Shabo: Wine and Prosperity on the Russian Steppe

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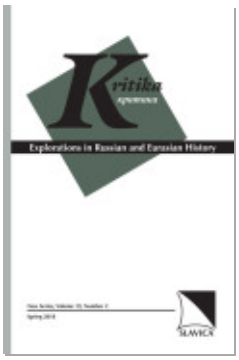

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Wine and Prosperity on the Russian Steppe

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The village of Shabo (aka Chabag) was founded in 1822 on the shores of the Dniester Liman at the Russian Empire's southwestern edge by a group of French-speaking Swiss of the Reformed Protestant faith. Somewhat improbably, more than 90 years later, Shabo was a prosperous and growing community. Unlike many nearby colonies of "foreigners," however, it did not preserve its initial sense of ethnolinguistic or religious community. The colony's trajectory, comparatively examined, raises interesting questions about the economic successes and failures of Russia's effort to colonize and incorporate the Pontic steppe after its conquest in the latter part of the 18th century.

The village of Shabo still exists, now a quite ordinary settlement near the shoreline about 10km south of Bilhorod-Dnistrovskii. Its founders and original inhabitants were Tatar. In 1812, following the Russian conquest of Bessarabia during the Russo-Turkish War, most residents left for other parts of the Ottoman Empire, leaving only three to four families behind.[1] A "new" Shabo was established by foreign colonists, Russians, and Ukrainians. At its peak in late imperial times, the village with the adjacent settlement had more than 4,000 inhabitants. Contemporary photographs and plans portray neatly arranged household plots on a rectangular grid. In the 1850s, long rectangular cottages with thatched roofs were set around an open square with a Protestant church at the center. But by 1920, population pressure had transformed the village, with residences filling in the earlier open plazas surrounding the church and facing the municipal hall, converting those civic buildings into other plots on the grid. To the north and west, the village was surrounded by vineyards on gently sloping sandy fields closest to the liman. Farther west, there were clayey chalk soils and, still farther inland, rich

[1] Charles Upson Clark, *Bessarabia, Russia, and Roumania on the Black Sea* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1927), chap. 8.

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black earth. To the south, Shabo bordered immediately on a somewhat larger village, known as Chabag (Shabo)-posad, whose inhabitants were mostly Russian and Ukrainian.[2]

Beginning in the late 18th century, the Russian Empire, as is well known, invited groups of foreigners as well as Russians and Ukrainians to colonize the steppe and Crimea. Over the century and more that followed, many of the foreign colonies proved to be economically very successful. This article uses a microhistory of Shabo to emphasize the importance of some explanations for such colonies' economic success that are not commonly treated together in the historiography.

The reasons for success that are usually offered focus on the qualities and conditions of the colonies themselves. Human capital explanations, well known to students of colonization the world over, argue that foreign colonizing populations often bring with them educational and cultural attributes, a different approach to technologies, or other factors that are unusual to the new territory. Such characteristics, especially when sustained in subsequent generations because of internal cohesiveness and cooperation, offer one important explanation for colonies' economic success.[3] Imperial Russian colonial policy was initially motivated by the belief that the successes of such cohesive groups of foreign migrants would provide a valuable example to Russians and Ukrainians on the steppe. The Russian government, these communities, and their descendants continued to endorse similar ideas. Since then, historians like Natalia Venger and Detlev Brandes have given considerable weight to the durable internal cohesion of immigrant colonies to explain their overall success.[4]

Another approach, again not uncommon to studies of colonization in many parts of the world, argues that the institutional framework in which foreign colonists operated was of great importance.[5] In the Russian context, discussion has focused on the economic advantages available to foreign

[2] Olivier Grivat, *Les vignerons suisses du tsar* (Chapelle-sur-Moudon: Ketty & Alexandre, 1993), 45, 121. The location of present-day Shabo suggests that it is probably more directly descended from Chabag-posad, the Russian settlement that bordered Shabo.

[3] See, e.g., William Easterly and Ross Levine, "The European Origins of Economic Development," http://faculty.haas.berkeley.edu/ross_levine/papers/EO_17july2014.pdf; and Eric Hanushek and Dennis Kimko, "Schooling, Labor-force Quality, and the Growth of Nations," *American Economic Review* 90, 5 (2000): 1184–208.

[4] N. V. Venger, *Mennonitskoe predprinimatel´stvo v usloviiakh modernizatsii Iuga Rossii* (Dnipropetrovsk: Izdatel´stvo Dniprov´skogo natsional´nogo universitetu, 2009), 189–206; Detlef Brandes, *Von den Zaren adoptiert: Die deutschen Kolonisten und di Balkansiedler in Neurussland und Bessarabien, 1751–1914* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1993), sect. 4.

[5] See Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson, "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development," *American Economic Review* 99, 5 (2001): 1369–401.

colonists who came with unusual resources or to whom the imperial government awarded family-owned plots of land and other preferential considerations on arrival.[6]

Here I analyze the economic success of Shabo by using a human capital argument based on the internal cohesion of the village, as well as by examining its early institutional framework. The article also examines a version of the human capital argument rarely broached in Russian historiography. In Shabo's case, furthermore, success was also predicated on a delicate interaction between the character of the southern Russian economy, evolving colonial policies, and their impact on the colony—an approach that has some limited but growing support in recent studies.

In the historical literature, the human capital explanation of economic success is most often linked to internal cohesion and cooperation within foreign settlements based on a tightly knit ethnolinguistic or religious sense of community. Explaining economic success in this way is a poor fit in the case of the village of Shabo. Initially, it is true, the Swiss settlement envisioned itself as exclusively French-speaking, Swiss, and Reformed Protestant: French in culture and language, hardworking, and resilient. One could easily describe the village in the 1820s as envisioning itself as part of an "imagined community" linking the recently arrived Shabo colonists of southern Russia to one another and to the French-speaking Swiss canton of Vaud.[7] Detailed and frequent correspondence and contact between Shabo and Switzerland offers eloquent testimony to that fact. Certainly, although Shabo was administered separately from its neighbors in those early years through the Board of State Economy, Guardianship of Foreigners, and Rural Husbandry (Ekspeditsiia gosudarstvennogo khoziaistva, opekustva inostrannykh i sel´skogo domovodstva), and from the late 1830s by the reorganized Ministry of State Domains (Ministerstvo gosudarstvennykh imushchestv), it was not entirely isolated from the rest of Russian colonial society on the frontier. But its settlement documents list the colonists' special privileges: tax exemption for ten years and low taxes for another ten, immunity from conscription, and freedom of religion, among other things. The Swiss also had a clear sense of their own importance. This is evident in their initially unfriendly encounters with the local peasantry. Their requests for changes in customary agricultural practice and even for a resettlement of some individuals were supported by the state.

[6] Leonard Friesen, *Rural Revolutions in Southern Ukraine* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 57.

[7] On imagined communities, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 2016 [1983]).

Shabo also insisted on receiving correspondence even from local officials exclusively in French for more than a decade.[8]

But such linguistic, cultural, and religious unities were soon disrupted in Shabo. For one thing, the residents of Shabo were not particularly insistent about their religion. For two decades, the village did without a pastor, a church, and a school altogether; some traveled to nearby villages for services, but the closer churches were Lutheran rather than Reformed. A village genealogy of 29 early settler families lists Reformed-Lutheran marriages in the first generation of colonists; Eastern Orthodox spouses appeared in the second generation.[9] In 1843, Shabo's first pastor-teacher arrived, a Swiss named Bugnion. Although he presided over the building of a church (*temple*), his seven-year career was scandal-ridden and ended in dispute and flight. At his departure around 1850, the colony was described as having 8 Roman Catholics and 37 Lutherans, as well as a larger number of Reformed Protestants. Such a mixture was unusual in most foreign colonies until much later in their existence.[10] Furthermore, a village map of the era, showing regular rectangular household lots organized around the new "temple," also depicts an Orthodox church on the very border between "foreign" Shabo and Russo-Ukrainian Chabag-posad, across the street from some Shabo households.[11]

If religion was not a lasting source of unity for Shabo by 1850, neither was ethnolinguistic identity. The Russian administration had envisioned the Shabo colony in 1822 as having an initial population of some 30–40 families, with land stock for 60 set aside in anticipation of further arrivals from Switzerland. Alas, these numbers were not achieved. Only 7 families arrived in 1822; another 25 would arrive before 1831, but death and disease took their toll on those already in the new colony. By 1827, there were still only

[8] V. F. Onoprienko, *"Istinnyi rai—na Shabskoi zemle": Dokumental'naia istoriia shveitsarskikh kolonistov v Bessarabii* (Odessa: Astroprint, 2009), 23–24; Archives cantonales vaudoises PP 217/8, typescript of André Anselme, *La colonie suisse de Chabag, notice historique 1822–1922, illustré d'après les photographies de l'auteur* (published by Cetatea-Alba: Tipografia Progresul, 1926), 25, 34; Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 15.

[9] This source—Église réformée de Chabag, *Registres de l'église réformée de Chagab, 1872–93* (Salt Lake City, filmed by Genealogical Society of Utah, 1991)—is described as the Shabo church registry, which it is not; nor are the dates provided in the title correct. It is rather a genealogy of 29 early settler families, starting from 1822. One assumes that these families would have been among the least likely to assimilate. See Heidi Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie am Schwarzen Meer: Ihre Gründung und die ersten Jahrzenhnte ihres Bestehens" (PhD diss., University of Zürich, 1974), 172, 179.

[10] Venger, *Mennonitskoe predprinimatel'stvo*, 500; Archives cantonales vaudoises PP 217/8, copy of handwritten document by M. Desloes, "Notice sur la colonie suisse de Chabag en Bessarabie dans la Russie méridionales en 1845," 40.

[11] Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 44–45.

eleven families settled in Shabo.[12] A frustrated Russian administration confiscated a portion of the original land grant and exerted considerable pressure on the Swiss to accept other colonists into their village.[13] A few non-French Swiss were gradually permitted to join—initially, they were Swiss-Germans, Germans, or foreign colonists from nearby. By 1840, the colony numbered 252 people (about 50 families), a population comparable in size to other foreign communities in southern Russia at the same time. The colony was well provided with working-age residents as well as numerous children. A visitor in 1845 reported that most people spoke to other villagers in a French patois that included Russian, Turkish, Moldavian, and German words. When talking with those outside the village, they comfortably "spoke a dialect coming from Russian which is called Little Russian."[14] As it turned out, this linguistic mélange proved a source of tension. It took about a decade for the village to agree that the common language of communication (and teaching) would be Russian, although there would be German and French lessons in the school. The tensions did not entirely disappear. French speakers deplored German speakers' determination to retain their language and culture. Later pastors and schoolteachers reported the difficulties of ministering to a flock on opposite sides of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71. Rather than a reputation for ethnolinguistic exclusiveness, Shabo developed a name for openness and "lively cultural exchange" with its Russian neighbors, even as it preserved to a degree a sense of its West European origins.[15]

It is worth noting here that the internal history of Shabo, like that of many other such colonies, of necessity relies quite heavily on sources written by colonists at the time or by their descendants since. These valuable internal sources—especially memoirs—of course, require a critical eye and careful corroboration in their use. In this case, however, the inclination of such internal sources is to emphasize cohesion, rather than its dilution.

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[12] Onoprienko, *"Istinnyi rai,"* 54; Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," 157–63; Leo Schelbert, "Vevay, Indiana, and Chabag, Bessarabia: The Making of Two Winegrower Settlements," *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 25 (1990): 120.

[13] Archives cantonales vaudoises PP 217/8, a xerox-like reprint of David Besson, *Résumé historique de la colonie suisse de Chabag* (Lausanne: Georges Conne, 1952), 6–7; Brandes, *Von den Zaren adoptiert*, 110.

[14] Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," 88; Claudia Chinezu, *Les suisses en Roumanie* (n.p.: Fondation Sturdza & Weidmann, 2002), 24; Schelbert, "Vevay, Indiana, and Chabag, Bessarabia," 121–22; Desloes, "Notice sur la colonie suisse," 40, 42 (my translation).

[15] Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," 58; Schelbert, "Vevay, Indiana, and Chabag, Bessarabia," 121–22; Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 40; Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 87. In a recent interview, a onetime resident of Shabo spoke French well but with a Russian accent: he lived for a time in Switzerland, but his more precise vocabulary seemed to be in Russian (http://www.cavebessarabie.ch/398149874).

In sum, then, neither religious nor ethnolinguistic cohesion can support a human capital argument that explains Shabo's long-term economic success. Considerably before that success in the second half of the 19th century, its population no longer exhibited collective adherence to any confessional or ethnolinguistic identity.[16] Rather, Shabo's early community identity was undermined by the initial size of the colony and by the settlers' subsequent attitude toward the difficulties confronting them.

The dilution of such unity in Shabo was reinforced by institutional Russification, which took place in several stages. After 1861, new villagers no longer needed the colony's consent to live in Shabo. The village complained about the malfunctioning of the Russian justice system, as they were "mainstreamed" after 1863. Especially after 1871, the empire integrated all foreign colonies into the general administrative system. Tax concessions and immunity to conscription were withdrawn. Shabo billeted Russian soldiers in 1874. The immediately adjacent Russian settlement of Chabag-posad was no longer definitively separated from the former Swiss colony.[17]

If this version of the human capital argument—which relies on colonies' internal cohesiveness to explain how their cultural, educational, and other attributes survived beyond the first generation—is an ill fit for Shabo, another version is more helpful. This version links prosperity more closely to occupational specialization and specific skills, initially imported but later intentionally maintained for economic and other reasons. It is an approach rarely mentioned in the Russian context, although it has appeared elsewhere in studies of colonial success.[18] In Shabo, residents' skills in raising wine grapes and producing wine were far from a first-generation occupation. It was deliberately maintained and renewed.

To put Shabo's skills in context, there were two elements to the Russian government's early intentions for the production of wine from the southern steppes and Crimea. One goal was the promotion of much greater

[16] It also considerably predates the kind of assimilation or integration posited for more exclusive foreign colonies later in the century by Friesen and Venger. Assimilation is here defined as (a) educational attainment, occupational specialization, and parity in earnings; (b) spatial concentration; (c) language assimilation, defined in terms of English-language ability and loss of mother tongue; and (d) intermarriage. See Mary C. Waters and Tomas R. Jimenez, "Assessing Immigrant Assimilation: New Empirical and Theoretical Challenges," *Annual Review of Sociology* 31 (2005): 107–8.

[17] Bilhorod-Dnistrovskii, Arkhiv Kraevedcheskogo muzeia, "Memo from the Office of Charles Gander, Sometime Mayor of Shabo, 1863–1881" (Microfilm RMS 296.009 at Archives cantonales vaudoises, Lausanne SW), 6 ob.; Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 34–35.

[18] A parallel is Johan Fourie and Dieter von Fintel, "Settler Skills and Colonial Development: The Hugenot Wine-Makers in Eighteenth-Century Dutch South Africa," *Economic History Review* 67, 4 (2014): 932–63.

wine production in the southern borderlands in the 1820s and 1830s, after Bessarabia had joined Crimea and nearby steppe regions as new parts of the empire. While this effort was very successful, foreign colonists as a group did not play a significant role in meeting this goal.[19]

Foreign colonists and individual immigrant specialists were expected to play an important role when it came to improving the quality of these wines, however. Contemporary wine-drinking Russians made it clear in word and deed that imported expertise was the appropriate path to a necessary improvement in the quality of Russian-produced wine; West European wines were unsurprisingly those that appealed the most to their palates and that they aspired to produce. Imported expertise was precisely the role envisioned for Shabo from the start. The initial settlement agreement refered to a "colony of Vaudois winemakers, which is to establish itself on the Akkerman vineyards," and specified that each family would receive vineyards, as well as access to pasturage and fields.[20] The nearly flat embankment of the Dniester Liman included a considerable acreage of former Turkish vineyards (Achaabag, or lower gardens). Other than carefully studying the varietals that had been raised by the Turks, Shabo's residents had little to say about the former residents of the area and their taste or skill in winemaking. The new residents of Shabo clearly shared the larger goal of producing European-tasting wines. Both they and their visitors consistently measured Shabo wines against European ones.[21] Unlike some other foreign colonists (those raising merino sheep, for example), they did not have the advantages, or difficulties, of launching a new agricutural product. Rather, the Shabo colonists were expected to use their imported expertise to help transform an existing agricultural project—the production of wine grapes and wine—into a high-quality European product. Shabo was not the only colony to be founded with such a goal, nor were its residents the only specialists invited to immigrate.

The nature and persistence of winemaking in Shabo as an occupation and a well-developed skill is easily documented. From the start, a number of Shabo's first colonists were experienced winemakers, and their leader, Jean-

[19] Roger Bartlett, *Human Capital: The Settlement of Foreigners in Russia, 1762–1804* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 225; P. P. Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii i levoberezhnogo Podnestrov'ia* (Moscow: Shtinitsa, 1988), 28.

[20] Onoprienko, *"Istinnyi rai,"* 47, doc. 3.

[21] See D. Strukov, "O bordoskom vinodelie," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo obshchestva sel'skogo khoziaistva iuzhnoi Rossii* (hereafter *ZIOSKIR*) (1859): 460–88 (no issue nos. for this volume); Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 56; and A. R. Boeva, "Iz dzherel pro istoriiu shveitsarskikh kolonistiv na pivdni Ukraini," *Visnik Odes'kogo natsional'nogo universitetu, Seriia: Bibliotekoznavstvo, bibliografoznavstvo, knigoznavstvo* 17, 2(8) (2012): 28.

Vincent Tardent, was a formally educated botanist and horticulturalist.[22] On arrival, the colonists found that the Turkish vineyards, planted on gently sloping fine yellow coastal sands, were old and deserted. Remaining local residents had left them abandoned after the Turkish departure, finding the sandy soils useless for most cultivation; they occasionally fished from the beaches. Further inland, the soil had a surface layer of sand, with clayey chalk underneath; still further west was rich black earth, which was universally considered valuable.

The Shabo colonists demonstrated their claim to expertise by applying their specific imported skills at once. Under Tardent's somewhat dictatorial tutelage, the difficulties of re-creating vineyards on such sandy, shifting soils were disregarded; such fields were judged to be productive of grapes with a higher alcohol content and better flavor.[23] In the spring of 1823, settlers began ripping out the Turkish vines, replanting them, and expanding the acreage planted in wine grapes. Although the colony did not fail to diversify its agricultural production to supply itself with food and cash crops as its vines matured and in defense against vagaries of the market, the colony's commitment to winemaking remained unwavering, and the quality of its wines soon received acknowledgment in terms of both reputation and price.[24] For example, Prince Mikhail S. Vorontsov, governor-general of Novorossiia and *namestnik* of Bessarabia, was involved in the imperial efforts to increase production; he was also a patron of specifically southern Russian high-quality wine production throughout the 1820s and 1830s and assured the colony of his ongoing support. In 1832, he founded a school for vintners in Akkermann, near Shabo; it was closed after three years and its lands given to Tardent to continue experimentation. Meanwhile, the Russian administration concluded that no further leadership in wine production and refinement was needed near Akkerman. Shabo also had other wealthy patrons in Odessa.[25]

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[22] He also met and spent (an?) evening in Pushkin's company, as the latter was enjoying a liaison with Prince Vorontsov's wife.

[23] K. I. Tardan, *Vinogradarstvo i vinodelie* (Odessa: Frantsov & Nitche, 1854), chap. 4; M. Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, pt. 5: *Iuzhnaia Rossiia (Bessarabia, Khersonskaia, Podol´skaia i Ekaterinoslavskaia gubernii)* (St. Petersburg: V. Kirshbaum, 1899), 18; E. I. Druzhinina, *Iuzhnaia Ukraina v 1800–1825* (Moscow: Nauka, 1970), 148. In a letter of 4 June to General Insov, Tardent reports that the settlers have planted 30,000 vine seedlings that spring (Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," 101).

[24] Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," chap. 7.

[25] Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 14, 26–27; Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 23; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:14; Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 44.

Winemaking as an occupational focus and the skills to sustain it did not fade in subsequent generations. For one thing, although its fields continued to produce some other crops, Shabo did not develop much artisanal diversity. That is, numerous "foreign" colonies in the Russian South developed new agricultural skills and enterprises (such as the production of merino sheep wool already mentioned) over time. Most of these colonies also developed a variety of artisanal skills to sustain themselves in the generations following their foundation. The number of joiners, carpenters, and smiths in Mennonite villages, for example, grew rapidly even before 1840.[26] Nothing of the sort seems to have happened in Shabo. The genealogy of 29 Shabo families mentioned earlier frequently lists the occupations of male members of the colony. The sample represented by the genealogy is large (that is, 10–20 percent of Shabo's population for most of its history) but skewed by its disproprtionate representation of early arriving French and German colonists. It is nonetheless notable that the number of self-identified *vignerons* (winemakers) and others connected to the wine industry in this village sample *rose* after the first generation of colonists to 40 percent of men in the second and subsequent generations until World War I.[27] In many cases, there is no particular evidence of special training overseas or elsewhere for these new generations of vignerons; rather a diary and a village history indicate that these particular skills were passed on within the village and between generations. Meanwhile, all other individual artisanal specializations in this sample declined over time.[28] While investigating the importance of occupational foci is not an approach that has been widely adopted in examining southern Russia's foreign colonies, Shabo may have been somewhat unusual in its concentration on a single occupation.

Nor did members of the Shabo colony rely on the skills with which the first colonists had arrived to support that occupation. Instead, they deliberately maintained and updated their winemaking skills in the period preceding emancipation and thereafter. Most important, Charles Tardent—one of Louis-Vincent's sons—was sent back to Switzerland to study. On his return, he became a respected southern Russian vintner with lands in Shabo and additional nearby vineyards nearby given him by Count Vorontsov. He and others from Shabo also joined the Imperial Agricultural Society of Southern

[26] Venger, *Mennonitskoe predprinimatel´stvo*, 507.

[27] Église réformée de Chabag, *Registres de l'église réformée*. There is an explainable decline to 33 percent in the fourth generation (wartime).

[28] That is, some families without vignerons on arrival listed themselves as such in later generations. No other single occupation grew. The second most common occupation listed was the rather neutral *agriculteur* (ibid.). See also "Memo from the Office of Charles Gander," 1857; and Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 14.

Russia, an Odessa-based organization founded in 1828.[29] In 1854, the organization's journal printed Tardent's manual on viticulture and viniculture, written for the grape growers and winemakers of Bessarabia as part of the initiative to improve the art of winemaking in the region. The volume drew on contemporary European innovation but also systematically contextualized those ideas for local conditions, which Tardent had carefully analyzed: describing the relationship of soil types to wine and table grape production, commenting on the latest plows, presses, and pruning equipment, identifying the grape varietals that were appropriate to southern Russian soils—including those with local origins—and detailing European methods for dealing with local pests.[30] The manual would remain a model for southern Russian vintners; it was reissued in 1862 and 1874 and reprinted several times in *Zapiski Imperatorskogo obshchestva sel´skogo khoziaistva iuzhnoi Rossii*.[31] An imperial award for Tardent's contributions to the Russian wine industry was contemplated, but when he died before arrangements were finalized, the project was abandoned.[32]

The manual makes it clear that, as a result of Charles Tardent, his father's, and others' skills, the colony of Shabo widely applied some remarkably advanced technical and other skills to Shabo's early cultivation of wine grapes. Thus, as Shabo planted its vineyards, colonists everywhere in the settlement planted their vines in long relatively close-packed rows, with four to five feet between the rows, as was becoming somewhat more common in Western Europe. But in accordance with the recent suggestions of European scientific agriculture, Shabo then normally pruned its vines when they branched, keeping the original plants in strict rows, while the new shoots were rooted elsewhere and used to expand acreage under vine in other fields.[33] This was in defiance of both tradition and practice in most European and Turkish vineyards, which may well have planted their vines in the same long close-packed rows as Shabo. But when their vines sent out shoots, the ends of the branches were usually buried in the ground and allowed to root. The result was that the

[29] Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 61.

[30] Tardan, *Vinogradarstvo i vinodelie*, 47, 138; Derzhavnii arkiv Odes´koi oblasti (DAOO) f. 22, op. 1, d. 606, ll. 3–6.

[31] *ZIOSKIR*, no. 1 (1856), no. 1 (1862); no. 4 (1890). It remained a respected source of information into the late 1890s (Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:15).

[32] DAOO f. 22, op. 1, d. 606, ll. 3–6; d. 23 (1855–56), ll. 1–20.

[33] Desloes, "Notice sur la colonie suisse," 52; Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 14, 28. Compare with the images in Tardan, *Vinogradarstvo i vinodelie*, appendix 26 (available at http://rarebook.onu.edu.ua:8081/handle/store/2111).These methods were seen in France as characteristic only of high-end wines, if that. See Leo A. Loubère, *The Red and the White: The History of Wine in France and Italy in the Nineteenth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976), 18.

vines did not long remain in clearly defined rows, but created vine bunches or bushes (*en foule*). As a result, the typical plant in a West European vineyard took careful, skilled, labor-intensive field maintenance, and sometimes pyramidal staking and equally attentive (leaf) trimming of individual vines to afford maximum support and sunlight to the grapes.[34]

This innovation and others like it, in grape and wine production, also represented an adaptation to Shabo's local social environment. By comparison with West European vineyards, Shabo's vines initially grew on quite extensive acreages.[35] The highly skilled labor needed for their cultivation under the old methods was initially exceedingly hard to find outside the village, which was itself very small. In its early years, Shabo unsuccessfully advertised its willingness to train peasants (serfs) in these arts.[36] Local estates were more interested in luring the Swiss themselves from Shabo's fields to care for vineyards on Russian- and Ukrainian-held lands.[37] These limited and unproductive interactions with their immediate neighbors were not only pregnant with questions about the colony's place in the local social hierarchy; they also made it worthwhile, even essential, for Shabo to replace some of the most labor-intensive elements of traditional viti- and viniculture with less labor-intensive methods, while demonstrating the imported benefits of modern and rational techniques.[38]

From this rather lengthy examination, it is not difficult to conclude that the colony of Shabo could claim substantial occupational skills in raising wine grapes and producing wine beyond its first settler generation. While this particular human capital did, of course, in part arrive with those first families, this was a set of skills that was used, renewed, and maintained thereafter in support of the colony's primary occupation. Neither the occupational focus nor the skills themselves were sustained, as is sometimes argued in reference to such situations, by ethnolinguistic or religious community. Rather, it was in tune with imperial colonial goals and was rewarded by reputation and a precarious prosperity.

[34] Loubère, *Red and the White*, 80–81; Aigle, Switzerland, Musée de la vigne et du vin à Chateau d'Aigle (conversation with curator, 21 July 2014).

[35] The Swiss were to have received 16 hectares of vines per family in the 1820s. Three hectares was an average French holding in the first half of the century. The colony did not receive all that was promised, but new acreages of vines were planted almost at once (Loubère, *Red and the White*, 171; Desloes, "Notice sur la colonie suisse," 52).

[36] Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 16.

[37] Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 42.

[38] Desloes, "Notice sur la colonie suisse," 54; Loubère, *Red and the White*, 18. Tardan, *Vinogradarstvo i vinodelie*, appendices 30–33, offers evocative images.

Nor did this occupational focus and renewal of skills fade in the latter half of the 19th century. There is evidence that such skills and interests continued to be transferred from generation to generation. Experimental gardens were used to test techniques and to prevent diseases. Other wine producers ordered seedlings from Shabo. At least some in the village remained committed to updating their skills well into the 19th century. Pasteurization and fermentation science were known in Shabo toward the end of the century, and in 1892, one George Giroz, master of viticulture, went to the colony from the Jura.[39]

The connection of such human capital to Shabo's economic success in the latter part of the 19th century is not difficult to perceive. The Shabo viniculturalists' skills helped them retain a competitive advantage in southern Russia into the 20th century. M. Ballas's exhaustive *Vinodelie v Rossii,* volume 5, subtitled *Iuzhnaia Rossiia* and printed in 1899, mentions only a few producers of respectable wines in the province of Bessarabia, primarily and repeatedly the village of Shabo, the neighboring town of Akkerman, and Purcari to the north. Nearby settlements in the Dniester Valley, although nearly all of them had vineyards and produced some wine, are not mentioned.[40] Akkerman is praised for its municipal gardens, which had regularly and over a long period experimented with wine grapes. Shabo's individual producers were not mentioned by name. The village had a collective reputation not only for quality but also for careful training and generous pay for its vineyard workers as early as 1850. These workers generally lived outside of Shabo proper, more often than not in immediately adjoining Chabag-posad; even in the 1890s, they were (re)commended as a local resource—skilled labor to be drawn upon for grafting in the wake of the phylloxera epidemic.[41] Beyond this, Shabo's middling and prosperous wine producers received especially positive mention (again not by name). Unusually for the region, they were able to concentrate

[39] Canton de Vaud PP 217/8, Pierre Grellet, "Un village Suisse en Roumanie," *L'Abeille*, no. 17 (1940): 16–17, 26. There is also the suggestion that another Tardent, following studies in Switzerland, wrote a second manual that was printed in Odessa in 1884; having been unable to find a copy or a complete reference, I assume that the reference is to a reprint of the 1854 Tardent manual. See DAOO f. 22, op. 1, d. 612, ll. 138–42 (1882).

[40] Friesen, *Rural Revolutions in Southern Ukraine*, 186–89.

[41] Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 87, mentions 3,000 workers, paid 85–115 rubles per annum by 1850. Ballas recommended them for work in vine grafting in the post-phylloxera era because of their excellent training (*Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:38–39). The Soviet Union was unimpressed, citing Shabo's exploitation of its local workforce. See V. T. Galias and G. D. Zlenko, "Shabo," in *Istoriia gorodov i sel: Odesskaia oblast'*, 277–87 (http://ukrssr.ru/Odesskaja.obl/Belgorod-Dnestrovskij.rajon/SZabo.html).

their attention on wine production, depending on it for their entire incomes because of their up-to-date techniques and high-quality production.[42]

It is easy to imagine that consistent praise of Shabo's winemaking skills, which were mentioned by the world outside the village as a collective characteristic, might have been a source of occupational pride in the village. Mayor Gander voices such sentiments, but his diary ends in 1881. As might be expected, there are fewer voices on this or any other topic from inside the village as its attachment to Western Europe declined.[43] Although the village held communal vineyards and fields from the 1830s, there is no indication that Shabo initially indulged in any other institutional cooperation. Much later, a Union viticole de Chabag is mentioned; the date of its foundation is unclear.[44]

In conclusion, Shabo had lasting human capital advantages, which seem much more deeply rooted in occupational commitment than in any particular ethnolinguistic, religious, or similar unity. This approach, focusing on occupational skills, has not been widely used to understand economic success in Russia's foreign colonies, but it is particularly appropriate in the case of foreigners invited for occupationally specific skills. But it still does not alone explain or guarantee economic success. Therefore, before leaving behind the inward-focused explanations for foreign colonists' prosperity that are often cited in the Russian historiography, it is worth exploring the institutional framework of Shabo's settlement and its economic implications for the second half of the 19th century.

First, the Swiss who arrived in Shabo in 1822 had some limited private sponsorship from home, and the settlers were lucky enough to receive private donations and other material help shortly after arriving. The Russian government offered some free vines for initial plantings, a fact bitterly resented by nearby Armenians (whose presence and activities otherwise go unmentioned). Although it enjoyed tax exemptions and reductions until ca. 1840,

[42] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:39; Ruben V. Guliev et al., *Vino, vlast´ i obshchestvo* (Kiev: n.p., 2006), 41. Purcari and Raskaitsa (less than 44 miles away in contemporary Moldova) were also mentioned in the context of the productive monastic vineyards that had been taken over by individual cultivators (Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:248).

[43] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:95; the quality of good wines in the area was attributed to experimental gardens, including Shabo; "Memo from the Office of Charles Gander," 1865, 1869, 1880.

[44] Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," 109; Bilhorod-Dnestrovskii, Arkhiv Kraevedcheskogo muzeia, "Journal de la commune de Chabag, 1831–1855," l. 16; Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 43.

Shabo prided itself on not depending on further help or support from the Russian government.[45]

While such limited initial capital advantages probably had little long-term impact on Shabo's later prosperity, the character of landholding in early Shabo almost certainly did. That is, Russian peasant villages essentially held land in common. Periodic redistributions of land among villagers tended to reduce the size of individual holdings over time, among other things. The arrangements in Shabo were quite different. Every family arriving in Shabo received 60 desiatinas in heritable private property, including 6 desiatinas of vines; it appears from later records that some land was communally held and could be periodically redistributed based on the decisions of the village council.[46] Held in common were haying and cereal fields, woodlands and pastures. This landholding pattern, not unusual for foreign colonies except insofar as it included vineyards, proved important as the village's population grew.

A successful Shabo grew fourfold in population between 1850 and the early 20th century; neighboring Chabag-posad had another couple of thousand.[47] The ownership of Shabo's vineyards is broadly known for the late 1890s: an average of 3.3 hectares planted in vines was held by 197 owners; there is no information about other agricultural holdings. As vineyard acreage, 3.3 hectares was not forbiddingly small. Vineyards of three hectares or so were quite common in France throughout the 19th century; in 1892, 28 percent of French vineyards were under five hectares. Furthermore, the average Shabo holding was 127 percent larger than those in nearby Akkerman and larger still relative to average vineyard holdings in other southern Russian villages. But to be prosperous, Shabo's smaller vineyards arguably required the up-to-date knowledge and skills mentioned by Ballas, particularly if they were extensively cultivated.[48]

Shabo's 197 proprietors included at least 12 who owned markedly larger vineyards. Ballas mentions the Zhaton (Jaton), Margot, and Miéville holdings

[45] Onoprienko, *"Istinnyi rai,"* docs. 7, 8, 16, 17; Gander-Wolf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," 80–82; Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, chap. 1.

[46] For the initial agreements, see Walter Kirchner, "Emigration to Russia," *American Historical Review* 55, 3 (1950): 561. Kirchner argues that all property reverted to communal property by 1830, but landholding patterns in the 1890s contradict this suggestion. See also Prince Sergei D. Urusoff, *Memoirs of a Russian Governor*, trans. Herman Rosenthal (London: Harper, 1908), 130 (https://archive.org/stream/cu31924028368979no. page/n5/mode/2up); and Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo."

[47] Again, Venger's data, which offer widely varying population numbers for German and Mennonite communities, suggests that Shabo's late 19th-century population was within the size range of other foreign colonies at that time (*Mennonitskoe predprinimatel´stvo*, 497–500; Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo").

[48] Loubière, *Red and the White*, 171, 218, 228.

of 12, 14, and 14 desiatinas each (approximately 12 and 14 hectares), as well as nine larger holdings—much the largest of which, at 70 hectares, belonged to the Buxcel family.[49]

This list of larger vineyard holders bears witness to the continuing importance of Shabo's initial landholding arrangements. Of the 12 larger holdings mentioned, 8 belonged to settler families from the French-speaking Canton de Vaud; 2 more belonged to early settler families from Alsace and Würtemburg who were included in the 29-family genealogy mentioned above. Only two of the mentioned larger holdings belonged to families whose origins could not be specifically identified (but were likely to have been German speakers). While Ballas may not have named *every* large Shabo vineyard, the list as it stands is incontrovertible evidence that the original inheritable six hectares of vineyard per family had been developed, consoldiated, and expanded while continuing to be held as private property, overwhelmingly by descendants of early settler families. These larger acreages were more likely to produce some of the village's most prosperous proprietors.

What impact did this distribution of property have on Shabo's prosperity? The pattern of vineyard ownership within Shabo in the 1890s undeniably had considerable divisive potential, as such inequality demonstrably did in other foreign colonies. Reports from Shabo are mixed and infrequent on this topic. There is, first of all, Shabo's relationship with the largely Russo-Ukrainian population of Chabag-posad. Many of its residents worked in Shabo as domestics and field workers. The residents of Chabag-posad certainly lacked any early arrangements for inheriting land. There are, on one hand, accounts of miserable living conditions and resistance in the early 20th century; those conditions may have helped inspire V. L. Schanzer, a descendant of the Tardent family, to join the revolutionary movement.[50] On the other hand, although hardly equivalent, sources agree that some 3,000 highly skilled vineyard workers were quite generously paid for the era at 85–115 rubles a year.[51] Because of its very different and sparser source base, this topic is only briefly pursued here.

As to Shabo proper, skilled viticulturalists, even the cadet offspring of early settler families, were frustrated by the limited availability of good vineyards in Shabo in the 1880s and 1890s. Descendants of 14 settler families,

[49] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:40. According to one source, the division of vineyards was less unequal in the 1890s than it had been shortly after mid-century (Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo").

[50] Dmytro Myeshkov, *Die Schwarzmeerdeutschen und ihre Welten, 1781–1871* (Essen: Klartext, 2008), 446; Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo"; Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 108. Schanzer was not a native of Shabo.

[51] Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo."

including progeny of families who owned larger acreages at the time, founded three new settlements specializing in wine production elsewhere in southern Russia; they would shortly be joined by Ukrainians and Germans. Unlike analogous off-shoot settlements connected to other foreign colonies, Osnova, Novyi Chabag, and Veseloe aroused little local animosity because they were on sandy soil that was not in high demand by Russians or for other kinds of cultivation. At Osnova, for example, some 1,000 desiatinas of land were purchased at 5–30 rubles a desiatina from landholders pleasantly surprised at the value given these useless lands by the newcomers.[52] Shabo vintners were also hired to work in Purcari, and several families left Shabo altogether, at least three for Australia, where they too founded vineyards. Little is known about the reciprocal feelings of village residents and those moving to the new colonies, except that those who left remained in close contact with the mother colony.[53] The new colonies briefly sustained the parent settlement's focus and reputation on winemaking.[54]

Notably, with respect to the divisiveness of inequality, it seems that ownership of the larger vineyards in Shabo was by no means firmly fixed. More than one prosperous family that owned 80–100 desiatinas of vineyard in 1856 did not appear on Ballas's list of large holders in the 1890s. The owners of one of the richest and most famous *caves* in Shabo in the early 20th century are also are not listed among the larger vineyard holders of the late 19th century. And the distribution of vineyards generally appears mildly less unequal in 1895 than in 1860.[55] Photographs from present-day Shabo depict at least one exceedingly prosperous home, now disintegrating dangerously but used in the Soviet era as a regional hospital, that also did not belong to one of the families on Ballas's list of larger vineyard owners; one of its last private owners was, however, very well informed about viticulture.[56] Finally, it

[52] Terry Martin, "The German Question in Russia, 1848–1896," *Russian History/Histoire russe* 18, 4 (1991): 418. Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 67, describe the creation of the new colonies but mistakenly attribute them to new German settlers having nowhere to settle or farm. The *Registres de l'église réformée* make it look as though the founders of the offshoot colonies included a large number of old settler families. Also see Brandes, *Von den Zaren adoptiert*, 111–12.

[53] Archives cantonales vaudoises P/1000/45, Henriette Götte, "Shveitsarskaia koloniia osnova na beregakh Dnepria" (2004), 5; Ernst Zeugin, *Das Ende einer schweizerischen Kolonisation im Osten Europas*, vol. 2 of *Prattler Auswanderer im Osten Europas* (Pratteln: H. Bühler, 1970), 69.

[54] Ts. I. Zhaton, "Vinogradarstvo na dneprovskikh sypuchnykh peskakh," in *Sbornik, posviashchennyi V. E. Tairovu v oznamenovanie 40-letiia ego deiatel´nosti*, ed. V. A. Gernet, 2 vols. (Odessa: Izdatel´stvo Tsentral´noi naucho-opytnoi vinodel´cheskoi stantsii im. V. E. Tairova, 1925–26), 1:77–79; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:313.

[55] Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo"; Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 7.

[56] Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 149. Contemporary photos (by Grivat) of the former Château Anselme can be seen on "I'm a Tardent and Proud of It," Facebook post, 7 August 2017.

is important to remember that the total acreage available for vineyards within and near the village was limited, creating a ceiling to the expansion of any and all, including the most prosperous. And, since only 50 families lived in Shabo as the colony's land-ownership arrangements expired at mid-century, most small vineyard holders who were there in the late 1890s did *not* date from the settler-colonist period, whatever their ethnic background. They held valuable and productive if small vineyards in a community where inherited and imported skills in winemaking abounded.

All of this argues that the original landholding arrangements in Shabo produced long-term results that influenced its later prosperity. Chiefly, the fact that much of the vineyard land in Shabo was heritable allowed the early consolidation of property; according to contemporary experts, larger vineyards were more likely to produce or at least to lead to greater prosperity. However, the unequal patterns of ownership, while probably supporting prosperity, were also potentially divisive, especially since the original settler families had such advantages in obtaining the larger properties. Given the sources examined, however, tempting though it is to speculate, little can be said about the long-term impact of such inequality. Nonetheless, some turnover in the ownership of large vineyards in the latter part of the 19th century should be noted. Furthermore, despite the village's unquestionable focus on wine production, there were clearly other sources of wealth in Shabo. Photographs from the late 19th century testify to supplemental sources of prosperity, such as cereals; Shabo would even become a site of a grape cure in the same era.[57]

The explanations of economic success in turn-of-the-century Shabo so far considered are at best partially enlightening. The human capital argument that attributes success to the cultural, educational, and other advantages deriving from cohesive generations of settlers has little application to the diverse and partially assimilated village of Shabo. Even the colony's sense of itself as a partly West European enclave seems to have had little reflection in long-term generally assimilationist economic behavior.

A different version of the human capital argument, focusing specifically on the importation and conscious perpetuation of a dominant occupational skill (wine production) is a more convincing but partial explanation. But there is no reason to assume that skill alone explains economic success.

Finally, landholding privileges based in the early 19th century certainly laid important groundwork for individual wine makers in Shabo to prosper in the late 19th century on substantial acreages, even if by doing so they encouraged the outmigration of vintners and the creation of sister colonies. Even in

[57] Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 81.

conjunction with the broad availability of considerable skill, this explanation too is not entirely satisfactory. The fact that the total fund of land available for vineyards was quite small and apparently changed hands at least occasionally seems at least as important as the fact that some villagers had more of that land than others. In the last analysis, neither skill nor landholding advantages can stand alone or together to adequately explain Shabo's economic success.

To consider more wide-ranging factors that might have contributed to Shabo's economic success, the Russian Empire's evolving colonial policy bears examination. By the latter half of the 19th century, imperial interests had shifted not only to integrating the many administrative and governance arrangements on the Pontic steppe, but they also actively promoted the development of that now populous area into a region of prosperous agriculture and bustling commerce, the later focused in part on new cities like Odessa, Kherson, and Ekaterinoslav. The encouragement of Russia's wine industry, focused primarily in the South and the Caucasus, was but one element in that effort to consolidate, improve, develop, and expand.

Shabo's years of prosperity (1880–1914) clearly coincided with this effort.[58] Any attempt to evaluate changes to the Russian wine industry and their role in explaining Shabo's economic success, however, is significantly complicated by the fact that the Russian wine industry is suprisingly understudied; some brief comments about changes to the Bessarabian arm of the industry are consequently necessary.[59]

In the first half of the 19th century, insofar as one can summarize it briefly, most of southern Russian wine production was very localized and the wine trade unsurprisingly decentralized. Grape growing and wine production had been officially encouraged as settlers of all ethnicities moved into southern Russia in the 1820s and 1830s. Among a great many encouragements, land and vines were distributed for this purpose as a part of the colonizing effort all over the newly acquired territories—Crimea, Novorossiia, and then Bessarabia. This effort was broadly successful, in that the volumes of wine produced in these territories apparently grew, and grew quite quickly, until

[58] Archives cantonales vaudoises PP 217/8, G. Girod, "La colonie de Chabag en Bessarabie," 4.

[59] Broad early surveys of the industry include Petr Keppen, *O vinodelei i vinnoi torgovli v Rossii* (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia kraia, 1832); Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*; and Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*. Forthcoming works by Stephen Bittner and Kelly O'Neill promise to add to the literature.

the beginning of the Crimean War. As part and parcel of this effort, trade in wine was deliberately encouraged by advantageous excise policies. From 1810 on, among other things, wine producers in Novorossiiskii krai were allowed to sell wine untaxed directly from their vineyards. Numerous debates ensued about the ways in which this exemption could legally be applied.[60] Prince Mikhail Vorontsov, committed to the production of southern Russian wines, urged the extension of this exemption. As of 1825, *all* wine sold direct from the cellar in limited quantities was exempt from *otkup*. Although further support was promised, producers' wish to have all wine completely tax-exempt was not granted.[61]

But the Russian Empire was also interested in improving the quality of southern wines, as an element in its early colonial policy. The Russian aristocracy, especially but not exclusively on the Crimean Peninsula, joined the imperial government in patronizing the introduction of scientific and experimental viniculture and viticulture to improve wine quality. Experimental gardens were created, experts invited, schools of viniculture and viticulture founded, and modern equipment and foreign vines imported. One of the founding goals of the Imperial Southern Russian Agricultural Society in 1828 was to expand and improve wine production.[62] There was a concerted drive to produce wines of character and quality (implicitly of a European standard) as well as more of them.

The region most relevant to the colony of Shabo, the wine industry with which it largely interacted, was limited to "southern Bessarabia." Here it was exceedingly uncommon for producers to devote themselves exclusively to the growing of grapes and making of wine. That would have been seen as economic suicide, and most producers—even in Shabo, where villagers did focus on winemaking—also necessarily raised grain, fruits, and other items. The relatively long period between planting vines and economic returns on wine were one problem; drought, disease, and the variable productivity of grapevines were another. The experts claimed that small producers generally did not use the up-to-date knowledge (such as separating varietals into different fields) and labor-saving devices that might have made their wines more profitable (and better). This was not only true in Bessarabia; it was also the case for locations much more broadly dedicated to wine production, such as southern France, where small producers could afford neither the time nor the

[60] DAOO f. 252, op. 1, d. 14.

[61] Keppen, *O vinodelei i vinnoi torgovli*, 108, 116–17. Statistics were gathered intermittently and inconsistently, especially earlier in the century. From 1827 on, only the cheapest young wine was tax-exempt (Keppen, *O vinodelei i vinnoi torgovli*, 108, 110).

[62] Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 20, 23, 56.

investment to introduce such changes.[63] As a result, before—and even long after—the 1850s, the numerous small producers of Bessarabia were growing grapes and making "fresh" wine primarily for their own domestic consumption. Given their tax-exempt status, such domestic producers could easily sell off any excess directly from their vineyards, without the additional expense of aging, cellarage, and so on. Such sales overlapped with a certain amount of Bessarabian wine being produced for sale tax-free directly from vineyards.[64] Inexpensive wines dominated this market. A smaller percentage of wines of higher quality was sold from the vineyards to local purchasers who had an eye to their quality but was also bought by or shipped to vintners, for mixing and/or bottling off-estate. This last was the part of the wine industry to which Shabo belonged from the beginning and which it, and others, were to develop as part of the empire's colonial project.[65]

Prior to mid-century, Shabo's interactions with this productive but highly fragmented industry generated only a precarious prosperity. The village had skilled viticulturists, highly praised wines, and generous-sized vineyards (due to its landholding patterns). But southern Bessarabia also had bad roads; the port of Odessa only gradually established itself as an entrepot; the immediate local demand for Shabo's product was limited, and there were few credit facilities. Before the Crimean War, therefore, grave matters of expense and profitability were a constant refrain and an important part of the calculus for these producers with successful reputations. Shabo had no trouble selling its wine to traders to the vineyards from Akkerman and Odessa or by sending wines directly to Odessa. The wines that they sold were highly valued. Initially, Shabo wine producers received five times as much per *vedro* (a little more than 12 liters or 3 gallons) of wine as their peasant neighbors. Toward mid-century, when it is harder to pinpoint exact prices, Shabo nonetheless remained in the top bracket for the Bessarabian market.[66] That is, it appears as though local and regional markets were responsive to both the quality and quantity of wines on the market, and Shabo had some economic reward for its efforts. Shabo also had the right to bottle and sell its wines. It is indicative of the broader state of the wine trade that Shabo would have been happy to forgo that right even in the later 1840s. Bottling was too expensive and time-consuming; Shabo's producers cellared their wine and sold it in barrels.

[63] James Simpson, "Wine: A Short History," 5 (https://arefiles.ucdavis.edu/uploads/filer_public/2014/03/27/simpson-wine-a-short-history.pdf).
[64] *Commercial Relations of the US*, nos. 27–30 (1883): 582.
[65] Venger, *Mennonitskoe predprinimatel'stvo*, 476.
[66] Druzhinina, *Iuzhnaia Ukraina v 1800–1825*, 313; Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 202.

Individual residents of Shabo made strenous efforts to adapt to the structure of the industry. One of Charles Tardent's great contributions at mid-century was to calculate production methods that reduced input costs by 75 percent. Another colonist, hoping to support local prosperity, applied for permission to run a distillery. Such distilleries used low-quality wines from bad harvest years and overproduction alike to make *eau de vie* and *spirt*. By the 1870s, the Shabo distillery was a quite large establishment.[67]

Thus, prior to the middle of the 19th century, Shabo as a community was reasonably well placed in a decentralized wine market to claim a precarious prosperity. But given the state of transportation, labor costs, marketing, and other elements of the industry, wine alone was not enough. Other agricultural returns and continuing adaptation to the deficits of the wine industry remained an important part of the equation.[68]

After the Crimean War and the emancipation of the serfs, a growing population, changing relationships on the land, and the construction of railways gradually brought about some profound changes in southern Russia. Not least among these was the transformation of the steppe from a colonial frontier into a zone of expanding agricultural and industrial production increasingly integral to the empire. As this change took place, some previously separate economic zones were integrated, systematized, and consolidated.[69] Predictably, Shabo participated in the southern Russian wine industry's efforts to create and benefit from similar transformations by expanding their consumer base and improving the quality of their product.

Wine producers and their professional organizations focused their efforts especially on improving and promoting the high quality of southern Russian wines on a regional, national, and occasionally international level. As early as the 1850s, for example, the Imperial Southern Russian Agricultural Society was corresponding with the Ministry of State Domains about establishing its leadership in viniculture and viticulture. As a part of its continuing focus on improving the quality of southern Russian wines, the society aspired to serve as a source of information for all wine producers about how to protect again insect pests, for example.[70] Discussions of quality in Bessarabian and other southern Russian wines continued—with examination of varietals, terroir, ideal techniques, and tools/instruments in the society's *Zapiski* and in

[67] Gander-Wölf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," 109; Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 80, 109; Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 27.
[68] Gander-Wölf, "Chabag, Schweizer Kolonie," sect. 7.
[69] Compare Friesen, *Rural Revolutions in Southern Ukraine*; and Venger, *Mennonitskoe predprinimatel'stvo*.
[70] DAOO f. 22, op 1, d. 606; *ZIOSKIR*, nos. 2, 8, 11 (1852); no. 3 (1870); no. 1 (1871).

the publications of proliferating southern Russian professional groups dealing with wine (*Trudy S"ezda vinogradarei i vinodelov v Odesse* and *Vestnik vinodeliia*). Surveys were distributed to ascertain the needs of viniculture, and a scientific-experimental institute, the future Tairov Research Institute of Viticulture and Winemaking, was enthusiastically launched after 1899.[71]

The Imperial Southern Russian Agricultural Society further cooperated in promotional events. In 1857, an exhibition of southern wine failed to produce a winner whose wine deserved a gold medal, although a Shabo vineyard won a silver prize. The device would be used again and again. There were subsequent exhibitions on a smaller scale, a larger display in the 1870s for wines from the Caucasus and the South, and wines from all over Russia were exhibited at the All-Russian Arts and Trades Exhibit in 1882. A variety of exhibitions took place with increasing frequency thereafter, toward and after the turn of the century in Odessa and elsewhere. Southern Russian wines appeared in international exhibitions, on one or two occasions winning significant prizes.[72]

Notably, however, this publicistic vein on behalf of and by the Russian wine industry largely expanded on existing efforts, rather than changing or adding to its approach. Marketing and advertising, for example, did not figure largely in the discussions of Russia's wine producers or direct their activities. Even though alcohol and tobacco advertisements were a driving force in the advertising industry in the latter part of the 19th century, advertisements about wine (either a particular wine or a wine merchant or trader) were not prominent. It may have been that wine producers shared the imperial government's discomfort with certain kinds of advertisements.[73] It certainly was not primarily a retreat in the face of alcohol reform or temperance movements; as in many other countries, wine was not the primary target of such movements.[74] It is also possible that some wine producers felt that advertisement undercut the social prestige that they associated with their product.

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[71] E. V. Tairov, "Pomogite!," *Vestnik vinodeliia*, no. 12 (1899): 707–10; *Vinodel´cheskaia stantsiia russkikh vinogradarei i vinodelov* (Odessa: Vestnik vinodeliia, 1912); DAOO f. 91, op. 3, d. 2.

[72] DAOO f. 22, op 1, d. 316; *ZIOSKIR* (1859): 242–43; *Ukazatel´ Vserossiiskoi promyshlennokhudozhestvennoi vystavki* (Moscow: n.p., 1882); V. P. Ponomarev, *Agronomicheskaia nauka Bessarabii v 1812–1917 vv.* (Kishinev: Shtintsa, 1981), 27. Not all prizewinners held larger vineyards. See *ZIOSKIR*, no. 10 (1881), and no. 11 (1883). On the Tardent Prize, see Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 26.

[73] Sally West, *I Shop in Moscow: Advertising and the Creation of Consumer Culture in Late Tsarist Russia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 146, shows one advertisement in which Crimean wine was on a list of 17 products to be purchased in Moscow by the discerning buyer.

[74] Compare with Jack S. Blocker, David M. Fahey, and Ian R. Tyrrell, *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: An International Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003),

Russian wine enthusiasts' and producers' efforts to publicize their product coincided, however, with the appearance of some significant problems in the southern Russian wine industry generally. The first of these was a change in the all-important excise and other imperial tax policies on wine and wine products; the change reportedly took place because wine products were seen as competing with the imperial monopoly on whisky.[75] These changes seriously undercut the previously advantageous position. After 1865, for example, the tax-exempt status heretofore enjoyed by wine included spirt and eau de vie when made from wine. This particular exemption disappeared to be replaced by an excise tax that became more expensive over time: while the tax was initially 1 kopeck per degree of alcohol, it would climb to 4 and then 6 kopecks per degree of alcohol by 1892. The number of such distillers dropped; those remaining cut their production by nearly two-thirds. The resulting squeeze on makers of wine-based eau de vie (and consequent decrease in such manufacturing) was widely believed by winemakers to result in the flooding of local and regional markets with cheap, poor-quality wine and consequently to undermine the development of high-quality wines. Later changes to otkup charges on direct sales of wine, and the still later introduction of monopolies, only exaccerbated the problem. In many cases, Bessarabian wine producers viewed these changes as punitive, since they did not apply to all wine-producing regions. Crimea, in particular, was often exempt, since wine was understood to be more central to its economy.[76]

High transport costs were also cited as a problem. A huge percentage of wine sold onward from Bessarabian, and in particular from lower Bessarabian, vineyards was sent to the growing entrepot and port of Odessa for bottling or mixing and sale. The new railroads, with their potential for expanding the range of wine sales broadly in the late 19th century, did not serve the traffic from southern Bessarabia to Odessa particularly well, although producers farther north did send their wines by rail to Ekaterinoslav and other centers.[77] In any case, wine producers complained that wines sent by train were not appropriately treated; trains sat in the sidings and wine overheated, for example, and transport charges were seen as excessive. Coastal shipping or shipping

2:667. Although Russia's wartime prohibition on alcohol initially affected wine, Nicholas II relaxed that provision in 1916. See Patricia Herlihy, *The Alcoholic Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 117.

[75] Urusoff, *Memoirs of a Russian Governor*, 91.

[76] Kh. I. Gozalov, "O stesniniakh v vinotorgovle," *Trudy S"ezda vinogradarei i vinodelov v Odesse* (1910): 58–60; Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 209; DAOO f. 22, op. 1, d. 108, l. 2; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:244; *ZIOSKIR*, no. 5 (1871): 355–71, and no. 8 (1871): 561–82.

[77] Friesen, *Rural Revolutions in Southern Ukraine*, 143; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:242.

across the Liman and then overland by notoriously poor roads were the ways in which wines from southern Bessarabia traveled to Odessa.[78]

There were downward pressures on wine prices. Producers believed that the dilution, coloring, and boosting of alcohol content during the latter part of the 19th century helped explain low prices; issues of wine purity would not be comprehensively dealt with until World War I. Producers also complained that wines purchased inexpensively in Bessarabia were resold at much higher prices in St. Petersburg; others were doctored and marketed at much higher prices under false (usually French) labels.[79] The downward trend of cereal prices at the same time further encouraged the presence of poorer wines on the market, as smallholders tried to compensate for the declining price of their principal product by selling wine.

This list of concerns, repeatedly produced by professional, semigovernmental organizations, suggest a wine industry heavily driven by production concerns and less by market and retail issues.

For a variety of reasons, producers' efforts did not result in the overall changes that imperial policy advocated. Four issues in particular help define the nature of the wine industry that Shabo faced during the period of its greatest prosperity. First, the production and sale of wine in southern Russia until World War I remained overwhelmingly decentralized and still fundamentally regional. In 1883, about one-third of all Russian wines were still used for domestic consumption, and another third were sold directly from the vineyards, sometimes to local vintners. In southern Bessarabia, prices for these wines were stable and low, showing a tendency to decline slightly toward the turn of the century. Peasants were encouraged by this situation to sell their crop as a job lot before the harvest. Producers of good wines were discouraged from endeavoring to create higher-quality products because the local premium for better quality was only about 10–15 kopecks a vedro and credit facilities were poor.[80] Only a few wines of the highest quality escaped this trap, shipped onward to Odessa for bottling or mixing and sale. Even here, prices were not nearly as high as they had been much earlier in the century, with premium prices for Bessarabia ranging from 50 kopecks to, very occasionally, 1.90 rubles a vedro.[81]

Second, in Odessa, the sales structures underwent considerable change. Although the number of warehouses for wine grew toward the end of the

[78] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:42, 233; "Memo from the Office of Charles Gander," 42 ob.
[79] Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 201–3.
[80] Ibid.; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:256.
[81] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:233, 257; *Commercial Relations of the United States*, nos. 27–30 (1883): 582. Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 33, states that 92 percent of Bessarabian wine was produced by peasants.

century, the number of retailers in the city dropped. Cellars dealing respectively in Russian and luxury wines also declined. If this was consolidation, it was also a reduction in the total number of outlets available. Nonetheless, Odessa's expanded reach did send wines to Kiev, Moscow, Warsaw, St. Petersburg, and occasionally out of the country.[82]

Third, wine sales in southern Russia remained surprisingly fungible. Despite their best efforts, Russian producers and their advocates had little success in changing social perceptions about wine drinking or in radically increasing the number of Russian wine drinkers. Unlike some other industries in the late 19th century, wine producers were unsuccessful in using advertising to domesticate their products, to "tilt the foundations of traditional culture in favor of the modern market" and in this case toward Europeanized taste.[83] Indeed, it is unclear that wine producers saw an advantage in such marketing-driven transformations. Perhaps as a consequence, there was neither a persistent nor a growing demand for wine by relatively ordinary consumers in southern Russia or in Russia generally. Instead, it was widely commented that ordinary Russians seemed to prefer stronger drinks or beer. Wine drinking remained, relatively speaking, a regional predilliction and a preserve of the upper reaches of society.[84]

Fourth, such a combination of circumstances may help explain why Bessarabian prices were so surprisingly stable even in the face of dramatic swings in international and Russian wine productivity and prices. The phylloxera epidemic, as it spread throughout France and elsewhere thereafter, then the entry into the world market of new producers and eventually the industrial vineyards of the New World all had little impact where there was only a negligible international market. Even in the 1880s and 1890s, when phylloxera reached southern Russia and led to the wide-scale destruction or disregard of vineyards there, there was a surprisingly modest price response.

How did Shabo fare in the context of this new wine industry? In one way, it fared gratifyingly well, in that it retained its reputation for excellent wines, and wines from Shabo and Akkerman figured well in some exhibition catalogues.

[82] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:242.

[83] West, *I Shop in Moscow*, 220.

[84] Vincente Pinilla and Maria Isabel Ayuda, "The International Wine Market, 1850–1938," in *Wine, Society, and Globalization: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on the Wine Industry*, ed. Gwyn Campbell and Nathalie Guibert (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 182–83; Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 210.

It also successfully developed a stable and profitable, if undiversified, market for them. Toward the end of the century, *all* of Shabo's wines were shipped to Odessa, by boat and overland where there was, at least for a while, a Shabo cellar.[85] The villagers were, by and large, also successful in choosing the bottlers and vintners with whom they dealt in the port city. Most of their wines were consumed there; some of them were shipped onward to Warsaw, as well as occasionally to Kiev, Riga, Moscow, and "all the large cities of the empire." A French company is once reported as having bought large quantities of Shabo wines.[86]

These were successful strategies in dealing with the wine industry of the late 19th century. Moreover, Shabo *was* prosperous from 1880 to 1914. In looking at old photographs of mansions, large *caves*, and extravagant village celebrations, the visual evidence seems overwhelming. In the 1890s, the village acquired a post office, then its own doctor, a *credit mutuelle*, and tax office. Throughout it all, viticulturists might earn a return of some 50 rubles per desiatina on their vineyards in a good year, a very respectable profit.[87]

But all was not perfect in Shabo's relationships with its neighbors. Both government actions and popular opinion were tinged with anti-German sentiment in the latter part of the century; in Shabo, there were instances of hostility in 1890. During the revolutionary summer of 1905, its wealth reputedly attracted attacks and looting in the village. Nonetheless Shabo apparently felt itself secure in the empire.[88]

There were causes for concern that related more directly to the community's wine. Reports from the 1890s suggest that Shabo's recent grape crops had suffered from unfortunate turns of weather, and its experiments with varietals had not been particularly successful. Its products had not recently won the most prestigious competitions, even if such success could be expected only rarely. Its products included "table wines of high quality"; indeed they are so described in a recent interview by a former resident of Shabo (b. 1908) whose parents owned one of the larger vineyards. But it reliably sold on the Odessa marketplace, for consumption there and for shipment to other parts of the empire. The average prices received in the mid-late 1880s (75 kopecks–1.25

[85] Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 27; "Memo from the Office of Charles Gander," 42 ob.; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:233; Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo." More than likely, the French purchase was for mixing and bottling in Russia.

[86] Boeva, "Iz dzherel pro istoriiu," 29.

[87] Martin, "German Question in Russia"; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:259; Girod, "Colonie de Chabag en Bessarabie," 4.

[88] Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 39; Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo."

rubles per vedro), marginally lower than their neighbors in Akkerman but higher than in Purcari, were among the highest in Bessarabia.[89]

It is difficult to know to what degree Shabo took on the challenges of the late 19th-century wine industry as a village with shared occupational interests. The residents' skills were certainly on display in at least some ways. Shabo's producers diversified their production, introducing a champagne as well as brandy and other luxury drinks. These products and their wines were consistently refered to as Shabo wines, rather than in terms of individual cultivators, an identification imposed from the outside. This period was also when the villagers, not previously particularly communally minded, founded the Union viticole de Chabag.[90] It seems unlikely that nearby Chabag-posad, where many of the village's skilled workers lived, would have felt much of any such sentiment, although their lives too were immersed in the cultivation of grapes and wine production.

Most catastrophic of all the problems facing Shabo, the phylloxera epidemic made its way across southern Russia in the 1880s and 1890s, leaving devastation in its wake. It might have been expected to derail Shabo's persistent productivity, giving the settlement no wine to send to its Odessa customers. The settlement appears to have been just plain lucky in surviving that most challenging of potential problems. This good luck had nothing to do with a timely Russian reaction based on information about phylloxera from the earlier French experience. Indeed, the Russian Phylloxera Commission seemed to believe that, unlike the French, it would be able to produce a prophylactic to the infestation that would save Russian vines.[91] Of course, it did not. The commission recorded huge swaths of Russian vineyards infected and then eliminated. According to a later memorialist, the gentle sandy slopes that had long been reputed to produce the best wine in Shabo were more or less immune to phylloxera, which found it impossible to tunnel from root to root in the shifting sands. Others were a bit more skeptical of the claim to *total* immunity. Shabo by then had vineyards on clayey and black earth soils, which probably did succumb, but other reports suggest that perhaps only one-third of Shabo's vineyard acreage was infected.[92] It seems very likely that

[89] Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 66; film at www.cavebessarabie.ch; Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:257.

[90] Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 43.

[91] Steven V. Bittner, "American Roots, French Varietals, Russian Science: A Transnational History of the Great Wine Blight in Late-Tsarist Bessarabia," *Past & Present*, no. 227 (2015): 151–77.

[92] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:31. In the immediate aftermath, the northeastern section of Akkerman uezd was identified as the worst hit (*Trudy S"ezda vinogradarei i vinodelov v Odesse* [1910]: 46).

while others' vineyards struggled to uproot and replant toward the end of the 19th century or gave up altogether, Shabo's sandy soils continued to produce despite the difficulties caused by the high price of labor, weather conditions, and the continuing low price of wines—a steady source of income when others had little. Although the fungibility of Russia's taste in alcoholic drinks, and the prospect of market consolidation in the wine trade may not have offered good prospects for Shabo's future as Russia entered World War I, the settlement's unique position at the turn of the century was reflected in steady production, high returns on its vineyards, and skyrocketing prices for its own and its offshoot colonies' sandy-soil vineyards.[93] But the goal that had led to its foundation—the improvement of the southern Russian wine industry—remained at best only partially attained.

The experience of Shabo as a colonial settlement in southern Russia suggests that its prosperity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is due to the interaction of a variety of factors. Early characteristics of the settlement, consciously prolonged into future generations—including institutionally designed inheritance patterns and the singular, particularly successful, artisanal specialization of village residents—laid the groundwork for later success. Meanwhile, the ethnonational and religious traits of that early community were quickly diluted, and the village apparently assimilated significantly. Crucially, however, the evolving Russian wine trade in the later part of the century interacted with these characteristics to produce unexpected results. That is, despite the efforts of producers and professional organizations at that time, the wine industry did not massively change in size, and indeed retained its regional character in Bessarabia even for its high-quality wine producers. From this apparently negative circumstance, Shabo profited mightily—with a reliable single destination for its product and, apparently, a judicious choice of bottlers and vintners. Beyond the nuances of this interaction, it was luck and knowledgeable appreciation of its situation that allowed Shabo to ride out the phylloxera epidemic in prosperity, supported by the vineyards on its sandy soils and by the foresight that had led the settlement to provide itself with profitable supporting incomes.

Whatever the prospects and experiences for wine producers within Shabo and around southern Russia prior to World War I, the war and political events

[93] Ballas, *Vinodelie v Rossii*, 5:41; 40; Makarenko, *Ocherki istorii vinogradarstva Bessarabii*, 67; Boeva, "Iz dzherel pro istoriiu," 29. A price of 1,100–2,000 rubles per desiatina is mentioned. See Genrietta Gette [Henrietta Götte], *Otvergnutye rodinoi* (Cologne: Izdatel´stvo G. Gette, 2008), 100.

in the Russian Empire abruptly redirected the settlement's focus. After three years of war and a revolution, Ukraine declared its independence from the empire. In January 1918, Shabo and other parts of Bessarabia were occupied by Romania; the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 confirmed Romanian control. Meanwhile, Shabo was occupied by a bewildering variety of troops.

As a part of Romania between 1918 and 1940, the Shabo community's skills in vini- and viticulture and astute market arrangements were no longer distinctive. Its interest in innovation and experimentation were not particularly unusual; neither its skills nor its landholding patterns stood out. Romania boasted a substantial number of both Romanian and foreign communities with similar characteristics; a number of these vineyards already boasted a much wider reputation than the village on the Dniester Liman. More significant is that the Treaty of Versailles had created an international border between Shabo and its established and reliable market in and through Odessa. Even had the community's wines crossed the frontier easily (which they did not), there is considerable evidence that wartime and early Soviet destruction of many members of Russia's elite had eliminated much of the regional demand that had supported Shabo. Meanwhile Shabo's other agricultural crops did not produce their usual return. In such conditions, the village's population dropped; a few thousand more people still lived in adjacent Chabag-posad.[94]

In a historical moment when appeals to ethnic nationalism were acknowledged and supported across much of Eastern Europe, a retreat to the exclusive claim of being French Swiss suddenly seemed advantageous for those in the village who could produce any claim to that heritage.[95] In the run-up to the village centenary in 1922, the colony's Swiss origins reappeared and were ostentatiously paraded. The Swiss ambassador to Romania from Bucharest and the Swiss consul from Galatz were invited to and visited the colony. During the centenary festivities, a Swiss flag led the celebratory parade through the village. In subsequent years, the flag would make regular appearances. The Swiss Consulate was asked to help establish a branch of the Alliance Française in Shabo to offset the successes of the Verein Aurora in restoring the German language and German activities in the village. The Swiss Consulate obliged, and French-Swiss journals and newspapers thereafter appeared regularly.[96] Occupational pride and prosperity were undercut; Shabo's

[94] Galias and Zlenko, "Shabo"; Anselme, *Colonie suisse de Chabag*, 41, mentions that, of those of non-Russian ancestry, about half were German-speaking and half French.

[95] Onoprienko, *"Istinnyi rai,"* 35; Gette, *Otvergnutye rodinoi*, 136, notes that by 1918 Osnova's residents carried a variety of passports, sometimes within the same family.

[96] Chinezu, *Suisses en Roumanie*, 25.

century-long participation in the Russian imperial project to improve the wine industry on the southern steppes was also muted.

The French-Swiss of Shabo were hardly alone in grasping at a lifeline of exclusionary ethnicity in times of war, economic uncertainty, and the many social and other meanings involved in the collapse of empire. Their German neighbors (and indeed those of German descent in Shabo) were doing the same, and the respective embassies and cultural organizations were responsive. The settlement's attitude toward its new Soviet neighbor was hardly improved by the presence of refugee Russian officers. As World War II began on the Eastern Front, the Swiss consul gave village residents advance warning of imminent Soviet invasion and occupation of the Romania's interwar eastern territories, which included Shabo. Many of the "Swiss" fled their homes—some to Bucharest, where the Maison Suisse became their refuge. Others headed "back home" to Switzerland, where most had never been. With the assistance of the Swiss Embassy, even as Soviet troops moved into the region, another group of families was evacuated in small boats down the Black Sea coast from Shabo into Romania and thence to an unfamiliar French-speaking Swiss "homeland."[97]

Many of the characteristics of the Shabo settlement (its wealth derived from hired labor, its status, and its foreign connections) were anathema to the Soviet state that took charge of the village after 1944. The 36 families who stayed behind in Soviet Shabo saw their lands nationalized after the war as part of the Krasnyi Liman Collective Farm, in accordance with existing Soviet policy. Not only did most of the traces of a prosperous settlement of viticulturalists vanish, but ethnic links to Switzerland became and remained toxic until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.[98] Thereafter, however, Shabo's Swiss ties were deliberately and enthusiastically restored in support of a Ukrainian commercial winery of the same name in the aftermath of Soviet disaggregation.

The colony of Shabo was founded and prospered throughout the 19th and into the 20th centuries on the southwestern Russian steppe in ways that fit easily and well into established understandings of the imperial colonization process, as described, for example, in Willard Sunderland's *Taming the Wild*

[97] Grivat, *Vignerons suisses du tsar*, 133–45.

[98] Onoprienko, *"Istinnyi rai,"* 35–36; Gette, *Otvergnutye rodinoi*. The Shabo denizens who returned to Switzerland now celebrate their former residence on the shores of the Black Sea in their new homeland. See notices of the biannual event at http://www.Shabofestival.ch/.

Field.[99] That is, it was initially guided by policies that defined how the empire envisioned Shabo and similar settlements. It was launched in a period when tutelary colonization of the steppe by West Europeans was encouraged. Its initial French-Swiss identification was a relatively predictable element of its foundation. So too were its early landholding arrangements, particularly the claim to private, heritable vineyards and other lands, permitted to West Europeans but atypical of nearby Russsian populations. The first of these early colonial characteristics, an ethnonational identity, did not prove lasting in Shabo because of the initially small size of the colony. A much more diverse population of French, German, and Russian speakers came to characterize the village, although Shabo would remain in many ways West European. The rapid dilution of its ethnonational identity thus offers little help in explaining the durability of any cultural, educational, or other characteristics introduced by Shabo's settlers. Its landholding arrangements proved both more lasting and more explanatory of the village's economic success. Although there was undoubtedly turnover in both vineyard ownership and vineyards owned by those who moved into the village after 1860, the predominance of early settler families among advantageously large vineyard holders in 1890 offered them a base from which to extend their activities.

But there was another carefully nourished circumstance, deriving from the early colonial era, that is helpful in explaining Shabo's growing success. This was the colony's skill in viniculture and viticulture. In the first half of the century, a growth in the proportion of colonists practicing this single skill distinguished Shabo from other foreign colonies nearby; thereafter Shabo's durable reputation as a producer of high-quality wines rested in part on the villagers' conscious maintenance and renewal of those skills. It remained a distinguishing feature beyond the turn of the 20th century, when Shabo's renown (and its cultivated success in selling its wines) permitted vineyard owners to dedicate themselves primarily to that art. Together with the existence of some relatively large vineyards, a reputational framework was established that helped promote Shabo's economic success toward the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

Even an interplay of such factors, however, does not explain Shabo's prosperity as the empire's colonial policies and interests shifted, as Russia urged a greater institutional and economic absorbtion of the steppe into the heartland. The impact on Shabo was evident as the settlement changed and as its relationship to the Russian wine industry altered. Initially, Shabo had developed as part of a new and decentralized wine industry, where its skills

[99] Willard Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field: Colonization and Empire on the Russian Steppe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

and organization only gradually gained it a precarious prosperity. As part of southern Russia's changing policies in the latter part of the century, a more diverse Shabo joined the professional organizations of that industry, working hard to achieve greater systematization, quality, and consolidation. This was an effort driven in large part by producers' concerns, and residents of Shabo participated in it. At the same time, in part because of its adaptation to the new conditions, its reputation, and the size of some of its vineyards, the settlement remained insulated from vineyard and local sales of wine in southern Bessarabia and established a profitable single market for its product in Odessa over the latter part of the 19th century. However, the industry as a whole was not transformed in the same way. Perhaps because of issues surrounding marketing of wine production and the impact of phylloxera, Bessarabia did not broadly finish the century with larger and better-informed markets for wine, nor did it, generally speaking, lose its local and regional character. That fact, ironically, protected Shabo from the vagaries of both domestic and international conditions toward the turn of the century. Its occupational specialization, its reputation, and its prosperity, which distinguished it locally, would thus persist until World War I, as a partial result of the incomplete consolidation of the southern Russian wine industry.

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