

ICHEU 2021
International Conference «Humanity in the Era of Uncertainty»**ATTITUDE TO PROPERTY IN RUSSIA IN THE 19TH - EARLY 20TH
CENTURY**

Artem Andreevich Kostrigin (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Institute of Psychology of Russian Academy of Sciences, Yaroslavskaya str., 13-1, Moscow, Russia,
artdzen@gmail.com**Abstract**

The article discusses the problem of the economic mentality of the Russian people. In particular, the phenomenon of property and the attitude towards it during various historical periods is highlighted. The discussion of problems related to property in the scientific, economic, legal and journalistic literature is considered as an element of the attitude towards property. A quantitative analysis concerning the frequency of the term “property” in the Russian-language corpus of Google Books for the period 1800-1917 is carried out. The results obtained are presented as the term frequency (percentage of all words) for a specific year in the Google Books database. The periods in the dynamics of indicators are highlighted based on the peaks and downs on the chart. The publications and the context of using the term “property” in the periods of 1800-1821, 1822-1841, 1842-1892, 1893-1917 are analyzed. Issues and problems discussed in connection with property in a particular period are noted; assumptions are made about possible factors and events that influenced the increase in the relevance (term frequency) of the property phenomenon for the Russian people (and authors of publications covering the topic of property) in different years. The phenomenon of property was reflected in the Russian public consciousness and mentality, probably as a result of the following events: economic, educational and censorship reforms of Alexander I, systematization of legislation by Nicholas I and the emergence of a new class of “honorary citizens”, discussion of the peasant issue and the liberation of serfs, the revolution of 1905-1907.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Property, attitude towards property, economic mentality, history, Digital Humanities

1. Introduction

Currently, the study of the Russian mentality (Koltsova & Zhuravlev, 2017; Yurevich, 2013; Zhuravlev et al., 2016), in particular, the economic mentality of the Russian people (Balabanova, 2001; Kitova & Kitov, 2020; Novozhenko, 2007; Zakharova, 2011) is a topical subject of interdisciplinary research. A private component of the economic mentality is the attitude towards property, perceptions, values and attitudes associated with it (Kitova & Shakov, 2017; Smirnova & Sukhanova, 2014).

2. Problem Statement

To understand the attitude of the Russian people to property, it is necessary to trace the historical aspects of this issue. The problem of the historical characteristics of property and its development in the 19th and 20th centuries was addressed by many specialists (Alpidovskaya & Sokolov, 2013; Timofeev, 2009; Verkhoglyad, 2014; Yuriev et al., 2009). These studies were carried out within the framework of historical science: historical documents, evidence and other sources revealing the nature of state and private property in Russia at various periods of its development were analyzed. This is a classic historical paradigm for studying a document and analyzing its content: the content of the concept “property”; its types and manifestation, factors of change, connections with other phenomena of economic and legal reality and everyday life are investigated.

However, there are other approaches to studying the history of various phenomena of human life. In particular, the approach called Digital Humanities has been lately developing. Within the framework of Digital Humanities, a quantitative (digital) analysis of information, data, knowledge, as well as scientific, cultural, artistic and other objects has been carried out (Schreibman et al., 2004).

In relation to historical research, the Digital Humanities approach enables to take a fresh look at traditional research subjects (concepts, phenomena, problems, specific objects, personalities, institutions, communities, etc.) and obtain data that can open new aspects of the analysis of an already known research subject (Borodkin, 2015; Volodin, 2013). Similar works already exist in economic history (Bykov et al., 2017; Roth et al., 2018; Skrebyte et al., 2016), but in a small amount.

3. Research Questions

This paper poses the problem of studying the phenomenon of property and attitudes towards it in Russia at different historical periods of its development using the Digital Humanities methodology. The subject of the research is the frequency of using the term “property” in the Russian-language corpus of Google Books. The frequency of using a specific word in this database indicates an increase or decrease in the relevance of the problem of property for the Russian people (represented by specific authors who study this issue). The units for studying the attitude of the Russian people to property are ideas, opinions, concepts within the framework of history, jurisprudence and law, economics, public issues and politics, science and culture.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the research is to study the attitude of the Russian people to property during 1800-1917. Ideas, concepts, problems and other forms of the property problem reflection in the corpus of books are part of the attitude towards property and an element of the economic mentality of the Russian people in different historical eras.

5. Research Methods

A quantitative analysis of the frequency of term “property” in the Russian-language corpus of Google Books has been used as a research method. This procedure can be carried out by the Google Books Ngram Viewer service. The term “property”, which is found in various digitized books hosted in the Google Books database, is the unit of analysis. This study is at the junction of classical history (using new tools), historical psychology and intellectual history: the study of concepts and phenomena that affect the self-consciousness of a person and a people, their mentality, behavior and specific economic, legal and labor activities belongs to interdisciplinary socio- humanitarian issues. This phenomenon is “property” transformed in different historical periods, reflected in different ways in everyday life, art, science, politics, state and municipal spheres, was built into the system of interpersonal, social, political and economic relations of a person, community and state, occupied a certain place in the hierarchy of individual needs and values. It is necessary to note the limitations of the data obtained: Google Books Ngram Viewer enables to consider only the word frequency in texts for a certain period, the names of publications in which the word is used, in some cases – the text of the publication itself, or to the context which the word is used in. Our analysis is limited by the fact that we can only analyze the frequencies and titles of publications in which the term “property” is used.

6. Findings

According to the results of an appeal to the Google Books Ngram Viewer service, the following indicators of the term “property” frequency for 1800-1917 were found (Figure 1).

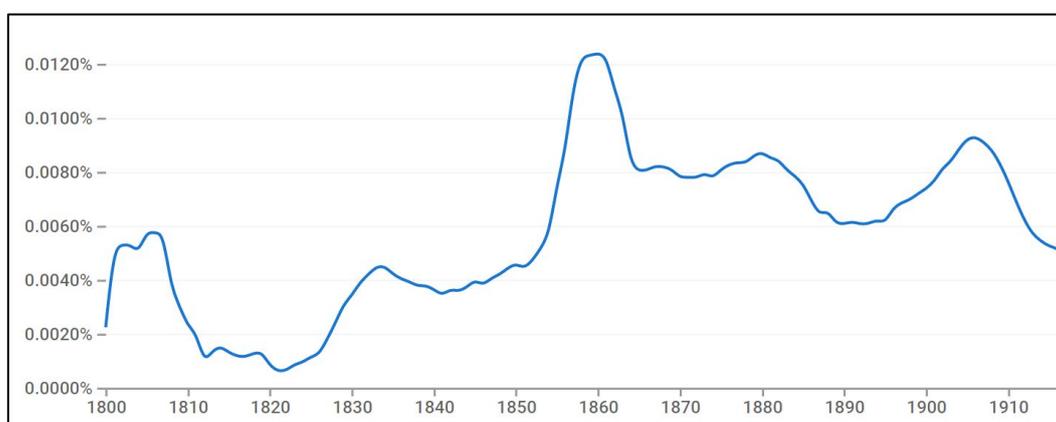


Figure 1. Dynamics of frequency of term “property” in Russian-language corpus of Google Books for 1800-1917

The resulting graph is interpreted as follows. An increase in the frequency of the studied word indicates an increase in the number of its use in various publications. In our opinion, this may be due to an increased interest in this issue, in our case, to the problem of property. Accordingly, a decrease in the word frequency also shows a drop in interest and relevance of the problem of property.

The results of this study are presented as follows: year, frequency (in% of the total number of words in the book corpus) and titles of editions mentioning the term. The frequencies are combined into periods depending on the peaks and downs on the graph. The analysis of the factors and events that influenced the increase in the frequency of the term “property” is probabilistic and hypothetical: in the publications, most often there is no indication of specific events and reasons due to which the author publishes this work. Therefore, we only expressed our assumptions about the events and factors that could have caused an increase in the frequency of the term “property” in the literature for a particular period.

Let us highlight the first period being 1800-1821 (0.00223378897% -0.0006051353%) with a peak in 1805 (0.0057953280%). During these years, the term “property” was found in the following books: F. Zeiller “Natural private law” (1809), “Economic description of the Astrakhan and Caucasian provinces: their civil and natural state in relation to agriculture, industry and home economics” (1809), G. Terlaich “Brief Guide to Systematic Knowledge of Civil Private Law of Russia” (1810), N.M. Karamzin “History of the Russian State” (1816), V.B. Stroinovskiy “General Economy of Nations” (1817) and others.

Basically, this term was found in legal, economic and historical works and discussed in the context of the types of property (estate in entirety, separate, of city dwellers, proper direct, “benefits of a thing” (use of products, objects derived from property), main, initial, complete, incomplete, useful, limiting, belonging to certain people, general, movable, immovable, noble and free, belonging to the people, belonging to Russia), its acquisition, appropriation, theft, the issues of obtaining property as a result of labor, obtaining property rights, respect for property, protection and securing property by the state and the court.

The peak in that period was on 1805. From our perspective the reasons for the increase in the number of references to the term “property” could be both economic and social, and intellectual reasons. We classified the economic reforms carried out by Alexander I and aimed at reorganizing the supreme governing bodies (throughout the 1800s), granting the right to purchase land to all estates (1801), the adoption of the decree “On free farmers” (1803), which allowed landowners to free the peasants (although in fact not many peasants were freed until 1861), as well as an increase in the urban population. Intellectual reasons were the reforms in the field of education (“On the structure of schools” (1803), “University statute” (1804)) and the adoption of the “Censorship statute” (1804), which led to an increase in publications on various topics including civil law, which embraced property issues.

The second period in the dynamics of indicators of using the term “property” refers to the years 1822-1841 (0.0006332997% - 0.0034202842%) with a peak in 1834 (0.0045063415%). The term can be found in the following publications: V.F. Velyaminov-Zernov “The experience of drawing Russian private civil law. Part 2. The right of things” (1823), I.M. Muravyov-Apostol “Traveling across Taurida in 1820” (1823), G.R. Derzhavin “Writings” (1831-1833), V.B. Bronevskiy “History of the Don Army” (1834), S.I. Gamaleya “Letters” (1836), V. Lebedev “Truth of a Russian Citizen” (1836), F.L. Moroshkin “On

ownership: according to the principles of Russian legislation” (1837), A.I. Mikhailovsky-Danilevsky “Description of the Patriotic War of 1812” (1840) and others.

In the highlighted period, bureaucratic, legal, journalistic issues of property, its historical roots (capture, discovery, acquisition, etc.), differences in the concepts of “possession”, “belonging” and “property” (the latter was the right of a citizen and had to be legally enshrined) were considered, differences between the property of a full-fledged citizen and a serf (servant, slave) discussed traditional types of property, state property in various historical epochs (feudal, church, military, government, patrimonial, imperial, house, local, noble, etc.), substantiated that the right to property could act as a source of other rights, the religious and spiritual aspects of property (as a self), property in everyday life and in various historical events (the Patriotic War of 1812, memoirs of various authors, etc.) were analyzed.

The peak in this period was in 1834. Discussion of property problems was primarily due to legal reasons: under Nicholas I, the publication of the Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire (1830) and the Code of Laws of the Russian Empire (1833) by M.M. Speransky, which enabled to streamline the existing legislation and clarify the details of legal issues (including those related to property). The socio-economic factor can also be noted: the manifesto “On the Establishment of a New Estate Called Honorary Citizens” (1832) diversified the civilian population and provided some privileges to “honorary citizens” (and thus new opportunities for owning property). At the same time, we cannot but say about the intellectual (and also literally book-printing) conditions: throughout the 19th century the publication of books increased. Consequently, more and more editions appeared for each social, economic, political, legal and scientific issue, which affected the change in the studied schedule.

The third period comprises the years 1842-1892 (0.0036541016% - 0.0060637216%) with two peaks in 1860 (0.0124074414%) and in 1880 (0.0087374970%). The phenomenon of property was discussed in the following books: A.I. Herzen “Baptized property” (1858), “Editorial commissions for drawing up regulations on peasants emerging from serfdom” (1859-1860), P.L. Lavrov “Essays on Questions of Practical Philosophy” (1860), A.I. Skrebitsky “Peasant business during the reign of Emperor Alexander II” (1862-1868), V.N. Flerovsky “Lot of laboring class in Russia” (1869), V. Veshnyakov “Collection of laws and regulations for farmers and rural owners” (1879), “Collection of statistical information on the Tambov province” (1880), K.D. Kavelin “The Peasant issue” (1882), B.N. Chicherin “Property and the State” (1882-1883), G.F. Blumenfeld “Inheritance in Copyright” (1891) and others.

During these years, the philosophical issues of property, the relationship between state, public and private property, the problems of property and serfdom, the problems of regulating the acquisition and disposal of property (in particular, land) by peasants, various aspects of private and personal property, criminal aspects of appropriation of someone else’s property were raised; the historical issues of ownership, regional peculiarities of ownership, issues of ownership in various spheres (family, creativity and authorship), outrage at the postponement by the state of the abolition of serfdom and granting rights to millions of citizens were considered, the problems of property among landowners and peasants were unresolved, the topic “class and property” was set.

The peaks in that period were in 1860 and 1880. Of course, the leading factor that influenced the growing urgency of the problem of property was the discussion of the “peasant issue”. At the end of the 1850s, there were many projects of peasant reform, which were associated with the rights of peasants to

possession and property. And finally, in 1861, Alexander II signed a manifesto “On the all-merciful granting of the rights of free rural inhabitants to serfs”. The peasants received their rights (albeit being limited in many respects), but then they were faced with the problem of buying out land from the landowners. Numerous publications were devoted to this topic including those of an educational nature (issues of land management, organization of agriculture, etc.). Other reforms that influenced public sentiment (reflected in the press) included the zemstvo (1864) and city (1870) reforms. This changed both the way of life of people and the duties of officials (what and how to manage). Let us note one more aspect being the development of social thought in the 1860s-1880s, developing socialist ideas, posing the problem of the relationship between the state and the citizen, society and the individual.

The fourth period in the dynamics of indicators of the use of the term “property” refers to 1893-1917 (0.0060806678% - 0.0053273593%) with a peak in 1906 (0.0093090710%). The term was found in the books: A.A. Borzenko “Industrial Property” (1894), L.Ye. Vladimirov “Alexey Stepanovich Khomyakov and his ethical and social doctrine” (1904), A. Veselov “The Flag of “Land and Freedom” and Russian Social Democracy” (1906), M. Bezrodny “Private land property from the standpoint of the national world economy, agricultural progress, human needs, state and national labor” (1907), N.V. Muravyov “The revolutionary movement in Russia in the reports of Minister Muravyov 1894-1905” (1907), L.N. Tolstoy “Complete Works” (1913) and others.

The issues of the peasants’ property, importance of property for the recognition of a person as a full citizen continued to be discussed. New aspects of property appeared in industry, the problem of “discovery” as the property of the discoverer was identified, political and ideological issues of property were analyzed, the role of property in the social order was highlighted, the criminal aspects of property were explained, and religious and philosophical attitude of the Russian people to property (according to the teachings of L.N. Tolstoy and A.S. Khomyakov) were discussed. The peak dates back to 1906. It is probably associated with the revolution of 1905-1907. The crisis was associated with the restriction of democratic freedoms and rights in society, class inequality, still prevailing landlord tenure, desire of the peasants to receive more rights and property.

7. Conclusion

Throughout the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century in Russia, the state, society and citizens considered property in various contexts: legal, bureaucratic, legislative, economic, agricultural, industrial, political, ideological, revolutionary, social, cultural, historical, scientific, etc. The urgency of the problem of property increased in 1805, 1834 1860, 1880, 1906. The phenomenon of property was reflected in the Russian public consciousness and mentality probably as a result of the following events: economic, educational and censorship reforms of Alexander I, systematization of legislation by Nicholas I and the emergence of a new class of honorary citizens, discussion of the peasant issue and the liberation of serfs, the revolution of 1905-1907.

At the same time, it should be noted that we considered the reflection of the problem of property in the scientific, historical, economic, legal and journalistic literature. Let us designate this as a component of the attitude of the Russian people to property (represented by specific authors and specific intellectual units being text, term, concept, idea, problem, etc.). Private opinions and concepts and state policy (enactments,

decrees, laws) determined a certain attitude of the people to property, it occupied a certain place in the values of society and citizens, was woven into political, social and economic events.

Acknowledgments

The study was carried out with the financial support of the Russian Science Foundation (RSF) within the framework of the scientific project No. 21-18-00541.

References

- Alpidovskaya, M. L., & Sokolov, D. P. (2013). The genesis of property relations in Russia: a historical retrospective. *Bulletin of the Volgograd State Technical University*, 11, 18-26.
- Balabanova, E. S. (2001). Features of the Russian economic mentality. The world of Russia. *Sociology. Ethnology*, 10(3), 67-77.
- Borodkin, L. I. (2015). Historian in the world of computer technology: development in a spiral? *History. Electronic scientific and educational journal*, 8(41), 1.
- Bykov, A. A., Bykov, K. R., & Khaustovich, N. A. (2017). Historical analysis of economic development using Google Books Ngram. *Belarusian Economic Journal*, 4(81), 37-55.
- Kitova, D. A., & Kitov, A. A. (2020). Economic mentality as a problem of psychological analysis: from theoretical propositions to empirical research. *Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Social and Economic Psychology*, 4(20), 67-95.
- Kitova, D. A., & Shakov, A. M. (2017). Attitude to property as a subject of psychological research. *Humanization of Education*, 1, 74-80.
- Koltsova, V. A., & Zhuravlev, A. L. (2017). Essential characteristics and factors of the formation of the Russian mentality. *Psychological Journal*, 3, 5-17.
- Novozhenko, K. A. (2007). Russian economic mentality: socio-philosophical analysis: [author. diss. ... Cand. Philos. Sciences]. Rostov-on-Don.
- Roth, S., Trofimov, N. A., & Mkrtichyan, A. E. (2018). Was there capitalism? Analysis of the Russian language environment in the 19th and 20th centuries using big data. *South Russian Journal of Social Sciences*, 2, 6-26.
- Schreibman, S., Siemens, R., & Unsworth, J. (Eds.). (2004). *A companion to digital humanities*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Skrebyte, A., Garnett, P., & Kendal, J. R. (2016). Temporal relationships between individualism-collectivism and the economy in Soviet Russia: A word frequency analysis using the Google Ngram corpus. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 9, 1217-1235.
- Smirnova, E. O., & Sukhanova, M. D. (2014). Attitude to property as a subject of psychological research. *Contemporary foreign psychology*, 4, 18-32.
- Timofeev, D. V. (2009). The concept of "property" in Russia in the first quarter of the 19th century: the experience of the reconstruction of meanings. *Russian history*, 1, 165-180.
- Verkhoglyad, D. A. (2014). *Land ownership and land-legal relations in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia (1917 - early 2000s): a historical and legal analysis of legislative development*: [diss. ... candidate of legal sciences]. Krasnodar.
- Volodin, A. Yu. (2013). Humanities in the context of digital challenges (review of the publications of the University of Michigan project). Historical informatics. *Information Technology and Mathematical Methods in Historical Research and Education*, 4(6), 99-102.
- Yurevich, A. V. (2013). Structural elements of the national mentality. *Psychological Research*, 29, 12.
- Yuriev, V. M., Osadchaya, T. G., & Dudina, O. Yu. (2009). The history of the transformation of property relations in Russia. In 3 v. T. 2 Birth, formation and development of new property relations in the Soviet period. Tambov, Tambov State University named after G.R. Derzhavin.
- Zakharova, A. N. (2011). *Economic mentality in the structure of Russian polymentality*. Cheboksary, Chuvash State University named after I.N. Ulyanov.
- Zhuravlev, A. L., Koltsova, V. A., & Kholondovich, E. N. (Ed.). (2016). *History and current state of the Russian mentality*. Publishing House "Institute of Psychology RAS".