointees, his former subordinate Rittikh became Minister of Agriculture from November 1916 until the February 1917 revolution. Aleksandr Naumov, who served as Rittikh’s predecessor as Minister of Agriculture from November 1915 to June 1916, remembered Rittikh as someone who worked “like the mechanism of the very best clock.”¹³

7. David A. J. Macey, *Government and Peasant in Russia, 1861–1906: The Prehistory of the Stolypin Reforms* (DeKalb, 1987), 46–47; also Alessandro Stanziani, *L'économie en révolution: Le cas russe, 1870–1930* (Paris, 1998), pt. 1, “The Formation of a Technocracy.”

8. Rieber, “Patronage and Professionalism,” 290.

9. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 134 (emphasis in the original); also 6, 387–88.

10. Macey, *Government and Peasant*, 46, naming both explicitly; on Krivoshein, see 153–55; on Rittikh, see 62–68.

11. V. I. Gurko, *Cherty i siluety proshlogo: Pravitel'stvo i obshchestvennost' v tsarstvovanie Nikolaia II v izobrazhenii sovremennika* (Moscow, 2000), 607–11; Kirill A. Krivoshein, A. V. Krivoshein: *Ego znachenie v istorii Rossii nachala XX veka* (Paris, 1973), 109, 148–50, 175, 222–24, 236.

12. George Guins, “Professor and Government Official: Russia, China, and California” (University of California, Bancroft Library, Regional Oral History Office, Berkeley, 1966), 87, 111. See also Pallot, “Stolypin Land Reform,” 123.

13. A. N. Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii, 1868–1917*, 2 vols. (New York, 1955), 2:348; see also A. A. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi: V gushche pereselencheskogo dvizheniia* (Moscow, 2001), 250.

Within GUZZ, the staff of the Resettlement Administration's central office also remained fairly constant from 1905 through 1917. Krivoshein had served as its director before he became head of GUZZ; he was succeeded by Glinka. In that post, from 1905 until 1915, Glinka had managed to prepare "an entire school of specialists in this particular field of state management."¹⁴ One of the best such "specialists" was Glinka's deputy, Chirkin. During the war years, when Glinka moved from the Resettlement Administration to oversee the Ministry of Agriculture's food supply efforts, Chirkin succeeded him as director.¹⁵ Chirkin published a prodigious amount, ceaselessly proselytizing the cause of settlement and land reform, and he served as coeditor of the agency's semi-official journal, *Voprosy kolonizatsii*. Another key official in the central office was Gavrilov. He worked alongside Chirkin in the Resettlement Administration and served as coeditor of *Voprosy kolonizatsii*. Naumov described him as someone who "had a clear mathematical head" and who demonstrated a marked tendency for planning and systematization.¹⁶

Tatishchev, who joined the central office as a young man in 1906, described this older generation of officials staffing the central office as fairly "left-wing" in their views, explicitly citing both Chirkin and Gavrilov. He continued: "They struck me first and foremost with how well read they were as regards social questions and with their knowledge of various currents in sociology. . . . Following the leftist tradition, they were fairly hostile to the class of landed gentry."¹⁷ In Tatishchev's view, the Resettlement Administration provided an ideal milieu for such people, allowing them to apply scientized solutions to burning social issues (such as "questions of colonization"—*voprosy kolonizatsii*).

Charged with realizing Stolypin's reform agenda for peasant agriculture after 1905, GUZZ now had to expand. As a newly formed entity, it was granted an exemption to appoint new staff to administrative positions above those that would have been permitted at other institutions and to offer high wages in comparison to other postings.¹⁸ As the primary agency charged with implementing Stolypin's reform program after 1905, it came to be viewed as a "fashionable" place to work, one that "attracted general interest and perhaps oversized expectations."¹⁹ Thus after 1905, the older officials heading GUZZ and its Resettlement Administration were joined by an influx of eager young enthusiasts. These young men often entered the agency with remarkable qualifications and enjoyed a meteoric career path once in it. Their qualifications, however, were largely in the academic sphere. In contrast to the older cohort, which included many landowners

14. Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:379–80; on Glinka see also Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 34–39, 349.

15. Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:379–80; see also Tatishchev, who served as Chirkin's aide from 1915 to 1917: *Zemli i liudi*, 42–43, 225–26, 232.

16. Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:389–90; also Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 232–34, 294, 299.

17. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 31–32, 42–43.

18. Guins, "Professor and Government Official," 77.

19. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 41.

and people who had worked on issues of agricultural reform throughout the 1890s and early 1900s, their younger colleagues had little direct or applied knowledge of rural life.

Tatishchev was representative of this new generation.²⁰ Born in 1885, he completed the elite Alexander Lycée in 1906, earning the gold medal as top student in his graduating class as well as an additional medal for an essay devoted to the topic "The Resettlement of Peasants." With many options open before him, Tatishchev elected to enter the new GUZZ. Personally introduced to Krivoshein by a family friend, he was assigned to the Resettlement Administration and its director, Glinka. Because the central office was still short-staffed, Glinka immediately invited the 20-year-old (!) Tatishchev to accompany him on an inspection tour of Siberia.²¹ Tatishchev worked in the central office from 1906 to 1911. In that time he also published several articles—two within a year of his appointment—in Chirkin and Gavrillov's *Voprosy kolonizatsii*.²² Although he had excellent prospects for promotion in Petersburg, Tatishchev was interested in fieldwork and requested an appointment on the empire's periphery. Indeed, Tatishchev's colleague—and coeval—Gins described him as an "enthusiast."²³ In 1911–1912 Tatishchev served as field director of the resettlement office in the Maritime Province, based in Vladivostok. He then became the head of the Turkestan department of agriculture and state domains, based in Tashkent, from 1913–1915. In late 1915, Chirkin—who had succeeded Glinka as director of the central office of the Resettlement Administration—summoned Tatishchev back to Petrograd as his deputy.

Gins's career trajectory was similar and equally meteoric.²⁴ Recruited into the Resettlement Administration while still finishing his degree at the law faculty at St. Petersburg University, he embarked on a study of water legislation in Turkestan. Like Tatishchev, he published prolifically in *Voprosy kolonizatsii*.²⁵ Gins was young—25 years old. But he recalled that he "did not feel very young, because during two and half years of my service and after my experience in Turkestan and, mostly, because of a study of the books of foreign authors on the colonization of African colonies of France, I believed that I was sufficiently prepared for the discussion of a plan

20. All details taken from Tatishchev's memoir, *Zemli i liudi*; see also Guins's evaluation of Tatishchev: "Professor and Government Official," 89.

21. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 34.

22. A. Tatishchev, "Zemleotvodnoe delo po doneseniiam zaveduiushchikh pereselencheskim delom v raionakh," *Voprosy kolonizatsii* [henceforth *VK*], 1907, no. 1: 236–53; A. Tatishchev, "Obshchie itogi pereselencheskoi kampanii 1907 goda," *VK*, 1907, no. 2: 369–89.

23. Guins, "Professor and Government Official," 89.

24. Guins, "Professor and Government Official."

25. G. Gins, "Sovremennoe vodnoe khoziaistvo Turkestana i neobkhodimost' vodnogo zakona," *VK*, 1910, no. 6: 46–103; G. Gins, "Deistvuiushchee vodnoe pravo Turkestana i budushchii vodnyi zakon," *VK*, 1910, no. 7: 140–206; G. Gins, "Gidrotekhnicheskie raboty Pereselencheskogo upravleniia," *VK*, 1911, no. 8: 178–209; G. Gins, "Usloviia orosheniia i eksplotatsii chastnymi predprinimateliami svobodnykh zemel' Turkestana i Zakavkaz'ia," *VK*, 1911, no. 8: 249–60; G. Gins, "Osnovnye nachala proekta vodnogo zakona dlia Turkestana," *VK*, 1911, no. 9: 128–69.

for the resettlement in the aspect of a broad scheme of colonization.”²⁶ In 1913 he published this “plan” as a programmatic, two-part article on “resettlement and colonization” in the agency’s official journal, *Voprosy kolonizatsii*.²⁷

When contemplating Russia’s peripheries between 1906 and 1914, and conquered territories during World War I, both the elder and the younger generation of officials in the Resettlement Administration envisioned the “colonization” (*kolonizatsiia*) of these regions. With this term, adopted self-consciously from the repertoire of western European practice, these officials meant something other than the traditional process of “resettlement” (*pereselenie*). “Colonization” was meant to be both more state-directed and programmatic than the traditional practice of “resettlement.”²⁸ “Colonization” encompassed, on the one hand, the standard meaning of settling peripheries with colonists from the metropole. In this sense “colonization” was a specifically *colonial* project, the channeling of ethnic Russians to the empire’s peripheries. And, in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century, government officials increasingly began to employ the category of ethnicity in their calculations. Civilians and military men alike argued that it was essential to increase the “Russian element” along the empire’s frontiers.²⁹ This agenda, well described in the secondary literature on Turkestan in the late imperial period, corresponded with the political programs developed, for instance, both by Stolypin and Petr Struve for “a Great Russia” (*Velikaia Rossiia*), the analogue to Robert Seely’s concept of a “Greater Britain.”³⁰

Yet officials in the Resettlement Administration simultaneously viewed colonization as a state-directed endeavor to maximize the human and productive resources of the empire as a whole, by matching available territory with the population and its productive capacity. In this sense, “colonization” was equally a program both for advancing Russian state interests

26. Guins, “Professor and Government Official,” 98.

27. Gins, “Pereselenie i kolonizatsiia,” *VK*, 1913, no. 12: 73–132 and 1913, no. 13: 39–99; see also Guins, “Professor and Government Official,” 91.

28. On how contemporaries distinguished between these two terms, see Willard Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field: Colonization and Empire on the Russian Steppe* (Ithaca, 2004), 194–96, and Francine Hirsch, *State of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, 2005), 87–92; for a programmatic statement, see Gins, “Pereselenie i kolonizatsiia”; and I. L. Iamzin and V. P. Voshchinin, *Uchenie o kolonizatsii i pereseleniakh: Posobie dlia vysshei shkoly* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1926), 3–5. (Both Iamzin and Voshchinin were colleagues of Gins in the Resettlement Administration prior to 1914.)

29. Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field*, 185–92; also Peter Holquist, “To Count, To Extract, To Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia,” in Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin, eds., *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin* (Oxford, 2001), 111–44, esp. 120–22.

30. Stolypin gave a notable 1907 speech to the Duma on “Velikaia Rossiia”; picking up on this term, Struve devoted an article to the idea: “Velikaia Rossiia,” *Russkaia mysl'* 29, no. 1 (1908): 143–57. See also the Riabushinskii circle’s journal *Velikaia Rossiia* (1910–1911). John Robert Seeley had coined the concept of “Greater Britain” in *The Expansion of England* (London, 1883). On Seeley and “Greater Britain,” see Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860–1900* (Princeton, 2007).

generally and for redressing peasant land impoverishment in the Russian core in particular. To this end, such officials viewed all segments of the population—Russian and non-Russian alike—as a resource. Willard Sunderland observes that such concerns about imposing or consolidating “Russian power in the empire’s non-Russian borderlands” remained “intimately tied to what were increasingly referred to as the ‘peasant question’ and the ‘land question,’ both of which were centered on Russia’s ‘interior’ and were not usually posed as imperial concerns.”³¹ In terms of administrative structure, then, resettlement and colonization were not ends in their own right, but functions of the larger land and peasant question.

A crucial feature of the colonization agenda for both GUZZ and the Resettlement Administration was an etatist and technocratic ethos. These officials’ vision of progressive statism extended a long-standing tradition within the Russian bureaucracy, with the bureaucracy often casting the state’s agenda in opposition to the interests of the petty and self-interested Russian nobility. This ideology championed technocratic knowledge, advocated forms of scientized state intervention, and emphasized “productive” labor over “speculation.” Both before and during the war, GUZZ, and the Resettlement Administration subordinated to it, pursued a large-scale effort to amass a huge land fund, under its own control, by repossessing and expropriating various categories of land in occupied territories and within European Russia. GUZZ was eager to *seize* land from various categories of the population and from entire ethnic groups. What existing studies have failed to explain is what GUZZ then intended to do with this vast land fund.

GUZZ’s purpose was to amass a huge amount of land in order to develop Russian agriculture in what it had determined was the most economically rational and socially desirable manner. That program was to be overseen by the state, which planned on applying statistics and scientifically determined norms to ensure that agriculture was based on “productive labor” rather than “speculation.” Its adherents believed their technocratic and statist program to be scientific and value-neutral. This conviction, however, was less an objective description of their agenda than a self-affirming rhetorical device, one that situated their project as an improvement over both the sclerotic and hidebound noble estate and autocratic order and the benighted peasantry.³² To be sure, these aspirations were often thwarted in practice. But such values determined policy and were the standards by which officials measured the success or failure of their programs. Judith Pallot has demonstrated, for instance, that GUZZ officials’ plans for the Stolypin reform were modified in practice by the exigencies

31. Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field*, 194 and 179–80.

32. On the technocratic ethos, see Charles S. Maier’s classic “Between Taylorism and Technocracy: European Ideologies and the Vision of Industrial Productivity in the 1920s,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, no. 2 (1970): 27–63; more recently, James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998). For the case in Russian history, see Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*; Stanziani, *L’économie en révolution*; and Yanni Kotsonis, *Making Peasants Backwards: Agricultural Cooperatives and the Agrarian Question in Russia, 1861–1914* (New York, 1999).

of real life and peasant reluctance. Nevertheless, she cautions that “this does not constitute evidence of the centre’s abandonment of its utopian vision, or its acceptance that the peasant knew better than the experts.”³³

Yet while articulating a vision that valorized the mobilizing impulse of state absolutism, framed in their own expertise and the scientism of the nineteenth century, these officials also sought to harness “civil society” for their project. GUZZ and its Resettlement Administration were eager to win the cooperation and support of the Duma and educated public. Krivoshein—Stolypin’s close collaborator—pursued a program he termed a “new course,” one that attempted to harness popular support for his ministry’s agenda. His deputy Glinka was likewise on very good terms with members of the Duma.³⁴ Little surprise, then, that officials in GUZZ (in stark contrast, say, to the Ministry of Internal Affairs) shared this sensibility.³⁵ A desire to cooperate with the Duma, however, did not mean that these officials foreswore their technocratic conceits. Cooperation with society, in their eyes, meant using the public to pursue the agency’s ends; it did not mean subordinating their agenda to political or legislative oversight. Tatishchev describes how his superiors fully supported using local forces to participate in the government’s work—so long as that participation went in the direction of “productive work,” not politicized speeches.³⁶ The task was to provide new foundations for the autocracy by employing scientific mobilization from above with the enlistment of peasant landowners alongside civil society from below.

How did officials in GUZZ and the Resettlement Administration attempt to put these aspirations into practice? In the first instance, it was these GUZZ officials who were in charge of the Stolypin reforms for peasant agriculture. (The debate about whether to expropriate noble lands was a separate issue.) And these GUZZ officials had very strong ideas about how peasant agriculture—indeed, how peasant life—should be restructured. Yaney describes the reform “agenda” as in fact a massive project “to foster social change among the 70–80 per cent of [the empire’s] subjects,” an attempt to be realized by administrative fiat. Another student of the reforms, Pallot, has described the side of the Stolypin reforms directed at the peasantry as “social engineering on a grand scale,” exemplifying in fact a true “utopian vision.”³⁷ Many scholars have typified the Stolypin reform as an attempt to secure social support for the post-1906 order by transferring communal peasant lands into the hands of peas-

33. Pallot, “Stolypin Land Reform,” 121–22. Pallot’s monograph details how peasant reactions subtly modified the actual implementation of the reform: Judith Pallot, *Land Reform in Russia, 1906–1917: Peasant Responses to Stolypin’s Project of Rural Transformation* (Oxford, 1999).

34. Guins, “Professor and Government Official,” 83.

35. *Ibid.*, 87.

36. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 48.

37. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 3; Pallot, “Stolypin Land Reform,” 120; David Macey, “Reflections on Peasant Adaptation in Rural Russia at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: The Stolypin Agrarian Reforms,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 31, nos. 3–4 (2004): 400–26.

ant proprietors as *private* property.³⁸ Such studies rightly emphasize the government's program to move land from the commune into the hands of individual peasants.

But by not examining in detail *how* and *to what extent* peasants were able to dispose of this land now held individually, these studies confuse the government's program for *individualized* peasant holdings with a program for *private* property. The new technocrats did not trust peasant communes to pursue the most efficient and productive forms of agriculture. But they equally did not trust the "invisible hand" of the market. Yanni Kotsonis has detailed how legislation regarding communal land passing into peasant hands defined this as "individual property" [*lichnaia sobstvennost'*]. The term "private property" [*chastnaia sobstvennost'*] tended to be reserved for noble landholding. Peasants received an "individual holding" from the commune—but they could not freely alienate this land or mortgage it as they wished.³⁹ "Individual property" implied a lesser sense of inviolability and immunity than did private property—and thus opened up a correspondingly greater arena for professional intervention and oversight.⁴⁰ The progressive officials of GUZZ wished to do away with "communal landholding"—but in the interests of creating an *individualized* and simultaneously *productive* form of *peasant* landholding that would provide a social basis for the autocracy's new order. But it would also sidestep the threat of "speculation" and the encroachment of non-peasant and non-Russian (read: Jewish) control over formerly peasant communal land.

The endorsement of "property," then, did not signal an all-embracing endorsement of market relations and private property. Along with doing away with the commune, the reformers simultaneously sought to combat what they believed to be the corrosive force of faceless "commerce."⁴¹ A particular horror for officials in GUZZ was that private property would lead to "speculation." Indeed, one reason the officials in GUZZ and the Resettlement Administration were suspicious about granting peasants full private property rights over their land was the fear that they would then sell these lands to "speculators." Indeed, the plans of reformers in GUZZ to shield peasants from speculators and non-peasants led the Finance Ministry to charge that they wished to "embark on the road to socialism." The reformers countered that such opposition to their plans was "hardly rational" and continued pressing for state-driven policies.⁴² Indeed, while the reformers condemned privilege in general and the noble estate in

38. Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (New York, 1991), 173–75; Stephen F. Williams, *Liberal Reform in an Illiberal Regime: The Creation of Private Property in Russia* (Stanford, 2006).

39. Kotsonis, *Making Peasants*, 54–55, 76. See also Pallot, "Stolypin Land Reform," 115 and V. Korelin, "Stolypinskaia agrarnaia reforma v aspekte zemel'noi sobstvennosti," in D. F. Aiatskov, ed., *Sobstvennost' na zemliu v Rossii: Istoriia i sovremennost'* (Moscow, 2002), esp. 277, 287.

40. Macey, *Government and Peasant*, 243; Kotsonis, *Making Peasants*, chap. 4, esp. 54–55, 71–76; see also Rieber, "Patronage and Professionalism," 290.

41. Macey, "Reflections on Peasant Adaptation," 150; Kotsonis, *Making Peasants*, 48–52, 58, 116–19, 146; Stanziani, *L'economie en revolution*, 120–23.

42. Macey, "Reflections on Peasant Adaptation," 160–61.

particular, it was not in the name of revolution or Marxism per se, but in the name of progressive etatism and science. This cohort of officials forms a crucial link in a larger narrative tracing the evolution of absolutism from a conservative to a radically transformative state-rooted mobilizer of populations and resources, retaining exclusive prerogative in the pursuit of “state interests” over the particular and selfish aspirations of specific social groups.

To these ends, resettlement officials were prepared to impose their wills upon peasants who might not realize what was in their own best interests. For instance, faced with a village assembly that did not provide the necessary number of signatures to transfer the village’s land from communal to personalized plots, Tatishchev simply refused to disperse the assembly until the community provided the necessary number of signatures. “I admit,” he wrote, “that in this case I ‘raped’—as we called it in jest—the village assembly, that is, I did not allow it to disperse until the number of signatures on the resolution’s draft reached two-thirds of the householders. This took until one o’clock at night. It transpired that I had ‘out-sat’ the peasants.”⁴³

Such views not only shaped the Stolypin reforms in European Russia but also framed the colonization programs of the Resettlement Administration. Sunderland has shown how colonization in this era took place under the slogan of “scientized colonization”—colonization as “an orderly, scientized, systematic process.”⁴⁴ Dedicated young men like Tatishchev and Gins joined the Resettlement Administration within GUZZ because they were committed to its agenda. In developing programs for the new settlers, they worked to implement their technocratic and anticommmercial concerns. Chirkin’s colleague and coeditor of *Voprosy kolonizatsii*, Gavrilov, preached the need for a “colonization fund” in Turkestan because he feared that the massive influx of new settlers created “favorable conditions for the development of speculation with the allotment lands of the older Russian settlers.” For the same region, Tatishchev argued for policies that would “liberate the small landholder . . . from the ruinous exploitation of middlemen.”⁴⁵ In a corresponding development, these officials—Gins first and foremost—advanced a new justification for state landholding. Modifying the eighteenth-century cameralist notion of “public property” as the “good of all subjects,” twentieth-century technocrats now employed the same term but emphasized instead the state’s role in managing natu-

43. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 129. Tatishchev’s full expression in Russian is: “Каюсь, что в данном случае я, что мы в шутку называли, «изнасиловал» сход, то есть не распускал его до тех пор, пока число подписей на составленном проекте приговора не достигло двух третей всего числа домохозяйств в селе. Но кончилось это, кажется, около часу ночи. Вышло, я «пересидел» крестьян.”

44. Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field*, 183–84.

45. N. Gavrilov, *Pereselencheskoe delo v Turkestanskom krae (Oblasti Syr-Dar'inskaiia, Samar-kandskaia, i Ferganskaia): Otchet po sluzhebnoi poezdke v Turkestan osen'iu 1910 goda chinovnika osobykh poruchenii pri Pereselencheskom upravlenii N. Gavrilova* (St. Petersburg, 1910), 186; Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 186.

ral resources. This new interpretation, Ekaterina Pravilova shows, rested “mostly on a negative anti-individualistic spirit and positive etatism.”⁴⁶

In their efforts to press these goals, officials of the Resettlement Administration sought to win over educated society, entirely in line with Krivoshein's “new program.” The Resettlement Administration's commitment to winning the public over to its cause was especially evident in what became a veritable press war in 1908–1909 over its activities in Turkestan. Local officials in Turkestan and some Duma deputies accused the agency of incompetence in caring for Russian settlers and disregard for the plight of the native Kazakh and Kyrgyz population. (Tensions were greatest in the Semirech'e region, in what is now Kyrgyzstan.) In particular, resettlement officials were accused of seizing land above an abstract “norm” from settled and nomadic natives in order to set aside a vast “colonization fund” from which to distribute plots to Russian settlers. It was this dispute that led to the appointment of Konstantin Palen to head a Senatorial investigative commission in Turkestan from June 1908 to June 1909.⁴⁷ For their part, officials in the Resettlement Administration had embarked on a press campaign of their own to refute any charges. The central office dispatched several expeditions throughout the empire staffed by “men of science,” with the goal of demonstrating the agency's commitment to “scientificity and publicity” (*dliia torzhestva nauchnosti i obshchestvennoisti*).⁴⁸ Chirkin, Gavrilov, and Gins all traveled to Turkestan and published reports defending the Resettlement Administration's efforts there, both as free-standing reports and in journal articles.⁴⁹

Resettlement officials valorized their technocratic approach. Their critics excoriated them for it. In part, this was a clash of worldviews. Palen, and those local officials whose views he defended, had an old regime, viceregal mindset, and they worked to accommodate existing social-ascriptive categories and were *relatively* sensitive to problems arising from socioeconomic

46. Ekaterina Pravilova, “Les *res publicae* russes: Discours sur la propriété publique à la fin de l'empire,” *Annales HSS* 64, no. 3 (May–June 2009): 579–609, esp. 592–93. Pravilova's focus in her discussion here is Guins's draft for a water law. For similar views by David Samsonovich Fleksor, the government's chief hydrotechnician, see Kotsonis, *Making Peasants*, 121 (private property should be subordinated to the general good).

47. Constantine Pahlen, *Mission to Turkestan: Being the Memoirs of Count K. K. Pahlen, 1908–1909*, ed. Richard A. Pierce, trans. N. J. Couriss (Oxford, 1964). This memoir recapitulates views found in Palen's multivolume report of his 1908–1909 senatorial inquest in Turkestan: see Konstantin Palen, *Otchet po revizii Turkestanskogo kraia, proizvedennoi po Vysochaishemu poveleniiu*, 18 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1910), volume entitled *Pereselencheskoe delo v Turkestane*. On Palen and his report, the foundation for much current scholarly work on Turkestan, see Daniel Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire* (New York, 2003), 103–6, 143–44, and S. N. Abashin et al., eds., *Tsentral'naia Aziia v sostave Rossiiskoi imperii* (Moscow, 2008), 123–25.

48. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 53–54.

49. E.g., G. Chirkin, *Polozhenie pereselencheskogo dela v Semirech'e: Zapiska komandirovanogo v Semirechenskuiu oblast' letom 1908 g. revizora zemleustroistva G. F. Chirkina* (St. Petersburg, 1908), plus three articles in *VK*. Gavrilov, in addition to *Pereselencheskoe delo v Turkestanskom krae* (1910), also penned an article for *VK*. In 1910–1911, Gins published five articles on Turkestan in *VK*.

and cultural difference. (Palen's views were of a piece with those of General Konstantin Kaufman, who as first Governor-General of Russian Turkestan famously opposed Christian proselytization there.)⁵⁰ The worldview of the resettlement officials, however, was much different. They regarded land and population alike as abstracted resources, understood in terms of productive capacity and utility to the "general state good."

Palen blamed the deteriorating situation in Turkestan in 1908 precisely on this blindly technocratic worldview of the resettlement officials. They suffered from "that foolish assumption that theory could be translated directly into practice".⁵¹

Here, at last, they were in a land which seemed to offer them unlimited scope for applying their ideals; a land freshly conquered and undisputed. They would divide it, split it up, give to each man toiling on the soil a parcel of land, in accordance with abstract formulae. On paper and in theory nothing could be simpler. These magic formulae were derived from statistical research which would show the exact number of acres needed by a 'toiler' in any given district. . . . The following reasoning was then applied. Here is a district belonging to the Tsar: it contains X number of hectares and is inhabited by Y number of nomads. As each nomad is entitled to thirty hectares, the total amount of land due to them is Y multiplied by thirty. Deduct that figure from the total acreage of the area and you have a balance N which should be handed over the settlers. *Q. E. D.*⁵²

Such "norms" proved useless, Palen charged, since they derived from "superficial investigations" and the "routine application" of abstract figures. They were "calculated in the office, not on the ground."⁵³

Palen's sarcasm about the technocratic conceits of these officials is undisguised. But his description of the working assumptions of the resettlement officials is accurate in nearly all respects. Officials in the Resettlement Administration were indeed committed to amassing a huge "colonization fund," from which these officials would then parcel out land in accordance with a standardized and scientifically determined "norm." This program took on a highly scientized form in the early twentieth century, but it had deep roots in Russian state policy.⁵⁴

Resettlement officials believed that their scientifically determined "norms" were a positive and distinctive feature of Russian colonization. In his programmatic article on colonization, Gins claimed that Russian legislation "stands closest to the best models, both in moral terms and in political terms." In practice, the best way to provide for the land needs of

50. On this viceregal mindset, see Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley, 1998), 50–61.

51. Pahlen, *Mission to Turkestan*, 196; similarly, Palen, *Pereselencheskoe delo*, 24, 37–38, 42, 406, 426.

52. Pahlen, *Mission to Turkestan*, 191; he also describes this system in his 1910 report: Palen, *Pereselencheskoe delo*, 31–42. For the Resettlement Administration's defense of its approach, see D. Fleksor, *Pereselencheskoe delo v 1908 godu* (St. Petersburg, 1908), 26–27.

53. Palen, *Pereselencheskoe delo*, 42; also Pahlen, *Mission to Turkestan*, 181.

54. Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field*, chap. 4.

the native peoples was to introduce immediate and definitive land consolidation for them. He thus fostered the conceit that the specialists' efforts were in the natives' best interests. Here then was an argument for the link between land reform and colonization.⁵⁵ Rather than establishing "reservations" for its natives, Russia was unique among colonial powers in establishing "norms for meeting the land needs of natives, norms determined after special statistical studies. This method is doubtless more objective."⁵⁶ Nevertheless, implicit in such ostensibly value-free evaluations was a clear preference for sedentary over nomadic life.

After 1910, resettlement officials aggressively pursued this model in Turkestan, for the first time expropriating lands directly claimed by the indigenous population.⁵⁷ Palen certainly believed that resettlement officials were deeply committed to this model: "one was up against . . . that foolish assumption that theory could be translated directly into practice." Resettlement officials simply took maps, calculated thirty hectares of land per head—but counting mountains and deserts together with arable land—then declared the remaining balance left after these calculations to be state property available for settlement.⁵⁸ Resettlement officials clearly privileged sedentary agriculture over the nomadic lifestyle practiced by many Kyrgyz. Yet their projects were not determined simply by an anti-nomadic (or anti-Kyrgyz) bias. Gins, for instance, wished to take this program further. He believed that resettlement officials should oversee the land reform and consolidation, not only for the native population, but also for the Russian population in those regions.⁵⁹ In Turkestan, resettlement officials sought to devise land "norms" for the native peoples (both nomads and those who had adopted farming)—but also to impose such norms on the existing Russian population and all newly arriving Russian settlers.⁶⁰ The task of the Resettlement Administration was to ensure that the indigenous population *and* the Russian settlers practiced forms of landholding that "did not hinder the proper economic exploitation of those lands."⁶¹

For GUZZ officials, the ideal was productive labor rather than private property. A dedication to this *type* of agriculture inspired their commitment to establishing "norms" for proper landholding. The rules that these technocrats respected "were not legal, but scientific."⁶² Palen agreed. He observed that in Turkestan, the resettlement officials' system of norms

55. Gins, "Pereselenie i kolonizatsiia," no. 13: 40–41, 47–48.

56. *Ibid.*, no. 13: 48–49; Fleksor describes the model in his 1908 report: *Pereselencheskoe delo*, 28.

57. Jeff Sahadeo, "Progress or Peril? Migrants and Locals in Russian Tashkent, 1906–14," in Nicholas B. Breyfogle, Abby Schrader, and Willard Sunderland, eds., *Peopling the Russia Periphery: Borderland Colonization in Eurasian History* (London, 2007), 153–54; Brower, *Turkestan*, 131–51.

58. Pahlen, *Mission to Turkestan*, 196.

59. Gins, "Pereselenie i kolonizatsiia," no. 13: 50–51; also Fleksor, *Pereselencheskoe delo*, 41, for Siberia; and Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 70–71, describing the views of his predecessor as director of the resettlement office for the Maritime Province.

60. Gavrilov, *Pereselencheskoe delo v Turkestanskom krae*, 52, 54, 333–34.

61. Fleksor, *Pereselencheskoe delo*, 55, 86.

62. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 136 and 388.

“serves, as it were, as a title for the expropriation of private land rights, without granting to the population those guarantees, which by the law of expropriation it should enjoy.”⁶³ For their part, the resettlement officials rationalized their programs for expropriation as necessary for more “efficient” landholding methods and as corresponding better to changing facts on the ground—regardless of existing legislation.⁶⁴ To these ends, they were prepared to impose their scientific system upon both Russian peasants in European Russia and Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, and Russian settlers in Turkestan.

The Wartime Programs of GUZZ and the Resettlement Administration: Colonization and Food Supply

In the years immediately preceding the outbreak of World War I, however, financial constraints and the government’s general lack of direction had by and large stymied these fantastic plans.⁶⁵ Although GUZZ was able to initiate some plans, many were left frustratingly unrealized.⁶⁶

With the outbreak of World War I, GUZZ—which became the Ministry of Agriculture in 1915—initially focused upon those efforts immediately related to the war. The scope of the Resettlement Administration shrank and its staff dropped almost by half.⁶⁷ A large portion of those who remained shifted from resettlement activities to the cause of food supply, which the Ministry of Agriculture had wrested away from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The Ministry of Agriculture fought to take over the task of food supply mainly in order to pursue its overarching, prewar agenda, but now armed with wartime legislation and wartime funding. Its officials saw their task as eliminating the commercial middlemen and thereby establish a *direct* relationship between the state and Russia’s millions of small producers.⁶⁸ Consequently, many of the officials who had been involved in the resettlement campaign

63. Palen, *Pereselencheskoe delo*, 49; Palen’s report at several points charges that the Resettlement Administration’s commitment to norms is “inconsistent with existing law” (38, 41); see also Pahlen, *Mission to Turkestan*, 191.

64. Gavrilov, *Pereselencheskoe delo v Turkestanskom krae*, 331; G. Chirkin, “Neobkhodimost’ peresmotra Stepnogo Polozheniia,” *VK*, 1913, no. 12: 65–72.

65. For a general overview, see Boris Anan’ich et al., *Krizis samoderzhaviiia, 1895–1917* (Leningrad, 1984), 421–22, 426, 428, 446, 528; Kotsonis, *Making Peasants*, 62–68.

66. See Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia’s Continuum of Crisis* (Cambridge, Mass., 2002), 18–20, 33–34; and Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 135, 405, 417, 426, 433, 436.

67. Tatischev, *Zemli i liudi*, 198–99, 233. On the drop in funding for the Resettlement Administration during World War I (by 1916 it had dropped by 30 percent), see Willard Sunderland’s article in this issue.

68. Minutes of Secret Council of Ministers meeting, 1 August 1914, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv, St. Petersburg (RGIA), f. 1276 (Sovet ministrov), op. 10, d. 800, ll. 2–3; B. D. Galperina, ed., *Sovet ministrov rossiiskoi imperii v gody pervoi mirovoi voiny: Bumagi A. N. Iakhontova* (St. Petersburg, 1999), 26–27 (30 July 1914) and 30, 367n55 (both 1 August 1914). See Holquist, *Making War*, 16–21, esp. 19; Kimitaka Matsuzato, “Obshchestvennaia sypka i voenno-prodovol’stvennaia sistema,” *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 15 (1997): 17–47.

between 1906 and 1914 became the leading managers of the agricultural economy during the war. Rittikh remained as deputy to the Minister of Agriculture for successive ministers: first for Krivoshein until late 1915, then for Naumov (who served from November 1915 until July 1916), and then briefly for Count A. A. Bobrinskii (July–November 1916). From November 1916 to the February revolution, Rittikh himself served as minister. Glinka, Krivoshein's assistant minister who had been in charge of the Resettlement Administration, took on the new post of High Commissioner for Grain Purchases for the Army. Then, when a Special Council for Food Supply was formed in the summer of 1915, Krivoshein became its chairman and Glinka, his deputy. When Krivoshein was dismissed in late 1915, Glinka took over chairmanship of this important body.⁶⁹ In that capacity, he was the official primarily responsible for the immense and massively interventionist task of acquiring grain from the population across the Russian empire to feed the army. Like Glinka, both Gavrilov and Gins moved from their earlier resettlement work into wartime food supply. Gavrilov moved into food supply as Glinka's deputy.⁷⁰ Gins, again turning his legal training to practical ends, took a position as legal counsel for the Special Council for Food Supply, headed by Glinka. Gins recalled that, although the focus of his work had shifted, he managed to retain his personal ties with his former coworkers from the Resettlement Administration, because so many of them came with him to staff the Special Council for Food Supply.⁷¹ In their new capacity as food supply technocrats, former resettlement officials sought to establish a new and direct relationship with Russia's millions of small grain producers. In the midst of war, and in contrast to the programs of nearly all other combatants, the Russian government aimed not to incorporate the private trade network into its state management of the economy but to displace that private trade network and replace it with a direct relationship between producers and the state.⁷²

Gins exaggerates, however, when he claims that nearly everybody in the Resettlement Administration shifted from resettlement into food supply work during the war. The central office effectively split in half, with one half moving into wartime food supply efforts, and the other half remaining to consider the problems of resettlement and management of state resources on the periphery during wartime. Chirkin, who had served as Glinka's energetic and capable aide before 1914, took over as director of the Resettlement Administration. In early 1916, he invited the young Tatishchev, who (after his tour in the Maritime Province) had continued to serve as the head of the resettlement office in Tashkent, back to Petrograd to serve as deputy director.⁷³

69. Iakov Bukshpan, *Voenno-khoziaistvennaia politika: Formy i organy regulirovaniia khoziaistva za vremia mirovoi voiny, 1914–1918* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), 377; Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:388.

70. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 232; Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:389–90.

71. Guins, "Professor and Government Official," 125–26.

72. Holquist, *Making War*, 31–36.

73. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 225–32, 241; Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:379–80.

During the war, officials in the now smaller Resettlement Administration extended their gaze to territories occupied by the Russian army and weighed other wartime measures to transform socioeconomic relations within the empire itself. In all of the cases during the war where the Resettlement Administration staked a claim to such land, it insisted that it be parceled out to producers as individualized plots no larger than a specific "labor norm" (*trudovaia norma*).

There clearly was a xenophobic and nationalizing aspect to the program to expropriate "German land" throughout the Russian empire.⁷⁴ Yet the agenda was not simply to seize the land *from* ethnic Germans. The nationalizing aspects of these programs overlapped with a program for social engineering, one in favor of small peasant landholding and directed against "speculation" and large latifundia regardless of the ethnic identity of their owners. The staff of the Resettlement Administration's central office, after all, was "fairly hostile to the class of the landed gentry."⁷⁵ In 1915, when the military had asked the Council of Ministers to aid Polish noble landowners suffering from the war, Minister of Agriculture Krivoshein bluntly declared that "it is not in the government's interests to support [large] landholders."⁷⁶ Later, when Minister of Agriculture Naumov was implementing the program to seize largely private, ethnic German landholdings in 1916, he also secretly prepared a plan (unrealized) to add greatly to the land fund by appropriating all land from large *Russian* landowners within the Russian empire that these landowners did not use "in a productive manner" (*khoziaistvennym obrazom*). By this term he meant to seize all lands that were not actually being worked by their owners but that were being rented out.⁷⁷

That this technocratic and anticommerical agenda was not simply a cover for programs of Russification or colonization is evident from the Ministry of Agriculture's plans for occupied northern Persia. Russia had long had interests in northern Persia, and in 1907 had entered into an agreement with Britain over spheres of influence in that country. Once there, "Russian commanders and consuls had virtually assumed the functions of local government in an attempt to pacify the region and to promote what they perceived to be Russian imperialist interests."⁷⁸ At the head of those agencies with an interest in northern Persia was the Resettlement Administration. Due to the spontaneous movement of Russian settlers into the region, the Russian government began in late 1913 to help direct and coordinate settlement, including establishing two resettle-

74. See the excellent treatment in Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003), 84–120.

75. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 42; Tatishchev expressed his own frustrations with the conservative gentry in Tula (96). Minister of Agriculture Naumov recalled his exasperation with the petty and selfish wartime demands of landowners and sugar manufacturers. See Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:392–93.

76. Galperina, ed., *Sovet ministrov*, 151 (4 April 1915).

77. Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:463–64.

78. Jennifer Siegel, *Endgame: Britain, Russia and the Final Struggle for Central Asia* (New York, 2002), 119.

ment regions in northern Persia, each headed by an official of the Resettlement Administration.⁷⁹ The Resettlement Administration even issued a pamphlet for distribution throughout European Russia warning Russian peasants of the dangers of trying to settle in Persia on their own. To assist them, the brochure helpfully provided the name and location of its two resettlement officers in northern Persia.⁸⁰ At this time Tatishchev, in his capacity as director of the Turkestan department for agriculture and state domains, toured areas of northern Persia bordering on Russia. There he found that the occupation of these territories by Russian forces had led to much broader powers for the Russian border commissar, General Lavrov. In particular, Lavrov had taken it upon himself to distribute plots of land to extend Russian claims to the region.⁸¹ The colonization program, however, had not advanced very far when the war broke out; barely three thousand settlers were in the region.

Anatolii Sakharov, the resettlement official charged with colonization and land settlement in Syr-Dar'ia and also in Persia's Astrabad province, was an ambitious and capable man.⁸² In a 1915 report, Sakharov noted that the weakness of the Persian government had allowed Russian subjects to buy up large plots of land. The owners of these latifundia, ranging from four to twelve thousand versts, did not farm the land but rented it out to Russian settlers and to the native Persian population.⁸³

The 1916 uprising in Turkestan provided Sakharov—he believed—with the opportunity to realize his program for northern Persia. Turkestan Governor-General Aleksei Kuropatkin had dispatched Russian detachments into northern Persia in late 1916 to punish Turkmen tribes for their attacks on Russian settlers during the uprising. Sakharov provided Kuropatkin with expansive advice as to what measures these military detachments should undertake, beyond their punitive operations.⁸⁴ Dismissing all existing land legislation out of hand, Sakharov argued that the region lacked any firm legislation or proper documentation for landholding, which provided the Russian state with a broad arena for acting in its own interest. (Yaney was quite right that such men valued rules that

79. Report of the Director of Resettlement in the Syr-Dar'ia region A. Sakharov to Turkestan Governor-General Kuropatkin, 3 October 1916, RGIA, f. 391 (Pereselencheskoe upravlenie MZ), op. 6 (1916–1918), d. 706, ll. 27–29. See also the “Draft of instructions for the resettlement officials dispatched to regions of Persia being settled by Russian settlers,” 2 April 1914, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voenno-istoricheskii arkhiv, Moscow (RGVIA), f. 400 (Glavnyi shtab Voennogo ministerstva), op. 1, d. 4341, ll. 1–6.

80. RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 387, ll. 1–9.

81. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 190–93.

82. *Ibid.*, 152–53.

83. “The Resettlement cause in Astrabad province in 1915,” RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 706, ll. 1–10. See also “On Russian settlements in Astrabad province in Persia,” RGVIA, f. 400, op. 1, d. 4507. V. P. Voshchinin, “Sovremennye zadachi Rossii na severe Persii,” *VK*, 1915, no. 17: 26–51, decries the chaos and confusion in the region's civil legislation in general and land legislation in particular (41–43), and argues that the war provides an opportunity to achieve Russia's goals in northern Persia (50).

84. Report of the Director of Resettlement in the Syr-Dar'ia region A. Sakharov to Turkestan Governor-General Kuropatkin, 9 December 1916, RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 706, ll. 15–20.

“were scientific not legal.”)⁸⁵ Sakharov proclaimed that existing land relations could not stand. In their place, he insisted that the land question be resolved to “satisfy the legitimate needs of the laboring mass of the indigenous population, which at present is actually using the land.” One of his readers—either Governor-General Kuropatkin or Director of the Resettlement Administration Chirkin—noted in the margins: “in other words: on the principle of state [property], and not on the principle of private property.”⁸⁶ The solution? A labor norm: “the indigenous laboring population of the peasant type should retain a land and water minimum, under which this population can support its existence, satisfying its normal needs.” Sakharov frankly admitted that this program favored the laboring population at the expense of the small group of large private landowners—many of them ethnic Russians—who rented these lands out to the Persian peasants.⁸⁷

Sakharov counseled Kuropatkin that it was urgent to act immediately. The Russian punitive detachments, he believed, were likely to rout the Astrabad Turkmen tribes. Then the Russian state would confront its *real* threat:

The most dangerous element with respect to the expansion of Persian colonization are the so-called private landholders—whoever they may be, whether Russian or Persian subjects. In the last several years they have seized vast tracts of land by means of purchase and long-term rental. Here, with particular sharpness, emerges the contrast between the private interests of these groups and that of Russia’s national-historic tasks. Here we confront the question of the fate of all those latifundia that have been seized in recent years by Russian citizens, and possibly also by the citizens of other states. Taking all this into consideration, we cannot permit there to be freedom to dispose of these lands without any limit.⁸⁸

Sakharov is here discussing Russian subjects who claimed to hold title to land in Persia. Even in those cases where Russian landholders *could* prove their ownership, Sakharov insisted that the state had a right to expropriate these lands because their nominal owners were acting either on behalf of Persian colonization or “exclusively for speculationist ends, seeking to resell these large plots at a high price to future Russian settlers or any others who may happen to arrive here.” According to Sakharov’s investigations, only 4 percent of the land on these large private estates was under cultivation; the rest was unused. The “Russian State” (capitalized by Sakharov in his reports), in endeavoring to realize its own national tasks, must act to limit the owners’ rights to dispose of their latifundia. The state could not make itself dependent on an “arbitrary group of individuals” when their actions might “contradict broad national interests.” The

85. Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*, 136.

86. Sakharov to Kuropatkin, 9 December 1916, RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 706, l. 16.

87. *Ibid.*, l. 17.

88. *Ibid.*, l. 18. Sakharov’s arguments are the same as those made by GUZZ prior to the war in regard to water rights in Turkestan, where Gins argued that retaining the regulation of water in Turkestan on the basis of private property would impede the realization of the government’s projects. See Pravilova, “*Les res publicae russes*,” 592.

Russian state, therefore, “must subordinate the private interests of this group to its own interests.” Much like Naumov’s wartime plan for expropriating the latifundia of European Russia, Sakharov was demanding that the state manage the “proper” use of large private landholdings. In both cases, Ministry of Agriculture officials envisioned imperiously extending the state’s claim over the rights of Russian landowners. In short, the *nature* of landholding was as important to Sakharov and Naumov as the ethnicity of the person holding the land. The state would recognize the ownership of privately owned enterprises only in those cases where they were worked “productively” and not for “speculationist pursuits.” In order to realize this program, Sakharov requested that Kuropatkin issue guidelines to the commanders of the punitive detachments and enlist other detachments to protect the empty plots in northern Persia—not from native peoples, but from seizure by speculators.⁸⁹ Other Russian officials evinced identical fears that underutilized lands in occupied territories would fall into the hands of “speculators.” To combat this threat of a faceless and nameless market, these officials, like Sakharov, counseled that the Russian state extend its claim over these lands in occupied territories.⁹⁰ Governor-General Kuropatkin, for his part, endorsed nearly all of Sakharov’s recommendations and directed his punitive detachments to take energetic measures to implement them.⁹¹ For Kuropatkin, as for Sakharov, “the Russian population” meant, in fact, small landholders productively working plots, rather than large (ethnically Russian) landholders pursuing “speculationist ends.”

For his part, Sakharov had written to Chirkin, director of the Resettlement Administration. In this report he explained his reasons for urging swift action upon Kuropatkin: “we should seize all that is unclaimed, without asking for prior agreement from the owners of the land.” Wartime provided a propitious moment for overcoming past problems that had confronted the Resettlement Administration: “This question is of immense importance. On the one hand, we need a land fund in Persia; on the other, we do not have the financial resources to acquire such a land fund. Before our eyes were vast expanses of available land, but we were not supposed to touch them, since we were first supposed to buy them from somebody at market prices. Moreover, the owners might decide not to sell the lands to us. It was impossible to accept this situation.”⁹² Kuropatkin shared Sakharov’s antipathy for large private landholdings, re-

89. Sakharov to Kuropatkin, 9 December 1916, RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 706, ll. 18–19.

90. Colonel Tsyss, “Po voprosu o skupke armianami zemel’ v prilegaiushchikh k Kavkazu chastei Persii i Turtsii” [n.d.: ca. May 1916?], Sakartvelos sakhelmtsipo saistorio arkivi (SSSA, Georgian National Historical Archive, Tbilisi), f. 13 (Kantseliariia namestnika na Kavkaze), op. 27s., d. 4353, ll. 1–5. Despite the title—and Tsyss’s undisguised anti-Armenian bias—he was concerned about speculators generally, not just Armenians.

91. In a resolution on the document, Kuropatkin indicated his approval of these measures. RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 706, l. 15. He then directed his commanders to implement them: Turkestan Governor-General Kuropatkin to Commander of the Giurgen Detachment General A. S. Madritov, 31 December 1916, *ibid.*, ll. 21–22.

92. Director of Resettlement in the Syr-Dar’ia region A. Sakharov to G. F. Chirkin, 4 January 1917, *ibid.*, ll. 11–14.

ardless of the ethnicity of the landowner. Indeed, in his eyes freeing the population of northern Persia from large private commercial landholding was almost an act of liberation. Chirkin—now head of the Resettlement Administration—had sent Kuropatkin his own memorandum on landholding in northern Persia. In it, Chirkin had noted that the concession to one Russian landholder was due to expire on 1 October 1920. Kuropatkin had added a marginal notation to this: “the hour of liberation is nigh!” (*blizok chas osvobodzheniia!*)—“liberation” in this case being liberation from large-scale, commercial *Russian* landholding.⁹³ Lest there be any doubt that Governor-General Kuropatkin was as concerned about the type of landholding as well as the ethnicity of those holding the land, he directed units under his command to allow “no estates or large landholding in this region. I find it necessary that the lands bordering on [the new Russian settlements] exist exclusively under peasant agriculture, worked only by the landowners themselves.”⁹⁴

The Resettlement Administration had an analogous agenda for occupied Armenia. Agriculture Minister Naumov insisted on the need to “prevent speculation in new lands by private individuals, a speculation that the experience of history has shown accompanies our conquests and has led to the transfer of a significant portion of lands in the newly obtained territories into the hands of elements of society who are highly undesirable from the point of view of *raison d'état* [*kraine nezhelatel'nykh v gosudarstvennom smysle elementov obshchestva*].”⁹⁵ So in mid-1916 the Resettlement Administration dispatched Chirkin's deputy, Tatishchev, and a legal aide, Nikolai Lenskii, to the Caucasus. Lenskii was director of the Resettlement Administration's fifth department, in charge of the Caucasus and the Far East. Like his colleagues in the central office, he had published several articles in Chirkin and Gavrilo's *Voprosy kolonizatsii*.⁹⁶ Lenskii, predictably, dismissed land rights as so “chaotic” that Russian reorganization of landholding should “entirely ignore the Ottoman legislation and the rights it grants to specific individuals.” Russian policy, he claimed, should be guided not by existing land deeds but by “only one principle”: the recognition of existing actual land usage by the native population.⁹⁷ Tatishchev traveled throughout the occupied vilayets of Trabezond, Erzerum, and Bitlis. He drew up a set of reports arguing that both the existing Armenian population and any Russian settlers be apportioned land according to a “labor norm.” Any land remaining above that norm was to enter into

93. *Ibid.*, I. 14.

94. Kuropatkin to General Madritov, 4 March 1917: A. V. Piaskovskii, ed., *Vostanie 1916 goda v srednei Azii i Kazakhstane: Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow, 1960), 713–14.

95. Naumov to Viceroy for the Caucasus Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, 6 March 1916, SSSA, f. 13, op. 15, d. 2690, l. 1, and to Foreign Minister Sazonov, 12 March 1916, Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi imperii (Moscow), f. 151, op. 482 (Politarkhiv), d. 3486, ll. 2–3.

96. N. Lenskii, “Samovol'nye pereselentsy i pereselencheskoe zakonodatel'stvo,” *VK*, 1914, no. 14: 96–120; N. Lenskii, “Dal'nevostochnyi konflikt i zadachi russkoi politiki,” *VK*, 1915, no. 17: 52–76.

97. N. A. Lenskii, *O pravovom polozenii zemlevladieniia v Turetskoi Armenii: Zapiska chinovnika osobykh poruchenii pri Pereselencheskom Upravlenii Ministerstva Zemledeliia, privatdotsenta Imperatorskogo Petrogradskogo Universiteta N. A. Lenskogo* (Petrograd, 1916), 22–23.

a state land colonization fund. In the midst of world war, he sketched out a grandiose program to manage both the territory and its people.⁹⁸ Following Lenskii's argument dismissing existing property legislation, Tatishchev argued that "it is desirable to conduct land consolidation for Armenian settlements, not on the principles of blindly reproducing the previous holdings of specific individuals, but rather *to take as our foundation new, economically rational holdings.*"⁹⁹ Tatishchev insisted that Russian settlers in Armenia must be subject to identical guidelines, just as Sakharov had for Russian settlers in northern Persia.¹⁰⁰ In many respects, the program made a larger distinction between producers and nonproducers—Russian and non-Russian alike—than it did between Russians and non-Russians. Tatishchev's advice, indeed, was that the ministry move to "establish government control over *any* use of land in the regions of Turkey that we occupy."¹⁰¹ The military men in charge of the occupation, however, rejected all his proposals. In their eyes, they were either too premature or entirely unrealistic.¹⁰²

By early 1917, Chirkin, as director of the Resettlement Administration, and his deputy Tatishchev had turned to new projects. Notably, they were investigating means for colonizing and developing the Russian north in connection with the construction of the Murmansk railroad. Chirkin had earlier written about the role of railroads in developing Asiatic Russia. Now Chirkin and his agency devoted themselves to planning how to exploit the Russian north. To do so, they would rely on the new Murmansk railroad, constructed largely with prisoner-of-war labor, but also employing Uzbeks and Kazakhs in punitive battalions formed following the 1916 Turkestan uprising. Mortality on this project was immense: one scholar estimates that 25,000 of the 70,000 prisoners employed on the project perished.¹⁰³

Revolution and Civil War

Officials from the Ministry of Agriculture played a precocious role in developing forceful—indeed militarized—technocratic state measures for the wartime imperial government. They would continue to do so under the Provisional Government. In the process, they forged many of the poli-

98. He recounts his tour in Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 235–40. He compiled three reports in mid-May: RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 305, ll. 41–45ob.; ll. 46–49; and RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 77, ll. 1–15. Tatishchev to P. P. Nikolenko, 27 October 1916, RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 305, ll. 164–166ob.; he repeated these arguments in all his reports: *ibid.*, ll. 41ob.; RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 77, l. 4ob.

99. Tatishchev to Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, 9 May 1916, RGIA, f. 391, op. 6, d. 305, l. 42ob. (emphasis in the original).

100. Tatishchev to Nikolenko, 27 October 1916, *ibid.*, ll. 164–66ob.; Tatishchev to Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, 9 May 1916, *ibid.*, ll. 13–14.

101. Tatishchev to Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, 9 May 1916, *ibid.*, l. 44ob. (emphasis in the original).

102. Journal of the Special Conference for discussing Tatishchev's report, 17 May 1916, SSSA, f. 13, op. 15, d. 2690, ll. 9–12.

103. Reinhard Nachtigal, *Die Murmanbahn: Die Verkehrsanbindung eines kriegswichtigen Hafens und das Arbeitspotential der Kriegsgefangenen* (Grünbach, Germany, 2001), 124–25.

cies later appropriated by the Bolsheviks. The Provisional Government valorized a technocratic ethos, in the belief that the managerial position situated officials above partisan and particular interests. Indeed, one scholar has termed the period from February to October 1917 “the age of specialists.”¹⁰⁴

During the war, both Gavrilov and Gins had moved with their superior Glinka from the Resettlement Administration to wartime food supply work. During 1917, Gins became the chief counsel for the Committee on Food Supply, first in the Ministry of Agriculture and then in the new Ministry of Food Supply. He offered a university course on “The Regulation of Food Supply during Wartime,” which was devoted to a study of the “comparative system of regimentation of national economy during the war.”¹⁰⁵ A conservative man, Gins was generally skeptical of Russia’s attempts at extensive state regulation of the economy.¹⁰⁶ His skepticism, however, was driven by his doubt about the capacity of the Russian state, not the virtues of state intervention: “Undoubtedly, it was not only the talent of Germany’s administration, but also the strength of its *obshchestvennost’*, its excellent statistics, and the pragmatic thrust of its science that contributed to the success of German economic centralization.” Gins left no doubt that a state-regulated economy had failed in Russia in the years between 1915 and 1917. Yet, “if Russian state power had been as strong or had had as strong a mechanism of administration,” he continued, “or if it had had Germany’s abundance of civic organizations and its disciplined citizenry, then a regulated economy would have been the answer.”¹⁰⁷ The failure was not in planning per se, but in the inability of the sclerotic Russian state to carry it out properly.

During the war, Gins’s colleague Gavrilov oversaw the grain subsection for Glinka as “High Commissioner for Grain and Fodder Purchases for the Army.”¹⁰⁸ Under the Provisional Government, Gavrilov became the Ministry of Food Supply’s special attaché to the army’s commander in chief.¹⁰⁹ It was not a military man, but this longtime resettlement official—and coeditor of *Voprosy kolonizatsii*—who in September 1917 penned the government order that extended the use of military force for grain requisitioning from the civilian population from the zone of the front to the territory of the *entire* empire.¹¹⁰

104. William Rosenberg, “Social Mediation and State (Re-)Constructions,” *Social History* 19, no. 2 (May 1994): 168–88, esp. 178–80, 187–88; “age of specialists” is Stanziani’s term: *L’économie en révolution*, chap. 8.

105. Guins, “Professor and Government Official,” vii, 139–40, 146. It is likely he published the notes for the course a year later: G. K. Gins, *Prodovol’stvennoe zakonodatel’stvo: Organizatsiia narodnogo khoziaistva vo vremia voiny* (Omsk, 1918).

106. On Guins’s conservative tendencies and his suspicion of the revolution, see Guins, “Professor and Government Official,” 143; on his skepticism regarding planning, see Gins, *Prodovol’stvennoe zakonodatel’stvo*, ii, 53.

107. Gins, *Prodovol’stvennoe zakonodatel’stvo*, 5, 57.

108. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 242; Naumov, *Iz utselevshikh vospominanii*, 2:389–90.

109. Order of the Chairman of the State Duma, 1 March 1917, *Izvestiia po prodovol’stvennomu delu*, no. 1 (32) (May 1917): 2; and Bukshpan, *Voenna-khoziaistvennaia politika*, 508.

110. Holquist, *Making War*, 104–5.

And throughout the course of 1917 under the Provisional Government, many of the same resettlement officials continued to meet and discuss plans for resettlement and colonization that would remain unrealized. Chirkin was the recognized authority on all these issues, being appointed by the Provisional Government to a welter of short-lived state commissions and committees.¹¹¹ In August 1917, as the revolutionary crisis deepened, the Provisional Government established a Commission for Issues of Resettlement and Colonization, staffed extensively by officials from the Resettlement Administration, who pursued their long-standing program.¹¹² The most immediate tasks of the commission were to develop plans for "systematic colonization" (*planomernaia kolonizatsiia*) and land consolidation for the population, both indigenous and Russian, of distant regions.¹¹³ The Resettlement Administration now expanded upon an argument for colonization that had already been present in the prewar and wartime articles of *Voprosy kolonizatsii*. In addition to helping to resolve the agrarian problem, they argued, colonization "leads to both a quantitative and qualitative increase in the country's productive forces."¹¹⁴ (The task of developing the country's productive forces was also championed by the Imperial Academy of Science's Commission for the Study of the Natural Productive Forces of Russia [KEPS]. Established in 1915, it proved to be the basis for many later Soviet scientific institutes.)¹¹⁵ And, over the course of 1917, the Resettlement Administration increasingly confronted new democratically elected local bodies, both zemstvo boards and local soviets, demanding a voice in the decisions that affected their regions. In the face of these demands, members of the Resettlement Administration's central office reiterated their belief in central state control: "resettlement and colonization must be founded on *all-state principles*."¹¹⁶

After the October revolution, many of these officials—especially the first generation, who had been serving since the 1890s—continued their efforts at land reform and food supply, but now under the aegis of the various anti-Bolshevik governments. Several officials of the former Resettlement Administration's central office reunited in the Crimea, under the

111. Letter of appointment to commission on the colonization fund, 26 July 1917, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv ekonomiki, Moscow (RGAE), f. 478 (Narodnyi komissariat zemledel'ia RSFSR), op. 6, d. 1335, l. 8; letter of appointment to commission on the upcoming agrarian reform, 8 July 1917, *ibid.*, l. 10.

112. "Tasks of the Commission for Issues of Resettlement and Colonization," ca. August 1917, *ibid.*, ll. 76–78. These 1917 commissions contain a familiar list of names among their members: Chirkin, Tatishchev, Lenskii, Fleksor, and Vladimir Voshchinin.

113. "The Resettlement Question in the Ministry of Agriculture" (n.d. [1917]), *ibid.*, ll. 124–25.

114. Chirkin at the 22 August 1917 meeting of the Commission on Issues of Resettlement and Colonization, *ibid.*, l. 148; similarly at the 22 September meeting, *ibid.*, l. 166.

115. A. V. Kol'tsev, *Sozdanie i deiatel'nost' Komissii po izucheniiu estestvennykh proizvoditel'nykh sil Rossii, 1915–1930* (St. Petersburg, 1999); Alexei Kojevnikov, "The Great War, the Russian Civil War, and the Invention of Big Science," *Science in Context* 15, no. 2 (2002): 239–75.

116. Principles for resettlement work, 22 September 1917 meeting of commission on issues of resettlement and colonization, RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, d. 1335, l. 170 (emphasis in the original).

control of General Wrangel and the Armed Forces of South Russia. Former Minister of Agriculture Krivoshein, his aide Glinka, and the former special attaché and onetime deputy of the Resettlement Administration, Tatishchev, all worked together to pursue land reform there.¹¹⁷ Krivoshein and Naumov, who had succeeded Krivoshein as Minister of Agriculture in 1915–1916, both served on a special commission to draw up a comprehensive land program.¹¹⁸ Glinka, long-time director of the Resettlement Administration under Krivoshein, became Wrangel's Minister of Agriculture.¹¹⁹ Tatishchev was one of those who worked to carry out this reform on the ground, as he had done before 1914 for Krivoshein and Glinka, first in the Far East and then in Turkestan. In the Crimea he found himself working under Glinka as a district land mediator (*uezdnyi zemel'nyi posrednik*) in Melitopol' district carrying out Wrangel's land reform. In an amazing admission, Tatishchev writes that over the course of that summer of 1920, "I came far closer to the actual life of peasants than I had in all those previous years in Siberia, since I spent the nights and took my meals with one or the other members of the county soviet."¹²⁰ Given the personnel in Wrangel's agricultural ministry, it is thus not surprising that Wrangel's memorandum sketching out the principles for land reform repeated many principles found in the prewar program of the Resettlement Administration. A core aspect of this "White" land reform, engineered by Russian imperial technocrats, was a stated preference to consolidate land in the hands of those who were actually cultivating it, limiting this right to small, individualized "productive" landholdings with the goal of eliminating "speculation." It further decreed that "all lands above a certain norm . . . must become subject to alienation," in order to create a state land fund. And finally, all those who received land would be required to surrender a portion of their harvest to the state. In other words, it instituted *prodrazvestka*.¹²¹ The policies of all these men came to nought with the defeat of the Whites in Crimea and Siberia, and they emigrated abroad, many to write their memoirs.

All these programs clearly favor a statist solution and show a preference for productive labor. Most debate regarding White land legislation has focused on whether it was "reactionary," and seeking to appease the landowners, or "reformist," and seeking to win the peasantry away from the Bolsheviks. This debate limits discussion only to the presumed constituencies and programs at the time of civil war. But there was an additional feature to these (doomed) policies: the land policy of the anti-Soviet

117. William Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution: The Constitutional Democratic Party, 1917–1921* (Princeton, 1974), 444; Peter Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1919–1920: The Defeat of the Whites* (Berkeley, 1977), 270–73; Donald W. Treadgold, "The Ideology of the White Movement: Wrangel's 'Leftist Policy from Rightist Hands,'" in Hugh McLean, Martin E. Malia, and George Fischer, eds., *Russian Thought and Politics* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), 489. Treadgold sees Krivoshein as a reformer; Rosenberg and Kenez view him as a more conservative figure. I incline more toward Treadgold's view.

118. Rosenberg, *Liberals*, 424n71.

119. Kenez, *Civil War*, 271, 279–87; Treadgold, "Ideology," 490.

120. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 349–51.

121. Decree cited in Kenez, *Civil War*, 281–82.

movements very clearly carried over the prewar agenda of the Ministry of Agriculture technocrats.

Not all former officials of the Resettlement Administration, however, had opted for the White cause. Chirkin, perhaps the most capable and committed of the resettlement technocrats, remained at his agency to work under the Bolsheviks.¹²² The now-Soviet Resettlement Administration remained within the ministry—rechristened after October 1917 as a “commissariat”—of Agriculture. Among Soviet commissariats, it had the highest percentage of holdovers from the imperial era. Throughout the civil war, nearly three-fifths of this “Soviet” commissariat were officials who had held their posts under the imperial regime.¹²³ The files of its “Resettlement Administration” (the title carried over) contain correspondence and memoranda from late 1916 composed under the wartime imperial state and from throughout 1917 in its guise under the Provisional Government. Clearly, the office simply packed its active files when it moved from imperial Petrograd to Soviet Moscow in early 1918.¹²⁴ It is in the files of the Soviet commissariat that one finds the protocols of conferences held throughout 1917 under the Provisional Government. Throughout 1918, officials in the Resettlement Administration continued to use letterhead from its imperial-era iteration, merely striking through “Ministry” and replacing it with “Commissariat,” and replacing its former Petrograd address (Morskaia 42) with the new Moscow one (Prechistenka 13).¹²⁵

Under Soviet power, Chirkin devoted his efforts to the program he had been pursuing since late 1916, the development and settlement of Russia's north. From mid-1918 the Soviet state initiated a series of expeditions to Murmansk and Arkhangel'sk provinces to investigate their potential for resettlement and economic development. Chirkin played an active role in developing this program and authored several of the reports on the expeditions' findings.¹²⁶ These first Soviet expeditions for colonizing the north were organized by the “Colonization section of the Commissariat of Agriculture (the former [imperial] Resettlement Administration).”¹²⁷ The resettlement officials repeated past formulas: the need to overcome the chaos of existing land relations through systematic, state-driven development and the redistribution of land among the

122. Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 272–76.

123. James W. Heinzen, *Inventing a Soviet Countryside: State Power and the Transformation of Rural Russia, 1917–1929* (Pittsburgh, 2004), 32–33; for the “subculture of expertise” found in the imperial Ministry of Agriculture before 1917, see 18, 41–46.

124. See the following files of the Soviet Commissariat of Agriculture's “Resettlement Administration,” containing correspondence from late 1916 through late 1918: RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, dd. 1331, 1332, 1335, 1363, 1406.

125. E.g., Circular from the Resettlement Administration to district and regional societies of Asiatic Russia, 15 June 1918, RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, d. 1415, l. 123.

126. Minutes of 2 May 1918 session, RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, d. 1402, ll. 79–84.

127. *Ocherki po istorii kolonizatsii severa* (Peterburg [sic.], 1922), 1:5. The core principles of this program are found in Spravochnoe biuro po pereseleniiu v Sibir', “Doklad ob organizatsii kolonizatsionnykh rabot v severnykh guberniakh Evropeiskoi Rossii” [January 1919], RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, d. 1402, ll. 7–25.

existing population according to labor norms—all in order to foster the country's "productive forces."¹²⁸ For developing the Russian north, Chirkin in particular advocated the use of railroads.¹²⁹ He had earlier urged this same instrument for the imperial state's development of its Asiatic peripheries.¹³⁰ The immense loss of life among the prisoner-of-war laborers who built the Murmansk railroad during World War I had not affected Chirkin's calculations in any way. In its programs for developing Karelia, the Soviet state adopted Chirkin's suggestion that the railway (rather than local authorities) should control wide swathes of territory in order to further the colonization program. Just as he had pressed the program of the imperial state against the opposition of local authorities in Turkestan, for Karelia, too, Chirkin championed the claims of the central Soviet state over the vain protests of local authorities.¹³¹

Chirkin was no solitary figure. He was joined by his close colleague Vladimir Voshchinin. In the imperial era Voshchinin had earned the title, the "golden pen of the Resettlement Administration."¹³² Together with other members of the "younger generation" at the Resettlement Administration, he had published prominently in *Voprosy kolonizatsii*, including a prominent 1916 paean to Krivoshein's efforts at imperial colonization.¹³³ Voshchinin now joined Chirkin in developing plans to pursue "colonization and resettlement" for a socialist state. These officials argued that, although resettlement had been a natural force in Russian life for centuries (here they cited Vasilii Kliuchevskii), only recently had such efforts achieved the state-led direction they required. Voshchinin contended that chaotic "resettlement" had begun to evolve into a new, more systematic phenomenon, "colonization," in the last years of the imperial regime—under the Resettlement Administration, of course. "Colonization" in this definition focused not just on moving people but also on developing the

128. "Doklad ob organizatsii," RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, d. 1402, ll. 7–9, 10–11.

129. Nick Baron, *Soviet Karelia: Politics, Planning and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1920–1939* (New York, 2007), 76–77. Chirkin wrote extensively about how Soviet power could settle the north: G. F. Chirkin, *Kolonizatsiia severa i puti soobshcheniia* (Petrograd, 1919); G. F. Chirkin, *Puti razvitiia Marmana: Posle poezdki na Murman glavnogo nachal'nika putei soobshcheniia I. N. Borisova* (Petrograd, 1922); G. F. Chirkin, "Istoriko-ekonomicheskie predposylki kolonizatsii severa," in *Ocherki po istorii kolonizatsii severa*, 1:7–26; G. F. Chirkin, *Priroda i liudi: Sovetskaia Kanada—Murmanskii krai* (Leningrad, 1929).

130. "Proektiruemye zheleznye dorogi i ikh kolonizatsionnoe znachenie," *VK*, 1910, no. 6: 27–45; "Kolonizatsionnoe i narodno-khoziaistvennoe znachenie proektiruemoi Iuzhno-sibirskoi magistrali," *VK*, 1913, no. 13: 100–128; "Znachenie dlia Rossii Mongol'skogo rynka: K voprosu o sooruzhenii Mongol'skoi zheleznoi dorogi," *VK*, 1915, no. 17: 77–84.

131. Baron, *Soviet Karelia*, 77–78.

132. On Voshchinin's service before 1917, see Tatishchev, *Zemli i liudi*, 226, 232, 287.

133. In the imperial era, Voshchinin was the author of *Pereselencheskii vopros v Gosudarstvennoi Dume III-ogo sozyva* (St. Petersburg, 1912); *Na sibirskom prostore: Kartiny pereseleniia* (St. Petersburg, 1912); *Ocherki novogo Turkestana: Svet i teni russkoi kolonizatsii* (St. Petersburg, 1914); and the following articles: "K zakonoproektu o prodazhe pereselencheskikh uchastkov," *VK*, 1913, no. 13: 176–82; "Sovremennye zadachi Rossii na severe Persii," *VK*, 1915, no. 17: 26–51; and a hagiographic article on colonization efforts during Krivoshein's tenure as minister: "Kolonizatsionnoe delo pri A. V. Krivosheine," *VK*, 1916, no. 18: 1–24.

productive forces of entire regions.¹³⁴ In Voshchinin's words, "the previous efforts of resettlement and manner of resettlement must fundamentally change and now take on the forms of colonization—that is, to have as its object, not people, but *the country's productive forces*."¹³⁵

But colonization was no longer concentrated only in the Soviet Commissariat of Agriculture. In April 1922 Gosplan had established the Soviet State Colonization Research Institute (Goskolonit), to bring together many "former imperial economists, geographers, and historians of empire."¹³⁶ Among those working for Goskolonit was Voshchinin. Along with another former official from the imperial-era Resettlement Administration, Ivan Iamzin, Voshchinin authored a 1926 Soviet university textbook on "colonization and resettlement."¹³⁷ It remains a standard work of reference today. Given the background of these men, then, it is small wonder that throughout the 1920s these experts from Goskolonit repeated without attribution many ideas from Gins's 1913 programmatic article on resettlement—"at times almost verbatim."¹³⁸ In their textbook, Iamzin and Voshchinin wrote that "only in the USSR did it become possible for the maximum triumph of the ideas of systematic organization of the economy—and consequently the systematic organization of territory, including colonized territories." Yet the authors observed that the turn from spontaneous and chaotic "resettlement" to systematic, state-directed colonization began "only at the time immediately preceding the revolution, when the Ministry of Agriculture, in the form of its Resettlement Administration, sought to place the tasks of colonization within an overall economic context—namely, to tie these tasks to the development of railroads." Given the trajectory of these two authors—themselves former officials of the imperial Resettlement Administration and close collaborators of Chirkin—such an evaluation should not be surprising.¹³⁹ Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Voshchinin would play a key role in the development of the Murmansk regions and Kola Peninsula.¹⁴⁰

134. V. P. Voshchinin, "Immediate reforms in the area of the resettlement," RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, d. 1404, ll. 2–3. For changing Soviet definitions of "colonization," see also Hirsch, *State of Nations*, 87–92.

135. Minutes of meeting of delegates of representatives of the Resettlement Administration, 6 June 1918, RGAE, f. 478, op. 6, d. 1415, l. 127 (emphasis in the original). This idea is developed in Iamzin and Voshchinin's 1926 textbook, *Uchenie o kolonizatsii i pereseleniakh*, pt. 1, chap. 1 and pt. 2, chap. 1.

136. Hirsch, *State of Nations*, 87.

137. Iamzin and Voshchinin, *Uchenie o kolonizatsii i pereseleniakh*. Iamzin also authored a series of articles on the goals of Soviet colonization: I. L. Iamzin, "Sovetskaia Rossiia i otstalye narodnosti," *Zhizn' natsional'nostei*, no. 30 (128) (23 December 1921): 1; I. L. Iamzin, "Kolonizatsiia v usloviakh Sovetskoi Rossii," *Zhizn' natsional'nostei*, no. 2 (131) (17 January 1922): 1; I. L. Iamzin, "Natsional'nye interesy i voprosy kolonizatsii," *Zhizn' natsional'nostei*, no. 16 (151) (31 July 1922): 3.

138. Hirsch, *State of Nations*, 88n100.

139. Iamzin and Voshchinin, *Uchenie o kolonizatsii i pereseleniakh*, 5, 144; for other favorable descriptions of the prerevolutionary Resettlement Administration's activities see also 68.

140. In 1933, Voshchinin would found and chair the Murmansk filial of the Geografo-ekonomicheskii nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut (GENII, Geographic-Economic Re-

The use of “labor norms” to apportion land and a commitment to state-led social engineering of the rural world were clearly not Bolshevik innovations, nor were they products of desperation in the midst of World War I and the subsequent Russian civil war. Rather, war and revolution provided a specific opportunity for certain officials to implement plans that had been gestating in imperial-era planning offices since before 1914. Existing studies have cast most of these measures as either programs of Russian nationalism (for colonization) or responses to wartime exigency (food supply and land reform during the civil war). But these policies shared a set of common first principles. Much like officials in the Finance Ministry studied by Rieber, the officials in the central office of the Resettlement Administration held “a fairly consistent set of propositions which gave prominence to the role of the state in stimulating and guiding, but also restraining, capitalism of a Western European type.” They demonstrated “a sense of moral identity as experts,” a “dedication to introducing science or special knowledge into life,” and a “corporate pride in achievement and mastery of problems.”¹⁴¹ These views, forged among a tight-knit group who had published together and had sought to proselytize their vision, informed government colonization policy before 1914 in places like Turkestan. With the war’s outbreak, these officials brought their technocratic and anticommercial views into wartime planning for the colonization of occupied territories and in concrete food supply policy for the entire empire. For many of these men, the 1917 Revolution seemed to open even broader horizons for the state management of social engineering. Their hopes and dreams were by and large thwarted, but they continued seeking to legislate a type of agriculture founded upon “productive labor,” to banish “speculation,” and to draw up programs for state-managed colonization of distant territories.

Some officials—certainly most of the older generation who had been serving before 1900 (Krivoshain, Rittikh, Glinka, but also some representatives of the younger generation, such as Tatishchev and Gins)—fled Bolshevik Russia and sought to implement their program under the Whites. Others, especially among the younger generation (Chirkin, Voshchinin, Iamzin), stayed to serve the Soviet state. Yet the particular institutional culture of the Resettlement Administration helps explain how certain wartime and revolutionary policies grew out of preexisting programs from the imperial period.¹⁴²

search Institute) and edit the geographical dictionary of the Kola Peninsula that appeared in 1939. In 1948 he would receive a prize for his role in editing the *Geograficheskii slovar' Murmanskoi oblasti*.

141. Rieber, “Patronage and Professionalism,” 289–91.

142. For analogous arguments in the Russian case, see Yaney, *Urge to Mobilize*; Stanziani, *L'économie en révolution*; Laura Engelstein, “Combined Underdevelopment: Discipline and the Law in Imperial and Soviet Russia,” *American Historical Review* 98, no. 2 (April 1993): 338–53; Kojevnikov, “Great War”; Alain Blum and Martine Mespoullet, “Le Passé au service du présent: L’administration statistique de l’État soviétique entre 1918 et 1930,” *Cahiers du monde russe* 44, no. 2–3 (April–September 2003): 343–68, esp. 343–48; Yanni Kotsonis, “‘No Place to Go’: Taxation and State Transformation in Late Imperial and Early Soviet Russia,” *Journal of Modern History* 76, no. 3 (September 2004): 531–77;

Describing Chirkin, once head of the tsarist Resettlement Administration who entered Soviet service and helped develop the Russian north, his onetime superior Naumov, later wrote in emigration: "If there remained at the disposal of Soviet power more than a few such intelligent and capable 'Chirkins,' then the Bolsheviks could establish a fairly good technology for ruling [*tekhnologiiia upravleniia*]. The 'Chirkins' were the unseen wheels of the watch mechanism, hidden behind the face of the watch, but moving the watch hands. Such, it seems to me, was the case in Russia: the watch face is different now, but behind it work the very same 'Chirkins.'"¹⁴³ In Chirkin, Voshchinin, and Iamzin one sees an illustration of the argument made by Kotsonis: "the critique so often leveled at the Bolsheviks—that their effort to achieve unity ignored Russian circumstances—acquires a non-Marxist history in the Old Regime."¹⁴⁴ The existence of an anticommmercial, pro-planning ethos in the pre-1914 era goes some way toward explaining how an imperial servitor such as Chirkin could come to embrace Bolshevik power. As Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in regard to France's Old Regime, but in terms entirely suited to the Russian Old Regime's Resettlement Administration: "actually, there had existed under the old régime a host of institutions which had a quite 'modern' air and . . . could easily be embodied in the new social order—and all these institutions offered remarkable facilities for despotism. They were hunted for among the wreckage of the old order and duly salvaged."¹⁴⁵

Hirsch, *State of Nations*; and Juliette Cadiot, *Le Laboratoire impérial: Russie-URSS, 1860–1940* (Paris, 2007).

143. Naumov, *Iz utselivshikh vospominanii*, 2:380.

144. Yanni Kotsonis, "'Face-to-Face': The State, the Individual, and the Citizen in Russian Taxation, 1863–1917," *Slavic Review* 63, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 246.

145. Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (1856; New York, 1983), 209.