Rural Inequality in the Republic of Karelia: Considering Nonfarm Communities in Russian Rural Studies

Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University

By

Lauren Elizabeth Welker, B.A.

Graduate Program in Slavic and East European Studies

The Ohio State University

2011

Thesis Committee:

Nicholas Breyfogle, Advisor

Yana Hashamova

Linda Lobao

Cathy Rakowski

Abstract

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and ensuing market reforms under President Boris Yeltsin increased inequality and economic stress on Russia's rural residents. The aftermath of agrarian privatization and the chaotic 1990s has been studied by researchers from various disciplines, but little has been done to explain regional variations in quality of life, employment opportunities, and how life in rural nonfarm economies differs from regions where commercial farming is the predominant economic activity. Russia's northwestern Republic of Karelia has an economy based primarily on forestry and a diverse rural landscape and population, only a small portion of which is engaged in commercial farming. National policies such as market reforms and President Vladimir Putin's 2006 project to grow the agroindustrial sector have done little to integrate rural nonfarm economies and communities into larger regional and national economies. Members of these communities continue to lead subsistence-based lives and face increasing marginalization as sources of employment and services in their villages close. If scholars and policymakers fail to provide services and maintain infrastructure to peripheral areas, local residents will face continued poverty, while their desire to work and participate in regional economies will be unrealized.

Dedication

Dedicated to the respondents who contributed to the June-August 2010 research.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to a number of individuals without whom this research project would not have been possible. My thesis advisor, Nicholas Breyfogle, has offered his insight and advice since the beginning of the project, and has reviewed my thesis drafts in a way that has served to both encourage me as well as improve my writing skills. I am grateful to my thesis committee and to Richard Hopkins-Lutz for their invaluable feedback and suggestions. I would like to thank Ludmila Isurin and Maria Alley for their assistance with materials for the IARO research period, as well as Anna Sharogradskaya for establishing a helping network for me in Petrozavodsk. Galina Parikhina found me an apartment for the summer and I am thankful for all of the ways in which she made my stay in Petrozavodsk more comfortable. I am especially grateful to Natalia Meshkova and Anastasia Ermashova from the newspaper *Litsei*, and to Olga Klimova for getting me to research locations and providing practical and moral support. This project would not have been possible had it not been for those respondents who so graciously shared their time and insights into local life with a naïve graduate researcher from the other side of the globe. Finally, I would like to thank my fiancé Andrey, for his unending patience and encouragement through the entire project.

Research for this thesis was supported in part by a fellowship from IREX (International Research & Exchanges Board) with funds provided by the United States Department of State through the Title VIII Program. Neither of these organizations are responsible for the views expressed herein.

Vita

June 2003 . . . . . Anthony Wayne High School

2007 . . . . . B.A. Russian, The Ohio State University

2007 . . . . . B.A. Anthropology, The Ohio State University

September – December 2008 . . . . . Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, The Ohio State University

2009 – 2010 . . . . . FLAS Fellow, Center for Slavic and East European Studies

2010 . . . . . IREX Individual Advanced Research Opportunities recipient

Fields of Study

Major Field: Slavic and East European Studies

Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization: Rural Sociology

Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization: Folklore Studies

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Maps

Terminology

Russian	Transliteration	Translation
сельское хозяйство	*s**e**l'skoe khoz**iai**stvo*	agriculture
фермерство	*f**er**merstvo*	farming
личное подсобное хозяйство	*l**i**chnoe pods**o**bnoe khoz**iai**stvo*	subsistence farming/farming on personal plot
колхоз	*kolhh**o**z*	collective farm
лесхоз	*leskh**o**z*	forestry collective
совхоз	*sovkh**o**z*	state farm
община	*obshch**i**na*	(pre-Communist) peasant commune
сотка	*s**o**tka*	100 M^2, or $1/100^{th}$ ha.
верста	*vers**t**a*	"verst", a linear measurement equal to 3,500 ft.
область	*obl**a**st'*	region
край	*kr**a**i*	territory
округ	***o**krug*	county
район	*rai**o**n*	district
дача	*d**a**cha*	cottage, or summer house
дачник	*d**a**chnik*	owner of a *dacha*

Key Dates

1917 Decree on Land, abolition of private property

1919 Formation of the Karelian Labor Commune

1923 Formation of the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic

1991 Collapse of the Soviet Union, beginning of Russia's marketization

1998 Devaluation of the Russian Ruble

Introduction

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and ensuing market reforms under President Boris Yeltsin increased inequality and economic stress on Russia's rural residents. The aftermath of agrarian privatization and the chaotic 1990s has been studied by researchers from various disciplines, but little has been done to explain regional variations in quality of life, employment opportunities, and how life in rural nonfarm economies differs from regions where commercial farming is the predominant economic activity. Russia's northwestern Republic of Karelia has an economy based primarily on forestry and a diverse rural landscape and population, only a small portion of which is engaged in commercial farming. National policies such as market reforms and President Vladimir Putin's 2006 project to grow the agroindustrial sector have done little to integrate rural nonfarm economies and communities into larger regional and national economies. Members of these communities continue to lead subsistence-based lives and face increasing marginalization as sources of employment and services in their villages close. If scholars and policymakers fail to provide services and maintain infrastructure to peripheral areas, local residents will face continued poverty, while their desire to work and participate in regional economies will remain unrealized.

My study examines the social and economic processes at work in the Republic of Karelia from the 1920s to the 1990s in an effort to understand the impact of the transition to a market economy for this non-farming rural region. My findings suggest that rural

Karelians face closures of key services (medical centers, post offices, and schools), widespread unemployment, and increased spatial isolation due to unmaintained roads. These structural barriers prevent rural residents from moving beyond subsistence practices, increasing their incomes, and creating communities in which people can work and raise families.

The reforms of the 1990s were part of a phenomenon known as "shock therapy", or the sudden entrance of Russia into the market economy. As the attention of international scholars and policy makers was focused on this "transition" from communism to capitalism in the 1990s, numerous studies were published by social scientists that tried to gauge the extent of marketization and privatization in rural areas. Initially in my thesis research, I wanted to examine current issues regarding rural inequality and poverty in the Russian Republic of Karelia. In my search for secondary literary sources I quickly realized that scholarship on rural poverty in Russia peaked in the late 1990s and dwindled thereafter. When it came to the literature on rural Karelia in particular, only one scholar (T.V. Morozova, 2004) published after the year 2000.

As I reviewed the existing literature on rural Russia I became acquainted with two issues. The first of these is the general ambiguity of terminology. "Rurality" is undefined in both the English and Russian language literature, while terms like agriculture are problematic when used indiscriminately between languages. The Russian word for "rural", *sel'skoe,* is the adjectival form of the noun *selo*, meaning town or village. *Sel'skoe khoziaistvo* is typically translated as agriculture in English, but a more literal translation might be "village economy" (the term *khoziaistvo* does not have a direct cognate in English).

Perhaps because of the shared linguistic base in *selo*, "agriculture" and "rural" have been used synonymously in the literature. While the word *fermerstvo* (farming) exists in Russian, *sel'skoe khoziaistvo* is used as a general term for farming in both the scholarly literature and Russian legislation. Thus, it is not entirely clear which rural activities (forestry, mining, fishing, and others) constitute "agriculture" beyond crop farming and animal husbandry. While authors frequently use the term "poverty" (*bednost'* in Russian), they fail to define it, making it difficult to grasp how they conceive of measuring it. These ambiguities are problematic when we consider that numerous people inhabit boreal, mountainous, and arid regions within Russia that are unsuitable for farming. Sociologist Cynthia Duncan (1999), in her comparative study of rural poverty in Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, and Maine, found that reasons for rural inequality differed according to complex local circumstances (the relationship between industry, entrenched social elites, in addition to spatial barriers). While research in one area of the world cannot be carbon copied and applied to another area, Duncan's work suggests that social and economic inequality are not only intertwined, but are formed in place-specific ways.

The second issue that appears in the work on rural Russia is that data are drawn consistently from central regions of Russia where crop farming is practiced. Conclusions drawn from the same, limited number of regions are projected onto the entire country, which has the effect of suggesting that all of rural Russia exhibits the same demographic and economic traits, and that inequality occurs for the same reasons. American rural sociologist Linda Lobao has argued that social scientists studying inequality need to ask not only "who gets what and why" but also "*where*" (Lobao, 1996, 2009). The question

of space is not only important when we consider Russia as the largest country in the world in terms of territory, but also on various sub-national scales within the country as a whole, from geographic regions to administratively defined municipalities.

Because the available literature on rural Russia did not address rural nonfarm economies like that of Karelia, much less in the last nine or ten years, I decided to embark on my own research to follow up, albeit on a small scale, on the studies others had conducted in the late 1990s. The overall purpose of my research is to understand sources of socio-economic inequality among rural Karelians, and how inequality may develop for different reasons in various places. I also seek to enrich the current perception of "rural" in the Russian context by drawing attention to rural areas that differ geographically, environmentally, and economically from Russia's stereotyped agrarian rural landscape. My goal is to argue for a more nuanced definition of rural in the Russian case that includes various rural landscapes and economies, and to expand current discourse on rural issues to include spaces and people outside of the agricultural sector. I developed a series of research objectives to meet these goals, which I discuss below. While the extent to which I can accomplish this objective is limited within the scope of three months of fieldwork and a Master's thesis, I propose that my research highlights the main problems that rural Karelians face in trying to move beyond subsistence activities. In Chapter 1, I introduce the Republic of Karelia by briefly recounting trends in the territory's structural and economic history within a larger Soviet and Russian context. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature on rural Russia in general. I pay particular attention to trends in scholarly inquiry, approach, and conclusions on issues of market reform and

the state of rural affairs. In Chapter 3, I present my findings and , in the Conclusion, situate them within conclusions drawn by other scholars.

Objectives and Methods

The first objective of my fieldwork in the region was to examine the extent to which contemporary rural conditions differ from those described in the 1990s. In other words, I wanted to see what has changed in the space of ten to fifteen years. The second objective was to survey the economic activities of households, to understand what parts of the population are employed and in which industries, and to catch any additional activities through which a household tries to supplement its income. Previous scholarship has indicated that the economic activity of households falls under the categories of 'survival strategies' and 'subsistence activities', emphasizing that rural people were not able to do anything more than barely make ends meet.[1] Thus, I wanted to see whether rural Karelians are still engaged in these minimalist activities, to what degree, and why or why not.

I am particularly interested in how rural residents qualitatively perceive the structural changes of the last twenty years, how they envision the future, how they identify and explain local issues and what should be done to assist rural areas from their perspective. Going into the fieldwork, I assumed that rural populations continue to face economic hardship, although it is through my research that I would understand the reasons behind this hardship (joblessness, lack of infrastructure). This assumption was based on previous scholars' description of socio-economic issues in the first ten to fifteen years after 1991, and a lack of any research since then that would suggest otherwise.

[1] Engebretson (2007), Ioffe *et al.* (2006), Morozova *et al.* (2004), Wegren *et al.* (2008), Varis (2000).

Methods

Within a timeframe of three months (June-August 2010), I administered written surveys and semi-structured interviews to rural residents in five villages in three regions (*raiony*), Kondopozhskii, Medvezh'egorskii, and Belomorskii. While I had originally wanted to conduct research in four villages that were far away from each other, I was limited to villages where there were points of contact. As a result, I visited three sparsely populated villages in the *Kondopozhskii raion* that were very close together (I consider them together since they were close enough to have been involved with the same local collectives). The other two villages were further from the capital city as well as from each other, in *Belomorskii* and *Medvezh'egorskii raiony* respectively. I selected villages according to the population size of 500 or fewer permanent residents. I define permanent residents as individuals who reside year round in the village, as opposed to a *dachnik*, someone who spends summer weekends and time off from work in the city at rural property. This distinction was critical for summer research, as rural populations swell with temporary residents during this season. In addition to surveys and interviews, I took descriptive field notes of the local environment and infrastructure.

Surveys were designed to gather demographic information about the respondent, and specific information about their employment or lack thereof (for example, monthly income, and if they are unemployed, how they make ends meet). Digitally recorded, semi-structured interviews were used to prompt conversation with the respondent, but in a way that allowed for individuals to add information or topics to the discussion. By allowing respondents room to add information within interviews, topics and issues that

are most important to them become apparent. For specific survey and interview questions and other research materials, please refer to the Appendix.

As I began this research, I had no previously established contacts in Karelia. Because I needed to work with local scholars and professionals to select and reach research locations, the villages selected for study were chosen in part due to personal connections between individuals in the capital city of Petrozavodsk and individual villagers. While this narrowed the selection of possible research locations according to interpersonal and logistical reasons, as opposed to criteria more relevant to the nature of the research, having a contact person in each village was a necessity. Potential research participants would not have been likely to respond to my study without an introduction by someone from within the village.

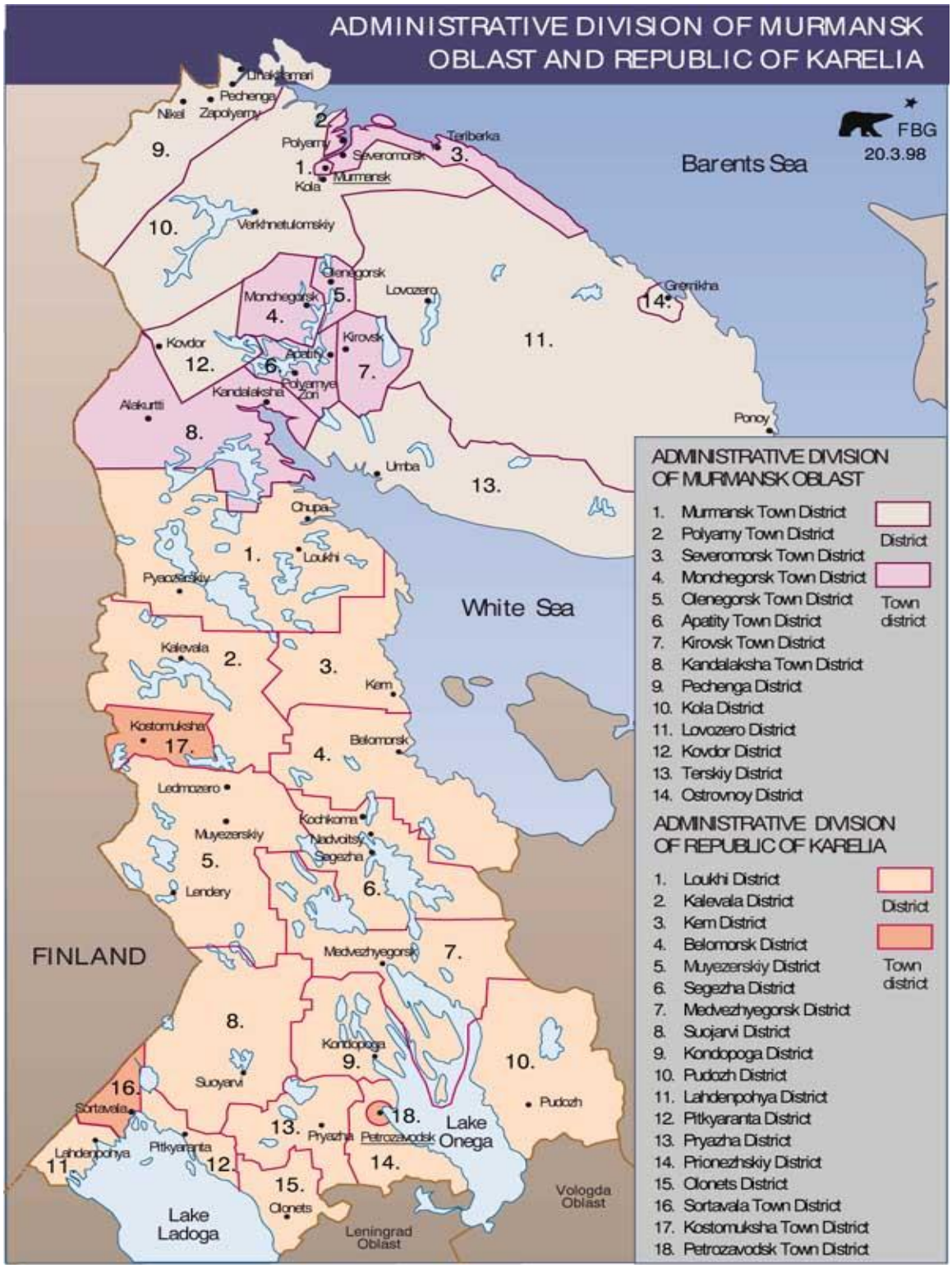
Each contact person knew which villagers were permanent residents, and which were *dachniki*. I would go door to door with my hosts, who would introduce me to permanent residents by explaining who I was and why I was in the village, after which I was able to engage respondents personally for surveys and interviews. No one from any of the five villages refused participation, but some were hesitant to speak with me. Thus, while I may not have found any participants without a local host or contact, I believe that having a local individual introduce me put social pressure on individuals to participate in the research, even when they may not have wanted to. It is unclear how this might have affected individuals' responses, but I worry that this pressure might have led to satisficing in responses.[2]

[2] Satisficing is defined as a response strategy in which "respondents do the minimum they need to satisfy the demands of the questions." Groves *et al.* Survey Methodology. Second ed. Wiley (2009): 224.

I did not offer compensation or incentives for participation in the research. Residents had the option to decline participation at any time, and were asked to read and sign a document explaining the research and participants' rights. As I had expected, the existence of such a document served to increase the level of skepticism and wariness among respondents, as the American tradition of "small print" has historically held significantly different connotations in Russia, such as imprisonment and worse. As stated previously, no one declined participation, but some respondents were confused by the need for a signature, while others referenced the connection between signing strange documents and oppression, as one respondent remarked coyly, "You know what happened to people who signed documents in '37 …"

Residents often felt unsure at first about talking with me, but it is difficult to connect this trepidation with any consequences in the accuracy of their responses. I propose that future research with these respondents would reveal a more nuanced understanding of individuals' views, but that these individuals were not necessarily lying to me in our first encounter. To be sure, they weighed and selected their answers according to how they understood my questions, what they considered important in relation to the questions I asked, what information they thought safe to disclose to a foreigner, and perhaps according to other criteria of which I am not aware at this time. Also at play were issues of age, gender, and language between individual respondents and myself. Some of the longest interviews were granted by my hosts, who were all female, as we spent evening hours together and had extra time to talk. Here it should be noted that hosts were compensated for the time I spent in the village, since they provided my meals and took time out of their day to take me around the village.

Map 1.The Barents Euro-Arctic Region
http://arcticcentre.ulapland.fi/barentsinfo/maps/map/d.htm (1998)



Map 2. Administrative Division of Murmansk Oblast and Republic of Karelia http://arcticcentre.ulapland.fi/barentsinfo/maps/map/f.htm (1998)

Chapter 1: An Introduction to the Republic of Karelia

In this section, I introduce the Republic of Karelia by providing geographical information, followed by a discussion of the republic's structural and socio-economic history, in particular collectivization and industrialization (1920s-1950s), concentration of collectives (1960s-1970s), decollectivization and the widespread closures of enterprises, and sharp decreases in output (late 1980s-early 2000s). I conclude by outlining various social impacts of these historical aspects that remain relevant today. The social and economic structures established between the 1920s and 1960s throughout Russia were reorganized or closed during marketization in the 1990s, resulting in increased socio-economic inequality among rural populations. The Republic of Karelia is no exception, and, by considering its unique geographical position next to Finland, its natural resources, and its northern climate in conjunction with local and national-scale trends during the 1990s and early 2000s (decollectivization, marketization), we can better understand how inequality develops in this peripheral region.

Geography

The Russian Republic of Karelia shares its western border with Finland, while it touches the White Sea, *Arkhangel'skaia* and *Vologodskaia oblasti* in the east, *Murmanskaia oblast'* in the north, and *Leningradskaia oblast'* in the south. The Republic is part of the Barents-Euro Arctic Region (BEAR)[3] and the Northern Economic Region

[3] The Barents Euro-Arctic Region is defined by the intergovernmental Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and interregional Barents Regional Council (BRC). The members of BEAC are Denmark, Finland,

(*Severnyi ekonomicheskii raion*) of Russia.[4] Today, more than forty-nine percent of the republic's territory is covered by forest, ninety percent of which is coniferous. Karelia has 26,700 rivers, roughly half of which flow north while the other half flow south, and around 61,100 lakes, not counting eighty percent of Lake Onega and fifty percent of Lake Ladoga (*Official Karelia*, 2009). Other natural resources include 203 deposits of twenty-three types of minerals, eleven sources and sixteen outlets of fresh and mineral water, as well as peat, berries, mushrooms, game, fish and algae (Lausala, 1999).

In contrast with the primary agricultural centers in Russia's central and southwestern regions, the Republic of Karelia is largely unsuitable for agricultural production, with its boreal forests and swamps, and short growing season. In spite of these geographic factors, collective farming has been a part, albeit a small one, of Karelia's economic activity. Agriculture in Karelia is more concentrated in meat, dairy, and vegetable production than grains, which are grown in south central regions of Russia.

As of 1999, Karelia has eighteen million hectares of agricultural land (forest, pasture, and meadow), of which 2.7% are arable. In the 1990s, 36.7% of arable land in Karelia was under cultivation, while by 2008 the percentage had fallen to 4.1% (Lausala, 1999; *Official Karelia*, 2009). The arable land lies in the southern part of the republic, where the capital, Petrozavodsk, is located. Agriculture does not factor into the republican administration's own assessment of its economy in 2009:

Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the European Commission. Finland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden act as alternating chairs of the Council. The other Russian BEAR territories are *Murmanskaia oblast'* and the Komi Republic. (see the BEAC website, www.beac.st/in_english/barents_ero-arctic_council.iw3).

[4]The Russian Federation is divided into twelve economic regions. *Arkhangel'skaia, Murmanskaia, Vologodskaia oblasti*, the Republic of Karelia, and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug make up the Northern Economic Region.

> Economy of the Republic of Karelia is founded on processing of local kinds of natural resources (timber and minerals), use of tourist and recreational potential and favourable economic and geographical frontier location. These factors define specialization and regional features of economy of the republic (*Official Karelia*, "Brief Information").

Structural History and the Economy

During the 1920s and 1930s, Karelia underwent massive demographic and structural changes due to collectivization, russification, and other ethno-political campaigns of the early Soviet regime (Baron, 2007). Until Stalinist collectivization[5] and industrialization in the late 1920s and early 1930s, forestry in Karelia resembled that of Scandinavia; residences in forested areas were permanent, and each residency had plots of land and forest. Under Stalin, forestry and logging became collectivized, which meant that foresters lived at temporary or seasonal locations and logged where instructed in accordance with the planned economy. Nick Baron (2007) indicates that in the 1920s and 1930s the Karelian labor force was felling various grades of timber for export to Finland and processing in its own plants. The highest quality timber was processed in Karelia for export or exported outright, while mature timber was consumed by the Soviet State and the lowest grades used to fuel railways (Baron, 2007:71). This structural rearrangement and intensification of timber production resulted in unsustainable forestry practices[6] as well as an upset in local ways of life, as laborers were separated from their villages and families for extended periods of time (Varis, 2000:41).

In the 1920s and 1930s, Karelia's industrial growth was concentrated along the north-south *Murmansk-Moskva* railroad, and timber from eastern and western areas of the

[5] Stalin's collectivization entailed the restructuring of rural land and labor into state owned enterprises in which all members worked common land according to the planned economy.
[6] These unsustainable practices included intensive logging without reforestation.

republic had been primarily transported via waterways. After the Second World War and the Wars with Finland, however, Karelia focused on fully incorporating its eastern and western peripheries into the republican economy: the *Zapadno-Karel'skaia* (Western-Karelian) railroad was constructed, allowing for the increased transport of timber, and more attention was focused on the expansion of hydro-electric energy, logging and woodworking industries, and the production of construction materials (Morozova, 2004:42). The main north-south railroad and these branching east-west auxiliary lines remain the main means of transportation for passengers and cargo within the republic and between the republic and its neighboring territories. The railroad also provides rural residents with employment and a "spot on the map", so to speak; whether or not trains make stops at a village can be a deciding factor in that village's future.[7]

After Stalin's death in 1953, Nikita Khrushchev came to power. In the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, food production and rural outmigration were two major issues that preoccupied rural planning. In order to streamline rural food production by *kolkhozy* and *sovkhozy*, Khrushchev instituted the village consolidation policy, which classified all rural settlements according to their viability (*perspektivnie i neperspektivnie*, or viable and non-viable) (Pallot: 1990). Smaller, less efficient collective enterprises were strategically "closed" in order to be merged with more successful ones. Non-viable villages were further subdivided according to demographic indicators, particularly age. Thus, an example of a non-viable village would be one in which the population was overwhelmingly comprised of elderly persons who would die out. Such villages were merged with viable settlements. The state assigned non-viable villages varying levels of

[7] I discuss the importance of the railroad for one Karelian village in Chapter 3.

priority as to when they would be merged and how. Leonid Brezhnev ended the village consolidation policy in the late 1970s, in part because it was expensive. Because local authorities with small budgets were supposed to foot the bill for village mergers, the result was that they abandoned outlying, "non-viable" villages (Pallot, 1990).

In the mid 1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev again addressed problems of agricultural production and rural living standards. Gorbachev sought to increase efficiency in farming while sparking a rural revolution that would "restore the traditions of peasant tillage and reconstruct life in the village" (Pallot, 1990). Arguably, policies of the late 1980s had little chance to take hold, as the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 and President Boris Yeltsin pursued different rural reforms.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, a barrage of national-scale laws attempted to transition Russia's agrarian complex into a market economy. These laws greatly affected rural enterprises, in particular *kolkhozy*.[8] The 1991 Law of the Peasant Farm allowed for the division of collective farm land and the division of its capital into shares. After the 1991 Law of Property, individuals could withdraw from collectives and begin private farms, or reorganize the *kolkhoz* into a joint stock company (Herrold-Menzies, 2009: 233). Yeltsin's 1993 presidential decree legalized the buying and selling of (agricultural) land, at which point individuals could buy, sell, lease, bequeath, or

[8] The term "agricultural land" is ambiguous in both the laws and the secondary literature on land reform. Stephen Wegren explained that agricultural land in this context can be compared to the American notion of zoning land for a particular purpose. Thus, land that had been used for agriculture, technically, should continue to be designated and used as agricultural land, as opposed to commercial development, for example (personal conversation, November, 2010). It is more difficult to pin down what *activities*, precisely, can be considered agricultural. I presume that pasture and meadow are considered agricultural land from a legal point of view, thus, while Karelia has little arable land, laws in the 1990s potentially affected many rural areas in the republic where animals were raised. Tero Lausala (1999) includes forested land in the category of agricultural land, but as far as I can tell, members of *leskhozy*, or forestry communes, were not able to purchase, rent, or otherwise obtain forested land in the case that a collective disbanded.

inherit agricultural land and land shares. The 2002 Law on Agricultural Turnover (*"Ob oborote zemel' selskokhozaistvennogo naznachenniia 2002 goda"*) regulated rural land sales, and was subsequently simplified in 2004/2005 (Wegren *et al.*, 2006:382). Up until this point rural residents wishing to buy or lease land faced a disorganized registration process that often prevented individuals from obtaining necessary permits and titles, in other words, these individuals were unable to acquire the additional land they sought to increase production (Wegren, 2008).

Between 1992 and 1994, the government offered incentives, in the forms of tax breaks, free land, grants, and subsidized credits, to start private farms. Accordingly, during this time the creation of private farms increased. When the government no longer offered incentives after 1994, this trend stopped (Herrold-Menzies, 2009:239). In addition to a lack of incentives, rural people looking to start private farms faced several obstacles, such as tax debts accrued by disbanded *kolkhozy*, price scissors because of liberalized agricultural inputs and increasingly expensive production, and an inability to compete in international markets. In 1998, the Russian government depreciated the ruble and defaulted on domestic debt, resulting in a halt to economic growth and, for citizens and fledgling businesses, the virtual overnight disappearance of savings accounts (Desai, 2000). During the crisis, Russia placed a ban on food exports, which hurt small farms that were trying to sell to foreign markets.[9]

The goal of land reform on a national scale was not to dismantle all the collective enterprises, but to "restitute land back to former owners, those who had once owned land

[9] For example, a newly privatized farm growing soy in Far Eastern Siberia was unable to access markets in Japan due to the Russian ban on exports. Alternatively, this farm was unable to sell to domestic buyers because cheaper, imported soy dominated the market (Herrold-Menzies, 2009:236).

prior to communist rule, or to distribute farmland for free as land shares to employees of state and collective farms" (Wegren, 2008:125). Steven K.Wegren writes that land reforms were carried out in regards to farmland, while other types of land remained in state ownership (2008:124). While there certainly is land that remains state property, for example, nature reserves and national parks, it is not clear if this means forests, or rural land used in industries such as mining and forestry. Wegren adds that in, "of the total amount of land held as private property in Russia, 97 percent is agricultural land" (2008: 124; figure for 2007). The total amount of agricultural land in use decreased by twenty percent. Wegren explains that this decline was due to increasing fuel costs, lack of spare parts for farm machinery, loss of large farms' capital stock, and a price disparity between input prices and the amount received for food commodities. It was allowed to lie fallow, allocated to land reserves, or simply abandoned altogether. Not surprisingly, an estimated 50 million hectares of abandoned land was in the northern regions. (2008:127).This abandoned land has turned into swamps and bogs, and slowly begun to reforest (Velikii, 2007:51; Ioffe *et al*., 2006; Wegren, 2008). Some of this land had been unsuitable for farming in the first place, and the difficulty of working it may have contributed to its abandonment. For example, poor soil in Karelia was put under the plow in the Soviet period in an effort to maximize food production nationwide, and over the course of the summer I saw many patches of land in central and particularly northeastern Karelia in various stages of reforestation.

In Russia today, large farms control most of the agricultural land, accounting for sixty-seven percent of agricultural land use nationwide. In contrast, private farms used only eight percent. From this literature, it is unclear what happened to the remaining

twenty-five percent, but it is likely that abandoned land and land owned by the government in the form of land reserves is included in this figure. When compared with the *kolkhozy* and *sovkhozy* of the Soviet period, today's corporate farms are even bigger (Wegren, 2008:123).

President Putin's 2006 "National Project: the Development of the Agroindustrial Complex" directed several tens of billions of rubles in credits and financial support for large farms, private family farms, and rural households, but the goal of this investment was not to stimulate the creation of farms, but to maximize food production (Wegren, 2008:143). Because this project directly targets already established (and especially large) farms, rural individuals not engaged in commercial farming do not stand to benefit, in spite of the anticipation of a trickle-down effect (Herrold-Menzies, 2009:239). In addition, this sort of investment does not involve local infrastructure projects, such as roadwork or the construction of schools and other amenities that would contribute to the "sociocultural infrastructure" called for by Velikii.

Similar to the national level, in Karelia both the number of enterprises (generally nonagricultural) and the level of production declined in the 1990s. Eira Varis (2000) reported on the reorganization and closure of fishing communes in Karelia during that decade and found that while many collectives closed due to bankruptcy, some tried to reform as joint stock companies. Because of a decades-long trend in over-fishing, local fish masses crashed, and White Sea enterprises were limited in their access to fish masses further away in the Barents Sea. Market competition and low outputs made it too difficult for some enterprises to stay open. According to Varis, the enterprises that survived 1990s

reforms were former *sovkhozy* that received assistance from the government (and remained owned by the state). While the decline in the number of fishing collectives in the 1950s-60s was a part of a larger trend of consolidating smaller communes to form larger, more streamlined enterprises (the rate of employment remained stable), the closures in the 1990s resulted in a loss of work and the loss of industry for many rural places. While members of disbanding farms could receive agricultural land, Varis does not explain what, if anything, was divided among collective workers when fishing *kolkhozy* closed.

1932	**1939**	**1949**	**1959**	**1960**	**1966**	**1993**	**1998**
57	70	77	34	18	13	5	7

Figure 1. Number of Fishing Collectives in Karelia 1932-1998
(Varis, 2000)

Meat and milk production declined sharply between 1990 and 2000, while potato and vegetable production actually increased in the late 1990s. In addition to farm closures, the demand for meat decreased throughout the 1990s as it became less affordable for consumers. It may be that an increased demand for potatoes and vegetables contributed to the increase in their production. With the exception of potatoes and vegetables, meat, milk, and egg production was lower in 2003 than in 1990.

Product	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Meat (tons)	37,654	21,335	6,400	6,700	6,500	6,400
Milk (tons)	176,218	92,709	85,700	81,200	81,700	78,400
Eggs (1000)	260,739	157,857	140,200	143,100	131,300	141,100
Potatoes (tons)	106,092	145,400	108,300	151,500	140,600	135,500
Vegetables (tons)	17,312	19,048	30,200	32,100	27,100	34,400

Figure 2. Production Outputs of Farming in the Republic of Karelia 1990-2003
Official Karelia, 2009

Industry in Karelia showed signs of recovery in 2001, when the Russian economy began to stabilize:

> Десятилетний период (1991-2001 гг.) показал, что темпы падения объемов производства в Карелии были значительнее, чем в целом по России, особенно в период с 1994 по 1998 годы (почти в два раза). Ситуация принципиально изменилась на следующем этапе: по темпам развития за период с 1998 по 2001 годы Карелия опережает показатели по России уже на треть.
>
> The ten-year period (1991-2001) showed that the rate of decline in the capacity of manufacturing in Karelia was more substantial than in the whole of Russia, especially between the years 1994 and 1998 (by almost twice as much). The situation fundamentally changed in the following period: the rate of growth for the years 1998-2001 in Karelia outdoes the Russian rates by a third (The Karelian Government, 2002:7).

According to the government of Karelia, agriculture was still struggling in 2003:

> Сельское хозяйство и весь агропромышленный комплекс до настоящего времени находятся в состоянии затяжного системного кризиса, который распространился как на экономическую, так и социальную сферу. С 1990 по 2003 годы объем сельскохозяйственного производства значительно сократился.
>
> Farming and the entire agro-industrial complex is still in a state of a protracted, systemic crisis that has extended to the economic, as well as social spheres. From 1993 to 2003, the extent of agricultural production decreased substantially (Official Karelia, 2009).

The 1998 devaluation of the national currency resulted in bankruptcies of already failing agricultural and fishing enterprises in Karelia. The few state-owned and private enterprises that survived are now powerful businesses. As in many other places in Russia, farming became mainly a subsistence activity in the 1990s.

Today, forestry, woodwork, and paper-cellulose make up 41.2 percent of the Karelian economy. Ferrous metallurgy counts for eighteen percent, and electro-energy

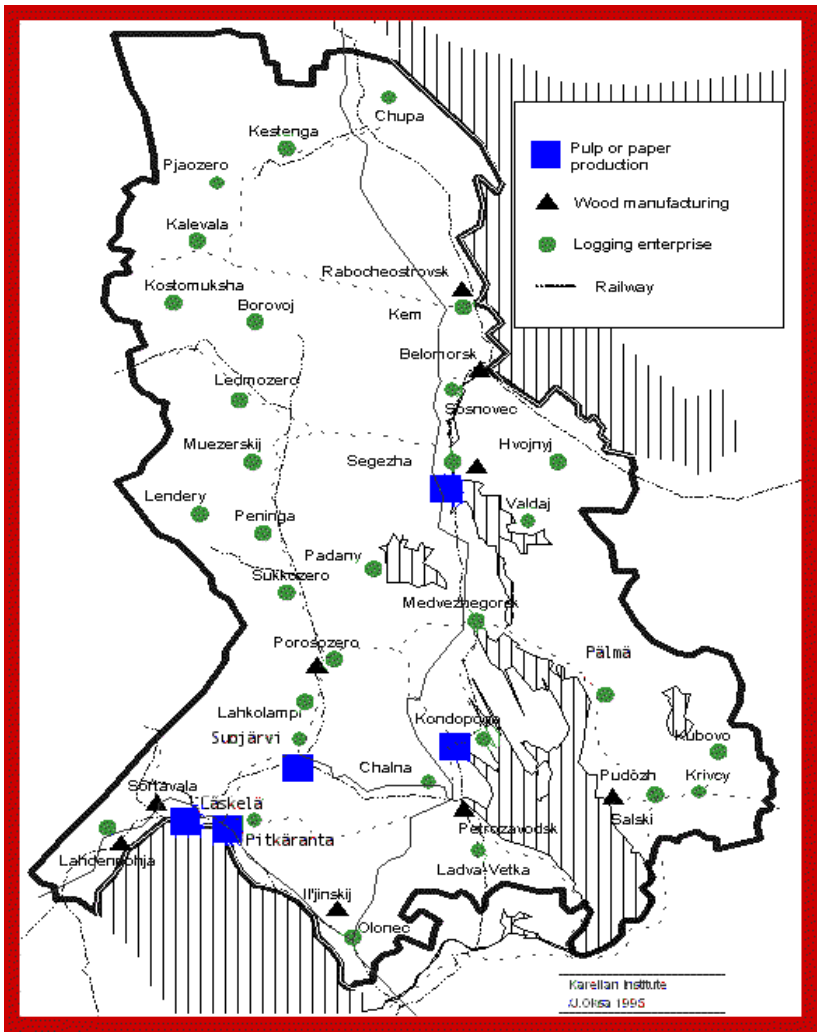
14.8 percent, while machine manufacturing, metalworking, non-ferrous metallurgy, and food production each make up anywhere from five to nine percent. If one were to consider the number of enterprises in each industry (private, mixed, and state run), tourism would appear to make up the largest sector of the economy; however, we should also consider the number of individuals employed in each industry to get an idea of which industries have the largest labor forces.[10] This suggests that a few companies control significant, if not whole sectors of the economy. Figure 3 (right) shows the number of Karelian enterprises, but not the number of foreign companies working in the region. Here it is important to consider that more than fifty percent of all manufactured goods are exported, while a third of the domestic turnover comes from Finnish shares (Official Karelia, 2009). Tero Lausala and Leila Valkonen (1999) write that the post-Soviet economic survival strategies of the Barents

Tourist agencies	144	Hotels	4
Wood working	29	Banks	4
Construction materials	29	Mechanical engineering	3
Petrozavodsk newspapers	21	Food industry	3
Museums/galleries	19	Regional TV and radio	3
Regional newspapers	16	Railroad	2
Trade companies	6	Auditing firms	2
Light manufacturing	6	Ferrous/non-ferrous metallurgy	2
Auto-transportation	6	Water transportation	1
Agro-industrial complex	4	Air transportation	1
		Shipbuilding	1
Higher Education	4	Energy	1
Insurance companies	4	Communications firms	1

Figure 3. Number of Enterprises per Industry in the Republic of Karelia. *Official Karelia 2009.*

[10] According to Kareliastat, in 2008 the processing industry employed the most individuals (32,926), followed by the education sector (32,500), transport and communications (28,051), and public health and social work (25,744). 14,077 were employed in farming, hunting, and forestry, 11,658 in energy production, 9,606 in construction, and 8593 in natural resource extraction.

Territories “have principally concentrated on the promotion of foreign trade and development of their exporting industries.”



Map 3.Karelia’s Forest Industry
Oksa, Jukka. *Six Images of Karelia.* The University of Joensuu (2003). *cc.joensuu.fi/~alma/6images/6images.htm*

Population Changes

In the first half of the twentieth century Karelia saw huge waves of in- and out-migration. Prior to industrialization in the 1920s and 30s, the region’s population

consisted of Russians, Finns, Karels, and Veps. The latter Finno-Ugric groups lived primarily in the east and south, along the border with Finland. Labor, including forced labor, brought thousands of newcomers from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asia and even the Far East to Karelia, which gradually marginalized the ethnic Finns, Karelians, and Veps. Steady waves of Finns crossed the border in both directions during the early days of the Soviet State, driven by hunger, national conflicts in Finland, or fear of oppression in the Soviet Union (Baron, 2007). In 1920, the Karelian population was at 210,000, of which two percent was comprised of industrial workers. The Karelo-Murmansk railway transported nearly 73,000 passengers to the Barents region between 1923 and 1928 and Karelia's population rose by twenty-one percent (Baron, 2007:78). Tatiana Morozova writes that even though the number of urban residents in Karelia doubled from 1926 to 1933, more than seventy percent of the population resided in rural areas (Morozova, 2004: 41).

Even American and Canadian Finns were pouring into the territory in the 1920s and early 1930s seeking to help build socialism. In addition to the labor they provided, they brought machinery, other goods, and money. Many of them would abandon their idealism soon after arriving, however, and return to North America or go to Finland. Because the majority of these North American Finns had been born in Finland, they were registered in the Soviet Union as Finns, thus making it nearly impossible to know how many came and left. Some have estimated that around six thousand North American Finns came to Karelia (Hokkanen, 1991; Armstrong, 2004).

Evacuations during wartime greatly shifted settlement concentrations of ethnic

Karelians and Veps. These populations were evacuated from the occupied territories in the west to the east and south of Lake Onega (*Pudozhskii* and *Olonetskii raiony*), where they mostly remain today. While Karelians and Veps enjoy a "celebrated" status today, with republican efforts to preserve their language and culture in the forms of grants, cultural tourism, and Karelian language television programming, Karelia's residents of Central and East Asian descent find themselves in the midst of racial conflicts (in particular, the Kondopoga riots of 2006). While the variable of ethnicity is not considered currently in rural statistics, it is a factor that should be included in future considerations of rural inequality.

The Karelian population in the post-war period continued to shift. The number of villages in areas where farming coexisted with forestry decreased more rapidly in comparison with areas engaged primarily in agriculture. Logging encampments began to incorporate seasonal labor from the nearest village or group villages, exerting pull factors on the nearest populations. In 1959, nearly forty percent of the entire rural population of Karelia was engaged in forestry. Over time, the number of these forestry villages would decrease from 347 in 1959, 294 in 1966, to 126 in 1998. The decrease in the number of forestry villages in the 1960s is due to the fact that, beginning under Khrushchev in the 1960s, collectives (and entire villages) that did not meet standards of productivity were liquidated by moving the population into more productive communes in the area (Pallot, 1990). In the year 2000, twenty-three percent of the rural population resided in forestry settlements (Morozova, 2004: 42-44).

Between 1991 and 1998 the population of Karelia declined by 3.5 percent (28,000

people) due to environmental degradation, stress, malnutrition, alcohol, epidemic diseases, and out migration (Lausala, 1999:60). The number of people who could participate in physical, agricultural labor was also decreasing – in 2004, thirty-eight percent of Karelia's rural residents were on pension (Morozova, 2004). The overall economic disparity of the 1990s and the 1998 ruble crisis resulted in a buildup of "back pay" for wages and pensions countrywide. In rural places in particular, people relied on payments in kind instead of money (for example, favors or produce from personal plots, shared labor) (Varis, 2000). Since the economy stabilized in the early 2000s, rural residents have been receiving current pensions and social welfare support, but this has not included back pay.

Today 15.4% of Karelia's population is younger than the working age (15-50 for women, and 15-55 for men), 64.5% is working age, 20.1% is the percentage of people older than the retirement ages. As of January 1, 2010, the official unemployment rate was 3.7% (*Official Karelia*, "Brief Information"). While these figures include both urban and rural populations, it is difficult to determine how these percentages would change were the rural population to be considered alone. Gregory Ioffe *et al*. write that throughout Russia rural populations have been aging since the late 1990s, but that unemployment is one of the most serious problems facing rural people, with the unemployment rate in some areas of the country exceeding twenty percent in the early 2000s (Ioffe *et al*., 2006: 90). My fieldwork this summer indicates that unemployment is the main issue for rural Karelians, although an unemployment rate for the rural population is unavailable. The following graph would indicate that the rate of unemployment was relatively low

between 1997 and 2003. Considering the relatively low unemployment rate for the republic overall and the seemingly high instance of joblessness in rural areas, there seems to be an incongruity in the statistical portrayal of unemployment. This may be explained by the fact that statistics only include the registered unemployed, and that individuals may be more likely to register as unemployed in urban areas, thus leaving out unregistered rural unemployed and underemployed working individuals. As a final note, the "employed" category in the graph below may not have been receiving pay, especially in the late 1990s.

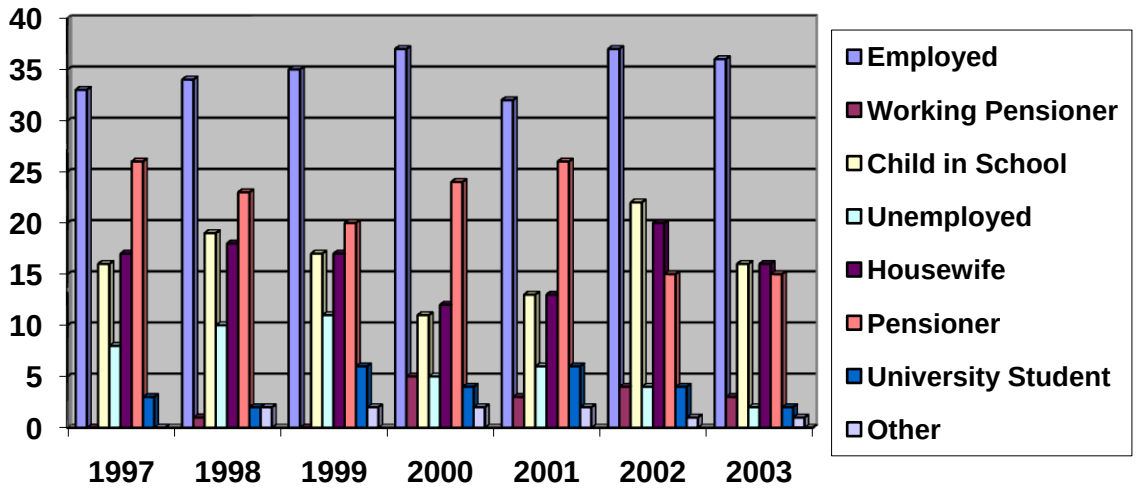


Figure 4. Population Dynamics in Rural Areas 1997-2003
(Morozova, 2004:58)

Social Impacts

While the 1930s-1960s were tumultuous times marked by social terror, forced migration, economic restructuring, and war, by the latter years of the Soviet Union, rural Karelian residents had come to rely on a stable system that provided infrastructure, jobs,

and pensions.[11] Before the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian BEAR territories had higher salaries and standards of living when compared with the rest of the country. Two of the economic benefits of living in a subarctic or arctic region which have remained in place since before the end of the Soviet Union are the earlier retirement ages (55 for men and 50 for women, compared with 60 for men and 55 for women in the rest of the country), and possible pension bonuses.[12] During the 1990s, however, pensions and salaries went unpaid, resulting in a demonetization of rural areas. Collectives that closed allotted land to residents who had worked there, and, receiving no monetary income, residents began to rely on subsistence practices (farming personal plots, collecting and consuming or selling woodland edibles such as mushrooms and berries) and payments in kind. Since the collective and state enterprises provided far more than just employment, such as social services and schools, their bankruptcies in the 1990s resulted in school and medical clinic closures in rural and coastal areas (Varis, 2000). As a result, migration from rural to urban areas (and from the Northern Economic Region southward) increased. Because of continued joblessness in many rural areas, out-migration continues (Kareliastata, 2010).

Companies and services located in rural areas continue to close, although this is unrelated to decollectivization. As I will discuss further in Chapter 3, in May 2010 a privately owned dairy farm in the Kondopozhskii region closed, putting an entire village out of work. Elsewhere, in the Belomorskii region on the White Sea, the post office and medical station were closed this year and trains may no longer stop at the village. It is

[11] I will return to residents' contrasts of Soviet and post-Soviet era life in chapter 3.
[12] See Article 13 of the law "About State Pensions in the Russian Federation", under the subtitle "Pension in Connection with Work in the Far North".

difficult to say why the dairy farm and other services closed, although this could be related to the global recession of 2008-2009. The impacts of these closures on local populations is similar, however, to the impacts of decollectivization in the 1990s: unemployed individuals either leave for urban areas or revert to subsistence practices, and residents face hardship when services and medical care become unavailable.

In this chapter, I reviewed the major trends in Karelia's socio-economic history that contribute to current realities in rural areas. In many ways, the nation-wide market reforms of the 1990s that included decollectivization affected Karelia in similar ways as the rest of the country. However, because of Karelia's peripheral location and concentration of production in forestry, we cannot assume that the lasting effects of these changes in Karelia resemble those in Russia's agrarian heartland. In the next chapter, I review the current body of rural sociological literature on Russia, which focuses on farming and ignores rural nonfarm economies – and populations – in peripheral regions of the country.

Chapter Two: A Review of the Rural Sociological Literature as it Concerns Russia

Scholars from various fields and countries have contributed to a body of literature focusing on rural Russia in the post-Soviet period, in particular rural sociologists, political scientists and ecologists, development scholars, and economists from Russia and the United States. In this chapter, I identify thematic and chronological trends within this scholarship while demonstrating that scholars, across the board, identify "rural" with "agriculture".[13] The majority of this scholarship focuses on commercial agriculture on various scales and has led to a misleading portrayal of the whole of 'rural Russia' as homogeneously agrarian. If scholars continue to stretch the conclusions of their research in the agrarian sector to apply to the entire Russian Federation we will fail to grasp the ways in which inequality is created and sustained across regions, and thus be unprepared to develop policies to confront it.

There is a consensus among scholars of rural Russia that market reforms since 1991 have been largely unsuccessful in rural areas, and have resulted in subsistence practices and widespread inequality. Agricultural reforms coincided with something known as shock therapy, the sudden entrance of Russia into the worldwide market economy, which was intended to facilitate a rapid transition to capitalism on a national

[13] In this discussion the term agriculture refers to activities such as growing grain, feed, and vegetable crops, in addition to cattle rearing, dairy, pig, and chicken farming, and other types of animal husbandry. In Russian, the term *sel'skoe khoziaistvo*, translated into English as "agriculture", can mean any of the above. It can also refer to subsistence farming (*lichnoe podsobnoe khoziaistvo, or LPKh*), in which individual households grow crops on a personal plot and/or own several animals. Here, I differentiate between commercial agriculture and subsistence activities, although the latter often involves working the land, even in northern climes.

scale. The goals of Yeltsin's agrarian transition were to reorganize and privatize state and collective farms, privatize processing enterprises and land, and adopt the necessary legal institutions to support this privatization, resulting in the creation of a class of private farmers and the development of a land market (Wegren, 2005:2). Shock therapy was particularly hard on the agricultural sector. Russian farms, accustomed to the set prices and buyers of the Soviet command economy, were unable to compete with the cheaper prices and better quality of imported food. As a result, agricultural output decreased by an estimated forty-five percent between 1992 and 1998, as compared to 1990 (Wegren, 2005). The overall result was that in the 1990s, "rural Russia experience[d] demodernization, a result of price scissors and lack of payments, along with financial resources being siphoned out of the country side" (Wegren *et al.*, 2006:394). Elizabeth Engebretson writes that "instead of joining the global capitalist system", rural Russians turned to subsistence agriculture. This is not to say that rural people did not want to start their own farms, but that they were often unsuccessful "because of a lack of capital and structural support" (Engebretson, 2007: ii).

Some authors hold the view that the success of marketization is a matter of time, and, despite difficulties and setbacks, its success is predicted (Wegren *et al.*, 2005; Velikii, 2007), while others are more ready to admit that rural privatization has failed and is not merely facing temporary setbacks (Engebretson, 2007; Herrold-Menzies, 2009; Ioffe *et al.*, 2006; Zvyagintsev *et al*., 2007). The body of literature is in many ways an attempt to explain why market reform has not produced desired effects in rural areas (the privatization of production and a boom in entrepreneurship). Thematically, authors

address issues of land ownership,[14] a lack of support or investment in rural areas on the part of the government,[15] unemployment,[16] spatial aspects of inequality,[17] and socio-demographic issues.[18] As these topics suggest, it is possible to surmise that the majority of these authors are working from a Marxian or Weberian conflict approach, which places more of the burden for inequality and poverty on institutions and the "system", instead of on individuals. This is certainly not to say that scholars have not made use of other perspectives, only that a criticism of structural and institutional barriers to development is prominent throughout the literature.

When it comes to how scholars' views of post-Soviet rural change and market reforms have changed over time, the trend has been that during the 1990s and early 2000s there was more optimism about the success of reforms than there was fifteen years after they were first introduced. Some authors, however, such as Ioffe *et al.*, Engebretson, and Herrold-Menzies, express concern about the possibility to turn the situation in rural areas around and prevent village death, much less revive rural communities. Ioffe *et al.* (2006) in particular write that rural Russia is "disintegrating", leaving behind only abandoned settlements or clusters of houses and plots used by seasonal *dachniki*. It may be that scholars' views about marketization as inherently positive (Wegren, O'Brien) or negative (Ioffe *et al.*) affect their level of optimism regarding the success of market reform in the long term.

[14] Wegren *et al.*, 2006; Wegren 2008.
[15] O'Brien *et al.*, 2005; Engebretson, 2007; Beliaeva, 2008; Wegren, 2008; Velikii, 2008; Herrold-Menzies, 2009.
[16] Engebretson, 2007; Zvyagintsev *et al.*, 2007; Beliaeva, 2008.
[17] Ioffe *et al.*, 2006; Engebretson, 2007; Wegren *et al.*, 2008.
[18] O'Brien, *et al.*, 2005; Ioffe, *et al.*, 2006; Engebretson, 2007; Beliaeva, 2008; Wegren, 2008; Velikii, 2008.

American political scientist, Steven K. Wegren, who has written extensively on land laws within the market reforms of the 1990s, argues that Russian peasants had been exposed to market conditions prior to the Soviet period and thus we cannot consider the current "transition" from collective to market economy as particularly novel (Wegren, 2005). In the 1990s and early 2000s, Wegren *et al.* noticed a correlation between the amount of rental land a household has, the amount by which a household had increased its private or rental land, and the socio-economic standing of that household within its village; that is, that owning and using less land than other villagers could result in inequality. Those households that increased their land holdings tended to produce enough from this additional land to sell, while those households that had not acquired additional land were more likely to grow enough only to feed themselves (Wegren *et al.*, 2006: 376). It remains unclear what allowed some households to increase land holdings and what prevented others, although some scholars explain that members of collectives who had held high positions had an edge when it came to acquiring land and beginning private enterprise (Engebretson, 2007). Additionally, these individuals were more likely to be in a position to better understand the changing land laws, and could more easily navigate reform.

In spite of emerging inequalities in relation to land ownership, several authors stress the importance of helping networks between villagers to account for shortages of machinery, labor, or expertise (O'Brien *et al.*, 2005; Ioffe *et al.*, 2006, Engebretson, 2007). These helping networks were particularly evident in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when many rural areas were demonetized. In order to explain this trend, O'Brien

et al. argue that due to their spatial isolation, villages have historically been more self-sufficient and less integrated into national affairs, and thus interdependence between villagers is a strategy that predates the Soviet period (O'Brien *et al*., 2005:192). O'Brien *et al.* turn to Scott's moral economy (1976) to explain the existence of helping networks, in which there exists a "sense of moral obligation and reciprocity" between members of an economic community (2005:190). Geographer Grigory Ioffe however, cites the pre-Soviet rural *obshchina* (commune) as the historical locus of village-wide helping networks, shared labor, and cohesiveness (Ioffe *et al.,* 2006:10-12).

Part of the discussion on rural land use and ownership is the question of the role of private land ownership in market economies. Wegren and Velikii are worried about the relationship between rural households and land, although they do not say specifically why it is necessary for individuals to privately own their own land. In 2006, the percentage of Russian agricultural land used by rural residents was eight percent. The problem, Wegren argues, is that while eight percent is *used* privately, it is not privately *owned.* At least three percent probably consists of land shares. As far as the government is concerned, leased land is the same as "owned" land. Many of the shares were leased back to the parent farm to which they had originally been assigned (2008:132).It is important to note that rural people are not only unable to purchase land because of a lack of capital, but because a small group of elites is buying up land shares and stocks. For example, Moscow business people have been buying rural land over the last five years and have simply been sitting on it, perhaps waiting for a rise in the cost of land to sell or lease (Ioffe, *et al.,* 2006; interviews, 2010). P. Velikii is quick to point out that the

creation of family farms within the current system of land laws is not a positive development. He argues that by creating family farms, people become tied to the land "just as before", and that it is "not enhancing peoples' sense of being free" (Velikii, 2007:50).

Based on evidence from the Ivanovo and Perm' *oblasti*, Zvyagintsev *et al.* argue that households were diversifying their income in the post-1991 period under "distress-push" conditions, and not because of entrepreneurship (Zvyagintsev *et al.*, 2007: 9). Thus, while households and individuals would try to supplement low or nonexistent income by selling produce, berries, mushrooms, fish, or by engaging in temporary employment, these activities should not be confused with entrepreneurial expansion. According to Zvyagintsev, they constitute temporary survival strategies. While there is a positive correlation between income diversification and household income, money earned from diversification is meager and is not discretionary income (Zvyagintsev *et al.*, 2007:4-6).

Social Inequality and Russian-specific Approaches to Poverty Studies

Rural sociologists in Russia have approached the subjects of rural market reform and inequality in ways that differ from their American counterparts. Whereas American scholars have written extensively about economic survival strategies, emerging economic inequalities, the nature of structural reform, and the extent to which the reforms have been successfully implemented in rural areas, Russian scholars are interested in the psychological wellbeing of rural residents after market reforms, varying levels of entrepreneurial initiative exhibited by villagers, and how economic inequality fuels social

inequality. Russia's education sector and academia also suffered budget crises over the last twenty years, but academic disciplines have had to reconsider their theoretical standpoints after the end of communism as well. Thus, there is a part of the rural sociological literature from Russia that focuses on the emerging goals and theoretical underpinnings of "post-Soviet" rural sociology.

Russian scholars in particular are interested in peoples' subjective assessments of socioeconomic wellbeing. Rural sociologist P. Velikii writes that rural Russians suffer from "feelings of social isolation and alienation" and poor morale as a result of market reforms (Velikii, 2008: 2). Sociologist L. Beliaeva writes that, while the overall Gini coefficient[19] for Russia rose in the early 2000s, income inequality varies by region. In regions with higher average income, she found more inequality than in regions where overall income was low (Beliaeva, 2008:21-22). Some sectors of the economy exhibit greater income disparity as well, in particular banking, communications, construction, and timber (2008:22). These latter two industries play important roles in peripheral rural economies, and in future studies examining income disparity in construction, timber, and other rural nonfarm industries will help us understand sources of socio-economic inequality in areas that practice little or no agriculture.

Beliaeva argues that while income statistics are important for understanding poverty, they cannot account for social aspects of inequality that also affect individuals. She administered surveys that asked respondents to place themselves on a scale of lower, below middle stratum, middle, above middle, and upper strata (2008:36), and argues that

[19] The Gini coefficient measures the inequality of a distribution on a scale of 0 to 1 (where 0 represents total equality and 1 maximum inequality).

statistics only single out the "extremely poor" (those with incomes more than two times lower than the subsistence minimum), but does not catch low-income households that are located near the subsistence minimum that suffer from social stratification and stigmatization. In other words, this is the portion of the population that cannot "lead a kind of life that is keeping with the standards accepted by society" (Beliaeva, 2008:29).

Ioffe *et al*. indicate that while many rural residents of agricultural areas aspire towards better living standards, most demonstrate more wishful thinking than activities to change their situation. This observation is not intended to blame the poor for not trying (the authors do cite financial and structural limitations to the extent to which people can better their living standards), but rather to stress that there is a potential for conflict between the minority "activist" and the majority "wistful" individuals within villages. The authors argue that these attitudes are a driving force in social stratification (Ioffe *et al.*, 2006:93). I discuss these attitudes and perceptions of who is responsible for "making things better" as they relate to my own research in Chapter 3, as well as villagers' sense of marginalization.

Like their American counterparts, Russian scholars focus on commercial and subsistence farming in regions where farming comprises a greater portion of overall regional economic activity. The only instance we see a description of peripheral, northern rurality is in Ioffe *et al.*, in their categorization of Russia's land types and the typology of the "Boreal North":

The northern part of European Russia and the northern Urals are covered by taiga, a tundra zone with no crop farming whatsoever not included in our data set. The rural

population is engaged in transportation, fishing, mining, and forestry. Existing villages lie along river valleys. The collective farms that existed in the area were the products of the gulags. During the post-1991 period, these farms have been reduced to shambles. They lost half the arable land and three-quarters of cattle. If you went down a taiga river by boat, you would see miles and miles of pristine forest lining both banks; human presence would almost never reveal itself. Only very rarely would your eye catch sight of a tourist tent or smoke from a far-off fisherman's bonfire or the dilapidated concrete slab ruins of an abandoned labor camp taken over by nettle, fireweed, and birch. Eventually, however, you would reach an inhabited settlement. Instead of cultivated fields, islets of pastures surround the village amid the sea of taiga, and each pasture is divided into segments by widely set poles. The vegetable gardens are tiny and cling to the log cabins; potatoes grown here are the size of walnuts (2006:164).

From this depiction, it is difficult to grasp the role of land in the daily life of northern rural residents who are not farmers. Unfortunately, the authors do not explain why so much arable land and cattle were lost in the 1990s. That this is the only attention paid to a peripheral region in two hundred forty-three pages written about rural Russia suggests that for these scholars, regions that are not agriculture-intensive are not as important to Russia's overall rural development as the central agrarian zones.

V.I. Staroverov, in reflecting on the field of Russian rural sociology in the first decade of the twenty first century, argues the main issues facing the field today is the crisis of its theoretical and methodological foundations and training the next generation of scholars (Staroverov, 2008:45). He explains that in the post-Soviet period, social

scientists, in their overwhelming rejection of Marxist theory, are producing a-theoretical studies, or "naked empiricism", as Staroverov puts it. At the same time, social science departments are unable to attract students to rural sociology, much less provide them with quality training. Similarly, according to Staroverov, the Russian scholarship of the last ten years has been largely a-theoretical because of the vacuum left behind by the abandonment of Marxist social theory after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In lieu of developing theoretical approaches, Staroverov points out that scholars have fallen back on descriptive statistical research (Staroverov, 2008).

Tatiana Morozova *et al*. (2004) have conducted the only extensive research in rural Karelia since 1991. Contrary to the concern expressed by Staroverov (2008) that contemporary Russian rural sociology is a-theoretical, Morozova has contributed a self-consciously theoretical book that draws attention to the peculiarities of place and natural resource extraction-based peripheral economy in the Republic of Karelia. Morozova addresses socio-economic and structural changes over time, and how they have shaped rural industries and populations within a functionalist, though multi-disciplinary framework. Her analysis of stratification and inequality in rural Karelia indicates the incorporation of sociological conflict theory, as well. Her work contributes to the development of a more systematic way of studying rural populations and places by exploring models that account for social, economic, and structural factors in a given place (2004:20, 21).The first section of the book is dedicated to historical and socio-economic development, in particular of forestry, while the second half of the book focuses on the modes of agriculture in Karelia, and the results of empirical and

qualitative research.

Morozova's research indicates, not unlike Engebretson's (2007), that there are rural residents who aspire to own their own farms, but are unable to overcome bureaucratic and financial obstacles to realize their goals. While a fundamental book for Karelian rural studies, Morozova's work resembles other Russian rural sociology in that its conclusions are oriented towards the agricultural sector, even though Morozova herself expresses the importance of forestry in rural Karelia. What Morozova contributes to the larger rural sociological literature is a clearly defined regional analysis, the conclusions of which are directed to regional administrators and scholars without trying to be prescriptive to the entire country.

In general, the body of literature, both American and Russian, stresses that rural individuals are "rational economic actors" (O'Brien *et al*., 2007:44) who desire to participate in market reform, but face overwhelming structural challenges. While individual recommendations for the future vary, the majority of scholars agree that future reforms should focus on long-term growth and stability for rural regions. Velikii calls for state investment to be spent on "the revival of the kind of whole community that offers a diversity of places where people can work, a sociocultural infrastructure, and ecological safety" (2008:58). Rural Sociologist A. Khagurov argues that local initiative, the modernization of agricultural production, a regulated relationship between the agroindustrial complex and the market, increased productivity, and the sustainable use of resources will contribute to sustainable development (Khagurov, 2009:101). What remains unclear is what sort of investment will be given to specific regions and farms,

and how to implement it.

In particular, one obstacle that remains for scholars and policy-makers to grapple with is how to systematically study Russia's vast and varied countryside. What is missing in the literature is the consideration of non-farm economies, which tend to be extreme peripheries engaged in natural resource extraction. These regions are involved in various industries, such as forestry, fishing, mining, and even reindeer herding, that make them distinct from agrarian areas. And yet, these regions – like Karelia, which I will discuss in the next chapter - were also subject to de-collectivization in the 1990s, and must grapple with economic stratification, marketization, the loss of employment, out-migration, and the appearance of large state-run or foreign enterprises where there were once collectives that provided social benefits to rural residents.

Chapter 3: Rural Poverty in the Republic of Karelia

In this chapter I present my findings from the summer 2010 research period and consider these results in conjunction with the larger body of literature on rural issues in Russia reviewed in Chapter 2. While my fieldwork has provided a small-scale update to the research carried out in Karelia in the 1990s, it also leaves us with questions of how scholars might define poverty in the rural Karelian context, and what the significance might be of rural nonfarm communities such as those in Karelia.

Results

I have organized the research results by the *raion* in which villages are located. I provide information about each village based on field notes and any statistical data that was available. Some of the information on village history and population size came from individuals who assisted me in Petrozavodsk and villagers, and is sometimes contradictory. One issue that arose in the case of each village was population size. Nearly each individual I spoke with estimated a different population size for a given village, and estimates varied by several hundred. This can be explained by the fact that many individuals born in a village reside elsewhere, but stay registered within the village, in effect inflating the number of residents. Outmigration continues to take place, and while statisticians publish rates of in/out migration for rural areas in each *raion*, these figures are based on individuals' registration. Thus, the statistics only indicate those individuals who have changed registration after migrating to a new place. Another issue that makes it

impossible to know how many people live in a village is that villagers may split their time between their home in one village and a family member's residence in a nearby town. Enquiring how many residents live year round in a village has solicited answers indicating a much smaller population size than is published in statistical records. Because individuals' estimates of the number of "permanent residents" varied, I am unable to indicate precisely each village's population size.

It is also important to consider the severe drought that affected Russia during the research period (summer 2010), resulting in crop failure and wildfires. While Karelia suffered fewer forest fires than other regions, Petrozavodsk and the area around Lake Onega witnessed smoky days in late July and throughout August. While it is difficult to discern just how the drought and fires affected rural Karelians, the "*anomal'noe leto"* (anomalous summer) was a topic that came up in nearly every interpersonal encounter. By mid-August, when I was in the *Zaonezh'e* region, some rural residents had given up on vegetable plots altogether, and I helped carry water to irrigate plots for hopeful growers. Needless to say, the rain boots I had purchased in June in anticipation for rural mud never came in handy. I discuss each of the villages in chronological order, as the extremes in heat and drought provide a backdrop for my experience in each village.

In accordance with The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board's approval of this research, I am unable to publish respondents' names and give away the names of specific villages. As I explained to respondents, individuals familiar with a village or its residents will likely be able to recognize places and people. However, to err on the side of caution I do not name villages and respondents here. While I conducted the

research I saw nothing that would indicate risk for respondents in participating, but I was primarily concerned with the *possibility* that local social elites may be suspicious of my work and create problems for individuals who agreed to participate. After giving a press conference on my project to Karelian journalists, my phone was tapped during my last week in Russia.

Kondopozhskii Raion

Kondopozhskii raion is located directly north of Petrozavodsk. The municipal center of Kondopoga is well known in Karelia for its paper-pulp mill, which was established in the 1920s. Near the town of Girvas there is a hydroelectric station on the Suna River. The nature reserve Kivach is a popular summer destination for tourists,[20] and is located on the eastern side of Sund Lake from Kondopoga. South of Girvas on the main highway there is a small resort dating from the era of Peter the Great, where tourists come to drink the mineral water of four unique springs. It took about an hour to reach the first village in this region by car, on roads that had been recently paved. While our driver continued on to Girvas, a nearby town with roughly 1600 residents, my traveling companion and I walked up a gravel road to look for the address of our village contact. In the mean-time, we could not help but notice that the main street, named *Pochtovaia*, was devoid of its

Number of cities*	1
Number of rural villages*	75
Overall population**	41, 827
Rural population**	8518
Registered unemployed*	790
Average monthly income*	16,561 rub.
Average monthly pension*	5553 rub.
Registered population	
in research village**	--

Figure 5. Kondopozhskii Profile. **Kareliastat. "Administrativnoe-territorial'noe delenie Respubliki Karelia na 1ianvaria 2009." (2010)*
*** Kareliastat. "Chislennost' naselenia Respubliki Karelia" (2009); data as of December 2008.*

[20] In Russia tourism (*turism*) refers to leaving the city to go hiking, camping, mushroom and berry picking, etc. There is also eco-tourism, which is low-impact travel to protected natural areas such as *zapovedniki* (nature reserves).

namesake, the *pochta* (post office). The post office building had been boarded up, although an outgoing mailbox remained standing. Several of the houses on this street had been built in the 19th or even 18th centuries, as evinced by their architecture: long, multi-family buildings constructed from logs, with the first story raised from the ground allowing for storage underneath. Decorative eaves and shutters were darkened with age, and many were broken. These older homes sagged in spots where the foundation had shifted and the beams warped. Regardless, curtains were visible in the windows and laundry hanging outside confirmed that at least one family resided in each of these old houses.

I administered surveys and interviews to three households (five individuals) in this village. It was very difficult to discern just how many individuals continued to live there as the only source of employment, a privately owned dairy farm (previously a collective farm), had closed in May. As a result, residents were forced to consider plans for the future, which meant deciding whether to stay in the village. By the time I arrived to conduct surveys in late June the village was in a state of transition and it seemed as though many villagers had begun spending increasing time in nearby towns such as Girvas and Kondopoga. At the time of the research, those previously employed by the dairy farm were still receiving severance pay. One middle-aged woman, our point of contact, said that she planned to stay in the village even though she has relatives in nearby Girvas. Close to retirement age, she works in the cultural sphere as a folklorist and expert on village history and tradition. She supports herself and other members of her family by growing her own produce, and relies on urban family members for help with

difficult labor. Her employment takes her to Girvas, where she is able to access the post office and purchase groceries and other household items not available in the village.

The second household interviewed also expressed their decision to stay in the village despite the closing of the dairy farm. This young family had three small children and expressed concern over their schooling, explaining that the school is located in Girvas, but starting this fall the school bus would no longer service their village. When asked how they planned to support themselves in the future, the husband said that he hoped to provide meat by hunting, while the wife said that she would sell socks knitted from the wool of their sheep. The family owns several sheep, which also provide milk, and rabbits that they plan to sell. However, the small change from selling wool socks would hardly be enough to buy necessities. The wife explained that she had tried to move to a city before for work and met with such hardship that she returned to the village. For this reason, she is unwilling to move to an urban area again, especially with children. Because she has children, she receives a maternal monthly income supplement known as *materinskii capital*. This supplement, combined with subsistence activities, may be enough to keep the family fed. However, this family's children will not receive an education and it is possible that when they reach adulthood they will move away.

The third household interviewed was located on the far side of the village. This middle-aged couple had several nearly grown children and was quick to admit they planned to leave for Kondopoga. They explained that they had worked previously for a forestry commune in the village, but after it closed, the wife started her own business, while the husband remained unemployed and now receives a pension. Both individuals

had completed higher education and saw themselves as living comfortably. Part of their decision to move, they explained, comes from the fact that they feel like outsiders in the village. They attribute this to jealousy on the part of some villagers, but also add that there is no reason (employment, children's education) for them to stay in the village. One difficulty that residents in the first village face is the lack of a nearby lake, something strange for a Karelian village. As a result, residents hoping to sell or rent their homes are unlikely to fetch a good price, as *dachniki* desire picturesque locales for summer recreation. In Karelia, this necessitates a lake.

Because no more permanent residents in the first village could be found that evening, my companion and I decided to go to the nearest village six kilometers away. My companion knew of one couple who lived in the village year round, but explained that this second village had otherwise become a settlement of summer cottages and seasonal residents (unlike the first village, this one is located on a large, clean lake). Previously, though, it had been part of the local network of villages working for the *kolkhoz* and *leskhoz*, both of which had closed in the 1990s. None of the labor for the recently closed private dairy farm had come from this particular village, already inhabited by *dachniki*. In this village, an elderly couple is the only semi-permanent household to remain. Husband and wife, both in their 80s, receive pension and are visited often by their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. Up until a year before the research, this couple wintered in the village, although starting this year they will spend the winters with family in Girvas. These respondents continues to grow vegetables in their private plot, and explained it had become too difficult to own cattle because of the labor

involved. The remaining population is comprised of *dachniki,* albeit several of them had lived in the village at some time before.

Across *Sundozero* (Sund Lake) to the east, I travelled with one of the previous village's elderly *dachniki* to the village of her childhood, where a long time friend and several others still reside. She explained that there had been several collective farms in the area around Girvas after the war, the only evidence of which remained were open spaces overgrown with hay. I interviewed her friend, who is in his seventies, about his previous employment and how he supports himself today. He explained that he receives a small pension and had been employed in forestry and construction before his retirement. He currently depends on his family for support and stays with them in the city during the winter, as the village has no electricity. He lives in the village during the summer and gardens to provide himself and other members of the family with fresh produce.

The *Kondopozhskii raion* research demonstrates primarily that not everyone desires to or can leave the village in the case that a place of employment closes. This fact underscores the importance of employment in rural areas, as other amenities disappear along with a closing enterprise (school bus service, post office). Elderly villagers regularly receive pensions, which is an improvement from ten years ago. However, the size of pensions varies depending on the industries within which an individual worked, as well as honoraries such as "war veteran". Village location and environment affect the resale value of homes and the likelihood for finding buyers or renters. One young family is entering subsistence as a result of a loss of employment, which means that they and their children are likely to face socio-economic hardship in the future stemming from low

(or no) income and their inability to access education for their children.

Residents indicated that this area had previously been a bustling, close knit collection of villages that depended on two communes and had kindergartens, schools, and a library. Since the closing of the forest commune a decade ago the villages' population base began to splinter and disappear, with young people moving away and the elderly dying off. *Dachniki* have taken their place, but keep to themselves. Despite being located off the road that leads to Kondopoga, Girvas and further north, as well as around the lake to the Kivach nature reserve, tourism skips over this area. Presumably, the *dachniki* in the second of these three locations would prefer to keep their lake to themselves.

Belomorskii raion

The village I visited in *Belomorskii raion* is located about five kilometers upstream from the White Sea, and forty kilometers from the regional center, Belomorsk. It was particularly difficult to estimate the number of permanent residents for this village. While over 2,000 people are registered here officially, what I could garner from residents is that between 120 and 200 people reside there year round. The village was founded in the fifteenth century by Novgorodian settlers and is also one of the oldest areas inhabited by *pomory*, the coastal inhabitants of the White Sea and Barents Sea coasts. Residents engaged in sea fishing, shipbuilding, and salt production. From the 15th

Number of cities*	1
Number of rural villages*	46
Overall population**	21,605
Rural population**	9,502
Registered unemployed*	830
Average monthly income*	17,708 rub.
Average monthly pension*	5886 rub.
Registered population in research village**	2,617

Figure 6. Belomorskii Profile. **Kareliastat. "Administrativnoe-territorial'noe delenie Respubliki Karelia na 1ianvaria 2009." (2010)* *** Kareliastat. "Chislennost' naselenia Respubliki Karelia" (2009); data as of December 2008.*

century to 1918, the village had been under the jurisdiction of Solovetsky Monastery and had been a booming coastal town with a thriving merchant class. In the nineteenth century a nautical school was opened, and one of the respondents I interviewed had received his education there as a sea captain. The nautical school has since closed, but the elementary school remains a point of pride for villagers. I was fortunate enough to interview the oldest resident of the village, formerly the school director and a historian by profession. She said that a labor camp was established in the 1930s, resulting in an influx of people from all over the Soviet Union. Many of those who survived camp life and the Second World War remained in the village. While there had been forestry and fishing enterprises up until the early 2000s, today residents who are employed work in some capacity for the railroad or teach at the school.

In order to reach this village from Petrozavodsk one must purchase a *platzkart* ticket for one train car, which travels attached to one train to Belomorsk, where it is attached to a train that then travels east. Our host and one of her neighbor's sons met us at the small train stop and drove us back to where they lived, overlooking the river that flows into the White Sea. Across the river a row of old, abandoned houses stood, scorched by fire. These had been the historic homes of the merchant class, which had caught fire because they had been built too close together. Our host herself lived in a hundred-year-old house with two rooms, a kitchen and dining room, and attached barn.

Visually, the most notable aspect of this village was its tidiness. Every house had flowers growing out front, trimmed grass, and a yard free of debris and domestic tools. Walkways between houses and along the river were set with wooden boards to keep

one's feet out of the mud and nettle. Compared with the previous villages, this former hub seemed to buzz with activity. Here I interviewed nine individuals, all of whom were over the age of forty.

Respondents receiving pension expressed concern over the recent closure of the post office and medical station. Pensioners receive their pensions at the post office, and residents of this village walk four kilometers to the nearest post office and medical station. Obviously, in the case of an emergency, especially when the unpaved roads are impassible from autumn through springtime, four kilometers is a substantial hurdle.

Each of the respondents had a source of income in the form of pension, salary, or both. While I was staying in this village, the news came that the RZhD, or *Rossiiskie zheleznyi dorogi* (Russian Railways) was considering closing the train stop at this village. This would mean that trains would bypass the village, limiting travel to cars, and potentially put many villagers out of work. For the time being the village school remains open, a point of pride for villagers. However, if the railroad were to stop employing local residents due to the station closure, the school may close. Some residents expressed the opinion that officials somewhere were trying to ruin them, or at least were ready to write them off if they were no longer profitable.

A particular sore point for residents is the fines for fishing with the use of nets. Villagers express with particular ire that fishing has been a traditional occupation for centuries, and now can barely be a subsistence strategy because nets cannot be used to catch fish. Without nets, enough fish to feed a household cannot be caught. Some villagers identified the irony in the situation in which authorities do not care enough to

keep the post office open but can continue to enforce fishing laws.

Monetary income is important for these northerly villagers because they must buy firewood in late summer to last through the winter. While residents are currently employed and receive pensions, purchasing firewood has not been a problem, but if people lose jobs in the future, acquiring enough firewood for the winter could become financially difficult. Some respondents argued that they want to stay in the village, but that a lack of work and basic services is what forces rural people to leave for the cities. Respondents with children studying at universities explain that these young people would prefer to stay in the village as well, but want more options for employment. If trains no longer service the village, young people without cars will find it difficult to visit home.

My host, aged seventy-four, receives just over 9,000 rubles (roughly 300 US dollars) a month in pension. From 2007 to 2009, she grew vegetables and flowers to order and was able to supplement her pension by 6,000 rubles each year. When I asked her why she no longer grows vegetables and flowers for sale she explained that the amount of time and labor is not worth the amount received for these products. Producing enough to earn 6,000 rubles required a tremendous amount of labor, which she can no longer do because of her age. Now she grows produce (and flowers) for her own consumption.

Residents of this *Belomorskii* village emphasized that they help one another when possible. While my companion and I assisted our host with bringing water from the river for cooking, the bathhouse, and for irrigation, our host explained that younger neighbors often helped her with this task. Neighbors who have cars help those who need to go to the

nearest village for their pensions and to run other errands. The village priest, however, expressed concern over social cohesion in the village, citing an increasing tendency for people to "live their own lives" behind closed doors and away from other people's problems. I suspect that he is referring to *dachniki* in particular, who spend a limited amount of time in the village and are not invested in its daily life or the needs of permanent residents. When I remarked to local residents that their village was remarkably clean and orderly, they replied that people who live there year round care about the appearance of their yards, while *dachniki* are more likely to leave trash and allow yards to become overgrown.

To summarize, this village faces potential hardship in the future if trains no longer make stops there. For now, most residents who are employed work for the railroad, while some teach at the primary school or work at the local store. Due to recent closures of the post office and medical station, elderly residents are particularly at risk of not being able to obtain their pensions and being stranded in the case of a medical emergency. Residents express frustration at authorities for ceasing to provide these services while continuing to enforce restrictive fishing laws. Residents are proud of their village's history, insisting that it be called *selo* as opposed to *derevnia*, the difference of which might be expressed in terms of economic and social significance.

Number of cities*	1
Number of rural villages*	138
Overall population**	34,172
Rural population**	11,447
Registered unemployed*	557
Average monthly income*	15,609 rub.
Average monthly pension*	5282 rub.
Registered population	
in research village**	--

Figure 7. Medvezh'egorskii Profile.
**Kareliastat. "Administrativnoe-territorial'noe delenie Respubliki Karelia na 1ianvaria 2009." (2010)*
*** Kareliastat. "Chislennost' naselenia Respubliki Karelia" (2009); data as of December 2008.*

Medvezh'egorskii raion

The city of Medvezhegorsk is the administrative center for the region, a portion of

which lies in a territory known as *Zaonezh'e*, designating the eastern bank of Lake Ladoga. The village I visited in this region is located on a peninsula that extends into Lake Onega and is best reached from Petrozavodsk by boat. The remoteness of this village is more apparent in winter, when boats do not traverse the lake, and when the already sorry road around the lake through Medvezh'egorsk is impassible. Boats travel only two days a week between Petrozavodsk and Velikaia Guba, the municipal center. My contact met me on the dock in Velikaia Guba and we continued the sixteen kilometers to the village by car.

Before I arrived in *Zaonezh'e*, my host had expressed particular concern over my "mental and emotional preparedness" for village reality over the phone. She asked what I can and cannot eat, if I knew what I was getting myself into. I reassured her that I would eat whatever she prepared, stressing that she should make what *she* likes, and that I have been acquainted with rural Russia for eight years. When we met, she explained that I was the first American to ever visit her village; I felt that this did not explain her concern, and, indeed, I later learned that a group of Finnish tourists had complained about local food and the lack of running water. Thus, while I might have been the first American, I was not the first foreigner.

During my stay in this village, the drought was at its peak. Each day my host prayed for rain, even though she could tell by the night's weather and other indicators that there would be none. In addition to conducting research with other villagers, I helped my host with the task of irrigating her personal plot, which involved several trips to the lake with buckets. Villagers expressed concern over the potential effects of the drought,

noting the bizarre lack of mosquitoes and flies. Those few villagers who were employed abandoned their personal plots altogether, while others devotedly brought water from the lake. During my stay, forests in the Pudozh region were burning, and the smoke traveled westward across the lake, effecting air quality on the peninsula.

The only opportunity for employment in this village is at a small, private fishing company, which only hires young laborers. As a result, individuals nearing retirement age are unable to find work. Previously there had been both a *kolkhoz* and *leskhoz* (forestry commune), the latter of which closed in 2009. Some residents continue to raise cattle. One thirty-six year-old female resident is currently unemployed (she had worked as a librarian), but grows hay and raises cattle, selling meat to locals. Another resident near retirement age sells meat, milk, and cheese to local residents as well as in Medvezhegorsk, making only 4,700 rubles (roughly 150 dollars) a month.

There is no school or culture house in this village, and Velikaia Guba is where most villagers go for groceries and social activities such as church services. My host stressed a strong social cohesion among villagers, evident in the ways in which villagers would enter each other's houses and yards, calling a resident's name as they did so. On the day of my arrival, my host accidentally backed her car into the garage door that was not fully opened. A neighbor took the car and fixed it free of charge. During a trip a back from Velikaia Guba, my host stopped when she saw someone from the village traveling by foot, giving him a ride. Another neighbor helped my host with a weed whacker she had recently purchased. However, as my host explained, being a close-knit community means being privy to everyone's problems. One young couple drinks when not at work,

drawing both pity and ire from other villagers.

Villagers express frustration over the lack of jobs and infrastructure. For example, when a Norwegian tourist company expressed an interest in starting bus tours in the region, during which tourists would stay in the village and bring capital, they sent a representative to survey local conditions. Upon seeing the sorry state of the roads, the representative remarked that tourists would never come here. Villagers felt they missed an opportunity because of factors that were out of their control, as the roads are the responsibility of the local government. When I brought this view to the attention of the head of the municipal government during my visit in Velikaia Guba, he responded that villagers had grown accustomed to Communist rule, and now expected the government to solve all of their problems. His response suggested that he believed villagers chose not to help themselves, as opposed to not being able to. He added that municipal governments are just as poor as villagers are, and thus are unable to help.

Still, the republican government takes enough interest in rural areas to conduct architectural surveys of historic buildings. The eldest resident of this village lives in a two hundred-year old house that needs repairs, including foundation work. Government surveyors declared the house was of "historical importance", and forbade the owner from undertaking repairs without permission. The irony, of course, is that the owner does not have the resources to repair the building, while the government is unwilling to invest in the repairs of a building it considers "historically important".

The residents of this *Medvezh'egorskii* village express a desire to work, and are frustrated with the lack of investment in infrastructure and jobs. Several villagers stressed

that, if there were jobs and basic services, individuals would not only stay in the village, but those who had previously been forced to leave would return. For now, only a few young individuals are employed, while those too old to be employed by the fishing company and too young to retire face particular hardship. Selling meat and dairy provides for a meager income, which only allows for a minimalist existence. The municipal government faces funding constraints and views the local population as unwilling to take initiative, while poor infrastructure discourages foreign investment in the region.

To summarize, the two most commonly cited problems in each of the villages were joblessness/underemployment and lack of infrastructure. Collectives began closing as early as the 1960s, and continued to close up until 2009. For the most part, private companies did not replace these enterprises, and when they did, they either closed (such as the dairy farm in *Kondopozhskii raion*) or limit their hiring among the local workforce (such as the fishing company in *Medvezh'egorskii raion*). Even where there are jobs, basic services have been cut back, meaning that children cannot get to and from school, retirees face difficulty obtaining pensions, and individuals facing medical emergencies cannot get the care they need.

Conclusion

In Chapter 2, I discussed how scholars characterize inequality, subsistence activity, and other rural issues in Russia as a whole. The extent to which their conclusions apply to rural Karelia has significant implications for scholars and policy makers. In this concluding chapter I situate my findings within the rural sociological literature regarding Russia, and offer considerations for policy-makers in the region both to take advantage of economic opportunities in rural areas and to better provide for rural residents. Negative stereotypes about rural people persist, suggesting that villagers are to blame for rural poverty due to alcoholism, laziness, and backwardness. My research demonstrates that these stereotypes are overwhelmingly inaccurate, that there is an untapped skilled workforce in rural areas. Poverty in rural Karelia is, therefore, not the result of locals' flawed character, but of poor structure. So long as inaccurate, negative stereotypes remain, village death will continue as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Velikii's argument that rural people remain tied to the land in a way that prevents them from more than subsistence living holds true for some villagers in *Zaonezh'e* who are unable to work and are too young to retire, and resort to selling meat and dairy products for a living. These individuals have the lowest monthly income and face the most economic hardship. Selling produce from personal plots and wild berries and mushrooms is not a steady source of income for rural Karelians, due to its seasonality, and does not bring in enough money to justify labor and transportation. At best, this

strategy has provided subsisting households with a little bit of extra cash to purchase food items and daily necessities that cannot be produced at home. Respondents explained that one of the benefits of living in the taiga was the proximity and abundance of berries, mushrooms, and fish, and that these natural food sources helped rural residents feed themselves during the most difficult periods of the 1990s and early 2000s (rural residents could also help supplement their urban relatives' and friends' diets by growing vegetables and collecting woodland edibles). As Zvyagintsev argued previously, while rural residents could diversify sources of income by selling produce from personal plots or wild mushrooms, these activities are not small business endeavors but temporary survival strategies triggered by economic hardship.

The residents of the villages in which I conducted my fieldwork are unable to become entrepreneurs because of a lack of capital, partly the result of demonetization after the 1998 ruble crisis and long-term poverty. At the same time, because the communist system was in place for so long (roughly seventy years), it is naïve for policy-makers and economists to assume that rural people in the Russian Federation possess an innate understanding of how to start and operate private businesses. While it is easy to place the blame on rural residents, citing, as one municipal official in *Zaonezh'e* did, rural people's supposed lack of initiative, policy-makers should consider the lack of information available to rural people about opportunities. As was clearly demonstrated in my research, rural individuals express initiative and the desire to work and become active economic agents. However, without knowledge of local regulations, potential financing opportunities, or an infrastructure in which it is possible to obtain forms, access to banks,

or other necessities, rural individuals are unable to act on their dreams. The Karelian administration could do more to ensure rural populations have access to information about starting and running businesses, perhaps by tapping existing NGOs, such as the All Russian Society for the Protection of Nature (*Vserossiiskoe obshchestvo okhrany prirody*), whose Karelian chapter is already active in sustainable rural initiatives.[21]

Scholarship from the 1990s cited the elderly as the poorest section of the population, but now that retirees receive pension payments (with the assumption that they can regularly receive them from post offices, which is not always the case); I propose that young people and children represent the most at risk group because of widespread unemployment. One aspect of socio-economic inequality that requires further research in this context is what happens to young individuals and families after they leave their villages in search of employment. A young mother in a *Kondopozhskii* village chose to stay in the village because a previous attempt to find work in an urban area was unsuccessful.

With the exception of the *Medvezh'egorskii* village, the absence of cows was hard to miss. In the *Belomorskii* village, for example, there is one cow for 120 residents. As a result, most residents purchase milk at the small village store, the profits for which end up going to large dairy farms outside of Karelia. In the mid-to-late 1990s, many rural Karelians existed in a demonetized economy, and relied on personal plots and animals to survive. Many residents who took home cows after collectives closed ended up selling or butchering them for the immediate, if temporary, cash (or trade) and meat this could offer. When the economy began to stabilize in the early 2000s, cows became too

[21] http:/voop.karelia.ru

expensive for most rural residents to purchase. In addition, older residents are often physically unable to produce enough hay and care for cattle. In the *Medvezh'egorskii* village two families own several heads of cattle, in addition to sheep and goats, but the landscape resembles that of the other villages in that large swathes of property are covered with hay that now grows wild and unharvested.

While I was based in Petrozavodsk, I noticed that grocery stores sold potatoes imported from Egypt. When I mentioned this incongruity to residents in the *Belomorskii* and *Medvezh'egorskii* villages, whose plots were mostly designated for personal potato crop, they said that they would like to provide Karelia's cities with fresh, local potatoes, but that – obviously – for someone, somewhere, it is more profitable to import potatoes from far away north Africa. This sentiment of "profitability for someone else" was common in expressions of frustration and villagers' sense of marginalization. For someone, somewhere, it was more profitable to close the dairy farm in *Kondopozhskii raion*, while for someone it was more profitable to close the post office and medical station, and potentially the railway station, in the *Belomorskii* village. While villagers do not specify who benefits from these closures, they use these examples to express the notion that villages are not profitable for urban elites – unless, of course, fees can be extracted from the local population for fishing violations.

Wegren (2008) argues that Putin's 2006 agricultural stimulus targeted already existing farms with the goal of maximizing food production. It may be that the state no longer targets northern areas as food producers, despite the presence of some dairy and meat farmers. Moreover, poor roads make it difficult for produce to be transported within

the republic, especially during winter. Morozova's (2004) argument that rural Karelians' desire to work and start their own businesses is supported by my own research. However, in each of the villages currently unemployed individuals had previously worked in forestry, an industry that requires specialized job skills. These former forestry workers received industry-specific education and training and are most suited for finding work in forestry. It remains unclear why there are so few jobs available to rural residents in the forestry industry, but two issues may be at play: the bankruptcy and downsizing of Russian logging companies in Karelia during the 1990s, and the fact that Finnish-owned companies do not hire local workers. In addition, laws restricting logging in some areas of the republic have meant that the location of forestry activities has changed, leaving spatial "gaps" in employment opportunities. Nilsson and Shvidenko found that Russian forestry enterprises cut back on social benefits in the 1990s due to a lack of subsidies, while "the Finnish contractors do most of the work themselves, using Finnish equipment and Finnish employees" (Nilsson, Shvidenko, 1998; Ovaskainen *et al.*, 1999). Companies such as the Finnish-owned fishing enterprise in *Medvezh'egorskii raion* and the dairy farm owned by Russians outside of Karelia in *Kondopozhskii raion* do not invest in local communities, although it is not clear why this is. As a result, profits and natural resources are siphoned out of rural areas. In my last several days in Karelia, I traveled to a town outside of Kondopoga. The population size was too big for me to conduct interviews there, but I spoke with a resident who runs the local library. She explained that a corporate pig farm would be built a few kilometers from town, but would employ fewer than ten local residents. Thus, the local population will not only be forced

to deal with the environmental hazards that result from large scale pig farming, they will not reap any of the benefits of the farm's presence in the form of jobs and profits that can be reinvested in the community.

Future research in Karelia would need to investigate further the subcontracting relationships of non-local companies that might play a role in preventing these companies from hiring local labor. This factor aside, the Karelian government might consider creating labor quotas for foreign enterprises working in the region that would ensure a percentage of the local workforce – most of whom are trained in industries such as forestry – are employed. In addition, foreign companies should be required to set aside a certain percentage of gains to invest in local development projects (their paying of federal taxes does affect local regions). To be sure, the Karelian administration wants to provide incentives to foreign businesses to come to Karelia, however, without regulations to ensure local investment in the form of jobs or development projects, these companies exploit the region's resources in a way that does not benefit local populations at all.

Rural Karelians face many similar issues as their counterparts in primarily agrarian regions of the country. However, rural Karelians have not received the state investment that farming populations have, and cannot take advantage of job opportunities that having large farms nearby provide to communities in other regions. Rural Karelians face particular hardship because of poor infrastructure, which complicates efforts to bring in investment such as tourist dollars. Rural Karelians desire both to work and to remain in their villages, but young people especially are forced to look for jobs elsewhere. Residents continue to express confusion and exasperation over the closure of collective

enterprises, which had provided villagers with work and social services such as schools, medical clinics, and culture houses for social activities. As Wegren argued previously, rural residents are logical economic actors, but they face constraints that prevent them from moving beyond subsistence practices and out of "at-risk" income brackets.

The need to reinvest in Karelia's rural communities is not just a humanitarian concern, but a strategic one as well: historically, in the 1920s and 1930s, the Soviet Union invested a significant amount of money, labor, and materials in Karelia because of its strategic importance as a border region. During my research, I did not encounter any evidence that the Russian government is concerned with protecting its border there by strengthening the local economy. Instead, as discussed above, Karelia's natural resources and profits gained from their extraction tend to go to other economies, whether to Finland or other regions within Russia. By investing in the development of Karelia's infrastructure and industry, Russia stands to strengthen this border region, and by offering incentives to rural individuals who would like to start their own small businesses, the region could become more self-sufficient (for example, by supplying much of its own potatoes), while rural individuals could increase their incomes and standards of living.

There are two last questions that arise as a result of this study. The first is how poverty is defined in rural areas. Poverty is defined statistically in Russia against median monthly income with an established poverty line or subsistence minimum (roughly 5, 200 rubles/month for an individual in 2010). However, defining poverty by income alone is problematic because it does not take into account housing conditions, access to services and health facilities, and specific local needs (such as expenditures for firewood in sub-

arctic regions). Are rural Karelians poor? Judging by monthly income, some are while others are not. One respondent stated that she and her neighbors are not poor, because they have enough to eat, warm houses, and televisions. However, most residents cannot afford to undertake house repairs, travel to areas only reachable by overnight train or car, or save money for the future. I asked a room of Karelian journalists during a press conference if not being able to afford such things made one poor. The answer was a resounding yes. One journalist espoused the view that an individual should have enough to pursue one's dreams, for example relocating to a place to get an education or retire. Myriad subjective views seeking to define poverty confuse the issue, but should be considered in addition to economic indicators.

The second question is rather uncomfortable to pose, but it nags at the back of one's mind when considering the future of rural villages in peripheral regions like Karelia: are these villages important for Russia economically? As rural areas increasingly become places of escape for *dachniki*, we must consider why a permanent population in rural areas should be supported by the state. I am inclined to answer that, so long as people reside in remote areas and pay taxes, they should receive services and support. I admit my bias for rural populations in this situation, as many have expressed their desire to participate in rural production and industry, whether it be farming of some sort, fishing, forestry, or something else. Russia, and the republican administration in particular, stand to benefit by increasing its workforce, even if it must give something of itself in the form of incentives, infrastructure and services. Rural Karelia is not ready to be written off, thus more could be done on the part of the local and federal governments to help rural Karelians participate in local economies.

References

Armstrong, Karen. Remembering Karelia: a Family's Story of Displacement During and After the Finnish Wars. Berghahn Books (2004).

Baron, Nick. Soviet Karelia: Politics, planning and terror in Stalin's Russia, 1920-1939. Routledge (2007).

Beliaeva, L. A. "Social Stratification and Poverty in the Regions of Russia." *Sociological Research*. 47/1 (2008): 19-40.

Berstein, Henry. "Agrarian Classes in Capitalist Development." Capitalism and Development, edited by Leslie Sklair (1994).

Bunker, Stephen. "Modes of Extraction, Unequal Exchange, and the Progressive Underdevelopment of an Extreme Periphery: The Brazilian Amazon." *American Journal of Sociology*. 89 (1984).

Creed and Ching. "Recognizing Rusticity: Identity and the Power of Place." Knowing Your Place: Rural Identity and Cultural Hierarchy. New York, Routledge (1997): 1-38.

Desai, Padma. "Why Did the Ruble Collapse in August 1998?" *American Economic Review* 90/2 (2000): 43-48.

Duncan, Cynthia. Worlds Apart: Why Poverty Persists in Rural America. University of New Hampshire (1999).

Engebretson, Elizabeth. "What Replaced the Kolkhozy and Sovkhozy? A Political Ecology of Agricultural Change in Post-Soviet Russia." Honors Project, Macalaster College (2007).

England, L; Brown, R. "Community and Resource Extraction in Rural America." Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century. Edited by Brown, D. and Swanson, L. The Pennsylvania University Press (2003): 317-328.

Harrold-Menzies, Melinda. "The Post-Collective Village: a Tale of Two Transitions." *World Development* 37/1 (2009): 232-241.

Hokkanen, Lawrence and Sylvia. Karelia: A Finnish-American Couple in Stalin's Russia. North Star Press of St. Cloud, Inc. (1991).

Ioffe, Grigory *et al*. The End of Peasantry? The Disintegration of Rural Russia. University of Pittsburg Press (2006).

Jensein, Leif; McLaughlin, Diane K.; Slack, Tim. "Rural Poverty: The Persisting Challenge."Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century. Edited by Brown, D. and Swanson, L. The Pennsylvania University Press (2003): 118-133.

Kareliastata. http://krl.gks.ru (in Russian)

Khagurov, A. A. “Several Methodological Aspects of Researching Rural Russia.” *Sociological Research.* 2 (2009): 95-101. (in Russian)

Krannich, Richard S.; Petrzelka, Peggy. “Tourism and Natural Amenity Development: Real Opportunities?” Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century. Edited by Brown, D. and Swanson, L. The Pennsylvania University Press (2003): 190-201.

Lausala, Tero; Valkonen, Leila (eds.). Economic Geography and Structure of the Russian Territories of the Barents Region. University of Lapland Press, Rovaniemi (1999).

Lobao, Linda. "A Sociology of the Periphery Versus a Peripheral Sociology: Rural Sociology and the Dimension of Space." *Rural Sociology*. 1 (1996): 77-102.

Lobao, Linda; Hooks, Gregory; Tickamyer, Ann. “Poverty and Inequality across Space: Sociological Reflections on the Missing-Middle Scale.” *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy, and Society*. 1 (2008): 89-113.

Luloff, A.E.; Bridger, Jeffrey. “Community Agency and Local Development.” Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century. Edited by Brown, D. and Swanson, L. The Pennsylvania University Press (2003): 203-213.

Lyson, Thomas; Tolbert, Thomas. “Civil Society, Civic Community, and Rural Development.” Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century. Edited by Brown, D. and Swanson, L. The Pennsylvania University Press (2003): 214-227.

Morozova, T.V.; Turova, S.A.; Kozyrova, G. B. Rural Community in Karelia: traditions, modernity, perspectives. Petrozavodsk: KarNTs RAN (2004). (in Russian)

O’Brien, David J., *et al.* “Marketization and Community in Post-Soviet Russian Villages.” *Rural Sociology*. 70/2 (2005): 188-207.

O’Brien *et al.* “Income Stratification in Russian Villages: From Profession to Property.” *Problems of Post-Communism* 54/1 (2007): 37-46.

Official Karelia. http://www.gov.karelia.ru/ (in Russian)

- The Karelian Government. *The Basic Directions and Actions of the Government of the Republic of Karelia in the Social-Economic Growth of the Republic of Karelia in 2002-2006.* Petrozavodsk (2002).

Ovcharorova, L. N. “Poverty and Economic Growth in Russia.” *The Journal of Research of Social Politics.* 6/4: 439-566.

Pallot, Judith. “Rural depopulation and the restoration of the Russian village under Gorbachev.” *Soviet Studies* 42/4 (1990): 655-675.

Salamon, Sonya. Newcomers to Old Towns: Suburbanization of the Heartland. The University of Chicago Press (2003).

Staroverov, V. I. “Towards the History of the Rebirth of Russian Rural Sociology.” *Sociological Research.* 10 (2008): 40-46. (in Russian)

Walton, John. "Urban Sociology: The Contribution and Limits of Political Economy." *Annual Review of Sociology.* 19 (1993): 301-320.

Wegren, *et al.* “Beyond Stratification: the Emerging Class Structure in Rural Russia.” *Journal of Agrarian Change* 6/3 (2006): 372-399.

Wegren, Stephen K. “Land Reform in Russia: What Went Wrong?” *Post-Soviet Affairs.* 24/ 2 (2008): 121-148.

Wegren, *et al.* “The Economics of Rural Households in Russia: Impact of Village Location.” *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 49/2 (2008): 200-214.

Varis, Eira (ed.). Transitional Survival Strategies of Peripheral Resource Communities in Hungary and Northwestern Russia. Finnish Institute for Russian and East European Studies, Helsinki (2000).

Velikii, P.P. “The Russian Countryside under the New Challenges”. *Sociological Research.* 47/6 (2008): 47-58.

Zvyagintsev, D. *et al.* “Diversification of Rural Incomes and Non-Farm Rural Employment: Evidence from Russia.” Paper presented at the 104th joint EAAE-IAAE Seminar on Agricultural Economics and Transition. Corvinus University, Budapest, Hungary. Sept. 6-8 (2007).

Appendix A: Condensed Survey Responses

Village	**Age**	**Sex**	**Household Monthly income (rubles)**	**Employment**	**Pension**
Kondopozhskii raion (Villages 1-3)	50	F	7,000	- Employed, cultural sector	--
	33	M	Declined to	- Unemployed, receiving	--
	33	F	answer	severance	--
	49	M	Declined to	pay, maternal welfare payments	--
	48	F	answer	- unemployed, formerly forestry	--
	80	F	(see below)	- self-employed internet business	Yes (for 2)
	73	M	140,000	- pension; formerly forestry	Yes
			38,000	- pension, formerly forestry and	
			10,400	construction	
Belomorskii raion	61	M	22,000	- pension, weed clearing/security, railroad	Yes
	59	M	Declined to	- employed, railroad	--
	50	M	answer	- railroad, store	--
	60	F	20,000	- employed, "person on duty"	Yes
			11,000	(*dezhurnaia*)	
	52	F		- railroad communications,	Yes
	42	F	20,000	pension	--
	47	F	20,000	- forestry	--
	80	F	40,000	- school teacher	Yes
	74	F	14,000	- pension, former school director	Yes
			9,050	- railroad communications, pension	
Medvezh'egorskii raoin	57	F	14,000	- pension	Yes
	36	F	22,000	- librarian	--
	30	M	10,000	- brigadier (fishing company)	--
	39	F	8,000	- cook (fishing company)	--
	52	F	4,700	- disability payments, pension	Yes
	74	F	16,000	- pension, formerly forestry	Yes
	47	F	22,000	- store clerk	--
	52	M	17,000	- education	--
	82	F	14,260	- pension, formerly cook, janitor	Yes
	51	F	6,000	- field veterinarian	Yes

Appendix B: Sample Documents

Interview Questions

- What can you tell about village history?
- How has the village changed or stayed the same in the time you've lived here?
- How would you describe your relationships with other villagers?
- Do you have personal connections to any other villages or towns? Which? What is the nature of the connection?
- Could you describe your daily schedule?
- What are some negative aspects of living in the village? Positive aspects?
- What would you like to see change in the village and why? What would you prefer stayed the same?
- In your opinion, is it important for young people and new families to have ties to villages?
- How do you envision the future of the village?

Interview Questions (Russian)

- Что Вы можете рассказать об истории этого поселка?
- В течение Вашего проживания здесь, что изменилось в этом поселке?
- Как Вы бы характеризировали Ваши отношения с другими жителями поселка?
- Имеете ли Вы личные связи с жителями других деревень или городов? Где они проживают? Опишите эти отношения.
- Какой у Вас распорядок дня?
- Какие есть отрицательные аспекты деревенской жизни? А положительные аспекты?
- Что Вы бы хотели изменить в этом поселке в будущем? Почему? Что Вы бы не хотели изменить?
- По Вашему мнению, должны молодые люди и семьи иметь связи в деревнях?
- Как Вы представляете будущее Вашего поселка?

Lauren Welker
Graduate Student

Persistent Poverty in the Republic of Karelia: complex causality and the importance of place

Consent to Participate in Research

You are being asked to participate in a sociological study to help understand contemporary rural life and conditions in the Republic of Karelia. Your village has been chosen for study because of its geographic location, local industry, and population size. The goal of the research is to provide policy makers and scholars with information about how villages are socially and economically connected to each other and to cities, as well as local realities, ideas, and aspirations which statistics cannot provide. This research has been reviewed and approved by The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board and is voluntary. No incentives or compensation are being offered in turn for participation in this study. Risks resulting from participation in this study are minimal, and are no greater than the risks to which one is exposed in everyday life.

Procedures/Tasks: Participant involvement consists of a one-page survey and an audio-recorded interview. The survey will take you about 10 minutes to complete, and the interview will last roughly 30 minutes.

Confidentiality: Your personal information will not be shared, and any reference to individuals in future publications (academic articles, books, or presentations) will be anonymous. **Villages will be assigned pseudonyms or numbers, although it should be noted that the residents of the villages will likely be able to identify their village and many of their peers.** The data is collected and stored in order to be transcribed and translated from Russian into English by Lauren Welker. Only Lauren Welker and Dr. Ludmila Isurin (The Ohio State University Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures) will have access to the database. Analysis of the data will not begin until the collection phase has been completed on August 31, 2010. Data will be stored in the home of Lauren Welker in a locked filing cabinet and under encryption and password protection on her home computer's external hard drive.

I have read (or the researcher has read to me) this form and I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I am not giving up any rights in agreeing to participate in this study, and I can choose to discontinue participation at any time without incurring any penalty.

☐ ***I am eighteen years of age or older.***
☐ I agree to take the survey and participate in an audio-recorded interview.
☐ I agree to take the survey only.

_____	_____	_____ 2010
Printed Name of Participant	Participant's Signature	Date

Please direct any questions, concerns, or complaints to Lauren Welker by phone or email. She will be in the Russian Federation until August 30th, 2010.

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant before requesting the signature(s) above. A copy of this form has been given to the participant.

Lauren Elizabeth Welker	_____	_____ 2010
Printed Name of Researcher	Researcher's Signature	Date

_____	welker.45@osu.edu or iarnsaxa@gmail.com
Phone Number	Email

For questions about participants' rights, contact Ms. Sandra Meadows at the Ohio State University Office of Responsible Research Practices:
email:meadows.8@osu.edu telephone: 1-800-678-6251

Лорен Уэлкер
Аспирантка

Устойчивая бедность в Республике Карелия: сложная причинность и важность места

Согласие участвовать в исследовании

Вы приглашены участвовать в социологическом исследовании, цель которого улучшить понимание современной сельской жизни и обстановки в Республике Карелия. Ваш населенный пункт был выбран из-за его географического положения, местной промышленности и численности населения. Цель этого исследования – проинформировать законодателей и социологов о том, как современные деревни социально и экономически взаимосвязаны друг с другом и с окружающими городами, а также о местных реальностях, идеях, и желаниях местных жителей – то есть, информация, которую статистики не описывают. Проверочный Комитет Государственного университета штата Огайо рассмотрело и подтвердило этический характер исследования. Участие в этом исследовании является добровольным. Данная работа не включает в себя материальную компенсацию или вознаграждения любого рода. Уровень риска, связанный с данным исследованием, практически нулевой. В любом случае, он не превышает уровень риска, с которым мы сталкиваемся в повседневной жизни.

Процедура: Участие состоит из одностраничного опроса и интервью, записанного на диктофон. Вы потратите около 10 минут, чтобы заполнить опрос, а интервью продлится приблизительно 30 минут.

Конфиденциальность: Ваша личная информация не будет распечатана или разглашена. Участвующие останутся анонимными во всех будущих публикациях (статьи, книги, выступления). Каждому населенному пункту будет присвоен свой номер или кодовое название (псевдоним), хотя следует отметить, что жители этих населенных пунктов все равно могут опознать свой населенный пункт и многих из своих соседей и знакомых. Данные, собранные во время исследования будут анализированы и переведены с русского на английский Лорен Уэлкер. Только Лорен Уэлкер и доктор Людмила Исурин из Государственного университета штата Огайо будут иметь доступ к базе данных. Анализ данных начнется сразу же после окончания сбора данных - 31 августа 2010 года. Данные будут храниться в ящике закрытым на ключ дома у Лорен Уэлкер, а также в электронном виде на внешнем жестком диске (в зашифрованном виде и под паролем)

Я прочитал/а (или исследователь мне прочитала) этот документ и у меня была возможность задать вопросы исследователю, и они были отвечены. Соглашаясь на участие в этом исследовании и подписывая эту форму, я не отказываюсь ни от каких законных прав. Я могу отказаться от участия любое время.

☐ ***Мне 18 лет или больше.***
☐ Я соглашаюсь заполнить опрос и участвовать в звукозаписываемом интервью.
☐ Я соглашаюсь только заполнить опрос.

_____ _____ _____ 2010г.
Имя/фамилия участника Подпись участника Число

Пожалуйста, обращайтесь к Лорен Уэлкер по телефону или электронной почте со всеми вопросами, беспокойствами, и жалобами. Она будет на территории Российской Федерации до 30 августа 2010 г.

Исследователь

Я объяснила процедуру исследования участнику перед тем, как участник подписался. Я дала копию этой формы участнику.

Lauren Elizabeth Welker _____ _____ 2010г.
Имя/фамилия исследователя Подпись исследователя Число

_____ welker.45@osu.edu or iarnsaxa@gmail.com
Телефон Email

Для разъяснения прав участников, обращайтесь к Сандре Мэдоус из Государственного университета штата Огайо, офис ответственных исследовательских практик: Электронная почта: meadows.8@osu.edu T: 1-800-678-6251

Survey

Please answer the following questions.

1. Age ____

2. Sex ____

3. Have you lived in this village without interruption since you were born? ☐ yes ☐ no

a. If no, how long have you resided here without interruption? __ yrs. __ mo.

4. Do you have any adult children (18 years or older)? ☐ yes ☐ no

a. If yes, do they currently reside in this village? ☐ yes ☐ no

4. What is your *household* annual income, including pension, stipends, and assistance?

_____ RUB/yr.

5. Are you currently employed? ☐ yes ☐ no

a. If yes, is this work seasonal or temporary? ☐ yes ☐ no

b. Do you currently work more than one job? ☐ yes ☐ no

1. If yes, how many jobs do you currently have? ____

c. Within what type of industry is your current job (for example, forestry, agriculture, construction, services)? If you have more than one job, include all appropriate industries:

_____

d. If you are currently unemployed, explain how you support yourself throughout the year:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

For interviewer
Date: _____

Did any other members of this household fill out a survey? __ yes __ no
If yes, what are their corresponding form numbers?
_____

Опрос

Ответьте, пожалуйста, на следующие вопросы.

1. Возраст ____

2. Пол ____

3. Беспрерывно ли Вы проживаете в этом поселении с рождения? ☐ да ☐ нет

а. Если нет, сколько Вы здесь проживаете беспрерывно? ___ лет ___ мес.

4. Имеете ли Вы взрослых детей (18 лет и старше)? ☐ да ☐ нет

а. Если да, проживают ли он/а/и в этом поселении? ☐ да ☐ нет

5. Какой у Вас *семейный ежегодный доход*, включая пенсию, стипендии, и пособия?

_____ руб./год

6. Имеете ли Вы работу на данный момент? ☐ да ☐ нет

а. Если да, является ли эта работа сезонной или временной? ☐ да ☐ нет

б. Работаете ли Вы на данный момент на более чем одной работе? ☐ да ☐ нет

1) Если да, на скольких работах Вы сейчас работаете? _____

в. К какой индустрии относится Ваша работа (например, лесопромышленность, сельское хозяйство, строительство, индустрия обслуживания)? Если Вы имеете больше чем одну работу, напишите все виды индустрии:

_____

г. Если Вы на данный момент без работы, объясните какие у Вас источники дохода в течение года (денежные и не денежные):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Для исследователя:

Число: _____ Написали опросы еще другие домочадцы? __ да __ нет

Если да, какие у них номера опросов?

_____