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The Second Economy
in the USSR and Eastern Europe:
A Bibliography
Gregory Grossman
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With an Introduction to the Series

Gregory Grossman
Department of Economics
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Vladimir G. Treml
Department of Economics
Duke University
Durham, NC 27706

Technical Editor
Nikolai Malyshev
Department of Economics
Duke University
Durham, NC 27706
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Author: G. Grossman

Performing Organization: Duke Univ.
Dept. of Economics
Durham, NC 27706

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Introduction to the Series

"Berkeley-Duke Occasional Papers on the Second Economy in the USSR"

The present issue inaugurates a series of occasional papers on the second economy of the Soviet Union, to be put out jointly by the undersigned. Our intent is to bring to the attention of the academic community and other interested persons certain research findings and other materials generated by our work on this general theme, and to do so in good time, often considerably before their publication (if any). Like other "working papers" that circulate in scholarly communities, the papers in this series may often be only tentative versions prior to further work and revision, and should be so treated. Comments are always invited and welcome.

It is perhaps fitting that the first paper in the series be a bibliography of publications on the Soviet and East European second economies, thus introducing the reader to a good part of the existing literature (in major Western languages) and, as it were, setting the stage for what is to come in the Berkeley-Duke Occasional Papers (BDOP).

For a good number of years the undersigned have been interested in that set of diverse Soviet phenomena which now goes by the catch-all term "second economy". Several years ago we pooled our interests, resources, and efforts to pursue the theme more systematically, and gave our joint undertaking the title of "Project on the Second Economy of the Soviet Union". We have been fortunate in obtaining financial support as well as encouragement from various sources, and to involve some of our students and a few interested outside scholars in particular aspects of the over-all
topic. Our Project has greatly benefited from (and, we hope, contributed to) the rapidly growing awareness among sovietologists of various disciplines and specialties in the importance of the second economy and concomitant socio-political phenomena in the Soviet Union and other communist countries. Indeed, it has coincided in time with a virtual explosion of interest and scholarly work on underground (parallel, hidden, submerged, black, informal, etc.) economies the world over. This, too, has stimulated and helped our own efforts. If there has lately been a significant "convergence" of diverse socio-economic systems, it seems to have occurred more below than above ground, while the convergence of the various branches of "underground economics", and of its practitioners, has been quite real!

Our Project tends to take a broad view of the Soviet second economy, concerning itself with macroeconomic as well as selected microeconomic phenomena, with monetary as well as real aspects, with incomes as well as production and exchange, and to some extent with extra-economic problems, too. We expect that the contents of BDOP will tend to reflect this breadth of interest.

Like all students of mostly hidden phenomena, we have had to take our data where and as they are, and to generate them afresh where we can. We have been fortunate in this last respect in having been able to conduct a questionnaire survey of households (in the USSR) among recent Soviet emigrants in this country. The data of the survey are now in and are currently being processed and analyzed, and will with time, we expect, provide some key information on the size, extent, and effects of the Soviet second economy. We hope it will also make a major contribution to BDOP. We therefore turn to a brief description of the survey.
The Grossman-Treml Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire survey is, so to say, the central empirical pillar of our project on the Second Economy of the USSR. Before launching it, we conducted several dozen non-questionnaire ("open ended") interviews with well-informed Soviet emigrants (former defense lawyers, prosecutors, judges, underground businessmen, police officials, journalists, etc.), which was valuable for designing the questionnaire and the sample. We were also encouraged and inspired by the early signs of success of the questionnaire survey among Soviet emigrants in Israel (OV survey) then being conducted by Professors Gur Ofer (Jerusalem) and Aron Vinodur (Haifa). It is a pleasure to record our gratitude to them for valuable counsel in matters both general and specific, and for generously sharing their questionnaire with us.

The unit of observation of our questionnaire survey is threefold: the household (usually, family) for most variables, every individual income-earner within the household for personal income, and every adult in the household, regardless of past income earning, for "perceptions" of side-incomes by the public at large. Following the OV survey, our sample is limited to the urban population; but unlike the OV survey, ours covers southern as well northern republics of the USSR. Almost all questionnaire interviews took place in the United States. The interviewers were also Soviet emigrants.

Recent Soviet emigrants in the United States are, of course, not representative of the "parent" Soviet urban population in a number of important socio-economic respects. By nationality, they are predominantly, though far from exclusively, Jewish or Armenian. Accordingly, in our sample we made a determined effort to give additional representation to
other nationalities (including mixed Jewish families), and also to blue-collar as against white-collar income-earners, to less as against more highly educated families, and to emigrants from other than the largest cities (except Leningrad, as explained below), and from southern republics.

Our sample includes 1,007 households (families) with the following geographic breakdown: R.S.F.S.R. - 446, Ukraine - 119, Baltic republics - 45, Belorussia - 37, Moldavia - 28, total for northern republics - 675; Armenia - 210, Georgia 46, Azerbaidzhan - 38, Uzbekistan - 38 (including 5 from southern Kazakhstan), total for southern republics - 332. By city size (1977): over 1 million population - 52.7 percent of families (of these, 57 percent from Leningrad, as explained below), 500,000 to 1 million - 27.8 percent, below 500,000 - 19.1 percent.

The number of individuals within the 1,007 households is 2,824, of whom 2,097 were adults (16+) before emigration. Of the adults, 52.2 percent are Jewish, 23.9 percent are Armenian, and 19.7 percent are Russian, Ukrainian, or Belorussian. (Nationality is here defined as it stood in the internal Soviet passport.) 

Number of income-earners interviewed - 1,819; number of persons filling out the questionnaire on "perceptions" of side incomes of various occupations and jobs - 1,970. Last normal year of household's material conditions in the USSR: mean and median - 1977, mode - 1978, with the years 1974 through 1979 accounting for 95 percent of the sample.

Two geographic locations, Armenia and Leningrad, constitute special case studies within our survey, the two together accounting for half the households in the total sample. The Armenian sub-sample accounts for 20.9 percent of the sample households, 90.5 percent of it consisting of ethnic Armenian families, which is very close to the actual proportion in the
republic as of 1979. Since the ethnic Armenians are the only contingent of titular nationality from a southern republic, it stands in our sample as proxy for the whole South, a region that of course plays an important and distinctive role in the Soviet second economy.

All the Armenian families came to the United States in the 1970s from Soviet Armenia proper (though there is also a comparatively large Armenian population in the rest of the USSR). Because of Soviet emigration policy, almost every Armenian family contains at least one "repatriant", i.e., one of the over 102,000 who immigrated in the late 1940s into Soviet Armenia, mostly from the Near East and S.E. Europe. Many of the repatriants in our sample were very young when they arrived in Armenia just after the War and grew to adulthood in the USSR. The non-repatriants among the Armenians in our sample are typically members of the repatriants' later-formed families. For some purposes the fact of being a repatriant (or a member of his/her family) may set such a person apart from the bulk of Soviet Armenia's population, but we do not believe this to be a serious problem for our investigation.

The other special case, Leningrad, accounts for 30.0 percent of the sample households. Here, in addition to the full, working families that are our exclusive object for all other localities, we collected sub-samples of other types of household, namely, single working males, single working females with children, single working females without children, and pensioner families. We hope that the relationships for the relevant variables between these various kinds of households from Leningrad will provide insights into the corresponding relationships in the USSR as a whole.

On the advice of our survey-research consultants we used the "snow-
ball" techniques of collecting interviews, constrained in the just-men-
tioned ways, rather than random sampling. To hold down the risk of "sample
inbreeding" (our term) in the course of questionnaire collection, we
interviewed in a number of American cities using many interviewers. (The
exception relates to Armenians, who were all interviewed in the Los Angeles
area, where they are highly concentrated.)

The questionnaire consists of two main parts. The first (in order of
answering) deals with individual perceptions of the size of unofficial
("left") incomes as supplements to the official earnings of 36 occupations,
professions, and jobs listed by us in the questionnaire. Respondents were
asked to place a mark against each occupation, etc., in one of eight
columns representing left-income class intervals, ranging from zero to
"over 300" rubles per month. We deliberately included occupations, etc.,
where we expected very low side incomes (e.g., librarian) as well as those
where we expected high ones. In this we have not been disappointed, though
there are a few surprises, such as the very high assessment of side incomes
of directors of funeral parlors. Altogether, 1,970 persons answered the
"perceptions" part.

The "perceptions" questions were asked somewhat differently of respon-
dents from northern and southern republics. The former were asked to
provide estimates for the USSR as a whole; the latter, only for their own
(southern) republic, in view of the reportedly higher development of the
second economy in the South.

The remaining and larger part of the questionnaire pertains mainly to
the composition and demographics of the household and to its expenditures,
income, and wealth in the "last normal year" (LNY) in the USSR. LNY is
defined as the last calendar year in which the household's material circum-
stances were not yet significantly affected by the prospect of emigration; it is not necessarily a typical year in the family's experience.

In regard to expenditures, the questionnaire asks for considerable detail about payments to private individuals for goods and services purchased, for repairs performed, tips and bribes given, rentals paid, and so forth. These data, we expect, will allow us to estimate -- albeit approximately -- the dependence of the urban population on private sources of supply. At a further remove, the expenditure data should help throw light on the aggregate hidden incomes of private producers and traders who sell to the urban sector, including those outside the direct purview of our survey, such as agricultural producers.

In this connection, a serious problem of estimation is created by incomes from "crypto-private" production, that is, private activity that hides behind the façade of a socialist enterprise. Such incomes are many and can be quite large individually, but are not likely to be reported by our respondents as payments to private persons. The reason is that the products of crypto-private production are often indistinguishable, physically or by price, from identical products sold on the state's account, and in fact are sold side by side with them. While this helps protect the private operation against discovery by authorities, it also fools the customer to think that he is buying "socialist" and not private goods. Unless we find a convincing way to estimate crypto-private sales, the corresponding hidden income, the extent of the second economy, and the "true" size of Soviet GNP, may all be significantly understated.

Still in regard to household expenditures, the questionnaire dwells on a number of special problems, such as privately owned housing and related matters; private automobile ownership and outlay on repair, gasoline
supply, etc; alcohol purchase, consumption, and use, including illegal home distillation and the use of vodka as a means of payment and of incentive. It also inquired into methods of circumventing goods shortages that were practiced by our respondents (such as exploiting personal connections, paying under the counter, travelling some distance to obtain goods, using "closed distributors").

The questionnaire seeks data on current saving during LNY, and stocks of liquid savings and other property at the end of LNY broken down by major items.

In the income and work sections of the questionnaire, emphasis is placed on second-economy components of income and on time utilization. As noted, this information is sought both of the household as a unit and of each individual member of the household who had significant income during LNY from whatever source. 1,816 persons in our sample had individual income, whether formal/legal or informal/illegal.

While the emigrants constitute a far-from-representative sample of the total Soviet population, yet, with the help of purposive sampling and proper re-weighting, one may be able to approximate the general Soviet population in some relevant respects. Nevertheless, serious problems remain. Re-weighting is hampered by the increasing paucity and unreliability of Soviet official statistics, while on the subjective side one must guard against respondent bias, imperfect recall, and the like.

Insofar as problems can be kept within reasonable limits, the survey technique harbors considerable promise of obtaining, for a given time period, estimates of hidden personal incomes, total and by social groups and regions, and a large amount of detail. Most importantly, survey findings may be combined with incomplete data from official statistics to
estimate hidden income and underground activity in specific sectors and markets.

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Our Project on the Second Economy of the USSR has benefited from the assistance, advice, support, and encouragement of many more individuals and organizations than can be listed here. We do, however, wish to acknowledge, with pleasure, the invaluable assistance of our (now) junior partner in the venture, Professor Michael Alexeev and of Mr. Leonid Khotin, and last but not least, of the many hundreds of recent emigrants from the Soviet Union, both interviewees and interviewers, the former anonymous, without whom our research would have been impossible. Finally, we note with satisfaction and gratitude the financial and material support of the Ford Foundation, the National Council for Soviet and East European Research, the U.S. Department of Defense, Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates (Planned Economies Unit), and our two universities with their various subdivisions, Duke University and the University of California, Berkeley.

Gregory Grossman

Vladimir G. Treml
Preface

This bibliography, a by-product of our ongoing research on the second economy of the Soviet Union, is being made available in this format to interested scholars and students. The phrase "second economy" here embraces legal private economic activity as well as "underground" and otherwise unobserved economic activity, whether on private or socialist account. Also included are items pertaining primarily to the broad issue of corruption, a common concomitant of the second economy.

The bibliography is limited to works in English and other major West European languages. The virtually limitless literature bearing on the second economy and corruption in Russian and other languages of the USSR and of Eastern Europe, originating in that part of the world or with the respective emigrations, is not represented. Also not represented (with a few exceptions) are journalistic accounts, unpublished papers (except if forthcoming in published form), and student papers other than Ph.D. dissertations.

It is our intention to update this bibliography from time to time. Readers are invited to draw our attention to significant works omitted here.

Gregory Grossman


Gaertner, Wulf, and Alois Wenig, eds. The Economics of the Shadow Economy (Proceedings of the International Conference on the Economics of the Shadow Economy held at the University of Bieliefeld, West Germany, October 10-14, 1983). Berlin/New York: Springer-Verlag, 1985. [Most of the volume is devoted to Western countries and situations. The three papers devoted to Eastern countries are by Galasi, Brezinski, and Brus/Laski; they are listed in this bibliography.]

Galasi, Peter. "Peculiarities and Limits of the Second Economy in Socialism (The Hungarian Case)." In Gaertner and Wenig, Economics of the Shadow Economy, 353-361 (this bibliography).


Greenslade -- see Schroeder.


U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Economic Research -- see Severin, Barbara, and David Carey.


Zieba, Andrzej. -- see Brus/Laski.