Household Inequality and Village Discord: Toward a Post-Socialist Moral Economy

S. Wegren

Stephen Wegren, Professor of Political Science at the Southern Methodist University. Dallas, Texas, 75275, USA. E-mail: swegren@smu.edu

The author believes that rural Russia is much more unequal today than during the Soviet period in terms of income and wealth (land). The article describes three periods in the XX century, when rural Russia experienced a significant upheaval in the economic interaction between peasants and their means of production: the Stolypin reform of 1906–1911, the Stalin's collectivization, and the ending of the Soviet system in the early 1990s. The author analyzes the effects of the market revolution that came with the end of Soviet rule and facilitated the growth of village inequality, and focuses on intra-village relations between different economic strata. The paper has several goals: to quantify the growth in household inequality; to examine intra-village relationships between "rich" and "poor" households; to explore whether high-income households feel communality with the village community. To analyze the level of village discord, the author uses survey data from a geographically diverse sample of 900 rural households. The article argues that the post-socialist moral economy is not based upon state regulated income levels or wealth holdings—rather on opportunity and economic freedom bounded mainly by the energy, willpower, capabilities and adaptability of household members.

Key words: village stability; household inequality; village conflict; high- and low-income households; (post-socialist) moral economy; means of production.

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Introduction

Three times in the twentieth century rural Russia experienced a significant upheaval in the economic interaction between peasants and their means of production. The first upheaval was brought about by the Stolypin reform of 1906–1911 that came in response to the 1905–1907 peasant rebellion. The Tsarist government wanted to improve the condition of agriculture and the peasantry that was in economic distress according to historians, although there is some disagreement about how bad conditions were (Volin, 1970: 57–69; Simms, 1977; Pipes, 1990: 100–107). It also wanted to reduce the power of the communal *mir* that was the dominant peasant institution in central Russia in the late 19th century[1]. The *mir* had played a leading role in the

1. The *mir* consisted of the heads of all landholding households; landless households and non-peasant families were not represented and did not take part in communal decisions. The *mir* was an authoritarian institution. The commune was headed by an elder and had several functions: in charge of taxation; maintenance of roads and bridges; care for orphans, the elderly, and

1905 rebellion. The Stolypin reform privatized and distributed land plots to individual households, thereby removing the commune's power over land management and reallocation (Yaney, 1982: 195–400). It also allowed land consolidation. The *mir* had not only governed land tenure but also defined social organization for villages. Although historians generally agree that the Stolypin reform fell short of its intended goals, in part because only about one-half of peasant households participated, it did set in motion a process whereby millions of peasant households became landowners which changed their orientation to the means of production. Villages became differentiated according to whether households became landowners or not. Under the new rules, a peasant could "take a piece of land from every household in the village, and his neighbors would have no legal measures to stop him... every villager had to live with the possibility that one of his neighbors would betray him and seize part of 'his' land" (Yaney, 1982: 278).

The second upheaval, Stalin's collectivization, was a part of a societal revolution that changed economic interaction through state regulation of the production cycle. Collectivization of agriculture represented an attempt to deprive peasants of their freedom through party control and state plans (Lewin, 1968; Nove, 1982). Peasants became alienated from the means of production through nationalization of land. Collectivization organized agriculture along an industrial model of production. Peasants became, in essence, rural assembly line workers. Collectivization was implemented only with brute force and violence, causing significant instability in village life and pitting kulak and non-kulak households against each other (Conquest, 1986; Hindus, 1988; Fitzpatrick, 1994; Viola, 1999; Viola, 2005).

The third upheaval came with the ending of the Soviet system in the early 1990s. This third upheaval was nothing short of another social, economic, and political revolution that changed the face of Rus-

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the handicapped; provided educational facilities; was responsible for basic police, judicial, and fiscal responsibilities; and managed land use in the village (Shanin, 1985: 74–75). Land holdings within the *mir* consisted of several types. The first type was a small plot of land that surrounded the house and was held on the basis of heredity. The second type was arable land held by the household in allotted strips from the commune. The size of the strip depended on the number of adults in the household. Strips were periodically reallocated to ensure equitable share of the land, and ensure the ability of all households to pay their taxes. The reallocation of land became common in the eighteenth century and remained a central feature of peasant society until the early twentieth century in Russian provinces (Blum, 1961: 508–523). In westerns and southern borderlands, around one-third of communes had stopped repartition by 1900 (Pipes, 1990: 97). The third type of land was communal that was reserved for collective use, usually pasture. Peasant households were also free to buy private land from non-communal sources but this fourth type of land was of little importance to the great majority of peasant households (Shanin, 1985: 76).

sia and its trajectory. Privatization broke the state monopoly on land ownership that had existed since the early 1920s. Liberalization of the price system, freedom of labor movement, and deregulation of food trade facilitated new opportunity that led to increased village inequality. The market revolution removed party control over the means of production and made land a tradable commodity. It changed the way rural workers related to their employment. And it created new opportunity. Old forms of economic exchange and sources of economic security were replaced by market-based transactions in ways that shifted power away from state bureaucrats (Nee 1989). Market-based forms of economic exchange were initially unfamiliar and insecure, but over time took hold as the advantages of new institutional arrangements became clear (O'Brien, Patsiorkovsky, 2006).

New forms of economic exchange built upon the fact that Russia's agrarian reforms were "giving" as opposed to the "taking" reform represented by Stalin's collectivization. What that means is that agrarian reform in the 1990s led to defensive actions in response to reform policies. Of course, different groups took advantage of new opportunities more so than others, but the point is that within the range of possible action violent resistance did not emerge. To the extent that resistance occurred it was usually in the form of bureaucratic obstructionism by officials or passivity on the part of the population, for instance not completing the privatization process for their household plots[2]. In short, the giving nature of agrarian reform in Russia did not spur offensive conflict with external actors as a result of change in the economic system. For this reason, the third upheaval is absent the violence that characterized Stalin's collectivization.

This article analyzes the effects of the market revolution that came with the end of Soviet rule. Market reform facilitated the growth of village inequality. The specific focus is on intra-village *relations* between different economic strata as a result of increased in-

2. The evidence remains mixed on household acceptance of the land privatization. One school of thought emphasizes resistance (Allina-Pisano, 2008). Another school of thought documents rural adaptation and the growth of household entrepreneurship (O'Brien, Patsiorkovsky, Dershem, 2000; Wegren, 2005; Wegren, 2014). After 2000, rural Russia became a source of political support for the Putin regime. Following Scott's thesis (1976) of peasants resisting violations of their moral economy, Allina-Pisan argues that an alliance actors — including farm managers, state bureaucrats, and even ordinary villagers — emerged to resist land privatization. Allina-Pisano paints a picture of villages populated by resisters who covertly unite with higher-ups to derail land reform. She maintains that "foot dragging and other covert attempts to forestall large-scale transformation occurred at all levels of local bureaucracy: among leaders of district [raion] administrations; in the offices of state economists, land tenure specialists, and land committee members; and within village councils" (Allina-Pisano, 2008, 59).

equality. The core question that this article addresses is whether the growth in village inequality led to village discord, and if not, why? To address this question the paper has several goals: 1) to quantify the growth in household inequality; 2) to examine intra-village relationships between "rich" and the "poor" households; 3) to explore whether high-income households feel communality with the village community.

Survey data from a geographically diverse sample of 900 rural households are used to analyze the level of village discord[3]. Inequality is used as the independent variable and discord is the dependent variable. Discordant relationships are examined between households with different levels of income. Two competing hypotheses emerge: 1) Low levels of village discord support a stable village; 2) High inequality generates discord that could lead to village-destabilizing conflict in the village.

The article argues that upper income households do not have significantly worse relations with their neighbors than low-income households; and that "rich" households appear to "fit in" to the village community and do not face hostile relations with other households in the village. Inequality did not generate conflict to the extent that inequality became destabilizing to the village.

The magnitude of household inequality

Market reform that was introduced in 1992 spurred inequality among rural households that mirrors the growth in inequality throughout

3. The data are from a survey of rural households in Russia, drawn from person-to-person interviews with the person who answered the door at the household. The refusal rate was less than 4 per cent. Households were selected randomly from the list of permanent residents in each village, a list that is kept by the village administration for all households within its jurisdiction. This list is updated annually and contains demographic and social characteristics of households in the village. The survey consists of more than 100 questions on household human capital, labor and employment, housing, sources and levels of income, the possession and use of production capital (land, equipment, animals), social networks and interpersonal relationships, household finances, and views on various policy issues. The questions were close-ended. The person who answered the door was interviewed, but data were collected about the respondent and up to four additional adults in the household (a total of five adults). The survey was conducted in nine regions that span the entire country west to east: Altai Krai, Amur Oblast, Krasnodar Krai, Voronezh Oblast, Moscow Oblast, Leningrad Oblast, Kurgan Oblast, Krasnoyarsk Krai, and the Republic of Tatarstan. 900 households were surveyed, but with data for five adults per household, a total of 4,500 data points are contained in the sample. Village location varied from close-in (less than 10 kilometers) from a raion center, to villages located up to 40 kilometers away from an urban center.

Russian society. The purpose of this section is to quantify the magnitude of rural inequality, drawing from previous research (Wegren, 2014). Rural Russia has experienced a growth in both income and wealth inequality. Income inequality is considered first and may be measured in three ways.

The first measurement of rural inequality is based upon a *coefficient of differentiation*, which is the ratio of monetary income received by the top 10% of households and the bottom 10% of households. Longitudinal survey data from the same households over time depict a linear rise in inequality. In 1991 the coefficient of differentiation was 2,7, reflecting egalitarianism in the late Soviet period. Sampling the same households in 1995, the coefficient rose to 9.4, and then to 10.2 in 1999, which meant that by the end of the decade upper 10% of households had more than ten times the monthly income as did the lowest 10%. Different surveys of rural households found a coefficient of differentiation of 10.8 in a 2006 survey and 17,5 in a 2008 survey. The coefficients of differentiation are based on *total* monetary income, which includes transfer payments. Transfer payments have a leveling effect and understate true stratification. If only *earned* monetary income is used, the coefficient is much higher.

A second measure of income inequality uses *total household income*. Total income is defined as all monetary and non-monetary income received in a month from all adult members of the household. It includes, for example, not only salaries of all adults, but also income from food sales, household enterprise, and various transfer payments such as alimony, pensions, disability support, student stipends, and assistance to mothers for child support. Survey data show that households in the lowest income decile have about one-fourth of the mean total income as the sample as a whole, and are clearly below the subsistence minimum (poverty line). At the other end of the spectrum, households in the top 10% have a mean income equal to about 2,5 times the mean monthly income for the entire sample.

A third measure of income inequality uses only *earned monetary income*. Earned monetary income includes salaries and wages from all adult members irrespective of the place of employment, money earned from food sales, revenue from household enterprise, and monetary dividends. Earned monetary income provides a more accurate picture of the economically active cohort and presumably measures adaptation to a market economy. Most importantly, earned monetary income represents capital that may be accumulated and invested. Transfer payments are excluded because transfers represent passive income — income that is received irrespective of economic activity; transfer payments reflect the demographic structure of the household whereby there may be one or more pensioners.

Inequality is even greater if earned monetary income is used to compare households. Households in the highest income decile have almost twenty-six times the earned monetary income as do households

in the lowest income decile. In addition, there is a linear increase in the percentage earned monetary income as one ascends the income scale. In the poorest households, earned income is a lower percentage of total income; lower income households depend more on transfer payments, which may be a function of their demographic structure. The richest households have a much higher percentage of earned income to total income.

A second form of inequality concerns wealth, which also increased in the post-Soviet period. In fact, it could be argued that income is *not* the primary driver of inequality in rural Russia because salaries tend to be so low. Wealth inequality requires a broadening of the analytical lens beyond earned income, although aspects of income remain relevant. Variables include the physical size of the house, the number of cows and pigs, the expansion in the size of rental land, and the size of real land holdings[4].

Survey data illustrate the magnitude of household wealth inequality. Households in the top decile have the largest houses, one-third larger than households in the lowest four income deciles, and 20% larger than second through fourth highest deciles. The larger size house for top income households is due to additional rooms being added since 1991, which is suggestive of enhanced income streams. Among households that increased the size of their house by adding rooms, 43% are in the top income decile, and only 10% in the lowest three deciles combined. Lower income households are more likely to report that their dwelling is in bad or very bad condition, whereas zero households in the top decile report their house to be in bad condition; for top households the most frequent response is good or excellent condition. There are also significant differences in the possession of livestock, which are important either for self-consumption or as source of revenue. The number of animals possessed by the top decile of households is twice that of the second highest decile, and several times more than that of lower income deciles. Previous research found that higher number of animals and larger rental plots often go hand in hand because garden plots that are attached to the dwelling are small, usually about 0,01–0,02 hectares (Nefedova, Pallot, 2006; Pallot, Nefedova, 2007).

Wealth inequality reflects variegated behavioral differences to opportunities created by market reform. For example, households in the highest income decile have increased their rental land much more than lower income households. Households in most of the income brackets increased their rental land by less than 0,05 hectares (ha), whereas households in the top decile increased their rental holdings

4. The analysis uses land rental (the renting in of land) rather than land purchases because rental has been and continues to be the predominant type of transaction in the Russian countryside (Ministry of Economic Development, 2010: 160).

by a mean of 5,85 ha, equal to more than eight times the mean for the entire sample (households with private farmers are included in this top income group, so there is some impact on the mean increase, but not excessively so because of their small number). Rental land is often used for pasture for cattle, which in turn facilitates meat production, which, if sold, is a high-value commodity. Households in the top income decile also have much larger total holdings of real land (excluding land shares). Whereas the top income decile has a mean of 6,3 ha of real land, the bottom three deciles average only 0,2 ha of real land, or not much more than during Soviet times. Thus, in terms of land as the basis for entrepreneurship, only the top income decile became truly distinctive.

Some comments about village conflict

Let us start with some basic comments about peasants and conflict. Peasants are simultaneously a society and a culture; they also display class solidarity during crises. Sometimes this peasant trifecta conflicts with external actors and peasant action may be independent, guided, or amorphous (Shanin, 1987: 360–361). Conflict is of different types and forms. Origins of conflict directed toward external actors have been explained by structural-class theories (Stinchcombe, 1961; Paige, 1975) and historical theories (Moore, 1966; Wolf, 1969; Scott, 1976). The structural-class theory emphasizes a conflict of interests between peasant and landlord leading to a zero-sum conflict. In this view, independent small landholders see large landowners as an obstacle to their upward mobility. The historical model sees conflict arising in the transition from one economic system to another. Specifically, this paradigm emphasizes the loss of economic security through commercialization of economic relations and increasingly inflexible demands on villages through the process of state building (Jenkins, 1982: 493).

Conflict toward external actors may be offensive, that is, initiated by peasants, although the action may be in response to preexisting conditions. The 1905–1907 peasant rebellion in Russia due to deficiencies in land reform is an example of peasant initiated action *because* of the lack of reform (Shanin, 1986). Conflict may also be defensive in nature, whereby peasants react to events or policies that are thrust upon them, for instance Stalin's collectivization. Defensive conflict sees villages trying to protect themselves from an assault by an external actor that threatens survival and/or way of life.

A third type of conflict occurs *within* the village. Intra-village conflict finds households divided over changes in interactions with the market and economic relationships with the outside world. The Stolypin reforms were destabilizing because of peasant views about limited economic resources that are gained or lost in a perceived zero-sum

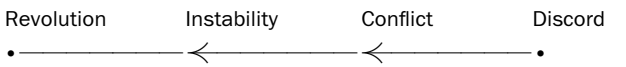
game[5]. Stalin's collectivization pitted poor and middle peasant households against so-called rich households, the kulaks. One might expect conflict in contemporary villages as non-adapting and non-entrepreneurial households become jealous of households that improved their economic condition.

Next, a few words about terminology. Russia's experiences in 1905–1907 and 1929–1934 are interesting for understanding peasant motivations and behavior, but ultimately these events do not help us sort out the effects of Russia's market revolution in contemporary villages. Genuine revolutions are often bloody, whereas Russia's path to the market was generally non-violent and rural responses were more defensive than offensive. Despite the fact that traditional peasant moral economy is argued to have been violated by market reform, through which economic interactions with external actors changed in fundamental ways, rural responses were not revolutionary[6]. Peas-

5. Members in the communal *mir* often adopted a zero-sum view of economic activity. One author argued that, "Peasants often seem to think of the world (or at least their world of the village) as constrained by a 'limited good,' that is, a space containing only a fixed amount of all goods worth having, including land, wealth, respect, and friendship. The idea of an expanding economy, an enlarging pie that will bring more benefits to everyone, is alien, or at least was so until recent technological breakthroughs" (Tian-Shanskaia, 1993: xxvi).

6. Reasons for the non-revolutionary rural responses are due to the "giving" nature of market reform in contrast to "taking" reform; the freedom to exit (leave the countryside); the right to vote to gain representation, although it could be argued that conservatives such as the Communist Party were not particularly effective in preventing the spread of market forces in the 1990s; and the ability to ensure household survival through a mixed income strategy whereby reliance on wages from agricultural production declined. Moreover, for those who stayed, various techniques of weapons of the weak could be employed (Scott, 1986). Furthermore, the state linked household economic behavior to it in several ways: land was privatized and obtained through state processes, procedures, and offices. Even for land that was not state owned, the buying and selling of agricultural land could not occur without state involvement; land allocations (use or lease transactions) were made through state processes, procedures, and offices; loans to households were channeled through the state-owned agricultural bank; and private farms were inextricably linked to state support and depended upon the state for the means of their existence, particularly in the 1990s. Thus, although village households had more economic freedom, they were not necessarily more free to avoid the state. Raion party organizations were replaced by non-party administrators (sometimes the same person), but the process for obtaining private goods was similar. Instead of appealing to the local party office a villager now appeals to the local administration. Distinct strata within the rural population had dissimilar incentives to rebel, which is to say that separate cohorts reacted differently. Following the introduction of land privatization a process of rural stratification very quickly began to affect households. Evidence shows that some households took advantage of new opportunity more so than others by engaging in household enterprise

ant rebellion is not particularly useful for understanding contemporary rural responses[7]. Although Russia's market reform was certainly part of a societal revolution, peasant behavior is best understood as a non-violent struggle to fit in to a new economic system in which the rules for economic interaction had fundamentally changed. Instead, I present a simple continuum of instability to discord.



Instability occurs for several reasons and takes different forms, and for this reason village instability is an elusive term[8]. The most dangerous condition is when a village becomes politically destabilized, which refers to radicalization of villagers or the deterioration in the political relationship with the state or other hegemon. Economic grievances may turn political and lead to offensive conflict against an external actor. Political instability lies on the path to rebellion, although as Johnson notes many societies experience radical change without having a revolution (Johnson, 1982). In other words, not all political instability ends with revolution.

The dividing line between rebellious behavior and conflict concerns scope and scale. Rebellion is wider and deeper. Conflict is more limited in time, space, and scale. Between conflict and discord the

that increased their income and by acquiring more land (Wegren, 2009; Wegren, 2014). The expected "losers" from market reform — farm managers — actually turned out to be the winners in terms of higher income and larger household land holdings (Wegren, O'Brien, Patsiorkovsky, 2002; Wegren, 2014). During the second wave of private farm creation it was farm managers and specialists and not ordinary workers who comprised the wave (Durgin, 1994: 224). Moreover, there were inherent advantages to be "early in" so as to create obstacles for those who came later. In the case of agricultural land, the first in were able to lay claim to the best land with the best location, leaving poorer quality land in remote areas for others. The economic losers were those who did not seize new opportunity as they fell farther behind. Thus, separate economic strata had different capabilities and incentives that affected how they responded to market-based opportunities. There was no general "rural" rejection or acceptance of market reform; separate cohorts responded differently according to their characteristics, capabilities, and incentives.

7. In this discussion I am using revolution and rebellion as synonyms.
8. A village can become destabilized economically due to economic failure induced from nature, behavior by villagers, or when terms of trade are unequal or become significantly worse. In this case, peasants may external conflict may ensue to address food shortages in the village by invading non-village land or seizing larger estates in order to increase production potential. A village can become destabilized demographically as a result of out-migration, death, disease, or low birth rates to the point where existence is problematic. Dying villages are unlikely to engage in external conflict.

criterion is intensity. Conflict is understood to be more intense activity than discord. Conflict entails struggle, fight, or battle, and may include violence. Conflict with external actors entails a range of actions. Taking the 1905 peasant disturbances in Russia as an example –offensive actions that arose due to peasant frustrations over land hunger and rural overcrowding — Shanin describes non-violent acts such as the illegal invasions of forests to cut lumber or of grazing land. At the violent end of the behavioral spectrum, peasants robbed stores, committed arson, destroyed estates, and murdered estate owners. Somewhere in the middle were actions that included ploughing up non-peasant lands, strikes, and collective demands for lower rents (Shanin, 1986: 84). Russia's 1905–1907 peasant rebellion shows that conflict is variegated and occurs along a continuum.

Discord is a state of disharmony or disagreement. Discord is understood as a state of unhappiness, the lack of tranquility, or low-level action to express that unhappiness. Discord in and of itself is usually non-violent, but may lead to violent conflict under the right circumstances. Whether we are talking about the 19th century *mir*, Soviet villages, or contemporary rural life, discord within the village has been a constant. Despite the tendency to idealize village life, Shanin argues that in Tsarist times "actual village life [was] far from being the rustic haven of equality, stability and brotherly love that its models often used to imply... Village communities show homogeneity but, at the same time, are split into conflicting strata, groups, and factions. These divisions in no sense express temporary social pathology; rather, they play a vital part in village life and are decisive for understanding its social structure and dynamism" (Shanin, 1985: 73). Different types of discord have been, and remain, a constant feature of village life over time:

- disputes between rich and poor households;
- arguments over land allocations or encroachments, rights of throughway;
- domestic disputes, intra-marital disputes, disputes with in-laws;
- disagreement over dowries; familial disagreement over future spouses;
- petty jealousies between neighbors and among members of the village;
- generational disagreement;
- gender-based disagreement, whether intra-family or in employment;
- disagreement between village officials;
- disagreement between village officials and common villagers.

In the Soviet period, village discord frequently revolved around inequality. One common grievance was over the assignment of housing (Amalrik, 1970). Some households who were favored by the farm cha-

irman received housing of better quality, condition, and larger size. Another source of discord was gender inequality related to work roles. Women resented farm managers whose discriminatory attitudes relating to gendered work roles relegated women to certain types of work and usually lower pay (Denisova, 2010). Women were also grossly underrepresented in management roles — as late as the 1980s only 2% of collective farm leaders were women. In the household, women bore the brunt of the workload for running and maintaining the house. Bridger notes that, "tending the plot, preparing animal feed and caring for livestock are seen primarily as women's responsibilities. In addition, cooking, cleaning, washing and shopping, the major elements of domestic labor in the cities, are overwhelmingly the responsibility of women in the villages" (Bridger, 1987: 108–109).

It is of little surprise, therefore, that contemporary villages in Russia also experience discord. In Russia's market environment, three events are hypothesized to contribute to village discord.

1. The growth of household inequality within villages, an outgrowth of market reform in the early 1990s. As shown in the section above, household inequality increased in several ways: income, wealth, landholdings, size and quality of housing, even possession of material goods such as cars, computers, or other electronics.
2. The violation of traditional moral economy by market reform, that is, the norms, values, and policies that governed rural society in the Tsarist and Soviet periods. The Soviet moral economy in particular was based upon state-provided economic security, collective ownership of land and other means of production, an egalitarian wage system, and shelter from market forces.
3. A lack of protection for property rights by village administrations from so-called "raiders." In this case, strained relations may emerge between villagers and the administration that fails to protect them; and toward households that are perceived to have benefited from land expansion. Concerns over land "raiding" began to appear in the Russian press as early as 2007, following the rebound in agricultural performance (Gordeev, 2007; Iakovleva, 2007; Svishchev, 2007). Subsequently, Western analysts identified a variety of legal, semi-legal, and illegal actions as "land grabbing" that compounded the violation of villagers' moral economy and aggravated the loss of economic security (Wegren, 2009)[9].

9. Although admittedly difficult to quantify, it has been argued that land grabbing has become worse in rural Russia in recent years, perpetrated by agroholding companies, banks and energy companies, food processing companies, and even foreign entities throughout several post-communist states (Visser et al., 2011). Land grabbing *may* have deleterious effects on rural dwellers, but there is also a positive dimension to consider. The prevalent view implies malevolent intent by land grabbers and local bureaucrats who

The point is that discord is a constant rather than an exception in village life. In contemporary rural Russia there are several sources of discord. The question is whether conditions exist whereby discord transforms into open conflict, and this is addressed in the section below.

Findings: Inequality and village discord

This section addresses whether there is evidence of discord in the village fueled by jealousy and rivalry between those who got ahead and those who were left behind. Two variables are used to address this question: 1) evaluations about relations with neighbors; 2) evaluations about commonality, or fitting in, with the rest of the village. High levels of discord may transform into conflict that if left unresolved could be destabilizing.

The impact of income inequality on relations with neighbors is considered first. Income inequality is used as the independent variable instead of both income and land because the number of households with significant land expansion since 1991 (five or more hectares) is small, thereby rendering the analysis inconclusive and speculative, whereas all households have income so the findings are more robust. The survey asked "what is your neighbor's attitude toward your household?" Myriad factors influence the answer, not all of which can be captured by the survey or may be related to inequality. Nonetheless, it is an interesting and important question whether upper income households have worse relations with their neighbors than lower income households. For all respondents (n=898), the most common response among is "average" relations with neighbors (n=373, or 42%, meaning relations are neither bad nor good). The second most frequent answer is "good" relations, voiced by 326 respondents, or 36% of the total sample. Only 153 respondents (17%) said relations are "bad" or "very bad"; and just 46 persons (5%) said relations are "very good." The results are indicated in Table 1.

Disaggregated by income decile, the data reflect similarity rather than significant differences across income levels. "Average" relations is the most frequent answer: 44% of households in the lowest income decile have "average" relations with their neighbors, as do 42% of households in the highest income decile. A total of 72% of households in the bottom two deciles have average relations, as do 79% of households in the top two income deciles.

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are bought off or corrupt. A contrarian view is that land grabbing has beneficial impacts by converting land that is underutilized or not utilized at all into economic use. Land grabbing may, therefore, allow land to be put into economic production, thereby generating income, tax revenue, and financial resources that can be used for the public good.

Table 1. Relations with Neighbors by Earned Monetary Income Decile
(Source: Author's survey data, n=898 households)

Earned income deciles	Very bad	Bad	Average	Good	Very good	Mean
0–9% lowest decile	0	11%	44%	39%	7%	3,4
10–19%	3%	25%	28%	39%	5%	3,1
20–29%	1%	19%	44%	33%	2%	3,1
30–39%	2%	15%	45%	33%	6%	3,3
40–49%	2%	17%	47%	26%	8%	3,2
50–59%	2%	16%	42%	34%	6%	3,2
60–69%	3%	10%	45%	38%	4%	3,3
70–79%	2%	6%	41%	38%	4%	3,4
80–89%	1%	11%	37%	49%	2%	3,4
90+% highest decile	6%	18%	42%	30%	5%	3,1
Number of responses	n=21	n=132	n=373	n=326	n=46	Mean for the sample = 3,2

Notes:
a. The survey question was: 'What is your neighbor's attitude toward your household?'
b. Percentages have been rounded and may not add to 100.
c. For means: 1=very bad, 2=bad, 3=average, 4=good, 5=very good.

For good relations with neighbors, 78% of households in the bottom two deciles have "good" relations (39% in each decile); as do 79% of households in the upper two income deciles[10]. For "bad" relations with neighbors, 36% of households in the bottom two deciles are found[11]. In contrast, upper income households have less bad relations: 29% of households in the upper two income deciles have "bad" relations with their neighbors[12]. Upper income households are able to help their neighbor or share more resources and this helps to foster better relations as suggested by Paxson (2005). The findings do not support the hypothesis that inequality causes significant discord between neighbors. The percentage of upper income households with good relations is similar to low income households, and a smaller percentage of upper income households have bad relations with neighbors than average income or low-income households.

10. 49% of households in the 80–89% decile, and 30% in the 90+% decile.
11. 11% of households in the bottom income decile have 'bad' relations with their neighbors, as do 25% in the second lowest income decile.
12. 11% in the second highest income decile, 18% in the highest income decile.

The relationship between household income and fitting into the community is considered next. This question is important because inequality exacerbates poverty and social exclusion, and ultimately, is linked to societal stability (Nolan, Marx, 2009). Community attachment is influenced by many factors besides income level (Kasarda, Janowitz, 1974)[13]. The most influential models to explain community attachment have been the systemic model, which places emphasis on the length of residence and social status; and the linear model, which emphasizes population size of a community, with the idea that attachment decreases as the size increases (Stinner et al., 1990). Both models have been reanalyzed and modified in subsequent studies (Beggs et al., 1996). Goudy argues that systemic variables have greater explanatory power than the linear development model alone, and income in particular has an impact on community attachment (Goudy, 1990)[14].

To explore the relationship between market involvement, which increases household income, and community attachment, another survey question asked "how much in common do you have with most of the people in your village?" The traditional moral economy hypothesis might expect that upper income households would feel separation from the community based on economic differences. The most common response is "average" which meant that feelings were neither of alienation nor high commonality (n=401). The second most frequent response is "a lot" of commonality (n=312). The responses by earned income decile are indicated in Table 2.

Disaggregated by income decile, there is more similarity than significant difference. In terms of raw numbers, twenty-nine respondents from the lowest income category feel "a lot" of commonality with the rest of the village, compared to twenty-seven in the highest income decile. Conversely, nine respondents from the lowest income decile feel "a little" or "very little" commonality with the village, compared to fifteen in the highest income category. In the second lowest income decile, seventeen respondents feel "a little" or "very little" commonality with the village, compared to nine in the second highest income decile. Moreover, the numbers for high- income households are not much different from "middle class" households, those that are found in the 50th, 60th, and 70th percentiles. More research is surely needed, but at this point it is difficult to identify an unambiguous pattern whereby high-income households feel less commonality with the rest of the village than households in lower income deciles.

13. Kasarda and Janowitz argue that community attachment is affected by three sets of factors: interpersonal networks, individual participation, and sentiments, or feelings, about the community.

14. A previous study of rural Russia found "no inherent contradiction between the utilitarian interests of marketplace behavior and the social interests of involvement with fellow community members" (O'Brien, Wegren, Patsiorkovksy, 2005: 203).

Table 2. Evaluation of Commonality with Villagers by Earned Monetary Income Decile (Source: Author's survey data, n=899 households)

Earned income deciles	Very little	Little	Average	A lot	Very much	Means
0–9% lowest decile	1%	9%	46%	32%	12%	3,4
10–19%	1%	18%	34%	40%	7%	3,3
20–29%	7%	13%	46%	27%	8%	3,1
30–39%	4%	12%	48%	28%	8%	3,2
40–49%	2%	12%	43%	36%	6%	3,3
50–59%	5%	11%	45%	33%	7%	3,2
60–69%	1%	10%	46%	40%	3%	3,3
70–79%	2%	6%	39%	46%	7%	3,4
80–89%	0%	10%	51%	36%	3%	3,3
90+% highest decile	5%	12%	48%	30%	5%	3,1
Number of responses	n=25	n=102	n=401	n=312	n=59	Mean for sample = 3,3

Notes:
a. 'How much do you have in common with most of the people in your village?'
b. Percentages have been rounded and may not add to 100.
c. For means: 1=very little, 2=little, 3=average, 4=a lot, 5=very much.

The findings that upper income households do not have worse relations with neighbors and feel as if they fit into the village community comports with reality that witnessed a quiescent countryside during market reform. Villages were not destabilized by violent conflict. The reasons for quiescence are explored in the concluding section below.

Conclusion: Toward a post-socialist moral economy

Historically, the moral economy of Russian villages was based on collectivism and egalitarianism. In rural households of Tsarist Russia, Richard Pipes writes that, "The household allowed no room for individuality: it was a collective which submerged the individual in the group... The Great Russian peasant, living in his natural environment, had no opportunity to acquire a sense of individual identity, respect for law or property, or social status in the village" (Pipes, 1990: 95). Moreover, the household made no allowance for private property, everything was held in common. The communal *mir* was based on collectivist-egalitarian village governance supported by peasant values (Watters, 1968).

In the Soviet period, collectivism in land ownership and egalitarianism in income defined state policy (Medvedev, 1987)[15]. To be sure, there were contradictory impulses, for example the resilience of household subsidiary agricultural production that operated outside the state plan and therefore was considered capitalist. These plots were limited in size by state policy and were collectively used by the household. In the Soviet period there was encroachment on state lands to grow food for the household. But the dominant value structure and hence moral economy was collectivist and egalitarian.

The development of agrarian capitalism in contemporary Russia broke sharply with the collectivist-egalitarian basis of historical village life. In Russia since 1992 collectivist property was supplanted by land privatization and egalitarianism was replaced by income and wealth inequality. The transformation of rural Russia gave rise to a stratum of winners and a group of losers. But contrary to expectations, instead of inequality creating village-destabilizing conflict, survey data show that high-income households do not have significantly worse relations with their neighbors than do low-income households; and that upper-income households do not have greatly differing feelings of community attachment than low-income households.

The question is whether an emerging post-socialist moral economy explains why household inequality did not cause higher levels of discord or even village conflict. Based on the evidence presented here, the findings provide reason to argue for the emergence of a post-socialist moral economy. Even allowing for other factors that contribute to low levels of village discord, such as length of residence, the fact that high-income households do not have worse relations with their neighbors and feel part of the community is an important finding.

A post-socialist moral economy departs from past cultural norms. The post-Soviet moral economy is not constrained by limited access to land as in the communal *mir* or the Soviet collective farm. The post-socialist moral economy is not based upon state regulated income levels or wealth holdings. Instead, a post-socialist moral economy is based on opportunity and economic freedom, bounded mainly by the energy, willpower, capabilities and adaptability of household members. Policies from an illiberal state or corruption undercut the post-socialist moral economy that seeks to unleash the incentives that the Stolypin reform wanted to tap into in the early twentieth century. Thus, we see different kinds of entrepreneurship that have been documented at every level: personal, household, and farm. In the new economic environment the values and norms of this new moral economy are shared across income groups so that inequality

15. Early collective farms and village administration continued to rely upon groups of individually operated plots of land during the first few years of collectivization (Yaney, 1971: 20).

does not cause village-destabilizing conflict. This positivist view of new moral economy helps to explain why the Russian countryside was quiescent during the 1990s, a period of increasing inequality and potential social strife during Russia's imperfect agrarian capitalism.

There is substantial behavioral evidence to support the argument of an emerging post-socialist moral economy. (Attitudinal data remain to be collected.) The data in this study show that a minority of households is entrepreneurial, but that number is likely to grow over time as the benefits become widely evident. Among those minority households there are several indicators to show a willingness to move away from collectivism and egalitarianism: the mere fact that household inequality has increased; an increase in land holdings and a willingness to acquire more land through leasing or purchase (leasing is more popular); a growth in food sales that leads to higher household income; a change in the structure of household income, specifically an rise in household business as a percentage of total income; a willingness to take loans for investment; and an enlargement in production capital such as animals and equipment (Wegren, 2014).

All of that said, the development of a post-socialist moral economy is a process and as such is subject to periods of slowing or even reversals. When we talk about moral economy we are really talking about the development of a culture whereby norms define economic relationships and orientations to the market. The establishment of new norms may not happen in a decade or even a generation, but may take several to fully develop. New cultural norms and values may not be shared by all and even a hegemonic value structure has dissidents and defectors.

In closing, the broader issue this article raises is that it may be time to see peasant moral economy as variable rather than a constant. The analysis herein suggests that rural norms and values are a dependent variable influenced by structural independent variables — time period; a country's level of economic development; characteristics of the economic system; state policies; and interactions with the market. This view does not diminish the importance of culture, history, and tradition, but does not see them as historically determinist or unchanging. A rethinking of moral economy would acknowledge that rural households using a mixed income strategy in a middle-income nation have a different moral economy than do households a low-income agrarian economy in which the majority of economic output comes from agricultural production. Put another way, rural dwellers who depend upon agricultural production as their main source of income have a different moral economy than do semi-industrialized rural dwellers who have links to the urban economy and draw income from agricultural and non-agricultural employment. If this thesis is correct, the research agenda going forward is to explicate the moral *economies* that are found in different regions of the world as we try to understand rural stability or lack thereof.

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Социально-экономическое неравенство и конфликты в сельской России: особенности постсоциалистической моральной экономики

Стивен Вегрен, профессор политологии в Южном методистском университете, Даллас, Техас, 75275, США. E-mail: swegren@smu.edu

По мнению автора, уровень социально-экономической дифференциации в сельской России сегодня существенно выше, чем в советский период, если оценивать его в показателях дохода и (земельной) собственности. Автор выделяет три периода в истории сельской России, которые отмечены серьезными противоречиями во взаимодействии крестьян со средствами производства: столыпинская реформа 1906–1911 годов; сталинская коллективизация; крах советской системы в начале 1990-х годов. В статье обозначены последствия становления рыночной экономики после распада Советского Союза, которая ускорила нарастание социально-экономической дифференциации в деревне, и показано, какие конфликты она породила между разными экономическими группами. Автор приводит количественные показатели нарастания сельской дифференциации; анализирует взаимоотношения между «богатыми» и «бедными» домохозяйствами; показывает, что «богатые» домохозяйства чувствовали свое единство с сельским сообществом. Для оценки уровня конфликтности сельской жизни автор обращается к результатам обследования 900 домохозяйств в разных регионах России и делает вывод о формировании в сельской России постсоциалистического типа моральной экономики, в основе которой лежит не государственное регулирование доходов и распределение земель, а понятия экономической свободы и возможностей, которые ограничивают лишь энергия, воля, способности и адаптационные стратегии членов сельских домохозяйств.

Ключевые слова: устойчивость села; неравенство домохозяйств; конфликты на селе; домохозяйства с высоким и низким уровнем доходов; (постсоциалистическая) моральная экономика; средства производства.