

Female Prostitution in Urban Russia, 1900-1917

Siobhán Hearne

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy**

University of Nottingham

September 2017

Abstract

This thesis examines the social history of female urban prostitution in the final years of the Russian empire (1900-1917). During this period, the tsarist authorities legally tolerated prostitution under a system named regulation (*reglemantatsiia*) or the medical-police supervision of prostitution (*vrachebno-politseiskii nadzor za prostitutsiei*). The stated aim of regulation was to reduce levels of venereal disease, yet in practice the system functioned rather to control the movement and settlement of prostitutes by making them known to the authorities. This thesis focuses on the different groups that the rules of regulation directly affected, including prostitutes, their clients, their managers, and wider urban communities. It examines specific urban spaces, the state-licensed brothel, and the lives of registered prostitutes and their clients. This approach allows an exploration of how the system operated in practice and how the regulation of prostitution fitted within wider attempts by the imperial state to monitor lower-class people. In doing so, this thesis contributes to the growing literature on sexuality, on the intersections of gender and class, and on the experiences of lower-class people in late imperial Russia.

To illuminate the diversity of both state practice and social experience, this thesis draws on a wide range of correspondence from 'above' and 'below', including letters between central and provincial government institutions and petitions written by lower-class people to those in authority. This research moves away from focusing solely on the capital of St Petersburg to examine how the regulation of prostitution functioned at a local level, drawing on archival material from Arkhangel'sk, Riga, and Tartu. It argues that responses to the

regulation system were rooted in the specific social, environmental and economic circumstances of a particular place and strongly influenced by the socio-economic transformations of the final decades of tsarist rule. In light of this, the thesis maps official and unofficial reactions to regulation onto the shifting social and economic landscape of modernising Russia. It explores how early twentieth-century urbanisation, industrialisation and transportation developments posed further challenges to the ambitions of the tsarist authorities to 'know' and monitor all the women who sold sex.

Acknowledgements

This project is indebted to the support, guidance and financial contributions of a number of individuals and organisations.

First and foremost, this project was made possible by the generous funding provided by the Economic and Social Research Council.

I am profusely grateful to my supervisors, Sarah Badcock and Nick Baron, for always pushing me to sharpen my writing and strengthen my arguments. Their invaluable comments and suggestions throughout the writing process have helped to mould this thesis into a coherent whole.

I could not have conducted this research without the help of the staff in the various libraries and archives in Moscow, St Petersburg, Arkhangel'sk, Kyiv, Riga, and Tartu. I am particularly grateful to the staff of the Russian State Archive for the Navy for allowing me access even though I am clearly not a naval historian. They shared my enthusiasm for researching venereal diseases and pointed me in the direction of various interesting files. Mari-Anne Kirschbaum at the National Archives of Estonia was also incredibly helpful and her suggestions helped me to push my research in new and interesting directions.

I benefitted enormously from the guidance of other members of the academic community, mainly Nancy Wingfield, Barbara Engel, my annual reviewer Karen Adler, and the anonymous readers at *Social History* and *Revolutionary Russia*. The delegates at the BASEES and Study Group for the Russian Revolution conferences always asked the right questions and forced me to be more sophisticated in my thinking. At Nottingham, David Denton has been a

supportive and patient language teacher, who kindly always put in extra time to aid my comprehension of the perplexing world of Russian grammar.

The Nottingham History postgraduate community made A25 Lenton Grove a stimulating and enjoyable place to work. I have enjoyed many hours of thoughtful conversation, tomatoes, and tea breaks with Richard Bates, Amy Calladine and Dan O'Neill. Emma Lautman and Teresa Phipps have both been sharp, insightful readers and supportive friends. Special thanks must go to Maroula Perisanidi, for her boundless professional and personal support, and for reading every line of this thesis. I am incredibly lucky to have met such great people while living in Nottingham. In particular, Aya van Renterghem commiserated and celebrated with me at all the right times, and I would have been lost without Claire Haswell's constant support and friendship.

I am grateful to all of the wonderful friends I made while conducting my archival research in Russia. They made the monotony of copying out hundreds of scrawling handwritten documents far more enjoyable by providing respite in the many *stolovye*, Georgian restaurants and bars of Moscow.

Stuart Miller and Patrick Hearne have given me with endless support and even travelled to Russia to provide me with my home comforts during longer fieldwork stints. Two cherished people passed away while I have been writing this thesis. I will always be grateful to Marie Shutt's and Patricia Hodson's enthusiasm for my studies.

Extra special thanks go to Gavin Hodson, for the love, happiness and encouragement, without which this entire process would have been impossible.

Finally to my mum, Christine Miller, for her unwavering enthusiasm for what I do. Her thirst for knowledge and emphasis on the importance of education inspired me to study History at university, and her continual support kept me here three degrees later. This thesis is dedicated to her.

Contents

List of figures	9
Abbreviations	10
Notes	11
 Introduction	 13
Prostitutes in late imperial Russia	17
Lower-class voices	23
Geography and urban space	30
Migration and work	37
Sexuality	41
Chapter outline	49
 1. Enforcing and resisting regulation	 53
Enforcing regulation	55
Resisting regulation	73
Spatial segregation	74
Medical examinations	81
Injustice and discrimination	85
Conclusion	94
 2. Prostitution and migration: a case study of Arkhangel'sk	 96
Arkhangel'sk in the early twentieth century	101
Prostitution in Arkhangel'sk	106
Prostitutes as migrants	109
Prostitutes and wider lower-class society	124
Conclusion	136
 3. Uneasy toleration: brothels and urban communities	 139
The brothel interior: clean, calm and concealed	143
Commercial sex in city space	155
Educated observers and the state-licensed brothel	182
Conclusion	192

4. Malevolent madams: facilitators of prostitution	194
Guardians of public health or exploiters of registered women?	198
Custodians of youth or procurers of children?	212
Supervisors of lower-class people or vulnerable members of the urban community?	227
Invisible middlemen: pimps and procurers	235
Conclusion	255
 5. Controlling clients: venereal diseases in the Imperial Navy	 258
The control of venereal diseases in the 'lower ranks' of Libava	261
Clandestine prostitutes	264
Municipal government	268
Sailors	271
Libava	279
Controlling the public health crisis	285
Conclusion	291
 6. Regulation in conflict: the place of <i>nadzor</i> in the Russo-Japanese and First World Wars	 294
The Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905	298
Policing prostitution along the line of mobilisation	300
Preventing venereal disease transmission in Siberia	309
The First World War, 1914-1917	316
Policing prostitution on Russia's western front	317
Controlling venereal diseases in the military	327
Conclusion	332
 Conclusion	 335
 Bibliography	 350

List of figures

Figure	Page
1: Map of the population distribution of Arkhangel'sk province	106
2: Nationalities listed on the Revel' police lists, 1901, 1904 and 1906	113
3: The passage certificate of Anna Petrova Sults, 1908	115
4: The passage certificate of Anna Mikhailova Slesiareva, 1906	116
5: Reasons for leaving prostitution as indicated in the Arkhangel'sk petitions	126
6: Reasons for removal from the St Petersburg police lists, 1909	132
7: Plan for the 'Green Island' brothel in Narva, 1908	148
8: Permitted locations for brothels in Kronshtadt, 1906	159
9: Police map of the location of brothels in Kishinev, 1902	164
10: Plans of Katz's proposed two-floor wooden building to house a brothel, 1909	170
11: Streets in St Petersburg where prostitutes were forbidden from renting accommodation from 1898 onwards	178
12: Photograph of Nadezhda Ivanova and Mariia Sepp, two registered prostitutes from Estliand province, 1913	208
13: Percentage of sailors infected with a venereal disease at the Port of Emperor Alexander III, Libava, 1893-1908	263
14: Percentage of sailors infected with a venereal disease in ports across the Russian empire, 1906	280

Abbreviations

MVD – Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del*)

GUMkh - Main Administration for Municipal Affairs (*Glavnoe Upravlenie po delam Mestnogo Khoziaistva*)

ROZZh – Russian Society for the Protection of Women (*Rossiiskoe Obshchestvo Zashchity Zhenshchin*)

RZhKVB - *Russian Journal of Skin and Venereal Diseases* (*Russkii Zhurnal Kozhnikh i Venericheskikh Boleznei*)

Archival abbreviations

EAA – National Archives of Estonia (*Rahvusarhiiv*)

GARF – State Archive of the Russian Federation (*Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii*)

GAAO – State Archive of Arkhangelsk Oblast' (*Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti*)

LVVA – Latvian State Historical Archives (*Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs*)

RGALI – Russian State Archive for Literature and Art (*Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva*)

RGAVMF – Russian State Archive of the Navy (*Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Voenno-Morskogo Flota*)

RGIA – Russian State Historical Archive (*Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv*)

RGVIA – Russian State Military History Archive (*Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv*)

TsDIAK – Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Kyiv (*Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Istorichnyi Arkhiv Ukrainy m. Kyiv*)

TsGIASpb – Central State Historical Archive of St Petersburg (*Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv Sankt-Peterburga*)

Notes

Dates

All dates throughout this thesis are given according to the Julian calendar, which ran thirteen days behind the Gregorian calendar used in Western Europe. The Gregorian calendar was adopted in Russia on the day following 31 January 1918.

Translations/Transliterations

Unless noted, all translations are my own. Transliterations have been made using the Library of Congress system, except in the case of well-known names with familiar spellings, such as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Throughout this thesis, I have provided translations for all Russian terms in order to make this study accessible to non-Russian speakers. When terminology is important or when there are multiple options for translation, the Russian word is transliterated in brackets.

I have included present-day equivalents for Russian imperial measurements throughout. The most frequently cited measurement is the *sazhen* (1 *sazhen* = 2.13 metres).

I have referred to towns and cities by their Russian imperial names throughout the thesis. The territory of the Russian empire covered in this study now comprises the independent countries of Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine, so where appropriate, the location's present-day name is included in brackets. The most frequent examples of this are:

Dvinsk (Daugavpils, Latvia)

Ekaterinoslav (Dnipro, Ukraine)

Elisavetgrad (Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine)

Kishinev (Chişinău, Moldova)

Libava (Liepāja, Latvia)

Revel' (Tallinn, Estonia)

Vilna (Vilnius, Lithuania)

Archival references

Archival references are given according to the guidelines of the country in which the document was consulted.

Documents consulted in Russian archives are categorised by their collection *fond* (f.), section *opis'* (op.), file *delo* (d.), and page number *list* (l.).

For Latvian archives, *fonds* (f.), *apralits* (apr.), *lieta* (l.), *lapa* (lp.).

For Ukrainian archives, *fond* (f.), *opys* (op.), *sprava* (spr.), *arkush* (ark.).

For Estonian archives, documents are categorised by *fond*, *inventari*, *säilitusüksus*, and *lehekülg*, but according to the National Archive of Estonia's guidelines, archival references only include their numerical classification (for example, EAA, 31.2.3722, lk. 1)

Introduction

In May 1911, the head of the Department for Military Health in Moscow distributed a circular to all city police officers. He informed them that, with the onset of the warmer springtime weather, prostitutes were loitering outside city bathhouses ‘importunately offering their services to passing men’.¹ In its framing of prostitutes as brazen and culpable agents of moral degradation, this circular speaks to official and popular anxieties regarding prostitution in early twentieth-century Russia. How could prostitution be hidden and contained in urban space? How could the visibility of lower-class sexuality be limited? How could prostitutes be forced to work only within the boundaries defined by law? From 1843, the tsarist authorities conducted the medical-police supervision of prostitution (*vrachebno-politseiskii nadzor za prostitutsiei*), known both as regulation (*reglamentatsiia*) or simply *nadzor*. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del*, MVD hereafter) implemented the system across the empire under the banner of public health. Urban centres with adequate financial resources began to establish medical-police committees to oversee the registration of prostitutes, their medical examination and the opening and closing of brothels. This thesis is primarily concerned with how regulation was implemented, experienced, and resisted. It asks three central questions. How did regulation actually function in practice? How did the system fit with wider state attempts to regulate lower-class people? Why was the system so

¹ Tsentral’nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv Sankt-Peterburga (TsGIASp hereafter) f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 116.

unsuccessful at containing prostitution and preventing the spread of venereal diseases?

The period between 1900 and 1917 formed a watershed moment in Russia's regulation of prostitution. During these years, the *nadzor* system expanded rapidly in tandem with Russia's accelerated industrial and urban development. Between 1889 and 1909, the number of registered prostitutes grew substantially in certain provinces. Lifliand had just 593 registered women in 1889, but 1348 by 1909, an increase of over 120 per cent.² In Kurliand province, the number of registered women increased by over 170 per cent across the two decades, from 141 to 384. Minsk province's registered prostitute population grew by 275 per cent, from 138 to 518 women. As the system expanded, criticism of its medical and moral failings gained momentum. By the turn of the century, most of Russian educated society regarded *nadzor* as a total failure and called for its radical reform or complete abolition. In the early 1900s, the MVD introduced new legislation in response to this criticism. In 1901, the minimum legal age for women working in brothels was raised from sixteen to twenty-one.³ In October 1903, the medical department of the MVD issued a revised set of rules known as 'regulations on the organisation of the supervision of prostitution in cities across the Russian empire', abbreviated as Circular 1611.⁴

² All of the subsequent figures listed in this paragraph come from the following two empire-wide prostitution surveys: A. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia v Rossiiskoi Imperii po Obsledovaniiu 1-go Avgusta 1889 goda* (St Petersburg, 1890), pp. 36-37; Glavnoe Upravlenie po Delam Mestnogo Khoziaistva, *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor za Gorodskoi Prostitutsiei* (St Petersburg, 1910), pp. 10-13.

³ Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF hereafter) f. 102, op. 58, d. 65, l. 3. However, this rule only applied to new brothel recruits, and women already working in public establishments under the age of twenty-one were allowed to continue.

⁴ TsGIA SPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, ll. 31-34. The 1903 regulations will be discussed in detail throughout the thesis and will be referred to as Circular 1611.

These rules granted regional authorities partial control over regulation, as they now could decide the level of police involvement in the regulatory process and adapt the rules in light of local conditions. Despite attempts to reform the system, regulation continued to be widely criticised right up until its abolition in July 1917 by the Provisional Government.

Given the minimal police force across the empire, the tsarist authorities relied heavily on brothel madams and wider urban communities to participate in the policing of the bodies, movement and activities of registered women. Various people aided the authorities by informing on registered women living in prohibited areas. However, others helped women on the police lists to resist the policies intended to keep them separate and invisible in urban space. Some men who paid for sex delighted in denouncing so-called secret or clandestine prostitutes (*tainye prostitutki*) to the authorities, but others refused to identify women when asked. The same complex picture applies to registered prostitutes: some women routinely transgressed regulation while others called out the authorities for their incorrect application of policy. The picture is wonderfully complicated and should be studied as such. This research shows that *nadzor* was not just a policy enacted from the top down and responded to monolithically. Instead, regulation will be used as lens to examine the diverse range of lower-class people's experiences in late imperial Russia.⁵ The thesis has three central arguments. First, that official and unofficial responses to

⁵ The term 'lower class' is used throughout Mark Steinberg's and Stephen Frank's edited collection. This terminology breaks down the inadequate and simplistic categories of 'peasants' and 'workers', which is especially important given that social identities were in flux in the late imperial period. I will use 'lower class' throughout this thesis to refer to both peasants (*krest'iane*) and townspeople (*meshchane*). M. D. Steinberg and S. P. Frank, 'Introduction', in S. P. Frank and M. D. Steinberg (eds), *Cultures in Flux: Lower-Class Values, Practices, and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1994), p. 3.

regulation were multifaceted and dependent on the social, economic and environmental circumstances of a particular place. Second, that regulation fitted within wider state ambitions to monitor lower-class people. Finally, that urbanisation, a lack of resources and a reluctance of ordinary people to help enforce policy meant that state ambitions were impossible to enforce in practice.

This thesis is a social history of prostitution, which examines the intersections of gender and class in contemporary understandings of, and responses to, the commercial sex industry. In exploring how prostitution policy was implemented, experienced and resisted, it will draw on and advance a number of overlapping historiographical fields. As well as being of interest to social and cultural historians of late imperial Russia, this thesis is useful for historians working on prostitution; gender and sexuality; urbanisation; and migration across various chronological and geographical contexts. With its focus on the contentious relationship between the authorities and ordinary people, it will be of interest to scholars concerned with lower-class resistance in the modern world. In the remainder of this introduction, I will demonstrate how the regulation of prostitution can be used as a lens to examine urban lower-class society, but first, I will turn my attention to the principal subjects of this thesis: the women who sold sex in late imperial Russia.

Prostitutes in late imperial Russia⁶

According to statistical surveys from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the vast majority of registered prostitutes were from the lower classes, either peasants (*krest'ianki*), lower-class townswomen (*meshchanki*) or soldiers' wives (*soldatki*).⁷ When surveyed, most prostitutes listed domestic service or needlework as their occupation prior to their entry into prostitution, both low-paid and predominantly unstable professions.⁸ These demographic and employment trends were replicated across other European geographical contexts.⁹ The dominance of lower-class women in the commercial sex industry

⁶ On the word 'prostitute': Jill McCracken explains how present-day debates 'surrounding the word choice of prostitute, sex worker or victim of sexual exploitation, reflect the speaker's moral and political standpoint regarding the subject's agency and position in society'. The word 'prostitute' is often used to remove the agency of women who sell sexual services, and rarely a term that women would apply to themselves. J. McCracken, *Street Sex Workers' Discourse: Realising Material Change Through Agential Choice* (Abingdon and New York, 2013), pp. 100-101. That is certainly not the aim of this thesis. Throughout this study, I will use the term 'prostitute' because it was a specific legal identity, a label assigned by the authorities, and a marker of self-identification. When women who sold sex corresponded with the authorities in archival material, they frequently employed this terminology themselves. To use the term 'sex worker' would be anachronistic, as women who sold sex in late imperial Russia did not have the technology to offer the wide range of services available in the present-day commercial sex industry.

⁷ Surveys by statisticians Fedorov and Oboznenko conducted in the 1880s and 1890s show that peasant women made up around 50 per cent of registered prostitutes in St Petersburg, whereas townswomen made up around 35 per cent and soldiers' wives between 7-12 per cent. In surveys of St Petersburg prostitutes conducted by philanthropic organisations on the eve of the First World War, peasants made up over 80 per cent of registered women. L. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995), pp. 93-98. Peasant women dominated the police lists in Dubrovskii's empire-wide survey of prostitutes in 1889, comprising 50 per cent of prostitutes. Townswomen made up 35 per cent and soldiers' wives around 4 per cent. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 36-37. The Revel' police lists for 1901 show that almost 75 per cent of registered women were peasants and 20 per cent were townspeople. Rahvusarhiiv (EAA hereafter) 31.2.3722.

⁸ Between 40-50 per cent of prostitutes surveyed by Dubrovskii and Oboznenko were former domestic servants and between 10-20 per cent had worked in workshops as dressmakers, seamstresses, milliners and coatmakers. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 107-113.

⁹ In Italy in the same period, needlework and domestic service were also the two most common former professions of prostitutes and the majority were rural-to-urban migrants, M. Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy, 1860-1915* (Columbus, 1990), p. 106. In Victorian Plymouth, most of the women registered under the Contagious Diseases Acts were recent arrivals from the surrounding countryside. The majority in women in London Lock Hospitals had worked as domestic servants, J. Walkowitz, *Prostitution in Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 193, 260. In Habsburg Lwów, two thirds of registered prostitutes were former domestic servants, K. Stauter-Halstead, 'Moral Panic and the Prostitute in Partitioned Poland: Middle-Class Respectability in Defence of the Modern Nation', *Slavic Review*, 68:3

coloured the discussions of the educated elite. Physicians, philanthropists, and policemen alike emphasised the vulnerability and moral laxity of registered women, apparently attributes typical of other women from similar social backgrounds.¹⁰ However, registered prostitutes were not just stereotypes or numbers on the pages of statistical studies. They were active agents, whose experiences of, and responses to, *nadzor* were multifaceted. In this thesis, I use regulation as a means to examine these women's lives and challenges.

The tsarist authorities divided registered prostitutes into two categories: those who worked in state-licensed brothels (*prostitutok v domakh terpimosti*) and those who worked anywhere else, known as independent prostitutes (*odinochki*). According to the updated 1903 regulations, prostitutes of both categories had eleven rules to follow.¹¹ Some regulations attempted to limit their visibility within urban space, as they forbade prostitutes from walking together in public places, appearing in the windows of their apartments, and sitting in the stalls at the theatre. Others dealt with the medical side of regulation, as both groups of prostitute were legally obliged to attend medical examinations twice a week, forbidden from working during menstruation or pregnancy and required to present their medical tickets at the request of the medical-police committee or their clients. The regulations also dictated that prostitutes needed the permission of their local committee to leave their place

(2009), p. 575. In pre-war Serbia, the majority of prostitutes treated at the state general hospital of Belgrade were daughters of peasants, craftsmen or domestic servants, J. Knežević. 'Prostitutes as a Threat to National Honour in Habsburg-Occupied Serbia During the Great War', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 20:2 (2011), p. 317.

¹⁰ For a discussion of class, sexuality and morality, see chapter five of L. Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca and London, 1992). See also Laurie Bernstein's analysis of the 1910 All-Russian Congress for the Struggle against the Traffic in Women and its Causes. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 219-233.

¹¹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, ll. 31-34.

of residence and that independent prostitutes could not live more than two to one apartment. These rules sanctioned the strict control of the private lives of women who sold sex, but the authorities were often unable, or unwilling, to enforce these ambitious policies.

When researching prostitution, it is impossible to truly 'know' the subjects. Even the Russian authorities had no idea of how many women were actually working in the commercial sex industry. Officials and the wider public were well aware of the fact that the police lists and empire-wide prostitution surveys did not provide an exhaustive record of all of the women who sold sex. Stephen Frank problematises late imperial official statistics in his work on female criminality, arguing that they 'served merely to confirm or buttress established knowledge' for contemporary specialists, rather than shedding light on actual figures.¹² Officialdom called on medical-police agents and wider urban communities to expose women working outside the regulation system as secret prostitutes. In 1909, the tsarist police arrested 11,351 women for clandestine prostitution across the empire, but these were just the women that they caught.¹³ If clandestine prostitutes never came into contact with the authorities, they remain absent from the historical record. Additionally, in certain regions women routinely evaded police supervision or removed themselves from the police lists with relative ease. Knowing that these practices were commonplace makes it even more difficult to gauge the scale of prostitution in late imperial Russia. Instead of attempting to do this, this thesis provides a snapshot of how

¹² S. P. Frank, 'Narratives Within Numbers: Women, Crime and Judicial Statistics in Imperial Russia, 1834-1913', *Russian Review*, 55:4 (1996), p. 543.

¹³ *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 58.

urban residents, prostitutes and their clients interacted with the regulation system, namely when they aided or resisted the policing of prostitution.

The legal categories of registered or secret prostitute were assigned to women by those in authority and it did not necessarily reflect a woman's self-identification. Not all women who worked as prostitutes chose their occupation freely and could have been coerced by their friends, family or partners. Women's registration could also indicate that they had transgressed official ideals of appropriate female behaviour. Local authorities were able to register women onto the police lists in the absence of any supporting evidence for their involvement in commercial sex. For example, the Riga Police Chief received two furious petitions in August 1900 from men following the forced registration of their fiancées as prostitutes.¹⁴ After a romantic evening of walking through the park together, the two couples had decided to stop at a local hotel for dinner when committee agents arrived and registered the women on the spot. 'No groom would want such an unpleasant thing for their bride', one objected, and they both demanded the removal of their fiancées from the lists. Presumably these women were targeted because the police perceived their behaviour to be inappropriate. In this case, registration was used to enforce patriarchal control. Regulation reinforced the idea that there were two types of women: those who emulated feminine ideals of subservience, chastity and modesty, and those who subverted them. Both the authorities and certain members of the public agreed that the latter category required police surveillance in order to protect public health and morality.

¹⁴ Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs (LVVA hereafter) f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 237, 238.

The relationship that registered women had with their profession was complicated. Myriad factors accounted for women's entry into prostitution, including gender hierarchies, family structures, economic circumstances and individual choice. Given the alternative of limited, low paid and unstable occupations for lower-class women, prostitution may have provided a relatively straightforward method by which to increase their income. Some women moved in and out prostitution throughout their working lives, working temporarily as prostitutes during slow seasons or for a few months after arriving to a new city. For other women, 'prostitute' was more than an assigned legal category. Certain registered women were well aware of their legal rights and willing to challenge the authorities in cases of violation. When corresponding with their medical-police committees, some registered women emphasised how they were 'unfortunate' or 'debauched', while others declared '*Ia – prostitutka*'.¹⁵ By drawing on correspondence penned by prostitutes and lower-class urban communities, this thesis will illuminate this diversity and demonstrate that for some women, prostitution was just another temporary or seasonal female occupation.

Contemporary observers privileged narratives of desperation, violation and seduction to explain how and why women ended up on the police lists. When discussing prostitutes, physicians, journalists, state officials and philanthropists often recycled the same set of lower-class female characters, reflecting their own assumptions about morality, gender and class. These stereotypes were clearly drawn. There were the poorly-paid seamstresses or

¹⁵ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 278.

servants who became jealous of the 'elegant, graceful ladies' that they served, so worked as prostitutes on the side to afford expensive dresses.¹⁶ There were the young shop salesclerks who supplemented their low wages with prostitution so that they could afford their work clothing.¹⁷ There were the lower-class female workers employed at workshops close to brothels, who began to envy the 'chic lifestyles' of prostitutes.¹⁸ Naïve domestic servants were seduced by their social superiors or ensnared by procurers, and socially isolated milliners, confined to their workplaces, were exploited by their mistresses and paid a 'pittance'.¹⁹ Generally, elite observers fused together social, economic and moral factors when explaining prostitution. Women became prostitutes both to afford frivolous items and to simply afford to eat. They sold sex to escape grinding poverty, but were simultaneously 'weak willed' and easily seduced into prostitution by the prospect of treats. These characterisations help to explain both the regulation system and philanthropic responses to prostitution during this period. Lower-class women required both protection and policing, hence they were to be either registered with the police or 'rescued' by religious charitable organisations to receive a moral education.

¹⁶ 'Khoziaiki – Svodni', *Golos Portnogo* (10 May 1910), pp. 8-9; A. Fedorov, *Ocherk Vrachebno-Politseiskogo Nadzora za Prostitutsiei v Sankt-Peterburge* (St Petersburg, 1897), p. 19.

¹⁷ C. Ruane, 'Clothes Shopping in Imperial Russia: the Development of a Consumer Culture', *Journal of Social History*, 28:4 (1995), p. 773; Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 118.

¹⁸ 'Mezhdu Masterskoi i Pritonom', *Golos Portnogo*, (10 May 1910), pp. 9-10.

¹⁹ V. P. Okorokov, *Vozvrashchenie k Chestnomu Trudu Padshikh Devushek: Sfera Deiatel'nosti Uchrezhdenii Marii Magdaliny v Moskve* (Moscow, 1888), p. 14. In Tolstoy's *Resurrection* (1899) Katusha Maslova was a domestic servant who was seduced by a nobleman, fell pregnant and then entered prostitution. One example that discusses the vulnerability of milliners is 'Kak Fabrikuiutsiia Prostitutki', *Golos Portnogo*, (10 May 1910), p. 10.

Lower-class voices

Regulation was a system primarily for, and overwhelmingly staffed by, people from the lower classes. As noted earlier, the vast majority of registered prostitutes were either peasants or townswomen, and their managers were from the same demographic background. In 1889, over three-quarters of madams running state-licensed establishments were either townswomen, peasants, or soldiers' wives.²⁰ Prostitutes' clients came from across the social spectrum. However, the prevalence of cheaper second-class and third-class brothels in major cities suggests that registered prostitutes mainly served lower-class customers.²¹ Prostitutes, both registered and clandestine, had no shortage of clients in the Russian military, which was comprised mainly of men who hailed from the peasantry and urban lower classes.²² As Russian towns and cities did not have formal red-light districts, lower-class people often lived in close proximity to state-licensed brothels. Regulation brought these various groups of people into contact with the imperial state, both formally and informally. The state expected registered prostitutes and brothel madams to maintain regular contact with their local authorities, and they could be penalised for their failure to do so. Law enforcement called on clients and wider

²⁰ Out of the 1214 registered brothel madams recorded in this survey, 525 were townswomen, 226 were peasants and 210 were soldiers' wives. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 18-19.

²¹ In 1900 in Riga, ten out of the fifteen state-licensed brothels were second or third class. LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23469, lp. 6. The St Petersburg medical-police committee's annual report of 1909 listed twenty-six brothels: seven first class and nineteen in the second and third class categories. Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv (RGIA hereafter) f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 58.

²² Alan Wildman argues that universal military obligation meant that the 'social composition of the Army necessarily reflected that of Russia as a whole', A. Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army: the Old Army and the Soldiers' Revolt (March-April 1917)* (Princeton, 1980), p. 30.

urban communities to help police prostitution by denouncing clandestine women and madams who violated regulatory policy.

Writing the history of lower-class people, especially registered prostitutes and their clients, poses certain methodological problems. Preserved material is often fragmented and there is a distinct lack of ego documents. When the voice of the subject finally is heard, it is mediated by those in power and is difficult to disentangle from the latter's political and social motivations. The authorities recorded prostitutes' responses only in cases of misdemeanour, at the court or police station. The absence of the prostitute's voice in official records held in archives is a problem acknowledged by many historians of sexuality, regardless of geographical and chronological focus.²³ Using philanthropic records to access information about prostitutes can pose similar problems, as it is difficult to untangle the motivations of charitable organisations from registered prostitutes' written testimony. Their clients are even more elusive, as the Russian authorities never legally mandated their medical examination on an empire-wide basis. Clients who did encounter the authorities were usually military personnel, whose sexual health was deemed especially worthy of protection. Written correspondence between brothel madams and the authorities is fragmented, and the contributions of pimps to the regulation system is unrecognised.

In her work on images of peasants in the post-emancipation era, Cathy Frierson argues that lower-class people were always symbolic for educated observers.

²³ On the sources available to historians of prostitution in modern Europe and North America and their challenges see T. J. Gilfoyle, 'Prostitutes in the Archives: Problems and Possibilities in Documenting the History of Sexuality', *American Archivist* 57 (1994), pp. 514-527.

Late nineteenth-century authors grappled to 'know' and understand peasants in order to provide explanations about the current state and potential future of the Russian nation.²⁴ In a similar way, educated society has used those who worked in the commercial sex industry as symbolic of wider political, social and economic problems in a variety of international contexts. In Russia, as across central and eastern Europe, official and popular discourse used the 'Jewish procurer' as emblematic of the apparent dangers of 'foreign' groups, modern transport innovation and female mobility.²⁵ Critics of prostitution in Latin America used the image of the black, foreign, migrant prostitute as symbolic of national moral decline.²⁶ In their work on Ireland in the early 1900s, Maria Luddy and Philip Howell reveal how the prostitute was symbolic of British oppression and exploitation in the discourse of those calling for Irish independence.²⁷ Around the turn of the century, discussions of prostitutes in Poland, China and Japan centred on how best to construct a modern, healthy state.²⁸

²⁴ C. A. Frierson, *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (New York and Oxford, 1993). Instead of relying solely on literary representations, Frierson uses peasants' relationship with fire and arson to illuminate their 'multiple, sometimes contradictory, historical character' C. A. Frierson, *All Russia is Burning!: A Cultural History of Fire and Arson in Late Imperial Russia* (Seattle, 2002), p. 10.

²⁵ N. M. Wingfield, 'Destination: Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Constantinople: "White Slavers" in Late Imperial Austria', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 20:2 (2011), pp. 291-311; K. Stauter-Halstead, "'A Generation of Monsters": Jews, Prostitution and Racial Purity in the 1892 L'viv White Slavery Trial', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 38 (2007), pp. 25-35.

²⁶ See chapter three of L. Putnam, *The Company They Kept: Migrants and the Politics of Gender in Caribbean Costa Rica, 1870-1960* (Chapel Hill, 2002), pp. 76-111. See also chapter three in T. A. Sippial, *Prostitution, Modernity and the Making of the Cuban Republic, 1840-1920* (Chapel Hill, 2013), pp. 85-111.

²⁷ P. Howell, 'Venereal Disease and the Politics of Prostitution in the Irish Free State', *Irish Historical Studies*, 33:131 (2003), pp. 320-341; M. Luddy, *Prostitution and Irish Society, 1880-1940* (Cambridge, 2007).

²⁸ K. Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil's Chain: Prostitution and Social Control in Partitioned Poland* (Ithaca and London, 2015); G. Hershatler, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Berkeley, 1997); C. Henriot, *Prostitution and Sexuality in Shanghai: a Social History, 1849-1949* (Cambridge, 2001); S. Garon, 'The World's Oldest Debate?

Women who sold sex were also symbolic in late imperial Russia. Opponents of regulation used the image of the registered prostitute to emphasise the sexual double standard and the vulnerability of lower-class women.²⁹ For those who supported the system, prostitutes were symbolic of all societal anxieties: disease, the breakdown of the family order and untameable female sexuality.³⁰ Frustrated physicians gestured to the diseased prostitute as a potent reminder of the tsarist government's unwillingness to invest in public health facilities.

Focusing solely on representations obscures the complex relationship between prostitutes, their clients, their managers, the police and wider urban communities. This thesis moves beyond concentrating on the attitudes of educated observers to provide a social history of prostitution. It will shed light on official priorities and practices, the integration of prostitutes within urban communities and the place of prostitution within wider urban society, to weave a complex web of interactions to illuminate how people complied with, were indifferent to, or rejected the regulation system.

Although official documentation mainly speaks to the priorities of those in authority, it can still provide useful information about the women who worked as prostitutes and the regulation system. Police lists of registered women provide information about prostitutes' ethnicity, religion, age, social class, the distances that they travelled and the languages that they spoke. In certain

Prostitution and the State in Imperial Japan, 1900-1945', *American Historical Review*, 98:3 (1993), pp. 710-732.

²⁹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 123, 274.

³⁰ Alain Corbin explores representations of prostitutes as symbols of social disorder throughout his work on French regulationism. The prostitute symbolised the breakdown of the bourgeois family and 'constitute[d] a counterideal, enabling the honest woman all the more easily to define herself' A. Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France After 1850*, trans. A. Sheridan (Cambridge, 1990), p. 53.

regional contexts, police lists indicate the city in which a woman became registered and the complete list of brothels in which she had previously worked. These records allow us to examine the women who sold sex in the late Russian empire both quantitatively and qualitatively from the top down. The prostitute's voice is largely absent in correspondence between regional and central police departments, but these letters allow us to draw conclusions about the widening gulf between state policy and practice and the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation on policing practices. Court cases may be saturated with official discourse, but they often include extended witness statements that illuminate how prostitutes were integrated within certain lower-class urban communities. Official reports help to delineate the legal boundaries set by local authorities and how these varied on a regional basis. Published statistical surveys commissioned by central government agencies reveal that the tsarist government considered prostitution to be something worthy of research and attention, which helps to demonstrate the centrality of commercial sex in late imperial society. In addition to official documentation, articles from newspapers and periodicals will be examined throughout the thesis.³¹ These publications help to gauge the perspectives of educated, and often elite, observers, namely their criticisms of the regulation system and approaches to solving the 'social problem' of prostitution.

This thesis draws extensively on petitions and letters written by lower-class people to the tsarist authorities regarding various aspects of regulation.

³¹ The bibliography compiled by Stanislav Panin has been an invaluable resource for locating early twentieth-century published articles on prostitution. S. E. Panin, *Prostitutsiia v Rossii v XIX-XX vv. Materialy k Bibliografii na Russkom Iazyke* (Penza, 2005).

Andrew Verner accurately describes these documents as ‘integral parts of the complex negotiations among, as well as between, the peasants and the outside’ in his research on peasant petitioning during the 1905 revolutions.³² Building on this methodology, this thesis demonstrates how lower-class petitioning was indeed a ‘discursive strategy’, used to highlight violations of regulation policy, to bring individuals under state control and a well-established outlet for voicing social, ethnic and religious prejudices. The backgrounds of petitioners varied markedly, so class and gender are fundamental considerations in the study of petitions. In her work on divorce, Barbara Engel argues that the majority of women petitioning for separation stressed their helplessness, echoing gendered notions of female vulnerability.³³ She also notes that lower-class women were more likely to emphasise their need or desire to work in their complaints.³⁴ Emily Pyle demonstrates that soldiers’ wives drew on narratives of vulnerability and poverty alongside legal discourse when petitioning for aid during the First World War.³⁵ Sarah Badcock has examined the collective rhetorical strategies of soldiers’ wives during 1917 to show how these women used the ‘language of the battlefield’ to appeal to regional governments.³⁶ This thesis puts gender and class at the centre of its examination of petitions, and uses these sources to reveal how lower-class people complied with, and resisted, the policies of the imperial government. The combination of

³² A. Verner, ‘Discursive Strategies in the 1905 Revolution: Peasant Petitions from Vladimir Province’, *Russian Review*, 54:1 (1995), p. 67.

³³ B. A. Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound: The Politics of Marital Strife in Late Imperial Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2011), p. 132.

³⁴ Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound*, p. 39.

³⁵ E. M. Pyle, ‘Peasant Strategies for Obtaining State Aid: a Study of Petitions During World War I’, *Russian History*, 24:1-2 (1997), pp. 41-64.

³⁶ S. Badcock, ‘Women, Protest and Revolution: Soldiers’ Wives in Russia During 1917’, *International Journal of Social History*, 49 (2004), p. 62.

examining both official discourse and lower-class voices will demonstrate the centrality of the imperial state, while also showing how the relationship between the authorities and various lower-class groups was frequently negotiated.

This thesis will also readdress the perceived social exclusion of prostitutes from wider urban communities by examining the responses of city residents to regulatory policies and the geography of prostitution in urban space. Engel emphasises prostitutes' segregation in her statement that the regulation system ostracised women from the 'milieu of the respectable poor'.³⁷ Laurie Bernstein has contradictory ideas on the issue, arguing in one section of her book that medical-police regulations made it 'extremely difficult' for women to leave prostitution and then later suggesting that most women were able to discard their medical tickets and reintegrate back into lower-class urban communities.³⁸ This thesis demonstrates that prostitution was woven into the fabric of lower-class everyday life in the late imperial Russian city. Independent prostitutes lived within apartment buildings with other lower-class people, and their clients were often their social equals. Brothels were an everyday feature of the urban landscape, and local residents reacted with both disgust and indifference to these establishments. As a social history of prostitution, this thesis shifts focus away from the assumptions and perspectives of elite contemporary observers to demonstrate how prostitution was an

³⁷ B. A. Engel, *Between the Fields and the City: Women, Work and Family in Russia, 1861-1914* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 168.

³⁸ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 39, 79-82.

acknowledged, and contested, component of late imperial lower-class urban society.

Geography and urban space

The temporal frame of this thesis incorporates a period of increased urbanisation, which had a profound impact on the appearance of Russian cities. From the 1880s, Russian industry and transport developed at a significant rate, and rural-to-urban migration for wage labour expanded correspondingly. St Petersburg's population increased by 50,000 people every year between 1890 and 1914.³⁹ Between the 1860s and 1914, Warsaw's population increased four-fold and Riga's five times over.⁴⁰ By the early 1900s, Moscow's population exceeded one million and continued to grow. The city was the sixth biggest in Europe in terms of population and had the highest proportion of non-natives in the entire continent.⁴¹ Mass overcrowding and housing shortages were the consequences of this rapid urban expansion, and these in turn increased the visibility of social 'problems', such as poverty, disease and prostitution. Historians have explored the social impact of these developments on urban dwellers, but many of these studies ignore women's experiences.⁴² This thesis

³⁹ J. Bater, 'Between Old and New: St Petersburg in the Late Imperial Era' in M. F. Hamm (ed). *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, 1986), p. 51.

⁴⁰ S. D. Corrsin, 'Warsaw: Poles and Jews in a Conquered City', p. 127; A. Henriksson, 'Riga: Growth, Conflict and the Limitations of Good Government, 1850-1914', p. 181, both in Hamm (ed). *The City*.

⁴¹ The majority of these migrants were peasants who had travelled from the central provinces of European Russia. A. Mazanik, 'The City as a Transient Home: Residential Patterns of Moscow Workers Around the Turn of the Twentieth Century', *Urban History*, 40:1 (2013), p. 51, 55.

⁴² For example, J. Bradley, *Muzhik and Muscovite: Urbanisation in Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1985); D. R. Brower, *The Russian City Between Tradition and Modernity 1850-1900* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990); R. E. Johnson, *Peasant and Proletarian: the Working Class of Moscow in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Leicester, 1979). Works that focus on female experiences include R. Glickman, *Russian Factory Women: Workplace and Society 1880-1914*

focuses on prostitution to explore late imperial urbanisation, by examining how officials and the wider public used commercial sex as a means to express concern about the impact of modernisation and urban growth.

Regulation was most pronounced in the heavily urbanised and densely populated regions of the empire. In 1909, just under half of Russia's towns and cities had some form of medical-police supervision.⁴³ The fifty provinces of European Russia contained the empire's ten most populated cities, and this region was where most people engaged in legal prostitution. The area comprised just 22 per cent of Russia's total territory, yet over 77 per cent of the empire's population lived there in 1914.⁴⁴ European Russia was also the most industrialised portion of the empire, as the vast majority of all industrial production occurred within these provinces.⁴⁵ This region contained 71 per cent of all the empire's registered prostitutes and 66 per cent of state-licensed sites of prostitution.⁴⁶ At a provincial level, legal prostitution was more

(Berkeley, 1984); Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*; B. Farnsworth and L. Viola (eds), *Russian Peasant Women* (Oxford, 1992); J. McDermid and A. Hillyar, *Women and Work in Russia, 1880-1930: a Study in Continuity Through Change* (Abingdon and London, 1998); B. A. Engel, 'Women and Urban Culture' in W. Roslyn and A. Tosi (eds), *Women in Nineteenth-Century Russia: Lives and Culture* (Cambridge, 2012); L. H. Siegelbaum and L. P. Moch, *Broad is My Native Land: Repertoires and Regimes of Migration in Russia's Twentieth Century* (Ithaca and London, 2014), pp. 107-110.

⁴³ Just 458 out of the 960 urban settlements in the Russian empire (excluding the Grand Duchy of Finland) had their own regulation systems. *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 1.

⁴⁴ D. Saunders, 'Regional Diversity in the Later Russian Empire', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 10 (2000), p. 145.

⁴⁵ M. F. Hamm, 'Introduction' in Hamm (ed). *The City*, p. 3. Traditional sectors of manufacture, such as textile and food production, dominated the central industrial district of European Russia in the early 1900s. D. H. Kaiser, *The Workers Revolution in Russia, 1917: the View From Below* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 29-30.

⁴⁶ European Russia was made up of fifty provinces in the west of the empire. 18,391 out of 25,660 registered prostitutes lived within these provinces. State-licensed sites of prostitution included both 'houses of toleration' and 'dens of debauchery', and 874 out of 1312 were located in this region. *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 58. These figures do not take into account clandestine prostitutes and unlicensed brothels which would have undoubtedly pushed the figures up even higher.

widespread in locations with transport links, such as provincial capitals, railway junctions and port towns.⁴⁷

Industrialisation was not static, especially given the rapid extension of the empire's railway networks in the last years of the nineteenth century. Often legal prostitution expanded geographically alongside industrial development, as urbanisation brought increased opportunities for policing and surveillance. For example, during the construction of the Trans-Siberian and Trans-Baikal railways between 1895 and 1905, the number of registered prostitutes in the Trans-Baikal region increased by 750 per cent.⁴⁸ Certain towns in the eastern provinces of the empire actually had a higher proportion of prostitutes than major urban centres in European Russia. In 1909, there were three prostitutes per 1000 residents in Riga, two in St Petersburg and one per 1000 in Moscow.⁴⁹ The small town of Irbit' in Perm province had a ratio of 23:1000. In the empire's Maritime Region (*Primorskaia oblast'*), Nikolaevsk-on-Amur's ratio was 16:1000 and Vladivostok's 14:1000.⁵⁰ The scale of legal prostitution within urban space was dependent on a variety of factors, namely the funding local authorities put aside for regulation, the zeal of local law enforcement and the willingness of wider communities to participate in policing practices.

As towns and cities grew in size across the empire, the tsarist authorities struggled to keep prostitution contained within delineated boundaries. Officials demarcated these boundaries based on their 'moral geographies', which were

⁴⁷ For example, in Kurliand province, 51 per cent of prostitutes lived in the port of Libava and in Lifliand province 65 per cent of registered women lived in Riga. *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, pp. 10-12.

⁴⁸ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 31; *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁹ *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 61.

⁵⁰ *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 61.

driven by the assumption that certain behaviours belonged only within specific places.⁵¹ Philip Hubbard argues that shifting moral geographies are part of a 'continuing (but contested) process involving the separation of disorderly prostitution from orderly and "respectable" sexuality'.⁵² Local medical-police committees were in charge of issuing brothel licences, which effectively marked out the moral geography of a particular locality. However, as towns grew in size through increased migration, the brothels that had once been located within a city's outskirts moved into the boundaries of the city centre. Urbanisation and the financial relationship between brothel keepers and law enforcement made the containment of prostitution within urban space even more difficult, much to the horror of certain urban residents and educated observers. Modernisation, technological advancement and urbanisation all expanded the geographies of prostitution, and this trend has been observed in other comparative contexts.⁵³

Regional case studies facilitate our understanding how prostitution policies functioned in practice across a vast empire.⁵⁴ Russia was governed at a

⁵¹ P. Hubbard, *Cities and Sexualities* (Abingdon and New York, 2012), p. 34.

⁵² Hubbard, *Cities and Sexualities*, p. 51.

⁵³ Julia Laite argues that the introduction of electric lighting and the underground railway in London transformed the workspaces of prostitutes in the city. Women solicited outside tube stations, used the newly built public toilets as meeting spaces and moved away from main thoroughfares, which were lit by electric lights, onto quieter side streets to avoid police harassment. J. Laite, *Common Prostitutes and Ordinary Citizens: Commercial Sex in London, 1885-1960* (Basingstoke, 2012), p. 85.

⁵⁴ Historians of the British Empire have long acknowledged the importance of case studies. This is down to the fact that both during, and after the repeal of, the Contagious Diseases Acts, individual municipalities were largely in charge of implementing prostitution policy. J. R. Walkowitz and D. J. Walkowitz, "'We are Not Beasts of the Field': Prostitution and the Poor in Plymouth and Southampton Under the Contagious Diseases Acts', *Feminist Studies*, 1:3-4 (1973), pp. 73-106; P. Howell, D. Beckingham and F. Moore, 'Managed Zones for Sex Workers in Liverpool: Contemporary Proposals, Victorian Parallels', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33:2 (2008), pp. 233-250. Philippa Levine examines the application of the Contagious Diseases Acts in four different British colonies: Hong Kong, India, Queensland and the Straits Settlements. P. Levine, *Prostitution, Race and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (New York and London, 2003). Philip Howell chooses the case studies of

municipal level with a complex hierarchy of provincial institutions, headed, at least in theory, by the provincial governor.⁵⁵ Peter Waldron observes how the structure of Russian governmental power gave those who operated the institutional structures of the late imperial period ‘considerable latitude in both the formation of policy and its day-to-day implementation’.⁵⁶ Provincial governors were often well aware of the limited level of supervision from central government in St Petersburg and took advantage of this relative autonomy.⁵⁷ In 1903, Circular 1611 included a clause that allowed local authorities to deviate from the rules of regulation in light of local conditions.⁵⁸ This allowed provincial authorities to make slight alterations to their policing practices based on the social, economic and environmental characteristics of their region, which had a profound impact on the way that regulation functioned at a local level. Regional authorities were also responsible for funding regulation, so city budgets also had a direct impact upon the system’s effectivity. In Kishinev (Chişinău) in 1912, budgeting constraints meant that local police organs prioritised the ‘opening and closing of brothels’, which brought in revenue for the medical-police committee, rather than directing funding towards facilities for the medical examination of prostitutes.⁵⁹

Liverpool, Cambridge, Gibraltar and Hong Kong to examine the variations in British regulationism. P. Howell, *Geographies of Regulation: Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the Empire* (Cambridge, 2009).

⁵⁵ Provincial governors had huge levels of responsibility and were often unable to manage the wide range of provincial institutions below them. S. V. Liubichankovskii, ‘The Myth of Authority and the Authority of the Myth: Was the Russian Governor the Undisputed Master of His Province?’, *Russian Studies in History*, 53:5 (2014), pp. 30-37.

⁵⁶ P. Waldron, *Governing Tsarist Russia* (Basingstoke, 2007), p. 82.

⁵⁷ Waldron, *Governing Tsarist Russia*, p. 102.

⁵⁸ Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 258.

⁵⁹ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 40.

This thesis looks at the local context of regulation, drawing extensively on archival source material from Arkhangel'sk, Riga and Tartu, as well as Moscow and St Petersburg. This material includes correspondence between provincial governors and the centre, as well as letters sent between various layers of local government. Petitions penned by lower-class people living within these areas will also be examined, sent either to the central MVD or to their regional branch. To explore the impact of environmental factors and migration patterns on the application of regulation policy, chapter two will focus on the policing of prostitution in Arkhangel'sk. The case of Libava, a port town with a large sailor population in Kurliand province, illuminates how the imperial authorities attempted to monitor prostitutes' clients, and this town will be the geographical setting for chapter five. This approach demonstrates the importance of looking beyond capital cities when researching sexuality, as large and anonymous metropolises are often anomalies. The importance of regional contexts has been emphasised by other historians of sexuality. In her work on China in the early twentieth century, Elizabeth Remick shifts focus away from the 'exceptional' Shanghai to the cities of Kunming, Guangzhou and Hangzhou to show how local regulatory policies shaped the development of provincial governments.⁶⁰ Historians of Britain and North America have also adopted regional approaches to understand the construction and regulation of sexuality outside the often-anomalous capital city.⁶¹

⁶⁰ E. J. Remick, *Regulating Prostitution in China: Gender and Statebuilding, 1900-1937* (Stanford, 2014).

⁶¹ L. Mahood and B. Littlewood, 'The "Vicious Girl" and the "Street Corner" Boy: Sexuality and the Gendered Delinquent in the Scottish Child-Saving Movement, 1850-1940', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 4:4 (April 1994), pp. 549-578; J. Howard, *Men Like That: A Southern Queer History* (Chicago, 1999); P. Boag, *Same Sex Affairs: Constructing and Controlling Homosexuality*

The greater accessibility of Russian archives following the collapse of the Soviet Union has enabled scholars to shift focus away from the capital(s) to examine the multiple social, political and economic contexts of the late Russian empire. Several historians have explored the political and social unrest of the 1905 revolutions in regional contexts, notably in the city of Odessa, and in Vladimir and Kursk provinces.⁶² In recent years, the 1917 revolutions have also become the subject of extensive regional analysis.⁶³ In the field of medical history, Charlotte Henze focuses on Saratov during the cholera epidemics of 1892 and 1910 to explore how the decentralisation of health care had an impact on disease control in a provincial context.⁶⁴ All of these works have considered how specific social and environmental factors of Russia's various regions affected the implementation of central policies. This thesis builds on this scholarship by introducing gender and sexuality into regional analysis.

in the Pacific Northwest (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2003); S. Jenkins, 'Aliens and Predators: Miscegenation, Prostitution and Racial Identities in Cardiff, 1927-47', *Cultural and Social History*, 11:4 (2014), pp. 575-596; H. Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-Sex Desire in Industrial England, 1895-1957* (Basingstoke, 2015).

⁶² R. Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa: Blood on the Steps* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1993); Verner, 'Discursive Strategies in the 1905 Revolution', pp. 65-90; B. R. Miller, *Rural Unrest During the First Russian Revolution: Kursk Province, 1905-06* (Budapest, 2013).

⁶³ Sarah Badcock examines the 1917 revolutions in Nizhegorod and Kazan provinces in S. Badcock, *Politics and the People in Revolutionary Russia: A Provincial History* (Cambridge, 2007). Mike Hickey has published extensively on Smolensk in the revolutionary period, for example M. Hickey, 'Discourses of Public Identity and Liberalism in the February Revolution: Smolensk, Spring 1917', *Russian Review*, 55:4 (1996), pp. 615-637; M. Hickey, 'Smolensk's Jews in War, Revolution and Civil War' in S. Badcock, L. G. Novikova and A. B. Retish (eds), *Russia's Home Front in War and Revolution, 1914-22, Book 1: Russia's Revolution in Regional Perspective* (Bloomington, 2015). Several essays from this edited volume explore revolutionary Russia from a regional perspective.

⁶⁴ C. E. Henze, *Disease, Health Care and Government in Late Imperial Russia: Life and Death on the Volga, 1823-1914* (London and New York, 2011).

Migration and work

This thesis considers prostitution as lower-class female work and challenges traditional assumptions about the exclusion of prostitutes from wider lower-class communities. This approach aligns with other scholars who have emphasised the labour element of prostitution histories, while looking at different geographical regions. In her influential study of Victorian England, Judith Walkowitz rejects ‘conventional assumptions’ about women’s entrapment or seduction into prostitution and instead treats it as an occupation in which women mainly worked on a temporary basis.⁶⁵ Ruth Rosen and Alain Corbin have also explored the complex interaction between individual choices, gender and class hierarchies, as well as socioeconomic factors in their studies of prostitution in the fin-de-siècle United States and France.⁶⁶ Since these pioneering works, historians of prostitution have continued to emphasise labour, but developed their analyses to include industry and technology. They explore how domestic economies, technological developments and employment patterns of particular industrial regions affected the way that prostitution functioned.⁶⁷ This thesis draws on these approaches by

⁶⁵ Walkowitz, *Prostitution in Victorian Society*, pp. 13-14.

⁶⁶ Corbin, *Women for Hire*; R. Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (Baltimore, 1982).

⁶⁷ In her recent article, Julia Laite reviews how historians have explored the specifics of prostitution in mining communities, J. A. Laite, ‘Historical Perspectives on Industrial Development, Mining and Prostitution’, *Historical Journal*, 52:3 (2009), pp. 739-761. She also demonstrates how the transportation developments of twentieth-century Britain had an impact on prostitution practices, J. A. Laite, ‘Immoral Traffic: Mobility, Health, Labour and the “Lorry Girl” in Mid-Twentieth Century Britain’, *Journal of British Studies*, 52 (2013), pp. 693-721. See also A. M. McMahon, ‘Mill Town: Prostitution and the Rule of Lumber in Lake Charles, Louisiana, 1867-1918’, *Louisiana Historical Association*, 45:2 (2004), pp. 151-171; J. Bortz, *Revolution Within the Revolution: Cotton Textile Workers and the Mexican Labour Regime, 1910-1923* (Stanford, 2008), pp. 77-80.

considering the impact of the social, economic and environmental factors of particular regions on the policing of prostitution in late imperial Russia.

Lower-class migration increased rapidly during the chronological parameters of this thesis and this had significant implications for gender and sexuality.⁶⁸ From the 1880s onwards, rapid industrialisation and urbanisation saw thousands of men and women migrate to provincial towns and cities for wage labour, living away from their families and spouses for at least part of the year. The number of internal passports issued to peasants rose from 4.94 million between 1881 and 1890 to 8.87 million in the period 1901-1910.⁶⁹ These developments destabilised the traditional patriarchal gender and family order. In physically moving away from their village, female migrants fell outside the direct control of their fathers or husbands. The influx of young, unattached women and men into urban centres fed both supply and demand for the commercial sex industry.

Prostitution was a form of migratory labour in late imperial Russia. Like laundresses and domestic servants in major cities, the majority of registered prostitutes were not born in their city of residence or registration.⁷⁰ Yet, prostitutes were a different kind of migrant. They moved frequently from place to place, but were also able to live in urban centres on a permanent basis. Engel

⁶⁸ David Moon traces the relaxation of peasant migration legislation. He highlights the importance of the 1894 Statute on Residence Permits, the cancellation of redemption payments in 1907 and the state-sponsored promotion of peasant resettlement in Siberia in the early 1900s. D. Moon, 'Peasant Migration, the Abolition of Serfdom and the Internal Passport System in the Russian Empire, c. 1800-1914' in D. Eltis (ed). *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives* (Stanford, 2002), pp. 324-357.

⁶⁹ P. Gatrell, *The Tsarist Economy, 1850-1917* (London, 1986), p. 89.

⁷⁰ B. A. Engel, 'St Petersburg Prostitutes in the Late Nineteenth Century: A Personal and Social Profile', *Russian Review*, 48:1 (1989), p. 28. In Moscow in 1902, 95 per cent of domestic servants all 91 per cent of laundresses were migrants. Glickman, *Russian Factory Women*, p. 67.

argues that it was difficult for peasant women who left their villages to fully sever ties with their communities, as they were expected to return home regularly and their internal passports could only be renewed with the consent of their family or village elders.⁷¹ The substitution of a registered prostitute's internal passport for her medical ticket meant that she did not necessarily need to return home to ensure her residence in the city. In his article on the representations of peasant migrants in late imperial popular culture, James von Geldern emphasises the need to 'describe the in-between states' of social identities and 'integrate them into history', yet he only analyses the processes of assimilation into city life for male peasant migrants.⁷² This thesis looks at prostitutes as people 'in-between'. Registered women were both temporary migrants and more permanent urban residents who forged ties within their local communities. They could work temporarily as prostitutes during their first unstable months post-migration, or remain in the commercial sex industry for a number of years.

Writing histories of lower-class people is even more challenging when the population in question was overwhelmingly mobile. As Nick Baron and Peter Gatrell have observed, historians and state authorities alike 'privilege place of being above space of movement' on the assumption that 'immobility and "rootedness" are the desirable norm'.⁷³ However, the imperial state's desire to keep its population rooted and 'known' allows us to piece together the lives of

⁷¹ Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 78.

⁷² J. von Geldern, 'Life in Between: Migration and Popular Culture in Late Imperial Russia', *Russian Review*, 55:3 (1996), p. 366.

⁷³ N. Baron and P. Gatrell, 'Population Displacement, State-Building, and Social Identity in the Lands of the Former Russian Empire, 1917-23', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 4:1 (2003), pp. 51-52.

registered prostitutes. Local authorities corresponded about the movement of registered women, organising the transfer of their internal passports between police departments and authorising their movement across provincial borders. When a woman was enrolled onto the police lists, the medical-police committee included her birth region, and often any towns in which she had previously worked. This thesis draws on these records to demonstrate that even though 'prostitute' was a distinct legal identity, registered women were often under similar restrictions to other lower-class migrants.

The authorities treated various mobile groups with suspicion in late imperial Russia. The tsarist authorities and medical profession placed migrants at the centre of their understandings of venereal disease transmission. In cities, the migrant prostitute was allegedly responsible for the circulation of syphilis and gonorrhoea, and the male seasonal worker or soldier carried the disease back to their villages on their return.⁷⁴ This association between venereal diseases and mobile people motivated the authorities' attempts to 'know' and regulate the population. The police and medical-police committees were supposed to monitor prostitutes' movement closely. In certain localities, factory owners and local authorities screened male migrant workers for syphilis before paying their wages or allowing them to return home to their villages. The connections between mobility and venereal disease transmission were evident in other contexts. The USA's 1891 Immigration Act attempted to prevent infected

⁷⁴ Russian physicians also blamed the 'ignorance' and traditional communal customs of peasant life for the transmission of syphilis in rural contexts. L. Engelstein, 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon: Russian Doctors View Syphilis, Social Class and Sexual Behaviour, 1890-1905', *Representations*, 14 (1986), p. 195.

immigrants from entering the country.⁷⁵ Around the turn of the century, mobile people evoked international concern, as moral panic over apparently widespread 'white slavery' erupted across Europe and North America. Anxiety regarding the trafficking of young, innocent women into domestic and foreign brothels gripped Russian philanthropic groups and government agencies. This concern propelled calls to limit female mobility, based on assumptions about women's vulnerability to procurement. As transport networks developed both across the empire and internationally, prostitution, venereal diseases and migration became inseparable in official and popular imaginations.

Sexuality

This study is situated within a period of intense discussion about the impact of modernisation on sexuality. As noted earlier, industrialisation and urbanisation encouraged seasonal, or more permanent, rural-to-urban migration, which destabilised traditional patriarchal family structures. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, increasing numbers of young peasant migrants, a substantial minority of whom were female, lived apart from their parents in Russia's rapidly expanding urban centres. Despite this social upheaval, the legal definition of prostitution remained static throughout this period, as a transaction between two heterosexual people: the female prostitute and the male client. This speaks to a core argument of many historical geographers, that systems to regulate female prostitution 'underwrite the assumptions of a

⁷⁵ Although in practice, the expense of performing medical examinations on all immigrants meant that only those who showed external signs of infection received full examinations for syphilis and gonorrhoea. A. M. Brandt, *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States Since 1880* (New York and Oxford, 1987), p. 20.

patriarchal and heteronormative society' in their delineation of appropriate spaces and partners for sexual intercourse.⁷⁶ As no explicit mentions of same-sex prostitution were observed in archival material, this thesis deals exclusively with female heterosexual prostitution. That is not to say that male and female same-sex prostitution were not realities in late imperial Russia. Dan Healey highlights how medical discourse identified the bathhouse as a 'significant locus' for urban male prostitution and how the image of the 'prostitute-as-lesbian' emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁷⁷ The imperial authorities' refusal to acknowledge same-sex relations in prostitution legislation demonstrates their dismissal of sex between women as 'innocent' and their lukewarm approach to policing male same-sex relations in European Russia.⁷⁸ It is also indicative of physicians' reluctance to pathologise homosexuality, driven by their classification of the socially and economically subordinate 'lower orders' as simple and sexually naïve.⁷⁹ Male prostitution and sexual barter primarily took place in private or 'marginal public spaces', whereas female heterosexual prostitution was sanctioned within the walls of the state-licensed brothel.⁸⁰ Regulation reinforced the idea that the only

⁷⁶ Howell, Beckingham and Moore, 'Managed Zones for Sex Workers in Liverpool', p. 234.

⁷⁷ He also argues that after 1905, Russian medical experts moved away from the categorisation of prostitutes as victims of male depravity and began to make links between female prostitution and the 'deviance' of lesbianism. D. Healey, *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia: the Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent* (Chicago and London, 2001), pp. 26-28, 50-54,

⁷⁸ Engelstein argues that Russian physicians were unwilling to 'stigmatise sexual perversion as socially marginal and organically pathological – at least in women'. L. Engelstein, 'Lesbian Vignettes: a Russian Triptych from the 1890s', *Signs*, 15:4 (1990), p. 817. Before 1905, convictions for 'consensual sodomy' were rare, with just 440 between 1874 and 1904. After 1905, there was a surge of convictions for 'sodomy' with 504 registered between 1905 and 1913. Healey notes that the figures indicate a shift of enforcement away from Moscow and St Petersburg to the rural Caucasus and southern Russia, driven by Orientalist perceptions of local cultures. Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, pp. 92-97.

⁷⁹ Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, p. 87.

⁸⁰ D. Healey, 'Masculine Purity and "Gentlemen's Mischief": Sexual Exchange and Prostitution Between Russian Men, 1861-1941', *Slavic Review*, 60:2 (2002), p. 236.

appropriate sexual intercourse was between a man and a woman, and that a regular supply of female bodies was essential to provide an acceptable outlet for male sexual desire.

Despite the rigid heteronormative definition, there were ambiguities in state and popular understandings of prostitution. Russian official discourse used the terms 'prostitution' (*prostitutsiia*) and the 'trade of debauchery' (*promysel razvratom*) interchangeably. This vocabulary reveals the inherent tensions of sanctioning commercial sex for the purposes of public health in a society where the state, the Church and local communities rigidly promoted sexual intercourse within marriage as the norm.⁸¹ In the countryside, chastity was the ideal for both sexes, but in reality families and wider communities policed women's extramarital sexual behaviour more stringently through ritualised shaming.⁸² On average, both Russian men and women married younger than their western European counterparts.⁸³ The ideal of sex within marriage promoted in the countryside carried over to towns and cities, where the majority of migrants were of peasant origin. 'Consensual unions', that is, two unmarried partners living together, were strongly condemned by both educated society and other lower-class people.⁸⁴ Urban communities and state officials alike acknowledged the contradiction of the Russian state's toleration

⁸¹ Gregory Freeze argues that the easiest way to obtain a divorce in late imperial Russia was to file on grounds of adultery, whether real or contrived. If the couple agreed to separate and presented the appropriate evidence of said adultery (two eyewitnesses), the Church had little room to 'quibble or prevaricate'. Adultery accounted for 90 per cent of all divorces cases granted by the Church by 1914. G. L. Freeze, 'Krylov vs. Krylova: "Sexual Incapacity" and Divorce in Tsarist Russia' in W. B. Husband (ed). *The Human Tradition in Modern Russia* (Wilmington, 2000), p. 8.

⁸² B. A. Engel, 'Peasant Morality and Pre-Marital Relations in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia, *Journal of Social History*, 23:4 (1990), p. 699.

⁸³ Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound*, pp. 51-52.

⁸⁴ Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, pp. 163-164.

of commercial sex and referred to prostitution as a 'necessary evil': an unpleasant, but unavoidable, outlet for male (hetero)sexual desire. The authorities distanced the state's role in facilitating regulation from the empire's official religion of Orthodox Christianity and its chief defender, the Tsar. Regulatory legislation forbade brothels from being in close proximity to churches and prohibited the hanging of images of the Tsar and imperial family on the walls of these establishments.⁸⁵ The Russian Orthodox Church also took no part in any discussions of commercial sex.⁸⁶

Understandings of female sexuality in the late imperial period hinged on social class. Often observers classified lower-class women as the complete antithesis of their social superiors. In accounts of women in Siberian prisons, commentators drew sharp distinctions between political prisoners and other lower-class criminal women. The former were chaste, selfless and humble, and the latter 'shamelessly base and venal'.⁸⁷ Around the turn of the century, the booming international and domestic pornographic postcard industry made the bodies of lower-class women readily available for public consumption. Their representation in these publications further reinforced the perception that lower-class women were 'insatiable and constantly ready for sex'.⁸⁸ In contrast, venereologists represented respectable educated women as 'passive and

⁸⁵ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 28.

⁸⁶ This was partly because prostitution was a jurisdictional issue. Although the Church was silent on the subject of prostitution, it did financially support anti-prostitution initiatives in the form of charitable donations at the discretion of local ecclesiastical authorities. N. K. Martynenko, 'Rossiiskie Blagotvoritel'nye Obshchestva v Zashchite Zhenshchin ot Prostitutsii v Kontse XIX – Nachale XX Vekov', *Vestnik Volzhskogo Universiteta im. V. N. Tatishcheva* 5 (2010), p. 3. With thanks to Gregory Freeze for this reference and for guidance on the Russian Orthodox Church's silence in discussions of prostitution.

⁸⁷ Sarah Badcock discusses this contrast in detail in S. Badcock, *A Prison Without Walls?: Eastern Siberian Exile in the Last Years of Tsarism* (Oxford, 2016), pp. 53-58.

⁸⁸ A. Rowley, *Open Letters: Russian Popular Culture and the Picture Postcard, 1880-1922* (Toronto and London, 2013), p. 117.

morally irreproachable', always the victims of syphilis rather than transmitters.⁸⁹ Often the authorities, physicians, and even philanthropists regarded *all* lower-class women as potential prostitutes, motivated either by their unnatural sexual instincts, poor morals or endless poverty.

Laura Engelstein's highly influential study of discourses on sex, gender and modernity around the turn of the century demonstrates how the profound social, economic and cultural change of this period weakened the influence of traditional values in 'shap[ing] collective and personal behaviour'.⁹⁰ The criminal code of 1903 attempted to secularise and modernise the law, placing more emphasis on individual rights, rather than community interests, in questions of sexual transgressions.⁹¹ Reforms focused on the administrative regulation of bodies rather than upholding moral ideals, yet legislation continued to reinforce both the power of the imperial state and the patriarchal order. In legislation against sexual crimes, men were always the key perpetrators. Engelstein argues that the 'ability to qualify for criminal status was in fact a mark of acceptance into civil society', something which women were consistently denied.⁹² Even prostitution policy, dealing specifically with policing female sexuality, relegated women to a passive role. Registered prostitutes who transgressed regulation were subject to administrative penalties at the 'custodial discretion' of the authorities, yet the men who had apparently seduced and procured them were, in theory, subjected to the 'full

⁸⁹ Engelstein, 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon', p. 182.

⁹⁰ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 19.

⁹¹ For example, the authors of the 1903 criminal code removed notions of 'honour' and 'chastity' in articles on rape and focused on the biological effect on the victim's body and the psychological damage. Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, pp. 79-80.

⁹² Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 75.

force' of criminal law.⁹³ Engelstein contends that women's special treatment, based on ideas regarding female vulnerability and prolonged immaturity, resulted in their 'civil subordination'.⁹⁴ Despite rapid social and economic transformation, patriarchal constraints remained firmly in place. Building on Engelstein's analysis, this thesis interrogates how ideas regarding women's naivety factored into official and popular responses to the 'social problem' of prostitution.

Historians of sexuality in the Russian empire suggest that the cultural, societal and economic transformations of the late imperial period provided new opportunities for sexual expression and danger. Andrejs Plakans and Ineta Lipša argue that public discussions of sexual immorality were 'forced into openness' in the late nineteenth-century print media because of the growing influence of literature from western Europe.⁹⁵ After 1905 and the relaxation of newspaper censorship, the boulevard press enjoyed a wider circulation and readership. Advertisements for contraception, divorce lawyers, and cures for impotence, venereal diseases, and even small bosoms filled their back pages.⁹⁶ Stephen Lovell categorises marriage advertisements in late imperial newspapers as attempts to adapt traditional courtship practices in a period of socio-economic transformation.⁹⁷ Gregory Freeze observes that increased geographical mobility, a 'heightened self-consciousness' and a 'refusal to

⁹³ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 92.

⁹⁴ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 95.

⁹⁵ A. Plakans and I. Lipša, 'Stigmatised Cohabitation in the Latvian Region of the Eastern Baltic Littoral: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *History of the Family*, 20:4 (2015), p. 536.

⁹⁶ Engelstein reproduces several advertisements from the popular journals 'Niva' and 'The Sun of Russia' (*Sontse Rossii*) in her monograph, Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, pp. 360-367.

⁹⁷ S. Lovell, 'Finding a Mate in Late Tsarist Russia', *Cultural and Social History*, 4:1 (2007), pp. 51-72.

tolerate spousal abuse, physical or psychological' contributed to the steadily increasing divorce rate in the early 1900s.⁹⁸ As cities expanded in the late nineteenth century, the sexualised geographies of these spaces developed in tandem. Certain streets, parks and city amenities became notorious meeting places for men seeking sex with men, such as the *Passazh* shopping centre and 'Palkin' restaurant in St Petersburg.⁹⁹ Russian jurists argued that the development of new and more convenient modes of transportation and communication around the turn of the century encouraged the trafficking of women and pornography both inside and outside the Russian empire.¹⁰⁰ The heightened mobility of people across Europe, and to North and South America, brought 'chaos, corruption, and anxiety' regarding the fate of young unattached female labour migrants and the impact of population depletion on those left behind.¹⁰¹

Concern for rising levels of venereal diseases across the empire accompanied debates regarding the impact of modernisation on sexuality. In the late nineteenth century, educated elites in Russia and across Europe used syphilis and other 'social ills' as symbolic of the cultural, moral, and physical degeneration which apparently gripped the continent.¹⁰² The extension of public health facilities and intense discussion of infectious diseases by physicians brought the issue of venereal infection to the attention of the wider

⁹⁸ This happened in spite of the Church making every effort to subvert reform legislation and prevent the dissolution of individual marriages. Freeze, 'Krylov vs. Krylova', pp. 15-16.

⁹⁹ Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, pp. 31-32.

¹⁰⁰ P. Hetherington, "'The Highest Guardian of the Child': International Criminology and the Russian Fight Against Transnational Obscenity, 1885-1925', *Russian History*, 43 (2016), p. 296.

¹⁰¹ For a detailed discussion of the white slavery panic in relation to mass emigration from eastern Europe in the early 1900s, see chapter five of Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil's Chain*, pp. 137-168.

¹⁰² D. Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: a European Disorder, c.1848-c.1918* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 15.

public.¹⁰³ Regulation policy classified registered prostitutes' bodies as objects of the state to be examined, treated and then returned to circulation to ensure a clean, readily accessible, and state-approved outlet for male sexual desire. This one-sided approach to examination absolved prostitutes' customers of any responsibility for their own sexual health and coloured clients' relationships with the tsarist authorities. Philanthropic organisations and prominent physicians attacked this sexual double standard and pointed to the reportedly high incidence of venereal diseases as evidence for regulation's inefficacy. At the same time, physicians across Europe and North America developed new methods of venereal disease detection and treatment that focused more on individual responsibility and the application of prophylactics as a form of disease control, rather than state regulation. In various international contexts, the lower ranks of the military provided modernising states with an opportunity to trial these new hygienic methods and practices.¹⁰⁴

This thesis maps the regulation of prostitution onto the shifting sexual landscape of modernising Russia. The complexity of responses to prostitution reflects the multifaceted ideas regarding the influence of modernisation on sexuality in circulation during this period. In the wake of increased migration and developments in transportation, the calls from feminist charitable organisations for the complete abolition of regulation amplified as they linked

¹⁰³ Mazanik argues that scarce and unreliable medical statistics on levels of infection and the moral overtones in physicians' responses to the problem suggest that claims of a syphilis 'epidemic' were exaggerated. A. Mazanik, 'Sanitation, Urban Environment and the Politics of Public Health in Late Imperial Moscow', PhD Dissertation (Central European University, 2015), pp. 80-81.

¹⁰⁴ See chapter eight of J. Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen: Modernity and Masculinity in France, 1870-1920* (Ithaca and London, 2006), pp. 212-242; D. J. Walther, *Sex and Control: Venereal Disease, Colonial Physicians and Indigenous Agency in German Colonialism, 1884-1914* (New York and Oxford, 2015).

the legal toleration of prostitution with apparent widespread sex trafficking. As urbanisation transformed the space of the city, certain authorities and lower-class residents confirmed their commitment to keeping prostitution hidden and contained, yet others used the increased visibility of prostitution as evidence for regulation's fundamental failings. Groups of prostitutes challenged the authorities for violating regulation policy and, in one city, even went on strike during the revolutionary year of 1905. As the twentieth century unfolded and Russia entered two devastating conflicts, military authorities disputed whether to increase control over prostitutes, or whether to turn their attention to soldiers' bodies. Official and popular responses to the 'social problem' of prostitution mainly focused on how to keep traditional values alive in a rapidly modernising world.

Chapter outline

This thesis comprises five thematic chapters that consider the impact of regulation policy on various parties within the prostitution transaction. It begins with the wider application of key regulation policies. Thereafter, each chapter narrows the geographical focus, moving from wider urban space, into the brothel, to the lives of registered prostitutes and their clients.

The application of key regulatory policies forms the focus of chapter one, namely the regular medical examination of prostitutes and their spatial segregation within cities. The chapter demonstrates that the successful application of regulation policy was dependent on the compliance of both prostitutes and urban residents. Drawing on petitions written by lower-class

people to their local medical-police committees predominantly in St Petersburg, Revel' (Tallinn) and Riga, it explores how prostitutes, often with the help of other city residents, were able to resist regulatory policies. Using the case of *nadzor*, the chapter reveals the gulf between state ambitions and realities, speaking to historiography that challenges the perception of the repressive late imperial state.

Chapter two offers the first case study, the city of Arkhangel'sk, to explore the connections between prostitution and migration in the early twentieth century. Letters sent to the Police Chief of Arkhangel'sk by prostitutes, brothel keepers and local officials reveal how the restrictions placed on prostitutes' movement were very similar to those directed at other lower-class migrants. Focusing on women who left the police lists, the chapter demonstrates how the environmental characteristics of Arkhangel'sk province made the regulation of prostitution in Arkhangel'sk city more informal than in other locations.

Chapter three moves into the space of the state-licensed brothel. These establishments were the principal location both to which tsarist officials directed regulation policy and on which philanthropists and physicians centred their more general criticisms of the regulation system. The chapter explores state attempts at 'zoning' to limit the visibility of lower-class sexuality in urban space, and how these ambitions were thwarted by the corruption of local officials. The responses of urban residents in cities across European Russia to brothels are also examined to demonstrate the spectrum of opinion towards these establishments, ranging from indifference to repulsion.

The lens narrows in chapter four to examine those who facilitated the prostitution exchange, namely brothel madams and pimps. It explores how these facilitators were instruments of state power, as regulation policy marked them as protectors of public health and morality and enforcers of policy 'on the ground'. Their central role in the prostitution exchange meant that perceptions of facilitators were overwhelmingly negative during this period, as official and popular discourse emphasised the foreignness and exploitative nature of madams and brothel keepers. The chapter argues that criticism of facilitators provided the authorities, philanthropic organisations and the popular press with an outlet through which the vocalisation of their wider social, ethnic and religious prejudices was possible.

Prostitutes' clients are the subject of chapter five, which brings in the second case study, the port city of Libava in Kurland province. Using documentation from the Russian State Naval Archive, the chapter challenges the perception that prostitutes' clients were always anonymous and blameless by focusing on the regulation of the Baltic fleet sailors stationed in the town. The health of sailors in the Imperial Navy was an important issue for national security as their illness had the potential to compromise Russia's line of defence. In the early 1900s, sailors stationed at Libava had the highest levels of venereal disease in the entire Imperial Navy, so naval and civil authorities turned their attention to the regulation of male bodies, as well as improving the policing of prostitution in the city. Again, the chapter demonstrates the importance of regional case studies, as the reputation of Libava as a transportation hub had an impact on the application of regulation policy in the city.

Chapter six continues to look at the regulation of male bodies, but shifts the chronological focus into the flashpoint of war. The chapter pulls together the themes of movement and visibility to demonstrate how, during the Russo-Japanese and First World Wars, mass mobilisation and social dislocation made the existing failures of regulation even more apparent. The chapter examines the wartime circumstances that made regulation more difficult to enforce, and how, because of this, blame for venereal disease transmission shifted onto soldiers and sailors. The turmoil of conflict further emphasised the gulf between state ambitions and realities, and their attempts to control population movement and register all women working as prostitutes emphatically failed. The chapter finishes with the official abolition of regulation on 19 July 1917.

1. Enforcing and resisting regulation

On 20 November 1915, the Riga medical-police committee received a petition from an angry city pharmacist. He began by asking the committee to explain ‘on exactly what basis Amaliia Soo had been registered as a prostitute’.¹ The petitioner protested against Soo’s forced registration because she was an ‘honest and moral’ woman who was not working in commercial sex. The letter demonstrates that urban residents did not passively accept regulatory practices and were willing to challenge their local authorities. This chapter will explore how prostitutes, their clients and urban communities resisted, and helped to enforce, key features of regulation policy. It will argue that regulation was not just a system enforced from the top down but that it was often dependent on the compliance of prostitutes and the wider public. The key regulation policies discussed in this chapter include the forced registration of clandestine prostitutes, the enforcement of regular medical examinations and the spatial segregation of registered women within towns and cities. Through these practices, the tsarist authorities attempted to monitor all women who sold sex by regularly examining their bodies and limiting their residential options.

The ambitious policies that the Russian imperial state enacted to control and monitor populations were impossible to implement in practice. Historians have explored the gulf between late imperial state ambitions and reality in a variety of contexts. Badcock argues that, in the context of exile, the imperial state

¹ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23557, lp. 597.

‘exercised less control than one would expect of the “late Imperial police state”’.² Overcrowding, insufficient facilities and strained resources meant that state ambitions to control their convict populations were resolutely unmet.³ Eric Lohr has explored how the tsarist authorities struggled to enforce restrictions on emigration in the late imperial period, and how this legislation actually caused illegal emigration to expand rapidly.⁴ In his study of non-Russian national cultures across the empire, Theodore Weeks refutes the portrayal of late imperial Russia as a ‘repressive and Russifying state’.⁵ Neil Weissman’s work on the woefully understaffed and underfunded tsarist police force suggests that municipal authorities’ methods of law enforcement depended ‘to a very considerable degree upon the general populace to police itself’.⁶ The same gulf between ambition and reality is evident in the state regulation of prostitution. Local authorities understood that with the available facilities and resources, the systematic examination of all prostitutes each week was impossible, so they adopted a lax approach. Medical-police committees relied heavily on urban residents to help register women working outside regulation.

This chapter draws on evidence of interactions between lower-class people and the authorities in the form of letters, petitions and denunciations. Although fragmented, this material sheds light on the relationship between prostitutes

² Badcock, *A Prison Without Walls?*, p. 176.

³ Badcock, *A Prison Without Walls?*, p. 32.

⁴ He argues that by the turn of the century, between half and 90 per cent of people leaving the Russian empire departed illegally. E. Lohr, *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union* (Cambridge and London, 2012), pp. 90-95.

⁵ T. R. Weeks, ‘Russification: Word and Practice, 1863-1914’, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 148:2 (2004), pp. 471-489.

⁶ N. Weissman, ‘Regular Police in Tsarist Russia, 1900-1914’, *Russian Review*, 44:1 (1985), p. 49.

and those who policed them, as well as their level of integration within urban communities. Examining how ordinary people helped to implement or resist policy provides insight into how they felt about regulation more generally. When helping to enforce policy, clients and urban residents argued that regulation was an effective form of venereal disease control that was thwarted by individual 'deviant' women. When resisting regulation, prostitutes and wider urban communities expressed their outrage at the injustice and corruption of local authorities and questioned the efficacy of regulation.

Enforcing regulation

Policing prostitution was a difficult task for the imperial authorities. At the turn of the century, the empire's police force numbered just 47,866 men for a population of 127 million.⁷ Even in St Petersburg, where the number of police officers was closest to the 'ideal' ratio of 1:400 inhabitants, five out of every nine police posts in the city were unmanned in 1904.⁸ Municipal authorities were required to organise the regulation of prostitution within their specific region and find the money within their budgets to hire patrolmen for their local medical-police committee. Municipal governments were often unwilling or unable to provide adequate funding, which meant that medical-police committees were chronically understaffed.⁹ In 1905, the medical-police committee in Revel' employed just two patrolmen for the detection of

⁷ This number also included political police, port and river patrolmen, and office personnel. Weissman, 'Regular Police', p. 47.

⁸ Weissman, 'Regular Police', p. 48.

⁹ For example, in 1908 Libava's medical-police committee was refused extra funding by the Kurliand Governor, the City Duma, and the Mayor. Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Voenno-Morskogo Flota (RGAVMF hereafter) f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 223.

clandestine prostitutes.¹⁰ Riga's medical-police committee also hired two patrolmen in 1915.¹¹ Because of staff shortages, these committees relied on ordinary people to expose clandestine prostitutes through denunciations. Upon receiving a denunciation, the St Petersburg committee sent patrolmen to investigate the woman in question, which suggests that certain authorities highly valued this correspondence.

In the early 1900s, the St Petersburg medical-police committee received hundreds of denunciation letters from men eager to expose women whom they believed to be working as prostitutes without registering with the police. The gendered nature of these denunciations stems from the rules of regulation, which placed all responsibility for the transmission of venereal diseases on the prostitute. From the outset of regulation in the 1840s, all registered prostitutes were required to attend medical examinations once a week.¹² In 1903, after the issue of Circular 1611, prostitutes were 'obliged to undergo examinations whenever the medical-police committee deemed it necessary' and, at the least, twice a week.¹³ The vast majority of clients were not legally obliged to be examined. The rules stated that prostitutes 'had the right to inspect the genitals and underwear of visitors' to protect themselves from infection, but the extent to which this happened in practice is questionable. These policies identified the prostitute's body as the chief site of venereal disease control, which absolved clients of any responsibility for their own sexual health. The system reinforced

¹⁰ EAA, 30.6.3628, lk. 6.

¹¹ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23559, lp. 2.

¹² From 1844 until 1903, brothel workers were required to have biweekly examinations and independent prostitutes were only inspected once a week. In 1903, both categories of prostitute were required to be examined twice a week. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 21.

¹³ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 33.

the paternalism of the imperial state, which prioritised the protection of men's health and wellbeing. This section will explore the impact of this one-sided approach on clients' perceptions of how the regulation system ought to function.

These documents must be examined within the context of denunciation and petitioning practices in late imperial Russia. Lower-class people corresponded with their local authorities for a variety of complex and overlapping reasons. One central theme throughout this correspondence is the reciprocal alliance between the individual and the state, based on mutual trust and responsibility. Petitioners often wrote in a way which suggests that they felt that they had a 'personal, unmediated relationship' with their authorities, and that they believed that their concerns would be taken seriously.¹⁴ When denouncing women for secret prostitution, petitioners frequently framed their personal interests as general interests, citing their duty to the state and wider public as their primary reason for providing information.¹⁵ It would be inaccurate to assume that all petitioners referred to a reciprocal relationship between themselves and the state, given the fragmented nature of this source material.¹⁶

¹⁴ Joshua Sanborn examines denunciation letters sent to the War Ministry regarding those who avoided, or prohibited others from, engaging in compulsory military service. He observes that the volume of letters sheds light on the fact that 'large segments of the population felt it to be not only their right, but even their responsibility, to give their expert opinion to the War Ministry', suggesting a 'presumed alliance' between petitioner and the state. J. Sanborn, 'Conscription, Correspondence and Politics in Late Imperial Russia', *Russian History*, 24:1/2 (1997), pp. 31-34. Badcock notes how in their petitions during 1917, certain soldiers' wives laid out what they had given to the state and what they expected in return, for example, they had given their sons and husbands to fight so they should be exempted from taxation. S. Badcock, 'Women, Protest and Revolution', p. 62.

¹⁵ Shelia Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately highlight this as a key feature of denunciation practices in modern European history. S. Fitzpatrick and R. Gellately, 'Introduction to the Practices of Denunciation in Modern European History', *Journal of Modern History*, 68:4, (1996), p. 747.

¹⁶ Pyle argues, in her study of petitions from soldiers' dependents in the First World War, that the majority of petitioners did not refer to a reciprocal relationship because they were

However, the selected cases in this chapter do shed light on this perceived alliance. As the local authorities followed up every denunciation letter, the cases also demonstrate the importance that those at the centre placed on 'messages from below', further cementing the idea of the reciprocal relationship.¹⁷

In April 1909, the St Petersburg medical-police committee received an anonymous letter accusing a woman known as Lipa of secretly working as a prostitute and avoiding registration. Lipa allegedly solicited men on Nevskii Prospekt in the evenings, and could often be found in the 'Café de Paris', in the basement of the *Passazh* shopping arcade, a nexus of legal and clandestine prostitution in popular imagination.¹⁸ The letter read:

After spending one night with [Lipa] during Holy Week, on the second day I became ill and the doctor confirmed that I had chancroid. I most humbly beg you to prevent this person from spreading her infection among the townsfolk, and bring her under medical examination.¹⁹

The petitioner melodramatically signed himself off as 'the victim' (*postradavshii*) and omitted any mention of his part in the transaction of

requesting aid as a form of charity, rather than legal benefit. Pyle, 'Peasant Strategies for Obtaining State Aid', p. 41.

¹⁷ This was also the case for denunciations regarding shirking military service. Sanborn, 'Conscription, Correspondence and Politics', p. 37.

¹⁸ On the association of the *Passazh* centre and 'debauchery' in panoramic literature see A. Schrader, 'Market Pleasures and Prostitution in St Petersburg' in M. P. Romaniello and T. Starks (eds), *Russian History Through the Senses: From 1700 to the Present* (London, 2016), pp. 67-94.

¹⁹ Chancroid, or *ulcus molle*, (in Russian, *miagkii shankr*) is a bacterial sexually transmitted infection characterised by genital ulcers. TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 71.

commercial sex. Instead, he positioned himself as a protector of public health by exposing Lipa, who allegedly threatened societal harmony. This petition was enough to prompt the medical-police to investigate the woman in question. They found that her name was in fact Epitimiia Aleksandrova. Aleksandrova was a twenty-six-year-old peasant woman from Tver' province who was working in St Petersburg as a seamstress.²⁰ The medical-police committee called her in for a meeting two weeks later and registered her as a prostitute.²¹ The committee's actions demonstrate that bringing this supposed threat to wider public health under their control and surveillance was their top priority. Regulation policy reinforced this, as it did not legislate for the punishment of men who financed the business of clandestine prostitution by knowingly visiting unregistered prostitutes. Male clients of prostitutes helped to enforce the regulation system as they benefited from it directly. By legislating one-sided inspections, the rules ensured clients' anonymity and sexual health in most cases, without requiring them to take any formal responsibility.²²

Likewise, in Revel', an anonymous source petitioned the local authorities in 1904 complaining that he had contracted syphilis after having sexual intercourse with various women across the city. He named Marta, a woman he had sex with on Rechnaia Street, Lilli on Martinov Street, and Paula on Novgorodanii.²³ Begging the authorities to impose medical-police supervision on these women, he ended his letter with a desperate plea: 'life is terrible, and

²⁰ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 72.

²¹ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 74.

²² The authorities treated clients of prostitutes in the military very differently. A full discussion of this can be found in chapter five.

²³ EAA, 31.2.4326, lk. 19.

many people have died from this'. His letter further illuminates the one-sided nature of regulation, as even though the client had a venereal disease and was most likely spreading the infection by continuing to visit unregistered prostitutes, the authorities closely regulated women, but not the client. The client could also remain anonymous while he performed a duty of exposing supposed secret prostitutes to the local authorities, whereas women became inscribed onto the police lists. These petitions suggest that some clients put their faith in regulation as an effective method for protecting their sexual health, even though the system consistently failed to prevent the spread of venereal diseases.²⁴ The relationship between clients and the authorities was reciprocal as it worked on the premise that men would expose women working illegally in exchange for state protection and legal immunity.

Certain men also expected the authorities to protect them from financial exploitation, which shows that some clients expected state protection to extend beyond medical concerns. A man named Gubskii sent a petition to the St Petersburg Mayor on 25 June 1904. Gubskii claimed that at the 'Apollo' concert hall he met Iuliia Shelkova who had invited him back to her house on Troitskaia Street at two in the morning. As he was drunk his memory of the evening was hazy, but he did remember paying the extortionate price of twenty-five roubles for a bottle of wine, sarcastically complaining that he 'did not receive any change, but was awarded a disease'.²⁵ There was no explicit mention of prostitution in the petition, which indicates that Gubskii was more concerned

²⁴ See chapter three for a discussion of disease amongst brothel workers and chapter five for widespread infections in the Russian Imperial Navy.

²⁵ TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 293.

with his financial loss in his vulnerable drunken state, rather than contracting an infection. The authorities then investigated the whole building and invited two women to a medical-police committee hearing, after which they were both registered as prostitutes.²⁶

In other instances, men clubbed together to expose so-called clandestine prostitutes. In August 1911, three peasant men from Vilna province wrote to the Riga medical-police committee regarding a young Jewish woman, Galiuta Rozovskaia. They claimed that Rozovskaia had previously worked as a prostitute in Warsaw, where she infected several men, and that she was now living with her uncle in Riga.²⁷ 'We have the honour to ask your excellency', they wrote, 'to examine Galiuta and bring her under lawful governance'. Presumably, these men wrote together in the hope that extra signatures would give their petition added legitimacy. Documents that reveal the consequences of this petition for Rozovskaia have not survived, so we cannot accurately gauge whether adding more signatures carried more weight for medical-police committees.

Similarly two men, Naumov and Aleksandrov, wrote to the St Petersburg medical-police in January 1909 to complain about two unregistered prostitutes living on Nikolaevskaia Street.²⁸ These women had infected the men with venereal diseases, and worse still, 'took money from [them] for themselves', apparently selling wine for outrageous prices, ranging from eighty kopecks to six roubles. The men implored the chief of the medical-police committee to

²⁶ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 300, 305.

²⁷ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23539, lp. 528.

²⁸ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 14.

‘properly consider the matter’. In their petition, Naumov and Aleksandrov omitted to mention that they had voluntarily engaged in and paid for sexual intercourse with these women and instead, they condemned the prostitutes as exploitative. Some clients expected extra protection from the state, and called for the authorities to ensure that prostitutes did not overcharge them for their encounters.

In other denunciations, clients positioned themselves as protectors of society and enactors of patriarchal authority ‘on the ground’. One male petitioner emphasised how he provided a valuable service for the medical-police committee by exposing a clandestine prostitute. On 7 March 1905, he wrote about Evdokiia Cherepanova, a twenty-two-year-old peasant migrant from Arkhangel’sk province:

I have the honour to inform the committee that on Aleksandr-Nevskii Prospekt, in house number 4, lives a woman who is secretly engaging in prostitution in Nikolaev station. I, the writer of the petition, accidentally found my way to her, and as it turns out she has a venereal disease [...] When she is not having sex (*sovokupliat*), she lives in an apartment under the guise of a seamstress. She is medium height, dressed in a velvet jacket and a wide-brimmed winter hat.²⁹

²⁹ Nikolaev station is now Moskovskii station. TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 79.

What appears to have troubled this man the most is the fact that Cherepanova blurred the lines between honest woman and prostitute. She was well dressed and had another 'respectable' job, so may have slipped under the radar of the medical-police. In such cases, we might assume the authorities relied on people like this petitioner to expose women believed to be working clandestinely. It is impossible to know whether Cherepanova was working sporadically as a prostitute or whether this petition was motivated by a personal grudge. When the authorities investigated her, they found that she had abruptly left for her home region on 30 March, perhaps in an attempt to avoid medical-police harassment.³⁰

Another man inflated his role to a protector of national security in his denunciation. In May 1905, he wrote to inform the St Petersburg medical-police committee of a certain Lucy Bloom (*Lutsii Blum*), a twenty-five-year-old British woman living on Vasilev'skii Island:

Her specialities are spying and prostitution. She can be found on the streets almost every night with men. All relations with this woman are very harmful.³¹

The petitioner also insinuated that Lucy was working with British 'agents' and deliberately infecting men with venereal diseases in an attempt to sabotage the Russian empire. He concluded his letter with a moralistic call to arms: 'we need to stop this evil'. This denunciation was sent during the Russo-Japanese War

³⁰ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 82.

³¹ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 411.

(1904-1905), and by spring 1905, Russia had already suffered humiliating defeats and losses of thousands of men, armaments and the entirety of southern Manchuria.³² This man's denunciation may have been linked to the more general xenophobic sentiments characteristic of this turbulent period of conflict. When the committee investigated Bloom, they found that she was living with her brother, Adolf, and working as a domestic servant.³³ They could not find any evidence of prostitution, but wrote to her local police officer requesting more information about her lifestyle and behaviour.³⁴

Some clients used their own unfortunate experiences as an opportunity to expose women who allegedly threatened wider public health. In early 1909, Varvara Zhilina, an eighteen-year-old peasant woman from Iaroslavl' province, was accused of infecting three men, two with chancroid and another with gonorrhoea. Two separate male petitioners complained about her to the medical-police.³⁵ One went into detail about his night at her apartment. His descriptions and references to the sale of alcohol give the impression of an unlicensed brothel.³⁶ He wrote:

I was drunk and went to a lady's house on
Nikolaevskaia Street and there I drank six bottles
of beer for fifty kopecks a bottle. I paid the madam
(*baryshnia*) five roubles [...] Not one of these

³² For a detailed exploration of the impact of this war on the regulation of prostitution, see chapter six.

³³ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 412.

³⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 413.

³⁵ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 42, 44.

³⁶ The sale of alcohol was officially prohibited in state-licensed brothels, TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

women had a medical ticket. These women should
be given the medical ticket and go to the doctor.³⁷

The petitioner admitted to visiting this establishment on two occasions, but he still positioned himself as a protector of his local community in his attempt to bring all of the prostitutes within this apartment under medical-police control. Interestingly, when the medical-police investigated Zhilina, they found that she lived at a different address with her young child and partner, a medical assistant who supported her financially.³⁸ This case suggests that petitioners might accuse women of clandestine prostitution as a form of character assassination.³⁹ The men who denounced women must have been aware that secret surveillance would follow. Medical-police agents were under constant pressure to register secret prostitutes, and regional authorities often used the number of 'clandestines' that they had detained as evidence of the rigour of their local medical-police committees.⁴⁰ Once denounced, a woman's behaviour would be under strict scrutiny and medical-police agents could use the slightest indication of suspicious activity to justify their registration.

An example of how this played out in practice is evident in a May 1905 petition to the St Petersburg medical-police committee. The gender of this petitioner is

³⁷ TsGIIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 44.

³⁸ TsGIIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 57.

³⁹ Sanborn observes how petitioning could be used as a method of revenge. However in this case, denouncing those avoiding the military draft had no real positive outcome, as 'the last drafted soldier in a district was not released from service if his neighbour was found to have unlawfully avoided service'. Sanborn, 'Conscription, Correspondence and Politics', p. 33.

⁴⁰ For example, in Libava, the Police Chief praised the medical-police committee for arresting more and more women for secret prostitution each year. The authorities arrested sixty-three women in 1907 and 370 in 1908. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, ll. 108-109. The medical-police committees of St Petersburg and Riga recorded the number of women arrested for secret prostitution each year. GARF, f. 564, op. 1, d. 4287, l. 1; LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 114; LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23557, lp. 394.

unclear, but it is reasonable to assume that they were a lower-class urban dweller. The petition began, 'I beg you, to pay attention to three prostitutes', Elizaveta, Evdokiia and Anastasiia, 'they sell vodka and keep beer in the corridor. All three are sick [with venereal diseases]'.⁴¹ The medical-police committee then investigated the case and established surveillance over the apartment. They found that Elizaveta and Evdokiia regularly left the house and returned with 'different men for an unknown purpose' and that the house administration confirmed that they had 'drinking binges' every night.⁴² Even though the medical-police committee found no actual evidence for their involvement in prostitution, they invited these two women to a hearing and most probably registered them as prostitutes.⁴³ Their transgressive behaviour, heavy drinking and entertaining of various men was sufficient evidence of their 'deviance', which potentially caused them to be brought under medical-police supervision.

As well as a mechanism for the character assassination of individual women, these denunciations also reveal popular anxieties regarding the links between urbanisation and moral corruption. In his study of peasant religious denunciations from villages around Moscow, Jeffrey Burds found that the vast majority of those denounced for blasphemy were peasants who migrated to towns and cities for wage labour. Petitions focused on how the migrants had become 'corrupted' by urban life: materialistic, neglectful of their religious

⁴¹ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643 l. 28.

⁴² TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 29.

⁴³ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 32.

duties and sexually promiscuous.⁴⁴ In light of this, the denunciation of women as secret prostitutes could be regarded as a moralising tool for policing the behaviour of young female migrants who had apparently become 'spoiled' by city life. This method of denunciation can be seen in petitions sent by disgruntled husbands against their wives. On 18 March 1905, the St Petersburg medical-police committee received a petition from a peasant man, Osip Kurochkin, who begged them to register his wife as a prostitute. 'My wife does not live with me and does not want to live with me', he wrote, 'and men go to her for sex'.⁴⁵ When the committee investigated the case, they found that his wife, Anastasiia, did not live with her husband because he was violent and did not provide for her financially.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, two months later they asked a local police officer to report on her behaviour and occupation, which suggests that the committee conducted an extended period of surveillance.⁴⁷ This case shows how the regulation system gave husbands ammunition for when their wives challenged their patriarchal authority, which made runaway wives especially vulnerable to police harassment.

Divorce cases granted by the Holy Synod in the early 1900s also reveal how the authorities linked 'promiscuous behaviour' with prostitution. During this period, the Russian Orthodox Church placed stringent restrictions on divorce: only 0.7 per cent of the total population were listed as divorced in the 1897

⁴⁴ In a study of 300 petitions from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Burds found that over 90 per cent were directed against peasant migrant workers. J. Burds, 'A Culture of Denunciation: Peasant Labour Migration and Religious Anathematisation in Rural Russia, 1860-1905', *Journal of Modern History*, 68:4, (1996), p. 790.

⁴⁵ TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 664.

⁴⁶ TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 665.

⁴⁷ TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 663.

census.⁴⁸ The number of approved divorces rose significantly in the early 1900s, particularly for lower-class people, and adultery was the main cause for 90 per cent of all divorces by 1913.⁴⁹ In 1904, the Holy Synod issued a decree ending the permanent ban on remarriage for those found guilty of adultery.⁵⁰ However, later divorce cases reveal that some wives who left their husbands and began working as prostitutes were not permitted to remarry (*vsegdashnee bezbrachie*). On 2 March 1908, Anna Istomina was forbidden from remarrying after two eyewitnesses claimed that she committed adultery in the woods with ‘strange men’ and that she had been working in a brothel in Kolomna, near Moscow.⁵¹ On 4 September 1914, Pavel Baranov’s wife Evfimiia received the same sentence after three eyewitnesses claimed that she led an ‘adulterous life’, drinking heavily and having sex with various men ‘like a prostitute’.⁵² In these cases, the wider community helped to police the behaviour of women and the Church prioritised the wellbeing of the male plaintiff.⁵³

The regulation system replicated this scenario as it reinforced the idea that wider society needed to police female behaviour in order to protect public health. Additionally, the municipal authorities relied on members of urban

⁴⁸ ChaeRan Freeze argues that in comparison, Jewish law recognised a ‘broad and liberal set of grounds for divorce’, and divorce rates were much higher for Jewish people living in the Russian empire. C. Y. Freeze, ‘“She Done Him In”: Marital Breakdown in a Jewish Family’ in C. D. Worobec (ed), *The Human Tradition in Imperial Russia* (Lanham, 2009), p. 131, 137.

⁴⁹ Gregory Freeze argues that the number of approved divorces rose from 71 in 1860 to 1,171 in 1900 and then nearly 4000 by 1913. Despite this, the Church still rejected the vast majority of applications for divorce. G. Freeze, ‘Profane Narratives About a Holy Sacrament: Marriage and Divorce and Late Imperial Russia’ in M. D. Steinberg and H. J. Coleman (eds), *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007), pp. 148-149.

⁵⁰ Freeze, ‘Profane Narratives About a Holy Sacrament’, p. 149.

⁵¹ RGIA, f. 796, op. 189, d. 5341, l. 3a, 5.

⁵² RGIA, f. 796, op. 199, otd. IV, st. 3, d. 547, l. 2, 3, 5.

⁵³ Burds provides a detailed example of a husband who used moral charges to regulate his wife’s behaviour in Bogorodsk district in 1905. In this case, most of the ‘witnesses’ were fellow peasant workers from his factory. See Burds, ‘A Culture of Denunciation’, p. 803.

communities, such as yardmen (*dvorniki*) and night watchmen (*nochnye storozha*), to inform on, and sometimes even detain, city residents due to the persistent understaffing of the police force in the late imperial period.⁵⁴ In a similar way, local medical-police committees also encouraged yardmen, watchmen and homeowners to act as informants, asking them to report on a woman's behaviour to justify her registration onto the police lists.⁵⁵ In Riga in 1916, when the medical-police accused thirty-two-year-old laundress Liudviga Kusen of secret prostitution, they interviewed the yardman of her building. Although he had only worked there for two months, he had apparently been 'troubled' by her 'strange way of life':

Almost no day has passed when soldiers do not come to see her, sometimes even several at once. Her statement that the soldiers are bringing her laundry is not credible, as I have never seen her washing clothes or hanging them out to dry. When I complained and told her that I would tell the police she paid no attention, and each time she mocked me: "What's it to you? Don't you feel sorry for me?"⁵⁶

A medical-police agent used the yardman's statement to make a case against Kusen, and his claims were also apparently 'strengthened by rumours' heard in the local area. Although neither the agent nor the yardman had actually

⁵⁴ Weissman, 'Regular Police in Tsarist Russia', p. 49.

⁵⁵ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23555, lp. 346.

⁵⁶ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23559, lp. 370.

witnessed her having sexual intercourse with soldiers, the fact that they had *not* seen her doing laundry was sufficient evidence of her involvement in secret prostitution.

Medical-police committees often used 'promiscuous behaviour' as evidence of secret prostitution. In May 1915, a Riga medical-police agent reported on a suspicious property on Palisadnaia Street, where he believed there was an unlicensed brothel for low-ranking soldiers and sailors.⁵⁷ When he arrived, he found that 'everybody was drunk and there were empty bottles and glasses all over the table'. He found a twenty-nine-year-old peasant woman, Agaf'ia Iuran, naked and sleeping in bed with a man named Aleksandr Ianulevich. When questioned, Iuran explained that she currently did not have a job, but had worked as a prostitute two years previously and now she was in a relationship with Ianulevich, who was supporting her financially. Even though Ianulevich confirmed this statement, he too was unemployed and living with his father. In light of this, the medical-police committee took Iuran's passport and registered her as a prostitute.⁵⁸ Although the agent found no evidence of a brothel at the address, a young, unemployed female peasant migrant who was engaging in extramarital sex was an easy target for registration.

The connections made by the authorities between women engaging in extramarital sex and prostitution were also made by members of urban communities. On 20 May 1905, the criminal investigative department of the St Petersburg police received an anonymous petition that accused Nadezhda

⁵⁷ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23557, lp. 238.

⁵⁸ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23557, lp. 239.

Mitrofanova of secretly working as a prostitute.⁵⁹ Mitrofanova hailed from Vladimir province and lived in Vasil'evskii Island, and her denouncer used her relationship as evidence of her secret prostitution. They claimed that a man stayed at her apartment a few nights a week, on Wednesdays, Saturdays and occasionally on Mondays, and the rest of the time, she apparently worked as a prostitute 'from three in the morning until the following evening'. When medical-police agents installed surveillance on Mitrofanova, they found that she was in a relationship with Aleksandr Kyrillov who lived over in the Kazan district of the city. They found no evidence to suggest that she was working as a prostitute, but her supposedly unconventional relationship was enough evidence for the petitioner to make their accusation.

These cases illustrate how the regulation system threatened the autonomy of lower-class urban women more generally. Bernstein and Engelstein have both argued that the tsarist government used methods of venereal disease control, such as regulation, as a way to bring those outside 'direct patriarchal control' back under the supervision of the state.⁶⁰ Although the sexual health of male peasant migrants was monitored sporadically, the regulatory system undoubtedly had a greater impact on the lives of migrant lower-class women, whose sexuality and morality was constantly under scrutiny. The official fixation on women's morality can be explained by the impact of the societal upheavals of the late nineteenth century, such as state-sponsored industrialisation and urbanisation, which placed additional strain on the

⁵⁹ TsGIIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 692.

⁶⁰ Engelstein, 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon', p. 189; Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 28.

patriarchal gender and family order.⁶¹ Russian law reinforced the authority of husbands and fathers, as wives had to obtain their husband's permission for a wide range of activities, including applying for an internal passport.⁶² Village communities closely monitored the sexual behaviour of women, and those who engaged in extramarital sexual intercourse risked public defamation.⁶³

Practices of denunciation and the rules of regulation transferred the patriarchal authority of husband, father and village community to the urban community and local police. As increasing numbers of unmarried young women migrated from rural settlements to work as domestic servants, laundresses, seamstresses and industrial workers, more and more single women lived an isolated existence on low wages, outside the direct control of their families.⁶⁴ Regulation ensured that these women fell under some kind of patriarchal authority, as registered women were required, at least in theory, to obtain police permission to leave the area and inform their authorities of any changes to their address.⁶⁵ Through these rules and obligatory regular medical examinations, the imperial state attempted to closely monitor the morality and bodies of 'unheaded' women.

⁶¹ Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound*, p. 1.

⁶² Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound*, p. 3.

⁶³ Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, pp. 8-9. Young men targeted young girls who had illegitimate children. Practices included the defacing of her parents' property or public defamation of character through the loud singing of mocking songs and rhymes. C. D. Worobec, 'Masculinity in Late-Imperial Russian Peasant Society' in B. Evans Clements, R. Friedman and D. Healey (eds), *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 83-84.

⁶⁴ Chapter two discusses female migration in relation to prostitution. Rose Glickman argues that unmarried female factory workers, unlike their male counterparts, were not normally hired from their districts in large groups and therefore did not form the same eating or sleeping *arteli* as men. See chapter four in Glickman, *Russian Factory Women*, pp. 105-155.

⁶⁵ The extent to which local authorities applied regulation policy varied widely from place to place. This is discussed in more detail in chapter two.

Resisting regulation

While regulation was clearly oppressive in many instances, women did not passively accept these policies. Local authorities often struggled to enforce the rules completely as monitoring *all* the women who engaged in prostitution was an impossible task. Because of this, the relationship between registered prostitutes and those who policed them was often informal and based on mutual trust. Urban residents were frequently unwilling to help enforce regulation policy when it impeded their own financial gain. This section will explore how prostitutes and other women resisted regulatory policy. It will also illuminate how ordinary people helped prostitutes to oppose regulation, which suggests that in some instances prostitutes were well integrated within wider urban communities.

As with all lower-class histories, looking for examples of agency and resistance is problematic when examining the lives of women who worked as prostitutes. The vast majority of registered prostitutes hailed from the peasantry or the urban lower classes, so the only way to gain information about them is through the files that city authorities chose to produce and preserve. However, in some cases, preserved documentation includes prostitutes' voices and demonstrates how these women were able to exercise agency within the confines of patriarchal regulation policy. Bernstein explores prostitutes' opposition to forced hospitalisation and their stays in charitable institutions using published sources produced by, and for, educated society.⁶⁶ In contrast, this section draws on letters sent by prostitutes and urban residents to their local authorities to

⁶⁶ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 67-72, 198.

examine examples of resistance to other key regulatory policies, such as spatial segregation and obligatory medical examinations. This method will illuminate the complicated relationship between prostitutes, other urban residents and the authorities.

Spatial segregation

On 7 July 1908, the Governor of Grodno province received a petition from sixteen prostitutes working in the city of Brest. They began their letter by reminding the Governor that they had always followed the rules for independent prostitutes, by handing over their passports in exchange for medical books and attending their examinations each week.⁶⁷ Their grievances lay with the newly-appointed Chief of Police for the city, Frimirman, whom they claimed had taken their passports and attempted to force them to work in brothels, rather than in their apartments. They expressed their outrage with a threat:

This measure is pointless and tactless. It will cause widespread syphilis across the city and garrison. [...] We are completely unwilling to become brothel prostitutes as the Police Chief wishes. We are on the streets with no specific occupation and no means to travel or live. We, and others like us, will be involuntarily forced to engage in illegal

⁶⁷ GARF, f. 102, op. 65, d. 40ch4, l. 1.

secret prostitution, which will have deplorable
consequences.⁶⁸

In a subsequent protocol, the department of police confirmed that the Police Chief's actions were justified as he had 'freed them from dependence on their landladies'.⁶⁹ The Grodno Governor dismissed the petition as 'undeserving of attention' in October 1908.⁷⁰ The authorities' actions suggest that in the city of Brest, the Governor endeavoured to keep prostitution contained and hidden within state-licensed sites of commercial sex. Local authorities could police prostitution more effectively in brothels, as the medical examination of brothel prostitutes was organised by their madam, who was subject to fines if the authorities found diseased women working in her establishment. A well-established system of bribery and extortion meant that local authorities received an ample income from brothel keepers, as police agents accepted cash gifts for turning a blind eye to those who violated the rules and arbitrarily levied fines against those who failed to comply with their requests.⁷¹ Therefore, it was in the authorities' best interests to have women working in brothels.

Documents that pertain to the outcome of this case have not survived, but the petition itself illustrates how prostitutes attempted to exercise choice while working within the confines of regulation policy. These women demonstrated to the authorities that they were willing to work outside the law if they were denied their preferred working location, and referenced the official regulatory

⁶⁸ GARF, f. 102, op. 65, d. 40ch4, l. 2.

⁶⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 65, d. 40ch4, l. 6.

⁷⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 65, d. 40ch4, l. 3.

⁷¹ The financial relationship between local authorities and brothel keepers is discussed in greater detail in chapter three.

aim of safeguarding public and military health to strengthen their claim. They threatened to make themselves *more* visible if the authorities enforced their spatial segregation. Although they framed their own interests as wider public interests, these women highlighted their destructive potential in society. This source speaks to Sanborn's hypothesis that the relationship between lower-class people and their local authorities was an 'interaction which was constantly being negotiated' rather than one of blind obedience.⁷²

Other prostitutes also threatened the authorities with the spread of disease to achieve different ends. On 10 February 1915, the department of police received a petition from two prostitutes living in Ekaterinoslav (Dnipro), Marfa Ivanova and Nastiia Marfumia complaining about recent brothel closures in the city. They lamented the closure of one particular establishment, the 'Shantan Apollo', which they argued had served as a 'refuge' for prostitutes.⁷³ Since the closure of the 'Shantan Apollo', they had apparently been 'forced to degrade [their] sinful bodies on the streets' and venereal infection was allegedly 'rampant' across Ekaterinoslav. By describing themselves as 'sinful', the petitioners borrowed the language of prominent advocates of regulation, such as physician Veniamin Tarnovskii, who marked prostitutes as 'morally depraved and physically abnormal'.⁷⁴ Tarnovskii praised the way brothels separated prostitutes and the public, arguing that 'the more women in houses of toleration, the fewer offences and crimes they can commit, especially abuses

⁷² Sanborn argues that threats sent by groups who opposed military conscription to their authorities illuminate this relationship of negotiation. Sanborn, 'Conscription, Correspondence and Politics', p. 36.

⁷³ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 11. Bernstein briefly refers to this document in Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 188.

⁷⁴ V. M. Tarnovskii, *Prostitutsiia i Abolitsionizm* (St Petersburg, 1888), p. 243.

of public morality'.⁷⁵ In adopting this language, the petitioners stressed the essential role of the brothel in shielding the public from their 'degradation', and begged the Ekaterinoslav Governor to 'open a house of toleration for us unfortunates'.⁷⁶ Although working in a brothel came with restrictions, these women may have preferred to have a fixed working location and a regular stream of clients. Brothel keepers were legally obliged to organise medical inspections and pay for prostitutes' treatment costs, whereas independent prostitutes had to organise and fund this themselves. These petitioners may have preferred these working conditions and used the official aims of protecting public health and morality to appeal to the authorities.

Ivanova and Marfumia's use of language demonstrates how lower-class people were able to exploit stereotypes about their gender and social status to achieve certain ends. Engel argues that some women petitioning for divorce 'augmented a portrait of female helplessness' in order to provoke a sympathetic reaction from the paternalistic officials deciding their case.⁷⁷ Pyle suggests that peasants 'role-played' different characters, such as 'victims', 'beggars' and 'monarchists', when requesting state aid as they were aware that local officials' decisions were based on subjective interpretations of criteria.⁷⁸ Likewise in 1917, peasants utilised myths about the ignorance and 'darkness' of the rural masses without necessarily believing them in order to justify their own subversion or neglect of law.⁷⁹ Rather than referring to prostitution as their

⁷⁵ Tarnovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 81.

⁷⁶ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 12.

⁷⁷ Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound*, p. 49.

⁷⁸ Pyle, 'Peasant Strategies', p. 60.

⁷⁹ O. Figes, 'The Russian Revolution of 1917 and its Language in the Village', *Russian Review*, 56:3 (1997), p. 331.

occupation, Ivanova and Marfumia took on the stereotype of 'deviant' and 'sinful' fallen women who required containment in the state-licensed brothel, perhaps to elicit sympathy or evoke disgust from their local governor.

Wealthy urban residents helped prostitutes to resist official policies of spatial segregation, often motivated by their own financial gain. In 1907, Riga's municipal government criticised the 'owners of old houses' who were willing to rent apartments to prostitutes on favourable terms.⁸⁰ Allegedly, this meant that prostitutes 'freely chose apartments in the central parts of the city'.⁸¹ Evidently, the medical-police attempted to enforce the 'zoning' of prostitutes, confining them to lower-class districts on the outskirts of Riga. In late 1907 in St Petersburg, Collegiate Secretary Nikolai Egor'ev convinced the department of police to overturn a ban on renting to prostitutes on Drovianoi Lane in the central Admiralty district, an area where prostitutes were forbidden from living in official regulations.⁸² The St Petersburg medical-police committee originally enforced the ban on this particular street because the area was 'populated exclusively by workers', and the prostitutes living there allegedly caused riots and disturbances.⁸³ However, following Egor'ev's complaint about his 'loss of income', the department of police overturned the decision.⁸⁴ Egor'ev's noble status may have also prompted the police to act, and it is likely that he would not have actually been living in this area himself. As long as they had tenants to

⁸⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 65, d. 11ch55, l. 2.

⁸¹ GARF, f. 102, op. 65, d. 11ch55, l. 2.

⁸² TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 601, l. 11.

⁸³ GARF, f. 102, op. 64, d. 7ch182, l. 8.

⁸⁴ GARF, f. 102, op. 64, d. 7ch182, l. 1, 18.

pay the rent, many homeowners were willing to challenge official policies of spatial segregation.

The authorities attempted to segregate prostitutes even when they were living within appropriate districts. Empire-wide regulations forbade independent prostitutes from living more than two to an apartment, a measure that was perhaps intended to make it more difficult for registered women to form communities.⁸⁵ According to the St Petersburg medical-police committee, five was the absolute maximum number of prostitutes permitted to live in one apartment building.⁸⁶ There is ample evidence to suggest that local authorities had difficulty enforcing these rules in the capital, and in some cases, even ignored women who flouted the regulations. In 1910, Nikolaevskaia Street was a popular place of residence for independent prostitutes.⁸⁷ Number 33 had a particularly high concentration: in this property nine prostitutes lived with their landladies across five apartments.⁸⁸ Other addresses had similarly high prostitute populations. In the same year, the St Petersburg Mayor received an anonymous petition regarding house number 59 on Zaborskanskii Prospekt, where the author claimed that five prostitutes were living across two apartments.⁸⁹

In 1902, the St Petersburg medical-police committee acknowledged that the police were completely dependent on the compliance of landladies to help

⁸⁵ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 33.

⁸⁶ GARF, f. 102, op. 55, d. 69, l. 33.

⁸⁷ This street is now Marata Street in central St Petersburg, which runs south from Nevskii Prospekt towards Vitebskii railway station. TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 14, 44; TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 57.

⁸⁸ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, ll. 95-96.

⁸⁹ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 550.

supervise independent prostitutes who rented private apartments, and these women often broke the rules.⁹⁰ As well as renting their apartments out to more than two prostitutes, landladies also apparently harboured prostitutes' pimps (*koty*).⁹¹ In 1910, in the Narva district of the city on Sofiiskaia Street, all landladies renting to prostitutes were threatened with eviction if they did not ensure that their tenants behaved 'more decently on the streets and did not get drunk in their apartments'.⁹² Because of chronic housing shortages and the huge overcrowding of the urban poor in late imperial St Petersburg, it would be reasonable to assume that most lower-class landladies and landlords lived with their tenants.⁹³ Therefore, those who took in tenants were able to resist *nadzor* by turning a blind eye to clandestine prostitution within their properties. In 1911, the St Petersburg medical-police committee installed surveillance on number 10 Tatarskii Lane, a house which allegedly attracted twelve low-ranking sailors from the torpedo vessel 'Strong' (*Sil'nyi*) on the evening of 11 May.⁹⁴ When the committee investigated the women living in apartments at the property, they found just one registered prostitute, but also sixteen unskilled labourers (*chernorabochii*), one domestic servant and one needle-worker listed in the house book, the majority of whom were unmarried peasant women under the age of thirty.⁹⁵ The high concentration of young unmarried women in low-paid and unstable professions suggests that some may have been working

⁹⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch6, l. 8.

⁹¹ In light of this, the St Petersburg medical-police committee decided that only the husbands of landladies could live in apartments which were rented out to prostitutes. GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch6, l. 8.

⁹² TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 298.

⁹³ Bater discusses the housing shortage in St Petersburg, Bater, 'Between Old and New', pp. 56-57.

⁹⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 250.

⁹⁵ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, ll. 251-252.

as clandestine prostitutes. Landladies could help maintain the business of clandestine prostitution by ignoring their activities, as long as tenants paid their rent.

The authorities' inability, or unwillingness, to enforce restrictions on independent prostitutes' residency was not exclusive to the capital. In Revel' on 8 January 1910, four women were added to the medical-police lists who all lived in the same apartment on Stennaia Street.⁹⁶ There were other significant obstacles to official attempts to 'know' all women selling sex. Out of the 336 women registered as independent prostitutes in Riga in 1914, almost a quarter were listed as 'without an apartment' (*bez kvartiry*).⁹⁷ Presumably, these women were unable, or refused, to give the police a fixed address. Perhaps they were living in poverty and sleeping in flophouses, taverns or on the streets, or they may have preferred to not disclose their address in order to avoid police harassment. Without an address, these women were difficult to trace, so it is highly unlikely that the local authorities would have followed up their non-attendance at medical examinations.

Medical examinations

Independent prostitutes were legally obliged to have regular contact with their local authorities in the form of medical examinations, which were meant to take place twice a week. Regulations also stipulated that prostitutes were to provide the local police with their current address, and inform them each time they

⁹⁶ EAA, 31.2.5558, lk. 1-4.

⁹⁷ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 6, l. 229.

moved. However, the imperial authorities' ambition to keep track of the bodies and location of all women who sold sex was impossible to implement, and registered women routinely flouted the rules. In 1909, the MVD introduced photographs to medical tickets in order to prevent infected prostitutes from sending healthy women to their medical examinations in their stead.⁹⁸ Other registered women simply did not show up to their examinations or left their localities without informing the police. Bernstein suggests that many women must have deliberately avoided their examinations because they found them humiliating and extremely unpleasant.⁹⁹ She also argues that women sometimes voluntarily registered as prostitutes to avoid arrest for clandestine prostitution, and then never showed up at their medical examinations.¹⁰⁰ Bernstein bases these arguments on documents produced by the St Petersburg medical-police committee or published accounts by physicians, such as Dr Petr Oboznenko. However, in this section I draw on records penned by actual prostitutes to explore the complexity of interactions between registered women and the medical-police committee in Riga. I conclude that women were aware of the limitations of policing regulation, which allowed them a degree of flexibility.

Files for the Moscow area (*Moskovskii chast'*) of Riga in the early 1910s are filled with dozens of small scraps of paper sent by prostitutes to the medical-police committee excusing themselves for missing their medical examinations. These interactions suggest that the relationship between the two groups was

⁹⁸ This change to policy was reported in 'K Registratsii Prostitutok', *RZhKVB*, (May 1909), p. 282.

⁹⁹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 56-62.

¹⁰⁰ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 59-60.

relatively informal, and that women believed that they could take temporary breaks from working as prostitutes. For example, Khana Brudko wrote in August 1911 that she had gone away to Libava for a while and ‘would go to the doctor when she returned to Riga’.¹⁰¹ In spring 1913, Mariia Ozol explained that she had ‘gone home for two weeks, so do not worry about writing to me’ and Al’ma Trautman wrote that she had gone to the countryside for two weeks and that she would visit the doctor on her return.¹⁰² Another woman commented that she was ‘leaving Riga for some time’ but that she would immediately inform the committee when she returned.¹⁰³ Whether they actually returned to the committee or not, these women chose to evade their medical examinations and seemed unperturbed by the possible consequences. This suggests that the authorities understood the impossibility of enforcing regulation policy and were flexible with their policing practices. The relationship between Riga prostitutes and their medical-police committee appears to have been one of mutual trust and cooperation.

Even in the capital of St Petersburg, there is evidence to suggest that some registered prostitutes corresponded with the authorities in similar ways. In June 1904, Kseniia Khrenova excused herself for not attending her medical examination because she had gone to the *dacha*.¹⁰⁴ Another woman, Mariia Pavlova, wrote to the St Petersburg medical-police committee rather dramatically, ‘forgive me, for God’s sake! I am lying [ill] in bed and I cannot come

¹⁰¹ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23534, lp. 175.

¹⁰² LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23545, lp. 18a, 35.

¹⁰³ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23545, lp. 16b.

¹⁰⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 569, l. 13.

to you for my examination'.¹⁰⁵ The informal nature of these exchanges suggests that the authorities were not always able to reprimand women who failed to attend their examinations, which further implies mutual trust and informality. When enforced, the punishment for missing a medical examination appears to have been relatively mild. For example, in 1906, Verro (Võru) provincial court prosecuted Pelageiia Sapok for repeatedly failing to attend her medical examinations. Sapok claimed that she had slept in until midday and missed one of her appointments, and for her 'careless attitude' the court gave her the option of a one-rouble fine or just one day's arrest.¹⁰⁶

Riga prostitutes also wrote informally to the committee to remove themselves from the police lists. In June 1912, one woman sent the committee a tourist-style postcard of Riga's Bastion Hill, with the message 'do not look for me, because I have left Riga'.¹⁰⁷ Women wrote short messages in Russian, German and Latvian instructing the committee to remove them from the police lists and to not attempt to find them.¹⁰⁸ For example, Fedosiia Sudach simply wrote 'I have left for Revel' in December 1912.¹⁰⁹ In August 1912, Minna Shmidfel'dit travelled 150km east to Gol'dingen (Kuldiga) to stay for a few months. In the October, she wrote to the committee explaining her absence and lack of contact:

Sorry that I did not tell you where I am living
earlier but I could not find anybody who could
write in Russian, so I have had to write myself.

¹⁰⁵ TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 567, l. 5.

¹⁰⁶ EAA, 430.1.453, lk. 2, 9.

¹⁰⁷ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23842, lp. 26.

¹⁰⁸ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23842, lp. 20, 25, 28, 30; LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23545, lp. 38.

¹⁰⁹ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23842, lp. 7.

Sorry the writing is so bad but I only know German and Estonian. I went to the doctor in Riga on 10 August and went to Gol'dingen on 12 August. It was a Sunday so I did not write to you as I thought the committee would be closed.¹¹⁰

These prostitutes' letters challenge previous scholarship, which has stressed the rigidity of regulation and its severe impact on women's movement and lifestyle choices. Bernstein and Engel argue that medical-police committee rules made it 'extremely difficult for a woman to extricate herself from the ranks of registered prostitutes' and that being registered 'severely restricted' women's freedom of movement.¹¹¹ Letters to the authorities penned by registered women suggest that in practice, prostitutes did not experience these restrictions with the same severity as officialdom intended. Limited funding and resources meant that local authorities were often unable to fully implement regulation policies, and perhaps registered women took advantage of this contradiction.

Injustice and discrimination

In 1903, the MVD's empire-wide circular (Circular 1611) laid out the medical-police committee's responsibility to protect the wellbeing of the women they supervised. They had an obligation to organise treatment for sick and pregnant prostitutes and were expected to bring exploitative brothel keepers and

¹¹⁰ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23842, lp. 46.

¹¹¹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 39. Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 168.

landladies to justice.¹¹² The circular forbade committees from registering women under the age of eighteen onto the police lists and stressed their responsibility to promote the activities of charitable organisations that helped women to leave prostitution. By the early 1900s, the MVD's own medical council, along with much of the educated public, had begun to focus their criticisms of regulation on its corruption and the lax application of policy by regional committees.¹¹³ Those from the educated public were not the only ones to criticise regulation for these reasons. The people whom regulation affected more directly, notably registered prostitutes and the urban lower classes, had their own objections to the system. This section shows how prostitutes and urban communities were keen to highlight injustice and remind the authorities of their responsibilities to protect prostitutes and vulnerable young women. This suggests that regulation was not just a policy enforced from the top down and subject to criticism by the educated public, but instead a system at times negotiated and resisted by the people it directly affected.

Like the sixteen prostitutes in Brest seen earlier in this chapter, other registered women directly challenged instances of injustice and discrimination. In 1900, Elizaveta Frei wrote to the Riga Police Chief to complain about her landlady. Frei claimed that the landlady had received three months' rent in advance, but evicted her upon learning of her profession. This had apparently happened to her 'a few times already'.¹¹⁴ Frei appealed to the authorities to help solve the situation 'without bloodshed', giving the Police Chief an essential role

¹¹² TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 32.

¹¹³ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 261-263.

¹¹⁴ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 278.

as a mediator between her and her landlady. Another prostitute, Ida Erikson, petitioned the Revel' Police Chief in 1911 complaining that the owner of the 'London' Hotel where she was living, had taken her passport and refused to return it.¹¹⁵ She reminded the authorities that it was their responsibility to help her in this very important matter, as she 'needed her passport to live'. These petitions suggest that some registered women were keen to emphasise the authorities' responsibility to ensure that regulation was operating legally.

Two prostitutes, Ella Friderin and Mariia Vestfas, petitioned the Riga medical-police committee in July 1900 asking for their documentation so that they could live and work legally.¹¹⁶ The women explained that they had already written to the committee three times asking for their residency permits and medical books. Stressing the urgency of the situation, they claimed that they had 'nothing to support themselves' and that they 'could not earn a piece of bread', replicating the official discourses that defined eligibility for state aid.¹¹⁷ These women appeared keen to work within the legal parameters of regulation and reminded the authorities of their responsibility to provide each registered woman with a booklet to record the results of their medical examinations. This petition suggests that the inefficiency of local authorities in arranging the registration and supervision of prostitutes sometime forced them to work outside the legal parameters of regulation, something which these two women were unwilling to do.

¹¹⁵ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23539, lp. 327.

¹¹⁶ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 95.

¹¹⁷ The 1877 law for defining eligibility stated that those who 'lacked their own means of subsistence' were able to claim state aid. Pyle argues that peasants petitioning for aid during the First World War borrowed the language from this legislation, which they may have heard from local scribes, to win favour with the authorities. Pyle, 'Peasant Strategies', p. 50.

In addition to individual complaints, some prostitutes organised themselves in order to ensure their grievances were acknowledged by the authorities. In February 1905, *Russkii Zhurnal Kozhnikh i Venericheskikh Boleznei* (*Russian Journal of Skin and Venereal Diseases*, *RZhKVB* hereafter) reported that a strike was organised by prostitutes in Vilna (Vilnius).¹¹⁸ The writer claimed that the prostitutes were protesting against the excessive deductions that brothel keepers took from their earnings and that their choice of action was influenced by the ‘widespread strikes across the country right now’. Vilna had around 400 registered prostitutes and the number was allegedly increasing rapidly due to the ‘economic impoverishment of the region’. The prostitutes’ strike action would have highlighted their central role in society. By refusing to work, they would have caused significant financial loss for individual brothel keepers. As brothel keepers paid fees to the local authorities based on how many women they had working at their establishment in a given week, this strike would have also had an impact on local government revenue.¹¹⁹ Prostitutes in Vilna presumably took action to force the local police to follow regulation policy and prosecute exploitative brothel keepers.

One of the most controversial practices of regulation was the issue of forcing women to register as prostitutes without their consent, and this was widely criticised by all sectors of society. In 1892, the State Senate ruled that all women inscribed onto the police lists had to do so voluntarily, officially forbidding forced registration.¹²⁰ Local medical-police committees often did not respect

¹¹⁸ ‘Zabastovka Prostitutok’, *RZhKVB*, 2 (February 1905), p. 171.

¹¹⁹ Brothel fees will be discussed in more detail in chapter three.

¹²⁰ Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 37.

these rules or obligations, and there is ample evidence to suggest that corruption and extortion were both central to the regulation system.¹²¹ For example, the Chief Medical Inspector (*Glavnyi Vrachebnyi Inspektor*) directed local authorities to specific laws so they could prosecute women who did not wish to 'submit to *nadzor*' as criminals.¹²² Additionally, the Governor of Lifliand stated that medical-police committees within his province had the right to register women 'with their consent or against their will, if there is compelling evidence' in 1910.¹²³

Women reacted strongly to forced registration, especially when they claimed that they had not been working as prostitutes. On 30 June 1900, Emiliia Verter, a peasant woman living in Riga, petitioned the Police Chief of the city describing her forced registration.¹²⁴ She claimed that she had been out late at night with her close male friend far from her home so had decided to spend the night at an inn. Rooms cost twenty kopecks for the night, so she decided to share with her friend. After midnight, a medical-police agent arrived, confiscated her passport and then registered her as a prostitute. Verter demanded that the committee return her passport so she could work, eat and feed her children and told them to contact three 'gentlemen' who could confirm her 'good behaviour'. She ended her petition by remarking that she was 'unwilling to hurt myself, but the law has', highlighting the harm caused by the arbitrary actions of the medical-police committee agents.¹²⁵ Another woman living in Riga, Charlotte Steinberg, wrote

¹²¹ Local governance and corruption will be discussed in more detail in chapters three and four.

¹²² In this instance, the Chief Medical Inspector advised the Military Governor of the Maritime Region (*Primorskaia oblast'*) to prosecute these women under Article 44 of the Statute of Punishment, updated in December 1909. RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 33, 65.

¹²³ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 102.

¹²⁴ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 128.

¹²⁵ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 128.

to the Police Chief about the harassment of her niece, Elena Vannag, in May 1901. Vannag was working as a housekeeper (*ekonomka*) in a shop when she was 'grabbed by agents on the street', arrested and then forced to appear in front of the committee.¹²⁶ Steinberg categorised the actions against her niece as 'violence', which she claimed had an 'extremely destructive' impact upon Vannag and forced her to leave Riga abruptly to avoid forced registration.

These two petitioners linked their criticisms of police corruption with the wider anti-procurement discourses of the early twentieth century. Fear over so-called 'white slavery', or in Russian the 'trade in women' (*torgovliia zhenshchinami*), reached a crescendo across Europe and North America at the turn of the century, following the publication of British journalist William Stead's exposé on child prostitution in Victorian London 'The Maiden Tribute to Modern Babylon' 1885.¹²⁷ While in other international contexts 'white slavery' referred to the trafficking of women abroad for the purposes of prostitution, in Russia, the definition of the 'trade in women' was much broader, encompassing a wide range of activities from forced prostitution to the recruitment of brothel workers.¹²⁸ In Russia, as elsewhere in Europe and North America, narratives of white slavery followed the same formula: the perpetrator, usually typecast as a Jewish man, ensnared a young woman in a seemingly everyday situation and precipitated her 'downfall' from innocence.¹²⁹ Verter and Steinberg's petitions

¹²⁶ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23477, lp. 666.

¹²⁷ Languages of procurement will be discussed in chapter four.

¹²⁸ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 147. In Great Britain and the United States the crime was 'white slavery'. In France, *traite des blanches* and in Germany, *Mädchenhandel*, terms which both emphasise the sale and trafficking of young women.

¹²⁹ Brian Donovan describes the narrative in the North American context. A young girl from the countryside migrates to the city in search of work, she meets an individual, usually a southern or eastern European migrant, who promises her employment but then procures her for prostitution. B. Donovan, *White Slave Crusades: Race, Gender and Anti-Vice Activism, 1887-1917*

mirror this formula, but with the medical-police agent playing the role of the perpetrator. The petitioners claimed that, like white slavers, the agents had destroyed the otherwise peaceful lives of these women and called their honour and respectability into question, factors which could have forced them into prostitution. Their criticisms helped to highlight the destructive potential of police corruption, drawing on wider concerns about procurement.

Even local police forces acknowledged that forced registration was a growing problem. In Riga in 1915, the Police Chief received so many complaints about the 'unauthorised' registration of women as prostitutes in the city that he issued a secret circular marked 'urgent' to all district police officers. He warned police officers that they should be careful with their accusations of clandestine prostitution in order to prevent 'offending female modesty'.¹³⁰ He issued instructions on how to register women correctly:

1. For women suspected of prostitution, first,
carefully conduct secret sustained surveillance.
2. Collect accurate secret references from
yardmen, guards and homeowners, and pass
this on to the medical-police committee.

(Champaign, 2010), p. 18. In the French context, Elisa Camiscioli describes the standard narrative as 'innocent French girls were duped, often with promises of marriage or employment, and sold into prostitution overseas by traffickers portrayed sometimes as French but more often as Jews, men of colour, or foreigners'. E. Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Durham and London, 2009), p. 101.

¹³⁰ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23555, lp. 346.

3. When you establish that prostitution is happening, submit the women to me for inspection.¹³¹

In his instructions, the Riga Police Chief did not mention obtaining the consent of the woman in question, and police officers could fabricate 'evidence' allegedly uncovered during the period of 'sustained secret surveillance'. Even when provincial medical-police committees worked within the legal parameters of regulation, there were still many opportunities for abuse.

The popular press also condemned forced registration, using it as an example of how police agents were able to abuse their power under the regulation system. In October 1899, the newspaper *Russkie Vedomosti* (*Russian Gazette*) ran a story about the forced registration of a Provincial Secretary's daughter in St Petersburg. The daughter, Elizabeth, was 'arbitrarily detained and forcefully sent to the police station' for smoking cigarettes and talking loudly, both activities that convinced the police that she was secretly working as a prostitute, which reflects assumptions about social class and appropriate behaviour.¹³² The police apparently held her for one and a half hours before releasing her. The writer asked readers to consider the wider significance of this case, the 'complete ineptitude' of the police not just in St Petersburg, but also across other cities.

Discussions surrounding the impact of police corruption on individual freedom should be understood in the context of discourse prevalent among the liberal

¹³¹ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23555, lp. 346.

¹³² 'Peterburg – po telefonu nashikh korrespondent', *Russkie Vedomosti*, 11 October 1899, p. 2.

educated public in this period. Social commentators complained about how the 'social and political problem' of despotism contributed to a variety of social ills, namely widespread prostitution, alcoholism and poverty.¹³³ Critiques of despotism filtered through all sectors of society. For example, in her research on marital breakdown, Engel argues that the word 'despot' came into broad usage in prescriptive literature and was used by witnesses in provincial courts to condemn the 'unrestrained or illegitimate exercise and subordination of another's "free will"' by rulers, parents and husbands.¹³⁴ Additionally, Louise McReynolds, in her study on murder, argues that the 'persistence of autocracy' coloured Russian legal and criminological debates in the late imperial period, which centred on 'how the government could be held accountable for the environment that kept people from actualising themselves'.¹³⁵ Criticism of regulation featured elements of the same discourse. Prominent feminist abolitionist Dr Mariia Pokrovskaia bemoaned how the legal guidelines for the regulation system made women 'plaything[s] of the police' and victim to the whims of 'even the lowest-ranked police officer'.¹³⁶ Forced registration provided critics with an example of how the unregulated power of medical-police agents could have disastrous consequences for women, which caused many to call for regulation's abolition.

¹³³ S. K. Morrissey, *Suicide and the Body Politic in Imperial Russia* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 269.

¹³⁴ Engel, *Breaking the Ties that Bound*, pp. 169-170.

¹³⁵ L. McReynolds, *Murder Most Russian: True Crime and Punishment in Late Imperial Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2013), p. 52.

¹³⁶ M. Pokrovskaia, 'Prostitution and Alcoholism', in R. Bisha, J. M. Gheith, C. Holden and W. G. Wagner, *Russian Women, 1698-1917: Experience and Expression, an Anthology of Sources* (Bloomington, 2002), p. 361. Mariia Pokrovskaia (1852-c.1921) was the leader of the Women's Progressive Party and campaigned tirelessly for the abolition of regulation throughout her career.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that 'prostitute' was used both as an occupational identity and as a slur for women who transgressed patriarchal authority. In the first instance, some women registered on the police lists were aware of the authorities' legal responsibilities towards them, and were willing to challenge the illegal application of regulation policy. These women utilised official and popular discourses about disease prevention, morality and deviance to resist policies that they deemed to be unfair. However, 'prostitute', or more specifically 'secret prostitute', was a well-established label of character assassination, guaranteed to attract the attention of the authorities and likely to lead to involuntary registration. Even though prostitute was a distinct legal identity and recognised occupation, sexual morality was central to definitions of prostitution, and 'promiscuous' sexual behaviour and commercial sex were often conflated.

The regulation system was not just about prostitution. Instead, it formed part of wider mechanisms to control and regulate lower-class behaviour. However, the system was not as strict as legislation intended nor solely enforced from the top down. Policies of spatial segregation and practices of forced registration were opposed by urban communities, and prostitutes resisted their compulsory medical examinations. Prostitutes' clients provided local authorities with an extra layer of informal policing as they denounced women who allegedly worked outside the legal parameters of the system. This suggests that people's relationships with the regulation system varied markedly. People

helped to enforce or subvert the rules depending on how their health or their pockets benefitted from the particular situation.

The intersections of gender and class have been fundamental considerations in this chapter. Single lower-class women were vulnerable members of urban communities as their behaviour was under constant scrutiny. Both denunciation practices and regulation policy served as state-approved techniques for bringing lower-class women under some form of patriarchal control. The denunciation of these women as 'secret prostitutes', even when there was clearly no evidence for their engagement in commercial sex, reveals how some men kicked back against the disruption of traditional gender and family roles by the processes of industrialisation and modernisation. The impact of these industrial and societal transformations on the regulation of prostitution will be examined in the next chapter, particularly the mass migration of lower-class women for wage labour in the early 1900s.

2. Prostitution and migration: a case study of Arkhangel'sk

In the city of Arkhangel'sk in 1902, the vast majority of registered prostitutes were natives of Arkhangel'sk province. Five years later, women from all over European Russia were inscribed onto the police lists after travelling hundreds of kilometres to the city. Developments in industry and transport across the empire at the turn of the century vastly increased the mobility of lower-class women. Female migration and prostitution were interrelated, as the overwhelming majority of registered prostitutes were born outside their city of registration. Using police records from Arkhangel'sk between 1902 and 1915, this chapter will provide a regional case study of regulation to show how environmental, social and economic factors influenced both migratory patterns and prostitution policy. More broadly, it uses prostitution as a lens through which to examine the experiences of lower-class migrant women in the early 1900s.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Russia experienced significant social and economic transformation which had a profound impact on population movement. The empire's population increased from 74 million to 170 million between 1860 and 1916.¹ Industrial development accelerated, as the total number of large factories with over 1000 workers in the European portion of the empire rose from forty-two in 1866 to ninety-nine by 1890.²

¹ R. W. Goldsmith, 'The Economic Growth of Tsarist Russia, 1860-1913', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 9:3 (April 1961), p. 441.

² M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky, *The Russian Factory in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. A. Levin and C. S. Levin, 3rd edn (Homewood, 1970), p. 303.

Between the years of 1861 and 1913, overall factory production increased by 1000 per cent and in particular iron production increased fourteen times over.³ Migration from provincial towns to larger cities was made more accessible as the length of railways increased forty times over, reaching a total of over 64,000 kilometres by 1916.⁴ In light of this, cities expanded and the populations of the major urban centres of Moscow and St Petersburg quadrupled.⁵

The expansion of rural-to-urban migration was a central part of this transformation. Russia's population was predominantly rural, with less than 12 per cent of its population of 126 million classified as urban dwellers in the empire-wide census of 1897.⁶ Rural-to-urban migration for wage labour greatly increased throughout the late nineteenth century, and the 1897 census indicated that rural-to-urban migrants made up slightly more than half of the total urban population.⁷ Between 1898 and 1900, 7.7 million people in European Russia received internal passports which permitted them to leave their home region for up to a year.⁸ In Moscow in 1902, 72 per cent of the population had been born outside the city, and this number remained consistent at 71 per cent throughout the following decade.⁹ Migrant workers

³ R. B. Cox, 'Industrialisation, 1881-1913' in F. W. Thackeray (ed). *Events that Changed Russia Since 1855* (Westport, 2007), p. 53.

⁴ Goldsmith, 'The Economic Growth of Tsarist Russia', p. 442.

⁵ I. D. Thatcher, 'Late Imperial Urban Workers' in I. D. Thatcher (ed). *Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects* (Manchester, 2005), p. 101.

⁶ Out of a total population of 126,411,736, 16,289,181 lived in cities. See Table 'Naselenie Rossiiskoi Imperii po Perepiski 1897 g. po Uezdam' in Tsentral'nyi Statisticheskii Komitet Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del, *Pervaia Vseobshchaia Perepis' Naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii 1897 g.* 1 edn. (St Petersburg, 1897), p. 29.

⁷ These figures are not definitive, as the number of migrants recorded would have depended on the season in which the census was collected, but do demonstrate a prevalence of migrants in urban centres. R. H. Rowland, *Spatial Patterns of Urban In-Migration in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia: A Factor Analytic Approach* (Norwich, 1982), p. 6.

⁸ Siegelbaum and Moch, *Broad is My Native Land*, p. 70.

⁹ Bradley, *Muzhik and Muscovite*, p. 103.

featured prominently in female-dominated industries. For example, 95 per cent of Moscow's domestic servants and 91 per cent of laundresses were born outside the city in 1902.¹⁰

Late imperial rural-to-urban migration has received substantial historiographical attention and scholars have attempted to unravel some of the complex motivations for peasant migration. Historians have argued that following the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, the combination of high levels of rural taxation, the substantial population increase and small land-holdings caused peasants to migrate for better employment opportunities in urban centres.¹¹ However, this focus on economic motivations has been criticised for removing peasants from their cultural background and providing little more than 'commonplace assumptions'.¹² More recently, historians have disputed the effects of population growth and land hunger on levels of migration, and begun to include environmental factors such as soil fertility in their analysis.¹³ Jeffery Burds and Joseph Bradley have argued that rural-to-urban migration was driven to a certain extent by financial need, and in part by rising literacy rates and the desire to transform one's life.¹⁴

There has also been historical debate over the extent to which rural-to-urban migrants became acclimatised urban residents following migration, or whether

¹⁰ Glickman, *Russian Factory Women*, p. 67.

¹¹ J. William Leasure and R. A. Lewis, 'Internal Migration in Russia in the Late Nineteenth Century', *Slavic Review*, 27:3 (1968), p. 383.

¹² Brower, *The Russian City*, p. 85.

¹³ D. Moon, *The Russian Peasantry 1600-1930: The World that the Peasants Made* (London and New York, 1999), pp. 50-51

¹⁴ J. Burds, *Peasant Dreams and Market Politics: Labour Migration and the Russian Village, 1861-1905* (Pittsburgh, 1998); Bradley, *Muzhik and Muscovite*.

they retained strong social and cultural ties to the village.¹⁵ Scholars generally agree that the majority of migrant workers retained some kind of link to their villages and migrated temporarily over a period of months or years as seasonal workers (*otkhodniki*).¹⁶ Figures on the issue of internal passports support this hypothesis, as between 1890 and 1896, over three-quarters of all passports issued in European Russia were for a period of six months or less.¹⁷ Migration in this case was in effect a short term, temporary movement, rather than a permanent population shift.

This chapter's analysis of prostitution in Arkhangel'sk speaks to two neglected fields: lower-class female migration and patterns of migration in the Russian north. The 1897 census suggests that levels of rural-to-urban migration were highest around St Petersburg and in the Central Industrial Region (including the provinces of Moscow, Tver', Smolensk, Vladimir and Iaroslavl', amongst others).¹⁸ Therefore, the majority of historiographical scholarship has concentrated on these areas.¹⁹ The 1897 census also indicated that women

¹⁵ On the historiographical debate see R. E. Johnson, 'Peasant Migration and the Russian Working Class: Moscow at the End of the Nineteenth Century', *Slavic Review*, 35:4 (1976), pp. 652-664; O. Crisp, 'Labour and Industrialisation in Russia' in P. Mathias and M. M. Postan (eds), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol 7, pt. 2 (Cambridge, 1978); Burds, *Peasant Dreams and Market Politics*, pp. 7-9.

¹⁶ J. H. Bater, *St Petersburg: Industrialisation and Change* (Montreal, 1976); Johnson, *Peasant and Proletarian*; Moon, 'Peasant Migration, the Abolition of Serfdom'; S. Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 18-19.

¹⁷ J. Burds, 'The Social Control of Peasant Labour in Russia: the Response of Village Communities to Labour Migration in the Central Industrial Region, 1861-1905' in E. Kingston-Mann and T. Mixter (eds), *Peasant Economy, Culture and Politics of European Russia 1800-1921* (Princeton, 1991), p. 73.

¹⁸ See groups 1 and 2 in the table 'Osnovnye Napravleniia Migratsii Naseleniia po Dannym Perepisi 1897 g' in B. V. Tikhonov, *Pereseleniia v Rossii vo Vtoroi Polovine XIX Veka* (Moscow, 1978), p. 164.

¹⁹ Notable exceptions include Timothy Mixter's work on seasonal labour in the steppe grain belt, see T. Mixter, 'The Hiring Market as Workers' Turf: Migrant Agricultural Labourers and the Mobilisation of Collective Action in the Steppe Grainbelt of European Russia, 1853-1913' in E. Kingston-Mann and T. Mixter (eds), *Peasant Economy, Culture and Politics of European Russia 1800-1921* (Princeton, 1991). Barbara Anderson examines migration to Odessa, Kiev, Siberia

accounted for 40 per cent of the number of rural-to-urban migrants. Despite this, recent histories have mainly focused on the experiences of migrant men.²⁰ Several historians have written comprehensively on female migration in this period, focusing on Moscow, St Petersburg or the Central Industrial Region.²¹ Although extremely important, these works skim over prostitutes in their discussions of migrant women, despite the fact that the majority of registered prostitutes were migrants.²²

This chapter seeks to place prostitutes at the centre of the history of late imperial migration. By examining police records, I will gauge the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation on the migration of women to Arkhangel'sk. The chapter then interrogates how far the authorities regarded prostitutes as a distinct group based on their occupation, or whether these women were under similar restrictions to other lower-class migrants. Finally, the chapter assesses how far migrant women who worked as prostitutes were integrated within urban lower-class communities. Using the case study of Arkhangel'sk, I will suggest that prostitution was understood by the local authorities and the wider urban community as another form of seasonal or temporary female labour, an understanding driven in part by local environmental conditions. Where possible, I will draw on examples from other north-western provinces to

and Central Asia in B. A. Anderson, *Internal Migration During Modernisation in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Princeton, 1980). R. H. Rowland's 'Spatial Patterns' focuses on rural-to-urban migration across the entire empire.

²⁰ Various studies focus almost exclusively on male migrants, such as: Bater, 'Between Old and New'; Brower, *The Russian City*; Johnson, *Peasant and Proletarian*; D. Moon, 'Late Imperial Peasants' in I. D. Thatcher (ed). *Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects* (Manchester, 2005); Burds, *Peasant Dreams*.

²¹ Glickman, *Russian Factory Women*; Farnsworth and Viola (eds), *Russian Peasant Women*; Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*.

²² Engel, 'St Petersburg Prostitutes in the Late Nineteenth Century', p. 28.

demonstrate the unique nature of the Arkhangel'sk case and to illuminate the importance of looking at regional contexts to understand how regulation functioned in practice.

Arkhangel'sk in the early twentieth century

The city of Arkhangel'sk stands on the north-western periphery of European Russia, just outside the Arctic Circle. Arkhangel'sk province (*Arkhangel'skaia guberniia*) was the largest in European Russia. The 1897 census indicated that just over 9 per cent of the population of Arkhangel'sk province lived in urban centres, the majority of whom resided in the province's only major city, Arkhangel'sk.²³ The remaining 89 per cent of the population were sparsely distributed across the province, which comprised 17 per cent of European Russian territory but was home to just 0.0025 per cent of the empire's population.²⁴ At around 0.7 people per square mile, the population density of Arkhangel'sk province was comparable to provinces in eastern Siberia.²⁵ Although 85 per cent of the province's population were ethnically Russian, many other groups, such as Komi, Karelians, Nenets and Lapps, were also represented.²⁶ The city of Arkhangel'sk had a population of 20,882 in 1897, and just under half of this urban population had been born outside the city.²⁷ Of the

²³ Arkhangel'sk province had an urban population of 30,369 out of a total population of 347,589 in 1897, *Pervaia Vseobshchaia Perepis'*, vol. 1, p. 5.

²⁴ The population distribution in Arkhangel'sk province was four times sparser than Tomsk province, eight times sparser than Vologda province and twenty-four times sparser than Novgorod province. A. S. Norman, *Pochemu Neobkhodimo Zaselenie Arkhangel'skoi Gubernii* (St Petersburg, 1909), p. 18.

²⁵ L. G. Novikova, *Provintsial'naia 'Kontrrevoliutsiia': Beloe Dvizhenie i Grazhdanskaia Voina na Russkom Severe, 1917-1920* (Moscow, 2011), p. 19

²⁶ Novikova, *Provintsial'naia 'Kontrrevoliutsiia'*, p. 19.

²⁷ Tikhonov, *Pereseleniia v Rossii*, p. 189.

non-urban born population, 61.8 per cent came from other regions in Arkhangel'sk province, and 38.2 per cent from other provinces and states. Demographic growth in the early twentieth century meant that the population of Arkhangel'sk province increased by over a third in seventeen years, reaching a high of 483,500 in 1914.²⁸

The population and literacy levels of Arkhangel'sk province recorded in the 1897 census were typical of European Russia. Eighty-nine per cent of the province's population were peasants, and out of this group only 3.6 per cent lived in towns and cities.²⁹ The next most represented demographic group were lower-class townspeople who made up 5 per cent of the total population in Arkhangel'sk province, but 41.7 per cent of all urban dwellers. In Arkhangel'sk city, 38.7 per cent of residents were townspeople and 33.5 per cent were peasants. Literacy levels across the province were just above the national average at 28.9 per cent, and men's literacy levels were three times higher than women's.³⁰ Almost 65 per cent of Arkhangel'sk's urban population were literate, compared with 52.3 per cent nationally.³¹

Labour migration was particularly important in Arkhangel'sk province because of the environmental challenges posed by the landscape. Sixty-two per cent of the province was thick forest, which meant that the region had low soil fertility

²⁸ Table 'Distribution of population in European Russia by natural zones, 1719, 1795, 1856 and 1914' in B. Mironov, *The Standards of Living and Revolutions in Russia, 1700-1917* (Abingdon and New York, 2012), p. 192.

²⁹ 'Arkhangel'skaia Guberniia, Tetrad' 1' in *Pervaia Vseobshchaia Perepis'*, vol. 1, p. 48.

³⁰ The national average was 24 per cent. L. Grenoble, *Language Policy in the Soviet Union* (Boston, 2003), p. 47; *Pervaia Vseobshchania Perepis'*, vol. 1, p. vi.

³¹ Grenoble, *Language Policy*, p. 47; *Pervaia Vseobshchania Perepis'*, vol. 1, p. vi.

and a short season of sowing and harvesting.³² In 1913, 80 per cent of all grain consumed in the province was produced outside Arkhangel'sk's borders.³³ The local economy was dominated by the wood industry, fishing and hunting.³⁴ The vast majority of the province's 25,000 wage labourers worked in timber mills rather than factories.³⁵ The most common form of wage labour was fishing, a trade plied by peasants who took advantage of the province's numerous rivers and lakes. Thousands of fishermen flocked to the coast each year in spring to catch up to 50,000 walruses, beluga whales and seals.³⁶ Those who did migrate to Arkhangel'sk city to work at the port or in the timber mills did so predominantly seasonally. They lived in the Solombala part of the city, which was separated from both the city centre and the upmarket merchant district by the Kuznechikha river.³⁷

Transportation developments in the late nineteenth century connected Arkhangel'sk with neighbouring provinces and major urban centres which provided greater opportunities for population movement. Across Russia, an estimated 42,900 internal passports were issued on average each year between 1891 and 1900, a number which rose to 49,000 in 1902 and 52,100 between 1906 and 1910.³⁸ Out of the entire Russian north-west in 1902 and between 1906 and 1910, Arkhangel'sk had the third highest proportion of passports

³² M. A. Tsvetkov, *Izmenenie Lesistosti Evropeiskoi Rossii s Kontsa XVII Stoletia po 1914 god* (Moscow, 1957), p. 115-119; Anderson, *Internal Migration*, pp. 27-28.

³³ Y. Kotsonis, 'Arkhangel'sk, 1918: Regionalism and Populism in the Russian Civil War', *Russian Review*, 51:4 (1992), p. 530.

³⁴ L. G. Novikova, 'Northerners into Whites: Popular Participation in the Counter-Revolution in Arkhangel'sk Province, Summer-Autumn 1918', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60:2 (2008), p. 279.

³⁵ Novikova, *Provintsial'naia 'Kontrrevoliutsiia'*, p. 21.

³⁶ Novikova, *Provintsial'naia 'Kontrrevoliutsiia'*, p. 21.

³⁷ Novikova, *Provintsial'naia 'Kontrrevoliutsiia'*, pp. 19-20.

³⁸ Table 'Peasant Labour Migration in 43 Provinces of European Russia', Burds, *Peasant Dreams and Market Politics*, p. 22.

issued, surpassed only by St Petersburg and Tver'.³⁹ In 1897, the railway line between Moscow, Iaroslavl' and Vologda was extended to Arkhangel'sk.⁴⁰ At the same time across the empire, the number of third class railway tickets purchased more than doubled between 1894 and 1903, and in 1912, 208.9 million passengers travelled in third or fourth class.⁴¹ People were also able to travel north on seasonal services ran by the Arkhangel'sk-Murmansk shipping company, which transported 36,611 people in 1907, and 50,825 by 1911.⁴² That being said, moving people and goods around Arkhangel'sk province was still sometimes difficult, particularly during the winter months. The provincial roads were impassable during the spring and autumn, which meant that rural settlements were often isolated from the administrative centre.⁴³ When the province's rivers froze each year, post and cargo were transported by reindeer.⁴⁴ Travelling to Arkhangel'sk city by rail was cumbersome regardless of season. Passengers had to transfer carriages at Vologda to travel the remaining narrow track and then take boats or sleighs along the Northern Dvina river for the final stretch as the railroad stopped before Arkhangel'sk centre.⁴⁵

³⁹ This region includes the provinces of Arkhangel'sk, Vologda, Olonets, St Petersburg, Novgorod, Pskov, Smolensk and Tver'. *Peasant Dreams and Market Politics*, p. 23.

⁴⁰ J. N. Westwood, *A History of the Russian Railways* (London, 1964), p. 61.

⁴¹ F. B. Schenk, "The New Means of Transportation Will Make Unstable People Even More Unstable": Railways and Geographical Mobility in Tsarist Russia in J. Randolph and E. M. Avrutin (eds), *Russia in Motion: Cultures of Human Mobility Since 1850* (Urbana and Springfield 2012), pp. 224-225.

⁴² S. D. Bibikov, *Arkhangel'skaia Guberniia: ee Bogatstva i Nuzhdy po Obzoru 1912* (Arkhangel'sk, 1912), p. 97.

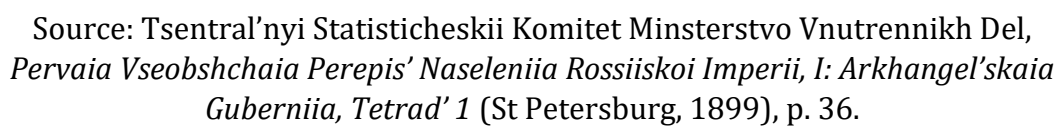
⁴³ Novikova, 'Northerners into Whites', p. 279.

⁴⁴ Novikova, *Provitsial'naia 'Kontrrevoliutsiia'*, p. 23.

⁴⁵ Novikova, *Provitsial'naia 'Kontrrevoliutsiia'*, p. 18.

When people did eventually reach Arkhangel'sk, they found a city with ample facilities. In 1861, the MVD Central Statistical Committee recorded twenty-three religious institutions, ten educational establishments, one theatre, eight charitable foundations and twenty factories.⁴⁶ The city had a bazaar, a building for flax, a marina, and a dock where hemp from ships could be unloaded (*pen'kovogo buiana*). The city was also home to countless wooden buildings and churches, built in the traditional northern Russian style. St Margaret's Fair (*Margaritinskaia Iarmarka*), Russia's first international trade fair, was held each year on 14 September, the date of the New Year's celebration for Pomor people.

⁴⁶ Tsentral'nyi Statisticheskii Komitet Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del, *Spiskii Naselennykh Mest Rossiiskoi Imperii, Arkhangel'skaia Gubernia* (St Petersburg, 1861), p. 1.



Source: Tsentral'nyi Statisticheskii Komitet Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del, *Pervaya Vseobshchaia Perepis' Naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii, I: Arkhangel'skaia Guberniia, Tetrad' 1* (St Petersburg, 1899), p. 36.

Prostitution in Arkhangel'sk

How did prostitution feature in Arkhangel'sk's urban landscape? In comparison to other provinces, Arkhangel'sk had a small prostitute population, as the region was home to just 0.5 per cent of all registered women in European Russia.⁴⁷ According to the first empire-wide survey of prostitutes in 1889, Arkhangel'sk province had fifteen state-licensed sites of prostitution and sixty-nine registered prostitutes.⁴⁸ Eleven women worked in brothels and fifty-eight worked independently. Unlike the nearby cities of Vologda, Novgorod and Iaroslavl', Arkhangel'sk did not have a dedicated medical-police committee. Instead, the Chief of Police was in charge of implementing regulation and local police officers were responsible for granting brothel licences and rooting out clandestine prostitutes.⁴⁹ Similar police organs were also in charge of regulation in 56 per cent of all the Russian cities in which *nadzor* existed.⁵⁰

Arkhangel'sk's prostitute population were surveyed again in 1909 by the Main Administration for Municipal Affairs (*Glavnoe Upravlenie po delam Mestnogo Khoziaistva*, GUMkh hereafter). The survey indicated that prostitution had decreased in Arkhangel'sk as now the province had just three state-licensed sites of prostitution and twenty-eight registered prostitutes.⁵¹ This is unusual given Arkhangel'sk's population increase in the early 1900s and the development of transport links between the province and other nearby cities. In other provinces, the number of prostitutes increased between the two

⁴⁷ Whereas 20 per cent of registered women lived in St Petersburg province, 9 per cent in Moscow province and 5 per cent in Lifliand province. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁸ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁹ *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 11.

⁵⁰ *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 1.

⁵¹ *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 2.

surveys, for example in Warsaw (an increase of 14 per cent), St Petersburg (19 per cent) and Lifliand (127 per cent).⁵² There are several possible explanations for the decline in legal prostitution in Arkhangel'sk between 1889 and 1909. It is plausible that prostitutes registered in Arkhangel'sk migrated to other cities during these two decades. The decrease could also indicate that policing practices became less severe and regulation poorly enforced, as a similar trend occurred in Moscow province between 1889 and 1909.⁵³ The season in which the survey was taken may also explain why so few prostitutes were registered. Ice engulfed Arkhangel'sk's port each year for approximately five months beginning in late autumn, causing the commercial activity of the port and city to decline and migrants to depart.

These quantitative surveys tell us very little about how regulation functioned in practice. From these data alone, it is impossible to gauge the connections between prostitution and migration and the impact of local conditions on the policing practices. Instead, this chapter adopts a qualitative methodology, drawing on a source set of 127 petitions (*proshenie*) and applications (*zaiavlenie*) sent to the Police Chief of Arkhangel'sk regarding women working in the city's brothels. These applications were either written by the prostitutes themselves, or if they were illiterate, penned by a representative. In each application, the prostitute herself, or her representative, requested her removal from, or insertion onto, the city's police lists. In the majority of cases, these applications were successful and accompanied by decision letters that

⁵² Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 2-3; *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 12, 20, 26, 30.

⁵³ The number of registered prostitutes decreased by 9 per cent in Moscow province and the number of brothels by 83 per cent. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 2; *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 14.

confirmed the woman's insertion or removal. These sources specifically reference prostitutes who worked in brothels, and do not include women who worked independently. The records are fragmented and only available for the years 1902, 1905-1906, 1907-1908, 1909 and 1915. Nevertheless, the material provides an insight into policing practices in Arkhangel'sk and migration patterns in the Russian north in the early twentieth century.

Prostitutes as migrants

Increasing numbers of women became rural-to-urban migrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1880, women were issued just 2.6 per cent of all internal passports in Iaroslavl' province, yet by 1913 the proportion rose to between 20-30 per cent.⁵⁴ In Tver' province, women were issued 3.3 per cent of all internal passports in the 1880s, and 11.1 per cent in 1910.⁵⁵ The total number of women migrating from Tver' province increased by over 260 per cent during these years.⁵⁶ By 1914, women made up almost half of the migrant population of St Petersburg.⁵⁷ Post-migration, women predominantly worked in low-paid industries, as domestic servants, laundresses, seamstresses or as unskilled factory workers.⁵⁸ Female work was

⁵⁴ Moon, *Peasant Migration, the Abolition of Serfdom*, p. 344.

⁵⁵ Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 71.

⁵⁶ The total number of women migrating from the province increased from 27,528 in the 1880s to 101,191 in 1910. Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 71.

⁵⁷ Siegelbaum and Moch, *Broad is My Native Land*, p. 107.

⁵⁸ Data from Moscow and St Petersburg suggest that women primarily worked as domestic servants post-migration. In the early 1900s there were 92,000 domestic servants in St Petersburg compared to the 57,848 women working in all other sectors of industry. Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 140. Glickman also states that domestic service was the largest employer of women in both Moscow and St Petersburg in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She explains that in 1885, women made up 22.1 per cent of the factory labour force across all industries in the empire, and a slightly higher proportion of 36.3 per cent

often unstable and seasonal, leaving women without wages for part of the year.⁵⁹ Unlike their male counterparts, peasant migrant women were customarily prohibited from controlling land, so they were less likely to return to their birth regions during quiet seasons.⁶⁰ For single, economically vulnerable women, prostitution could have provided a lucrative stopgap during periods of unemployment and represented the difference between survival and starvation. Prostitution may have also been a more attractive profession than the other poorly-paid and precarious female employment options.

As stated earlier in this chapter, the majority of registered prostitutes were migrants and this was certainly the case in Arkhangel'sk province. In the early 1900s, most of Arkhangel'sk city's registered prostitutes had been born in other areas of the province. In the fifteen petitions from 1902 that included information about the woman's birth region, eleven women came from other areas of Arkhangel'sk province, and just one from the city itself.⁶¹ The same trend appeared in the 1889 survey of registered women, where sixty-six of the sixty-nine prostitutes registered to work in Arkhangel'sk city were born within the province (listed as *mestnykh*).⁶² The expanse of Arkhangel'sk province meant that some women who hailed from inside its borders still travelled

in the St Petersburg Factory District (including the provinces of St Petersburg, Olonets, Arkhangel'sk and Novgorod, amongst others). Glickman, *Russian Factory Women*, p. 60, 75. Statistics that detail female employment by industry are unavailable for Arkhangel'sk province, so it is important not to generalise based on data from Moscow and St Petersburg.

⁵⁹ Needlework was particularly precarious, as women would only be employed for between four and five months in a given year, Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 177. Domestic servants' situation was equally unstable as they could be dismissed at the whim of their employer, Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 109.

⁶⁰ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 113; Glickman, *Russian Factory Women*, pp. 97-99.

⁶¹ Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti (GAAO hereafter) f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 5, 20, 28, 36, 38, 48, 50, 53, 69, 77, 89.

⁶² Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 2.

substantial distances to reach the city. Correspondence between the police departments of Mezen' and Arkhangel'sk reported on a registered prostitute who was travelling between the two cities, a journey of around 389km.⁶³

There are some cases of rural-to-urban migration from outside Arkhangel'sk province listed on the police lists for 1902. In this year, four peasant women travelled to the city from the bordering Vologda province, perhaps taking advantage of the Moscow–Arkhangel'sk railway line which passed through Iaroslavl' and Vologda. One twenty-one-year-old peasant woman, Elizaveta Deiachkova, was inscribed onto the police lists on 17 February 1902.⁶⁴ Deiachkova was born in Vel'skii district, (part of Vologda province until 1929) and would have travelled approximately 487km to reach Arkhangel'sk. Two other peasant women, twenty-two-year-old Anina Spiridonova and twenty-one-year-old Elizaveta Koroleva were inscribed onto the lists in January and April.⁶⁵ They had both travelled from Vologda district, Vologda province, a distance of around 766km. Another peasant migrant from this district in Vologda province was removed from the police lists in the same year.⁶⁶ Although they came from a neighbouring province, these women had migrated substantial distances by the time they arrived in Arkhangel'sk city.

Petitions from 1905-1909 reveal the impact of railway developments on migration to Arkhangel'sk. By 1906, the railway route between Moscow and Arkhangel'sk had grown in popularity and was joined with the St Petersburg-

⁶³ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 5,

⁶⁴ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 32.

⁶⁵ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 26, 61.

⁶⁶ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 85.

Viatka line to make the Northern Railway.⁶⁷ More and more women from Vologda and Iaroslavl' provinces appeared on the Arkhangel'sk police lists following this amalgamation. After 1906, the Police Chief received petitions from women who had travelled from more distant provinces, such as Vladimir, Novgorod and Tver'.⁶⁸ The 1906 reorganisation of state railways also created the North-Western Railway, which combined the Pskov-Riga and St Petersburg-Warsaw lines.⁶⁹ After this, the geographical scope of female migration to the city of Arkhangel'sk greatly increased. Several women who wrote to the Chief of Police between May 1906 and January 1909 were born in more westerly provinces of European Russia: St Petersburg, Smolensk and even Minsk.⁷⁰

The impact of railway amalgamation on the movement of registered prostitutes is evident in other northern regions of the empire. The Baltic Railway was established in the 1870s, connecting northern Baltic cities such as Revel' and Iur'ev (Tartu) with the capital of St Petersburg.⁷¹ The line was bought by the imperial Russian government in the 1880s and improvements were made to the route throughout the following two decades until it was absorbed into the North-Western Railway in 1906.⁷² Throughout the early 1900s, police lists for the city of Revel' mostly comprised women described by the city authorities as Estonian nationals.⁷³ The percentage of Estonian nationals on the police lists

⁶⁷ Westwood, *A History of the Russian Railways*, p. 144.

⁶⁸ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 21, 37, 115.

⁶⁹ Westwood, *A History of the Russian Railways*, p. 144.

⁷⁰ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 67; GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, l. 20, 109, 121; GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3999, l. 6, 20, 28.

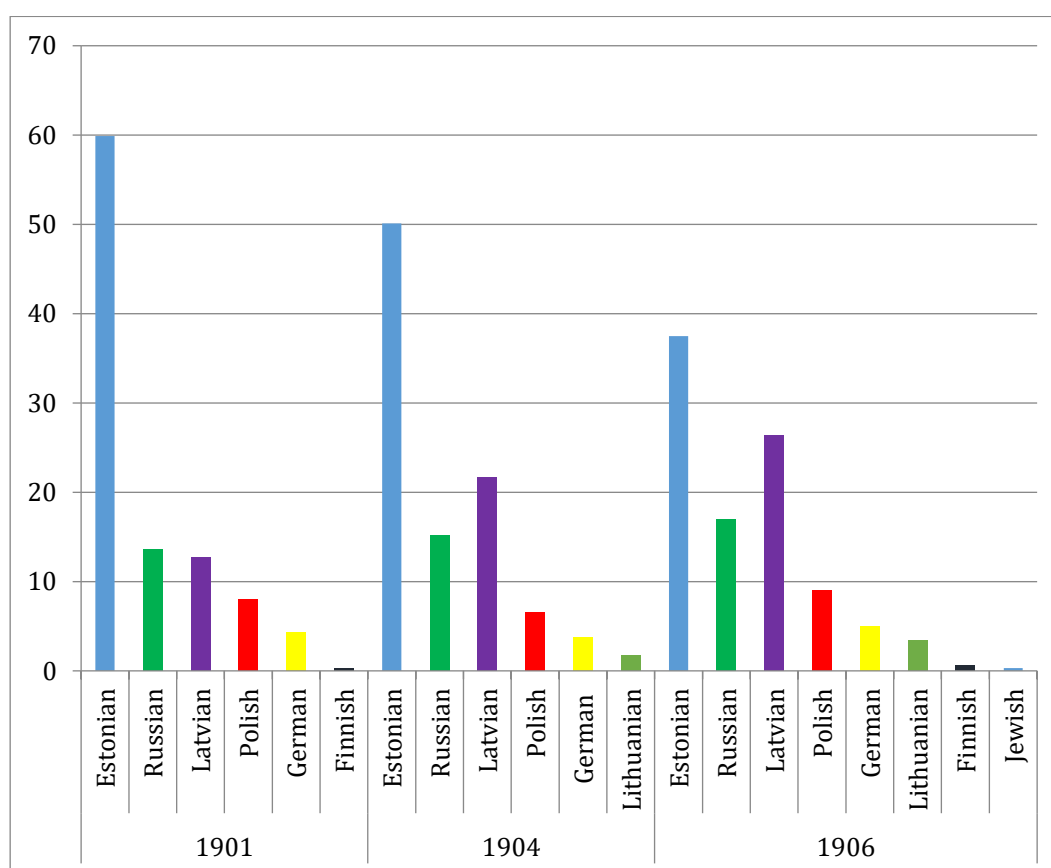
⁷¹ T. U. Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, 2nd edn. (Stanford, 2001), p. 71.

⁷² Westwood, *A History of the Russian Railways*, p. 76.

⁷³ Police lists for 1901, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906 and 1908 are available in the following files, EAA, 31.2.3722; 31.2.4075; 31.2.4283; 31.2.4509; 31.2.4681; 31.2.5037.

fell from almost 60 per cent in 1901 to 50 per cent by 1904, and then declined further to 37.5 per cent by 1906. Between 1901 and 1906, the number of registered Latvian women rose from 12.7 per cent to 26.4 per cent, and Russian women's representation grew from 13.6 per cent to 17 per cent. Figure 2 demonstrates the impact of the amalgamation of state railways upon the ethnic diversification of prostitutes in Revel'.

Figure 2: Nationalities listed on the Revel' police lists, 1901, 1904 and 1906: percentage of total



Source: EAA, 31.2.3722; 31.2.4283; 31.2.4681.

Despite evidence of mobility, there were significant restrictions placed on female migrants, especially those who were already registered as prostitutes. In order to travel between towns and to cross provincial borders, registered prostitutes required a passage certificate (*prokhdnoe svidetel'stvo*) issued by their local medical-police committee or chief of police. They did not have access to their internal passports as these documents were transferred from one police department to another.⁷⁴ Local authorities were required to authorise prostitutes' routes and final destinations. The rules for these certificates reminded prostitutes that they had 'no right to deviate from the route' prescribed by the authorities, and that they must register with the police at their new destination within twenty-four hours of arriving in the city.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ TsGIIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 32.

⁷⁵ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 60.

Figure 3: The passage certificate of Anna Petrova Sults, 1908. Sults was a twenty-five-year-old woman from Verro district, Lifliand province. The Iur'ev medical-police committee grants her permission to move from Iur'ev to Pernov (Parnu)

М. В. Д.
ЮРЬЕВСКИЙ
ПОЛИЦЕЙСКИЙ КОМИТЕТЪ
по
НАДЗОРУ ЗА ПРОСТИТУЦІЕЙ.

Проходное свидѣтельство.

№ 61.

Февраля 19 дня 1908г.
г. Юрьевъ, Лифл. губ.

Дано сіе Юрьевскимъ Полицейскимъ
Комитетомъ по надзору за проституціей, состоящей подъ вра-
чебно-полицейскимъ надзоромъ, приписанной къ Каро-
меневск. волости, Верроекск. уезда,
свѣдѣн. Петрова Сульты
родив. 7 Января 1883 года

проживавшей въ гор. Юрьевѣ въ доме торговца
Меламіа Вина для немедленнаго слѣдо-
ванія въ гор. Пярну съ тѣмъ, чтобы по прибытіи
туда, она явилась въ мѣстный Врачебно-Полицейскій Комитетъ,
куда и будетъ высланъ ея паспортъ по требованію.

Предсѣдатель,
Полиціймейстеръ:

Членъ Распоряд.
Пом. Пристава: Губин




Figure 4: The passage certificate of Anna Mikhailova Slesiareva, 1906. Slesiareva was a twenty-three-year-old peasant woman from Novgorod province. The Arkhangel'sk Police Chief grants her free passage from Arkhangel'sk to Iaroslavl'

*получено
30/10 1906*

Проходное свидетельство

№ 45

Согласно просьбе

от _____ ва № _____ дано

сие свидетельство содержит въ разрядъ проститутки крестьянки Совскаревой Григорьевны Михайловны Сельсаревой на свободный провозъ изъ г. Архангельска въ г. Ярославль

и проживание въ семь послѣднее до

февраля " 7 " дня 1906 года.

Архангельскій
Полицеймейстеръ Гайн

Получателю объявлено: 1) что онъ по сему свидетельству не можетъ проживать нигдѣ, кромѣ г. Ярославля, а по приѣздѣ въ сей городъ обязанъ не позже 24 часовъ со времени своего приѣзда лично предъавить таковое въ Ярославль Григорьевны Михайловны Сельсаревой и 2) что во время пути онъ не имѣетъ права уклоняться отъ маршрута, при семъ ему врученнаго, и обязанъ извѣщать гдѣ бы то ни было, за исключеніемъ случаевъ болѣзни или какихъ либо непреодолимыхъ препятствій, и въ сихъ послѣднихъ случаяхъ обязанъ немедленно заявить о своей остановкѣ мѣстному полицейскому начальству для сдѣланія на семъ свидетельствѣ необходимыхъ отъѣтокъ. Получатель предваренъ также и о томъ, что въ случаѣ нарушения съ его стороны вышеизложенныхъ предписаній онъ будетъ немедленно препровожденъ въ г. Ярославль тѣми властями, которыми будутъ обнаружены сии нарушенія.

Подпись получателя Александровъ

The strict monitoring of migrants' routes and destinations was not unique to prostitutes. As seen in figure 4, Anna Mikhailova Slesiareva was issued a passage certificate to travel between Arkhangel'sk and Iaroslavl' in February 1906.⁷⁶ Her certificate included a description of her appearance, in which the Police Chief was given the option to describe her beard and moustache, indicating that this document was used for both male and female migrants. The authorities also monitored the movement of migrants through the internal passport system. Internal passports were required by the state for anybody living or working outside their place of birth. These documents were usually issued for three months or less, and migrants had to return to their birth regions in order to renew them.⁷⁷ For peasant women, this process was even more cumbersome, as the permission of the elder of their rural district (*volost'*) or the head of her household (husband or father) was also required.⁷⁸ While living in urban centres, migrants had to hand over their internal passports to their employers in exchange for an urban residency permit. Their passport details were also registered in the house books of their apartment buildings.⁷⁹ This system meant that the imperial authorities were in principle able to monitor the movement and residency of lower-class people.

Registered prostitutes were able to circumvent certain restrictions placed on migrants, as they did not always have to return to their birth regions to renew their internal passports. Instead, local medical-police committees were able to

⁷⁶ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 60.

⁷⁷ Burds, 'The Social Control of Peasant Labour in Russia', p. 73.

⁷⁸ Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 64.

⁷⁹ Examples of this practice can be found in TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 596; d. 598; d. 599; d. 600; d. 602; d. 645. The documents are entitled *vypiska iz domovoi knigi*.

write to a woman's township board (*volostnoe pravleniie*) on her behalf and ask them to send her renewed passport directly.⁸⁰ For example, in March 1913, the medical-police committee in Verro wrote to Anna Kadak's regional authorities asking for her passport to be renewed and sent back to them.⁸¹ Although registered prostitutes had to live under the constraints of regulation policy, this loophole afforded them a degree of freedom compared to other migrants. As prostitutes did not always have to return to their birth regions, it was easier for registered women to sever ties with their villages and live in urban centres on a more permanent basis. Some women even manipulated the internal passport system to remove themselves from urban life. On 30 October 1900, Revel' police department reported on the disappearance of a certain Loviz Bilov, a prostitute who had worked in the city.⁸² While investigating the case, it became clear to them that she had returned to her home region of Illuusk region, located further than 500km south in Kurliand province, without any identification. Bilov told her local authorities that she had lost her passport, so they issued her a new one. Although the Revel' police department eventually caught up with her, Bilov's case demonstrates how prostitutes were able to use the system to their own advantage. There is also evidence to suggest that Jewish women registered as prostitutes so that they could live and study in St Petersburg, a privilege granted only to Jews who were merchants of the first guild, craftsmen, retired officials or those who had completed higher education.⁸³

⁸⁰ The St Petersburg medical-police committee wrote to Emili Greil's township board in Lifliand province to ask for her passport to be renewed. TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 571, l. 9.

⁸¹ EAA, 3163.1.1, lk. 47.

⁸² EAA, 151.1.9, lk. 6.

⁸³ In her memoir, about her time in the Soviet Union, Finnish Communist and Comintern member Aino Kuusinen recalled meeting a woman named Maria Yakovleva while incarcerated in Lefortovo prison. Yakovleva was Jewish and, before 1917, had registered as a prostitute so that

Unlike other migrants, many registered prostitutes were able to travel between towns with just a passage certificate, as their passports were transferred from one police department to another. Records from Estliand province reveal that local authorities often adopted a lax attitude with regards to prostitutes' documentation. There was frequently a delay between prostitutes travelling to new areas, starting work, and then receiving their passports. Mariia Roland left the city of Revel' for the town of Fellin (Viljandi) on 7 February 1900, but her passport only reached her on 1 March 1900.⁸⁴ Her passage certificate and medical ticket were sufficient for her to travel the 158km between the two cities. Another woman worked in the city of Verro in Estliand province for three months before the local police department received her passport from Vindava (Ventspils) in Kurliand province.⁸⁵ The Police Chief of Pernov granted the prostitute Miny Eisman passage to the city of Revel' on 11 September 1900.⁸⁶ Instead of going to Revel', Eisman travelled to Fellin and started work at the brothel 'Grinka'.⁸⁷ When the authorities in Fellin attempted to trace Eisman's passport, they found that it had expired, yet allowed her to continue work in the city.⁸⁸ These women were able to relocate even when the authorities had control over their documentation.

she could study at St Petersburg University. A. Kuusinen, *Before and After Stalin: a Personal Account of Soviet Russia from the 1920s to the 1960s*, trans. P. Stevenson (London, 1974), pp. 137-138. With thanks to Katy Turton for this reference. For residency restrictions for Jews in St Petersburg, see M. Beizer, *The Jews of St Petersburg: Excursions Through a Noble Past*, trans. M. Sherbourne (New York and Philadelphia, 1989), p. 7.

⁸⁴ EAA, 351.1.153 lk. 10, 42.

⁸⁵ EAA, 3163.1.153 lk. 13

⁸⁶ EAA, 351.1.153 lk. 43

⁸⁷ EAA, 351.1.153 lk. 46.

⁸⁸ EAA, 351.1.153 lk. 48.

The laxity of local authorities with regards to prostitutes' documentation apparently had implications for the spread of disease. On 4 April 1912, the Iur'ev medical-police committee wrote to the committee in Verro drawing attention to this very problem. They spoke of prostitutes with venereal diseases leaving for the next town 'under the guise of a "newcomer" (*noven'kii*)' to avoid being caught and forbidden from working.⁸⁹ They argued that in most cases, parents were not aware that 'their daughters live in other cities and engage in debauchery' so women were able to lie about losing their passport and then receive another in their home region to evade regulation.⁹⁰ In the months that followed this letter, the medical-police committee in Fellin, in an attempt to keep track of these women, issued monthly summaries of prostitutes who had arrived at, or left, the city.⁹¹

Despite this freedom, it is important to remember that local police had full control over prostitutes' documentation, and in some cases used this power to override individual women's choices. In September 1900, two young peasant women from Pernov wrote to the Valk (Valka) police department in Lifliand province complaining that they had been enrolled in a brothel in Valk against their will. They claimed that they had since returned home to their parents and become 'honest' once more, but their passports were still held by the Valk city police.⁹² Rather than returning the passports to the women, the Valk police department sent them to the Pernov Chief of Police with a note explaining that they had enrolled at the brothel 'according to their own desires' and that they

⁸⁹ EAA, 3163.1.1 lk. 5.

⁹⁰ EAA, 3163.1.1 lk. 5.

⁹¹ EAA, 3163.1.1 lk. 19, 20, 23, 34, 35, 37.

⁹² EAA, 351.1.153, lk. 63-64.

were both infected with venereal disease.⁹³ This case reveals how prostitutes' ability to move or change professions was sometimes dependent on the whim of the local authorities. Their apparent infectious potential was a sufficient reason for the authorities to curtail their freedom of movement.

The case of the two Pernov peasant women reveals how mobile populations were strongly associated with venereal disease transmission in official imagination. At the 1897 Congress for the Discussion of Measures Against Syphilis and Venereal Diseases in St Petersburg, physicians agreed that the transmission of syphilis was 'maintained' by mobile people: seasonal migrants, factory workers and soldiers, who carried their infection to the countryside on their return from service.⁹⁴ Physicians at the congress claimed that although prostitutes were undoubtedly the source of venereal diseases in urban settings, 78 per cent of all syphilis cases were apparently non-venereal, transmitted by the unhygienic and 'backward' customs of peasant life, such as communal eating and sleeping.⁹⁵ Engelstein argues that the Russian medical community preferred diagnoses of non-venereal syphilis in the countryside because they still clung on to ideas of 'innocent' and uncontaminated rural morality, in contrast to the moral corruption and visible 'vice' of rapidly-expanding cities.⁹⁶

Like registered prostitutes, male and female migrants also apparently required state surveillance to prevent the spread of venereal diseases. An article in the August 1904 issue of *RZhKVB* recommended the constant corporeal

⁹³ EAA, 351.1.153, lk. 64.

⁹⁴ GARF, f. 543, op. 1, d. 440, ll. 2-3.

⁹⁵ GARF, f. 543, op. 1, d. 440, l. 2.

⁹⁶ L. Engelstein, 'Syphilis, Historical and Actual: Cultural Geography of a Disease', *Reviews of Infectious Diseases*, 8:6 (1986), pp. 1036-1048; Engelstein, 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon'.

surveillance of migrant workers in three stages: as they were hired, periodically throughout their service, and at the end of their employment.⁹⁷ Factory doctors were to examine the oropharynx, genitals and skin of their workers, and ensure that all male and female staff were examined with equal rigour. The idea of compulsory inspection did not exist only on the pages of medical journals. In Moscow, certain migrant workers' internal passports were only handed back to them once they had tested clear for syphilis, and those infected were obliged to receive treatment to prevent the circulation of venereal diseases in rural regions.⁹⁸ This practice appears in Semen Kanatchikov's autobiography, occurring just before the 'great departure to the countryside' at Christmas and Easter.⁹⁹ In Khar'kov (Kharkiv) in March 1903, the district board wrote to the inspector of the local factory district blaming the transmission of venereal diseases on syphilitic workers who apparently went on to infect 'hundreds of people' on their return to their villages after their employment.¹⁰⁰ Following this, the district factory inspector enforced the compulsory examination of all potential industrial workers and forbade factories from hiring syphilitic men and women.¹⁰¹ This case points to similarities in the treatment of prostitutes and other lower-class migrants in certain regional contexts. Regulation policy forbade prostitutes with venereal diseases from working in an attempt to

⁹⁷ 'Ob Osmotrakh Rabochikh v Fabrikakh i Zavodakh', *RZhKVB*, 8 (August 1904), p. 193.

⁹⁸ Mazanik, 'Sanitation, Urban Environment', p. 89.

⁹⁹ Kanatchikov mocks the practice, claiming that the 'examination' consisted of a doctor 'tapping [their penises] with a pencil' before factory workers were handed their pay. He remarked that the doctor never found anybody infected with a venereal disease because the examinations were so ineffective, S. Kanatchikov, *A Radical Worker in Tsarist Russia: the Autobiography of Semen Ivanovich Kanatchikov*, ed. and trans. R. E. Zelnik (Stanford, 1986), pp. 51-52.

¹⁰⁰ Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Istorichnyi Arkhiv Ukrainy m. Kyiv (TsDIAK hereafter) f. 2090, op. 1, spr. 96, ark. 7.

¹⁰¹ TsDIAK, f. 2090, op. 1, spr. 96, ark. 26.

remove infected women from circulation, and in Khar'kov, migrant workers faced similar restrictions.

Like prostitution and factory labour, other migrant-dominated professions were the focus of official concern surrounding venereal disease transmission. In the Port of Emperor Alexander III, located close to the Baltic city of Libava, the local Society of Naval Physicians marked the port's forty-eight domestic servants as particularly suspicious in their 1901 report on levels of venereal disease.¹⁰² This group was apparently dangerous as they were unregistered casual workers and frequently 'moved to places or other professions'.¹⁰³ Later in the decade, evicting any domestic servants found to be infected with venereal diseases became the official policy of the port.¹⁰⁴ Within the walls of the port of Peter the Great in Revel', all casual workers were potential transmitters, regardless of gender. In November 1914, the Collegiate Councillor insisted that all orderlies, cooks, bakers, delivery boys and *artel'* workers should be examined every two weeks at the very least.¹⁰⁵ New recruits from the 'lower ranks' (*nizhnie chiny*) of the Navy were to be examined no later than one day after their arrival to the port.

Across the empire, prostitutes bore the brunt of migrant surveillance, given that their medical examinations were sanctioned in law. However, in certain contexts, local authorities endeavoured to monitor other groups of migrant workers for disease control, as anybody who was not rooted within one

¹⁰² RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 9.

¹⁰³ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 9.

¹⁰⁴ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 218.

¹⁰⁵ RGAVMF, f. 949, op. 3, d. 4, l. 2.

location and one occupation aroused suspicion. Like registered prostitutes, other migrant workers' ability to work or to relocate was dependent on whether their bodies fitted the healthy ideal of the imperial state. Additionally, although prostitutes' versions of the internal passport severely restricted their accommodation and employment options, the medical ticket did have its advantages. Unlike the internal passport, prostitutes were not always required to return to their birth region in order to renew their documents. This stipulation allowed women to sever ties with their villages once registered and live in urban centres on a more permanent basis.

Prostitutes and wider lower-class society

Previous historiography has suggested that regulation policy made it impossible for women to work as prostitutes temporarily and that prostitution became the 'full-time vocation of registered women', which distanced them from the 'milieu of the respectable poor'.¹⁰⁶ This literature has relied on statistical surveys to analyse the exit strategies of women who left prostitution. While these surveys give insight into how women who worked as prostitutes represented themselves to charity workers and the intelligentsia, the vague responses women gave for leaving prostitution ('voluntarily departed', 'hid themselves' and 'abandoned debauchery') tell us very little about their actual motivations for doing so.¹⁰⁷ This section will explore how and why prostitutes left the profession in Arkhangel'sk, and how far they were ostracised from other

¹⁰⁶ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 39; Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 168.

¹⁰⁷ Surveys compiled by Fedorov, Oboznenko and the St Petersburg House of Mercy are cited in Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 81-82 and Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, pp. 195-96.

segments of lower-class society. It will also address how far the specific conditions of Arkhangel'sk contributed to the city authorities' treatment of prostitutes as just another group of seasonal lower-class labourers.

This section draws on forty-three petitions for removal from the police lists sent to the police chief of Arkhangel'sk between 1902 and 1909. The sources for 1909 are different from the other years, in that all of the petitions were written on behalf of prostitutes by their brothel madam. Therefore, the material for 1909 lacks the nuance of the previous years, as the voice of the prostitute herself is absent. Nevertheless, these records illuminate patterns of seasonal migration.

Figure 5: Reasons for leaving prostitution as indicated in the Arkhangel'sk petitions

	Engaged in honest work	Established a relationship with a man	Improved behaviour	Left the city
1902	6	1	2	
1905-1906	10	2		3
1906-1907	2	5		6
1909				6
Total	18	8	2	15

Environmental factors had an impact on the number of registered prostitutes on the Arkhangel'sk police lists. During late spring and summer, the port was a hive of commercial activity as the surrounding waters offered abundant opportunities for fishing and trade. Between 1906 and 1909, 444 British trawlers ventured to Arkhangel'sk.¹⁰⁸ In 1911, over 18,647 tonnes of fish were caught in the region.¹⁰⁹ In the same year, 819 ships entered Arkhangel'sk port.¹¹⁰ Forty-five per cent were Russian, and the rest came from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Britain, and Spain. Registered prostitutes would have certainly found plenty of clients amongst the hundreds of sailors and fishermen that arrived in the city each year. However, ice engulfed the port annually for approximately five months beginning in late

¹⁰⁸ I. V. Sosnovskii, *Vsepoddanneishii Otchet o Sostoianii Arkhangel'skoi Gubernii za 1909 god* (Arkhangel'sk, 1911), p. 6. With thanks to Liudmila Novikova for providing me with this reference.

¹⁰⁹ The measurement given in the source is 1,165,418 *pudi*, and 1 *pud* = roughly 16kg. N. A. Golubtsov, *Obzor Arkhangel'skoi Gubernii za 1911 god* (Arkhangel'sk, 1912), p. 34.

¹¹⁰ Golubtsov, *Obzor Arkhangel'skoi Gubernii*, p. 96.

autumn, and during this period, the commercial activity of the port and city declined. Registered prostitutes often left the police lists during these slow months. Between 1 and 25 November 1907, three women left for Iaroslavl', and a further seven returned to their birth regions.¹¹¹ There were consistently nineteen or twenty registered brothel workers recorded on the police lists for Arkhangel'sk city for every month of 1907, until October when the number dropped to nine.¹¹² On the list for October, five women left for Vologda and a further three left for Iaroslavl'.¹¹³ The number of registered prostitutes remained low for both November (ten) and December (thirteen) of that year.¹¹⁴ Likewise, in 1906 the number of registered prostitutes dropped from twenty-three in May to fifteen by November.¹¹⁵ The migration of women to the interior provinces of Iaroslavl' and Vologda suggests that the freezing over of Arkhangel'sk port adversely affected the business of prostitution. In this context, prostitutes shared experiences with other seasonal migrants and responded to the regional environment in a similar way. The fact that whole groups of women were periodically removed from the police lists at the same time each year suggests that the Arkhangel'sk authorities understood prostitution as another form of seasonal labour.

Like other seasonal migrants, some prostitutes retained ties to their home regions. Out of the fifteen registered women who left Arkhangel'sk, ten returned to their birth regions. One peasant, Aleksandra Kostreina, was granted

¹¹¹ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, l. 112, 113, 115, 121.

¹¹² GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, l. 10, 19, 50, 57, 75, 79, 92, 97, 104, 106.

¹¹³ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, l. 106.

¹¹⁴ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, l. 124, 130.

¹¹⁵ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 76, 124.

free passage to Arkhangel'sk in January 1906.¹¹⁶ Kostreina then appears in the records for the following year, as the Arkhangel'sk State Police Department were informed that she had left a city brothel to return to her hometown in the Ribinsk region of Iaroslavl' province.¹¹⁷ In another case, Aleksandra Pishchelnikova, an urban-born migrant from Romanov-Borisoglebsk in Iaroslavl' province, was inserted onto the police lists on 5 January 1909 and removed on 3 March of the same year as she returned to her hometown.¹¹⁸ Five peasant migrants left for their home regions in late spring and summer, during the planting and harvest seasons.¹¹⁹ The fact that these women were able to return home suggests that ties with their villages were not severed in spite of their profession.

The practice of seasonal prostitution is also evident across other regions. The Nizhnii Novgorod fair (*Nizhegorodskaia Iarmarka*) was the largest trade fair in the Russian empire, held each summer in the city of Nizhnii Novgorod. The fair was an important commercial centre which attracted thousands of domestic and international traders annually. The event also provided a whole range of entertainment for visitors, as various taverns, restaurants, theatres, circuses and fairground rides sprung up within the complex. Throughout its history, the fair had a certain notoriety for drunkenness, disorderly behaviour and the widespread circulation of pornography.¹²⁰ The fair was also a hub for

¹¹⁶ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 16.

¹¹⁷ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, l. 14.

¹¹⁸ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3999, l. 9, 64.

¹¹⁹ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 87, GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, l. 91, 98, GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3999, l. 73.

¹²⁰ A. Lincoln Fitzpatrick, *The Great Russian Fair, Nizhnii Novgorod, 1840-90* (New York, 1990), p. 184. On the sale of 'billions' of pornographic postcards at the fair see Rowley, *Open Letters*, pp. 109-110.

temporary or clandestine prostitutes. At the 1878 fair, a survey of 336 prostitutes claimed that almost a quarter were only working in commercial sex for the duration of the event, and a further 33.3 per cent were 'secretly engaging in debauchery as a side occupation'.¹²¹ In 1903, one survey reported that there were 982 prostitutes working at the fair and over a third were independents who had travelled to Nizhnii Novgorod specifically for the event.¹²²

The authorities in Nizhnii Novgorod understood that the fair attracted seasonal prostitutes because of the temporary influx of thousands of men to the city, and they adapted the rules of regulation in light of this. Physicians believed that the majority of women at the fair were 'involved in prostitution as a subsidiary profession' (*kak vspomogatel'nyy remeslom*), working also as chorus girls, dressmakers, and milliners, or selling water or lemonade in the gardens.¹²³ In an attempt to prevent women from working outside the regulation system, the local medical-police provided seasonal prostitutes with 'temporary yellow tickets', which allowed them to return to their villages and regular jobs at the end of the fair.¹²⁴ They also organised supplementary inspection points and employed a special commission of doctors to conduct the additional medical examinations for the temporarily registered women.¹²⁵ As in Arkhangel'sk, the

¹²¹ A. I. Elistratov, *O Prikreplenii Zhenshchiny k Prostitutsii (Vrachebno-Politsieskii Nadzor)* (Kazan, 1903), p. 10.

¹²² 'Nadzor za Prostitutsiei na Nizhegorodskoi Iarmarke v 1903 god', *RZKVB*, 3 (March 1904), pp. 463-464. The survey data from this year distinguished between independent prostitutes who usually worked in Nizhnii Novgorod and those who had travelled for the fair. The same distinctions were not made for prostitutes who worked in brothels, which suggests that the percentage of seasonal prostitutes was actually much higher.

¹²³ 'Nadzor za Prostitutsiei na Nizhegorodskoi Iarmarke', pp. 463-464. Stauter-Halstead states that in the 1850s, professional prostitutes regularly travelled from the Polish Kingdom to the Nizhnii Novgorod fair, disguising themselves as harpists or choir singers. Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil's Chain*, p. 122.

¹²⁴ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 114.

¹²⁵ 'Nadzor za Prostitutsiei na Nizhegorodskoi Iarmarke', p. 464.

Nizhnii Novgorod authorities considered the particular circumstances of their region when regulating urban prostitution.

The petitions sent to the police chief of Arkhangel'sk present a picture of periodic prostitution, which suggests that, in reality, the working identity of 'prostitute' was not rigidly fixed, and instead fitted with a more general trend of short-term employment.¹²⁶ Mariia Panafidina, a peasant migrant from Arkhangel'sk province, was granted free passage from the city of Iaroslavl' where she had previously worked as a prostitute, and registered to work in the city of Arkhangel'sk in January 1906.¹²⁷ In August of the same year, the police warden reported that Panafidina now worked as a laundress, and she was removed from the police lists that month as she had found 'honest work'.¹²⁸ For Panafidina, working as a prostitute may have presented a short-term employment opportunity during a transitional period, after moving from one city to another. Prostitution provided a temporary solution in a period of economic uncertainty, and her transition into the world of 'honest work' appears to have been fairly straightforward.

In almost half of the petitions, women cited their financial independence after finding new work as their reason for leaving prostitution. Out of ten women who petitioned the Arkhangel'sk Police Chief in order to be removed from the lists in 1902, only one petition was based solely on cohabitation with a man. Six

¹²⁶ Stauter-Halstead explores the myth that prostitutes were 'socially excommunicated' in late nineteenth-century Galicia. She argues that contemporary discussions of sex trafficking in the Polish-language press ignored the reality of widespread temporary prostitution and presented prostitutes as 'non-people, comfortably marginalised in foreign brothels or shut up in houses of ill repute'. See Stauter-Halstead, "A Generation of Monsters", p. 29.

¹²⁷ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 2, 3

¹²⁸ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 99, 101.

women who petitioned listed 'honest work' as their reason for requesting removal, the majority of whom had become laundresses since leaving prostitution.¹²⁹ The remaining two had entered other forms of employment, such as domestic service and service at a wine warehouse.¹³⁰ Finally, a further two women petitioned on the grounds that they now 'behaved impeccably' or had learned to 'live modestly' and no longer worked as prostitutes.¹³¹ The most common justification for being removed from the police lists was finding alternative employment, which demonstrates the use of prostitution as a temporary form of labour while seeking other, more 'respectable', work.

This focus on employment as a reason for leaving prostitution makes the Arkhangel'sk records unique, especially when compared with reports from the capital. In 1909, the Medical Inspector of the St Petersburg medical-police committee reported on the reasons for the removal of 341 prostitutes from the city's police lists. The results can be seen in the following table.

Figure 6: Reasons for removal from the St Petersburg police lists, 1909

Reason	Total
--------	-------

¹²⁹ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 36, 39, 48, 54.

¹³⁰ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 71, 84.

¹³¹ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 28, GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3821, l. 50.

Began living with a man	126
Returned to a working life	96
Evaded medical inspections	58
Left the capital	28
Entered into the House of Mercy or a women's shelter	13
At the request of parents, relatives or guardians	13
Due to a general medical condition	2
Expelled from the capital	4
Married	1

Source: RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 57.

In St Petersburg in 1909, just 28 per cent of women left prostitution after finding alternative work, compared with 42 per cent in the Arkhangel'sk petitions. In the capital, 37 per cent of women left after establishing a relationship with a man, whereas in Arkhangel'sk this figure was just 18 per cent. This suggests that in St Petersburg, the stigma of working as a prostitute had a greater impact upon women's ability to find alternative work. It is possible that the St Petersburg medical-police committee preferred women to cohabit with men after leaving prostitution, as then they came under some kind of patriarchal authority.

Out of the forty-three Arkhangel'sk petitions, only one expressed revulsion towards prostitution as an occupation. The petition of Lidiia Khanovicha

reveals how the mental and physical harm of prostitution may have caused women to accept the lower pay of 'honest work'. She was illiterate, so her representative wrote that she was leaving prostitution as she was now living with a man who supported her financially. The representative added that her 'diseased condition and revulsion towards the trade' were also key factors in her exit.¹³² Khanovicha was removed from the police lists on 14 December 1906, and her decision document listed only her new living arrangements as her reason for leaving.¹³³ The omission of the other information suggests that disliking prostitution was not a valid excuse for removal from the police lists, and that women needed to secure alternative employment to ensure their exit.

The fact that Khanovicha's petition stands alone in expressing disgust is of course not evidence that all women enjoyed their work as prostitutes. The formulaic nature of these petitions suggests that women wanting to leave prostitution were aware of the requirements for doing so. Women may have chosen to omit information about their personal feelings towards prostitution because they recognised that it was not important to the authorities, as evidenced by the omission of Khanovicha's revulsion and disease on her decision form. The extent to which these petitions reveal the *actual* reasons why women left prostitution is questionable. Despite these limitations, the Arkhangel'sk records shed light on a somewhat straightforward transition between prostitution and other forms of employment, and suggest that the

¹³² GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 129.

¹³³ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3914, l. 131.

stigma of having worked as a prostitute was not enough to deter future employers.

Petitions to the police chief which requested removal are accompanied by short reports from a police officer and decision letters which confirmed the removal. Although it is important to consider possible gaps in source material, the overwhelming majority of petitions submitted for removal are accompanied by a decision letter approving their request.¹³⁴ If all that was required for a woman to leave prostitution was a petition and report from the warden, providing alternative employment could be secured, the transition to the world of 'honest work' appears rather fluid. Despite this, the fluidity of this transition was entirely dependent on the availability of alternative employment and local prejudices towards women who had held the medical ticket. Therefore, the results from Arkhangel'sk are not representative of any other region. The icing over of the port each year may have meant that the authorities better understood prostitution as a seasonal occupation here than elsewhere in the empire.

Leaving prostitution was not as straightforward in other regions of Russia. In Estliand province, twenty-five-year-old Alida Oiama petitioned the Provincial Governor for her removal from the Revel' police lists on 6 April 1912. 'I humbly beg your excellency', she wrote, 'to issue me a clean passport, so I can, like all of my honest neighbours, earn my bread by honest means'.¹³⁵ Oiama only received

¹³⁴ Out of forty-three petitions sent, I was able to identify twenty-seven sets of petitions and decision letters. In the other sixteen cases, the decision letter may not have survived, but I was able to find other documents (reports, police lists of prostitutes) which confirmed their removal. I did not find any archival evidence of requests being denied, although it is important to note that these may have not been preserved.

¹³⁵ EAA, 31.2.6123, lk. 6.

her passport three months later in June; following a period of surveillance by the Revel' medical-police committee and her mother's verbal confirmation that she had left prostitution.¹³⁶ In a case mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Valk police department withheld two prostitutes' passports on the grounds that they could have been infected with venereal diseases.¹³⁷ The fact that registered women could experience long delays and outright refusals when requesting the return of their documents demonstrates that leaving prostitution was dependent on the whim of the local authorities, who were evidently more lenient in Arkhangel'sk.

In St Petersburg, the medical-police committee required several forms of proof to remove women from the police lists. Kseniia Khenova, an eighteen-year-old peasant woman from Vitebsk province, requested removal from the St Petersburg police lists on 26 February 1903.¹³⁸ In order to leave, she had to provide her current address so that the medical-police committee could verify that she was no longer working as a prostitute. A police officer in her local area installed secret surveillance on her rented property and concluded that she now worked as a dressmaker, lived with a man and behaved well.¹³⁹ The medical-police committee observed Khenova one month later for further confirmation, and then eventually removed her from the police lists on 28 April.¹⁴⁰ Another eighteen-year-old Finnish woman was only removed after her cohabitation with a man was confirmed following two stints of secret

¹³⁶ EAA, 31.2.6123 lk. 8, 10.

¹³⁷ EAA, 351.1.153, lk. 63-64.

¹³⁸ TsGIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 569, l. 8.

¹³⁹ TsGIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 569, l. 10.

¹⁴⁰ TsGIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 569, l. 9, 12.

surveillance.¹⁴¹ If prostitutes listed alternative employment as their reason for leaving, the St Petersburg medical-police required confirmation from their employers.¹⁴² No available records suggest that these verifications occurred in Arkhangel'sk, and the Arkhangel'sk police chief appeared willing to trust that prostitutes and local employers were not providing false information. The modest population of prostitutes working in brothels in Arkhangel'sk compared with St Petersburg could have affected the relationship between prostitutes and the authorities.¹⁴³ The smaller city may have provided a preferable working environment for registered women.

Conclusion

Prostitution can be used as a lens through which the experiences of female migrants in general can be examined. The police lists in Arkhangel'sk, as in other contexts, reveal the impact of transport developments and environmental factors on the regulation of prostitution at a regional level. In Arkhangel'sk, the icing over of the port each year saw the mass departure of prostitutes from the city. The seemingly straightforward way in which women were added to, and removed from the police lists suggests that the local authorities took Arkhangel'sk's environment and the seasonal expansion of the port's commercial activity into account when regulating prostitution, and were more lenient than in other regions of the empire.

¹⁴¹ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 600, l. 8, 10, 11.

¹⁴² TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 602, l. 18, 20.

¹⁴³ In 1909, Arkhangel'sk had twenty women working in brothels and St Petersburg, 322. *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 2, 20.

This study of women who worked as prostitutes in Arkhangel'sk also reveals the desire of the tsarist authorities to keep the population ordered, classified and, if possible, rooted in one location. Restrictions such as the passage certificate were indicative of more general controls placed upon the wider mobile population. Internal passports granted for rural-to-urban migration were overwhelmingly issued on a temporary basis, and only with the approval of the wider peasant community. Like prostitutes, other lower-class migrants, such as factory workers and domestic servants, were routinely monitored under the banner of venereal disease control. Regulation provided the authorities with another mechanism for monitoring the movement and behaviour of lower-class people.

This chapter has shown how officialdom did not always draw a strict binary between prostitute and 'honest' working woman. The ease with which women were both inscribed onto, and removed from, the police lists of registered prostitutes in Arkhangel'sk suggested that the stigma of being a registered prostitute was less pronounced in this regional context. Women predominantly worked as prostitutes temporarily, and moved between the worlds of prostitution and 'honest work' unobstructed. The vocabulary used to describe work after prostitution helps to present the image that women actually perceived, or knew to make reference to for their own gain, prostitution as actual labour. Working as a prostitute appeared to be just another part of the fluid identity of the working woman, as she moved from prostitution into other occupations, or to other regions of the empire. The next chapter will shift the

focus onto wider urban communities' perspectives on regulation by concentrating on the state-licensed brothel.

3. Uneasy toleration: brothels and urban communities

In 1903, the Society for the Preservation of Public Health (*Obshchestvo Okhraneniia Narodnogo Zdraviia*) published a twelve-page report investigating the regulation of prostitution. The report directed its most zealous criticisms at state-licensed brothels, describing them as ‘revolting and inhumane establishments’ which worked to degrade women and allowed men to develop ‘bestial and abnormal [sexual] instincts’.¹ In late imperial Russia, legal brothels were mainly known as houses or dens of toleration (*doma/pritoni terpimosti*). Regulation policy gave brothel keepers a long list of rules intended to keep the ‘necessary evil’ of prostitution hidden within their establishments. Local authorities also implemented policies of zoning in an attempt to limit the visibility of lower-class brothels and prostitutes in the urban landscape. This chapter will explore the ways in which early twentieth-century urbanisation, local governance and corruption thwarted the execution of these policies of containment. Shifting the primary focus away from the revulsion of educated society, the chapter will examine city residents’ varying responses to brothels. I will use this method to assess the place of prostitution in lower-class urban society and argue that there was an uneasy toleration of brothels by urban communities.

There were two possible variations of legal brothel in late imperial Russia: houses of toleration (*doma terpimosti*) or houses of assignation (*dom svidanii*). Houses of toleration were managed by madams, who were in charge of

¹ GARF, f. 579, op. 1, d. 2490, l. 10.

organising prostitutes' medical examinations and keeping an accurate record of all women working at their establishments. Houses of assignation were more informal locations where registered prostitutes could rent rooms to meet with their clients.² Not all commercial sex was confined within the walls of state-licensed brothels. According to the 1909 empire-wide survey of prostitution, 46 per cent of registered prostitutes worked in brothels and 54 per cent worked independently.³ The latter predominantly worked in apartments, though they also sold sex in a wide variety of locations, including taverns, restaurants, furnished rooms, tea houses, and beer halls. Bathhouses (*bani*) had particularly strong connections with prostitution, both heterosexual and homosexual, legal and clandestine. The St Petersburg's police file on cases of prostitution in bathhouses in the 1880s are filled with protocols, logs and accusations by anonymous visitors.⁴ In his study *The Perversion of Sexual Feeling* (1885), venereologist Veniamin Tarnovskii claimed that three-quarters of male bathhouse attendants were willing to engage in same-sex relations for money.⁵ In both St Petersburg and Riga, the respective medical-police committees found plenty of women working as prostitutes in the city bathhouses.⁶

Brothels received ample attention in Russian literature, and various authors represented them as sites of debauchery and corruption. Even before the

² The Moscow Mayor sent a circular to all city law enforcement organs outlining the rules for houses/apartments of assignation on 19 October 1909. Women who used these premises had to have a valid medical ticket with a recent photograph. TsGIASPB, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 129.

³ According to this survey by the Main Administration for Municipal Affairs, there were 25,930 registered prostitutes across the empire in 1909. 13,965 worked independently and 11,965 in brothels. *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 58.

⁴ O. Petri, 'At the Bathhouse: Municipal Reform and the Bathing Commons in Late Imperial St Petersburg', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 51 (2016), p. 50.

⁵ Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, p. 28.

⁶ TsGIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 195; LVVA, f. 51, apr. 6, l. 338, lp. 9.

implementation of state regulation, Gogol' described brothels as 'foul places where vice begotten of spurious education and the terrible overcrowding of a big city takes up its abode'.⁷ After prostitution became legally tolerated, Vsevolod Krestovsky continued to represent brothels negatively, referring to state-licensed establishments as the 'gangrene of our society' in his four-volume popular series on the slums of St Petersburg in the 1860s.⁸ When the protagonist in Dostoevsky's 1864 novella *Notes from Underground* entered the brothel, he was struck by the darkness of the space and likened it to the 'damp, musty underground'.⁹ In Chekov's short story *A Nervous Breakdown* (1889) the gaudiness and 'bad taste' of the public establishments in Moscow disgusted the protagonist Vassilyev, a young law student.¹⁰ In Tolstoy's 1899 novel *Resurrection*, a brothel was the site of robbery and murder.¹¹ The most notorious literary representation of the state-licensed brothel was Aleksandr Kuprin's *The Pit (Iama)*, published in instalments between 1909 and 1915 and set in an unnamed southern city of the empire.¹² Although the work received a mixed reception from critics, it included Kuprin's vivid representations of the debauchery of brothel life. Its depictions of the corrupt relationship between

⁷ N. Gogol, *Nevskii Prospekt* (1835) quoted in G. Siegel, 'The Fallen Woman in Russian Nineteenth-Century Literature' in H. G. Lunt (ed). *Harvard Slavic Studies*, vol. 5 (Cambridge, MA, 1970), p. 81.

⁸ Quoted in Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 277.

⁹ Quoted in J. Andrew, *Narrative, Space and Gender in Russian Fiction: 1846-1903* (Amsterdam and New York, 2007), p. 137.

¹⁰ A. Chekov, *The Schoolmistress and Other Stories*, trans. C. Garnett (London, 1930), pp. 25-26.

¹¹ In Tolstoy's novel, former prostitute Katerina Maslova was falsely accused of poisoning a rich merchant at the brothel where she worked. L. Tolstoy, *Resurrection*, trans. L. Maude (Mineola and New York, 2004), pp. 29-30.

¹² A. Kuprin, *Iama: The Pit, A Novel in Three Parts*, trans. B. G. Guerney (North Charleston, 2013).

brothel keepers and law enforcement agencies sparked fervent discussion in the popular press.¹³

This chapter focuses on brothels precisely because they were such a contentious issue in late imperial Russia. Examining brothels helps to gauge the relationship between wider urban communities and those who worked in the prostitution industry, namely what urban residents were willing to tolerate within their localities. As elsewhere in this thesis, evidence is drawn from petitions written by lower-class people to their local authorities in order to explore how people conceptualised socioeconomic transformations and invoked official rhetoric to achieve their own ends.¹⁴ Their responses to brothels illuminate the moral geographies of sexuality in the late imperial period. Moral geographies concern 'assumptions about what behaviour belongs in which particular places' based on the classification of places as central, peripheral, public or private.¹⁵ In late imperial Russia, when acts transgressed the ascribed character of a particular place, they had the potential to bring about moral panic. The moral geographies of those 'above' and 'below' differed markedly. Local authorities were often uninterested in the impact of a particularly rowdy brothel on a community providing that it was situated in an area populated by lower-class people. Brothel madams had close ties with law enforcement agents who ignored misdemeanour in favour of bribes. On the other hand, certain urban residents regarded their local brothels as 'out of place' and emphasised their destructive impact within their communities. This

¹³ N. Luker, *Alexander Kuprin* (Boston, 1978), pp. 133-134.

¹⁴ A full discussion of lower-class petitioning practices can be found in chapter one.

¹⁵ Hubbard, *Cities and Sexualities*, p. 34.

chapter will attempt to navigate these conflicting moral geographies by examining official responses to complaints. It will explore how attempts to conceal and segregate brothels within urban space worked in practice and reveal the widening gulf between state ambitions and realities.

The brothel interior: clean, calm and concealed

The interior of brothels and their location within urban settlements was regulated by regional branches of the MVD. These local authorities were guided by empire-wide instructions, such as Circular 1611 of 1903. The rules attempted to construct the brothel as clean, calm and concealed. Hygiene was at the forefront of regulation policy, as madams were obliged to provide dry, bright and well-ventilated bedrooms for prostitutes, which could not be located in the cellars of buildings.¹⁶ According to regulations from Irkutsk, each prostitute had to have their own separate bedroom of no less than four cubic *sazheni* (8.5 cubic metres) in size, as well as a communal room for prostitutes and guests to sit in.¹⁷ The furnishings of prostitutes' rooms were to be well looked after, both to provide them with a pleasant living environment and to ensure a hygienic visit for guests.¹⁸ Madams had a responsibility to ensure that all spaces within their brothels were kept 'completely clean' at all times.¹⁹ In Moscow, madams were obliged to have a constant access to warm water in each bedroom so that prostitutes were able to douche following encounters with

¹⁶ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

¹⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400 l. 132.

¹⁸ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 132.

¹⁹ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 116, d. 290, l. 11.

clients.²⁰ Wall displays were designed to reinforce the sanitary aims of the brothel. Circular 1611 dictated that as soon as a client entered the establishment, his eyes should be drawn to a prominently displayed notice, which reminded him that ‘every visitor who wishes to verify the health of his chosen woman has the right to see her medical ticket’.²¹

Regulation policy also attempted to produce a harmonious and quiet atmosphere within brothels. The sale of alcohol and tobacco, the playing of music, card games, dice or chequers were all forbidden inside state-licensed establishments.²² In St Petersburg, the medical-police committee prohibited the hanging of paintings ‘depicting passion’ (*deistvuiushchikh na strasti*), arguing that they ‘enticed salacity’ (*sladostrastiia*).²³ These rules show how the brothel represented a contradictory space, perhaps indicative of the tension of legally tolerating prostitution within an officially Christian empire. Sexual desire and intercourse were permitted, but ideally within a dispassionate, clinical environment rather than a space of leisure. Portraits of the Tsar and his family, the chief defenders of the Orthodox Church, were forbidden in brothels.²⁴ To respect the sanctity of the Church, madams were not permitted to open their establishments on holy days and before the weekly Sunday liturgy.

Brothels were meant to be camouflaged in urban space as madams were forbidden from advertising what happened behind their closed doors. Houses

²⁰ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 113.

²¹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

²² TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

²³ GARF, f. 102, op. 55, d. 69, l. 33.

²⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

of assignation had to be run in a 'quiet and proper' manner, so that they would be indistinguishable from other nearby apartments.²⁵ Generally, houses of toleration were to be located at least 150 *sazheni* (320 metres) away from religious and educational institutions.²⁶ Brothels were forbidden from opening out onto the street like other commercial establishments and required concealed entrances. Windows facing the street were to be covered with curtains in the daytime and shutters in the evening and night. The ideal brothel was meant to contain and hide prostitution. In Ekaterinoslav, for example, the Provincial Governor praised one establishment that completely concealed the fact that it was a site of commercial sex, as it was 'surrounded by large stone walls with the gate and wicket always closed in the daytime' and 'women [did] not exit onto the street'.²⁷ Through regulation, the tsarist authorities sought to limit the visibility of prostitution. The authorities were driven by the need to appease urban residents whose localities were home to state-licensed establishments, and to prevent the moral contamination of young people. Mary Gibson contends that Italian state-licensed brothels functioned in a similar way, as their opaque walls and sealed windows served to 'make vice invisible', hiding both sin and disease.²⁸

Attempts to produce a sanitary environment in brothels were unsuccessful. In 1889, Dubrovskii's empire-wide survey of prostitution revealed that fifty prostitutes in third-class establishments did not have their own bedrooms.²⁹ In

²⁵ TsGIA SPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

²⁶ TsGIA SPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

²⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 5.

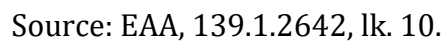
²⁸ Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy*, p. 32.

²⁹ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 4-5.

the medical-police survey of city brothels in Revel' on 19 August 1903, one establishment had thirteen women working in seven rooms, and the bedrooms of four brothels in the city were just a tiny two cubic *sazheni* (4.1 cubic metres).³⁰ The floorplan of the brothel 'Green Island' (*Zelenyi Ostrov*) in Narva (figure 7) includes two violations of regulation policy, as there were just eight bedrooms for ten registered women and the brothel had an entrance on Piatnaia Street.³¹ These cases suggest that, despite the rules, prostitutes were frequently forced to share working spaces and or work in cramped conditions.

³⁰ EAA, 31.2.4216, lk. 3.

³¹ EAA, 139.1.2642, lk. 12.



Even if a prostitute had a separate bedroom, this did not necessarily guarantee a clean working environment. In the Mitav district of Riga in July 1900, a local police officer reported that in two local brothels the bedsheets were 'filthy' and were even 'contaminated with human flesh' (*chelovecheskaia plot'*).³² In Tver' in 1910, the medical-police committee closed several brothels on Burakova Street as they had an air content of just one cubic *sazhen* (rather than the regulation four cubic *sazheni*), rotten floorboards, no ventilation and tiny windows.³³ In February 1915, the Irkutsk medical-police began inspecting the premises of each person who petitioned to renew their brothel license. They found that one brothel had no emergency exit in case of fire, another a 'dark bedroom with no windows' and a further two an 'extreme lack of cubic air'.³⁴

The ideal sombre atmosphere of the brothel was little more than a mirage. The department of police in Ufa province received reports of continuous drunken disturbances in city brothels. One particularly violent incident involved a client assaulting a police officer and bending his sword in half.³⁵ In another police case in the town of Stary Oskol in Kursk province, local agents accused the brothel keeper Anastasia Gruzintseva of selling alcohol, exploiting her customers and harbouring stolen goods.³⁶ Urban residents across the empire petitioned their local authorities begging for the closure of nearby unruly brothels. In Mariupol', residents of the central Kharlampievskaiia Street complained that brothels in the city were opened all throughout Lenten Holy Week, as well as on the feast

³² LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 124.

³³ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, ll. 90-93.

³⁴ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 37.

³⁵ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 13ch5, l. 5.

³⁶ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 3.

days of the Beheading of John the Baptist (11 September) and the Exaltation of the Cross (27 September).³⁷ In Tarashcha, Kiev province, local homeowners branded one establishment a site of ‘constant debauchery’ in their petitions, complaining that brawls, theft and even arson occurred there on a nightly basis.³⁸

The principles of concealment worked much better in theory than in practice, as brothel activities often spilled out into residential spaces. Residents of Tarashcha bemoaned the local brothels where naked prostitutes were often visible through the windows.³⁹ In Libava, three homeowners identified this practice as a common means to attract customers into public establishments.⁴⁰ The visual contamination of streets as a result of prostitutes’ nudity was not the only concern of city residents, as several petitions sent to the MVD lamented the aural pollution of localities. In Elisavetgrad (Kropyvnyiyskyi), one resident complained that the external door of a brothel was constantly open, so ‘music, singing and dancing [were] all clearly audible’ on the surrounding streets.⁴¹ Another disgruntled inhabitant of St Petersburg condemned the sound of the ‘accordions droning from the windows’ and the ‘dirty songs’ of drunken visitors to a nearby brothel.⁴²

In September 1907, one Odessa resident petitioned the authorities explicitly on the theme of contamination. Addressing the Odessa Mayor, the writer complained about the ‘Saratov’ brothel-hotel (*priton razvrata-gostinitsa*),

³⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 15.

³⁸ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch8, l. 1.

³⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch8, l. 1.

⁴⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 54, d. 14ch42, l. 12.

⁴¹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch7, l. 1.

⁴² GARF, f. 102, op. 62, d. 39ch3, l. 1.

allegedly a site of visible 'orgies, drunkenness...and scandals'.⁴³ The petitioner claimed that 'Saratov' was extremely hazardous for public health. The visibility of prostitution outside the establishment not only contaminated the morality of young children, but the brothel was located in the yard of the city's bazaar, a place that 'supplied most of the city with their daily meat and other essentials'.⁴⁴ Towards the end of the nineteenth century, meat was seen by Russian medical professionals and their western counterparts as 'the main source of physical strength and work productivity'.⁴⁵ Public abattoirs were constructed on the outskirts of major cities in the 1880s and 1890s, both to meet the increased demand for meat from rising urban populations and as part of the reordering of urban space to conceal and remove death, disease, pollution and foul odours, in order to produce the 'ordered and "civil" city'.⁴⁶ State-licensed brothels were a key mechanism of this reproduction of space as they were meant to conceal venereal diseases and so-called 'debauchery'. For the Odessa petitioner, the close proximity of the 'Saratov' to the city's bazaar contaminated morality, ruined produce and subverted the principles of the modern, hygienic city. Evidently this petition struck a chord with local law enforcement, and the Mayor ordered the closure of the 'Saratov' for one month beginning in October 1907.⁴⁷

Brothel madams were often able to violate rules governing the activities inside their establishments because regulation granted local authorities significant

⁴³ TsDIAK, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 132, ark. 22.

⁴⁴ TsDIAK, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 132, ark. 22.

⁴⁵ Mazanik, 'Sanitation, Urban Environment', p. 126.

⁴⁶ Mazanik, 'Sanitation, Urban Environment', p. 128.

⁴⁷ TsDIAK, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 132, ark. 14.

autonomy in the policing of prostitution. Local police and medical-police committees had the power to open and close down establishments and arbitrarily levy fines from madams, which left the business of brothel keeping vulnerable to corruption. Medical-police agents earned a low salary of thirty roubles per month, which made them reliant on bribes and cash gifts to supplement their income.⁴⁸ An example of how this corruption worked in practice can be found in the following case from Elisavetgrad. In September 1915, city resident David Iakerevich accused the brothel keepers Etlei and Ester Kunin of illegally selling hard liquor (*krepkii napitki*) at their establishment.⁴⁹ The sale of alcohol had been illegal in brothels since the beginning of regulation in the mid-nineteenth century and was reinforced by Circular 1611. Additionally, in a bid to improve wartime efficiency, the Tsar had ordered the confinement of the sale of vodka and other spirits to restaurants from autumn 1914.⁵⁰ Iakerevich alleged that when he brought this flouting of regulation to the attention of his local authorities, they told him to ‘clear off’ (*ubiraisia von*) and not to ‘fool around’ (*ne moroch’ mne golovu*).⁵¹ The Police Chief even told Iakerevich that the sale of alcohol was permitted in brothels, ignoring both Circular 1611 and the Tsar’s order. Police indifference to the rules did not go unnoticed in other regions. In June 1915 in Petrograd, the Army’s Chief of Staff of the Northwestern Front issued an order condemning the city’s police for

⁴⁸ Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 35.

⁴⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 73, d. 7ch240, l. 1.

⁵⁰ P. Herlihy, *The Alcoholic Empire: Vodka and Politics in Late Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 2002), p. 65.

⁵¹ GARF, f. 102, op. 73, d. 7ch240, l. 2.

concealing establishments which sold spirits, such as the Chinese liquor *baijiu* (in Russian *khanzhki*).⁵²

Evidence from MVD files suggests that corruption filtered down the ranks of law enforcement. Brothel keepers often paid low-level police officers with a cut of their earnings so that they would turn a blind eye to illegal activities. In 1910 in the city of Nevel', Vitebsk province, the medical-police committee reported on the case of the brothel keeper Gita Sadkina, who was granted permission to open her establishment after bribing several police officers.⁵³ Between 1904 and 1909, there were allegedly twenty-four different 'offences' committed within Sadkina's brothel, yet it remained open, which indicates that she was regularly paying the local police to avoid the withdrawal of her license.⁵⁴ In Riga in 1911, the owner of the Hotel 'Russia' petitioned the Police Chief to complain about the harassment that they were experiencing at the hands of medical-police agents, who were potentially looking for a bribe. The proprietor complained that 'the agents of the committee started visiting my hotel without any reason and promised to continue doing so', making the establishment 'unattractive for visitors' and causing financial loss.⁵⁵

Homeowners who rented out their premises as brothels complained about the seemingly arbitrary application of regulation policy by local law enforcement. One homeowner in Irkutsk petitioned the central MVD in St Petersburg on 15 January 1915 to criticise the Irkutsk Governor General's attitude to regulation.

⁵² GARF, f. 102, op. 73, d. 13(1), l. 3.

⁵³ GARF, f. 102, op. 67, d. 39ch3, l. 3.

⁵⁴ GARF, f. 102, op. 67, d. 39ch3, l. 3.

⁵⁵ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23539, lp. 257.

Since the arrival of the Governor General, 'brothels are subject to all kinds of constraints', he complained; 'they are [even] forbidden from having a piano' and are closed down for the slightest violation.⁵⁶ He believed that the local police were on a moral crusade and wanted to close down all brothels in the city. The mass closure of brothels occurred in certain cities of the empire from the early 1900s. Local authorities were under increasing pressure to close state-licensed establishments from educated elites, charitable organisations and government bureaucrats, who emphasised brothels' degenerative impact on the public's physical and moral health.⁵⁷ As the MVD employed a decentralised approach to regulation, central government allowed regional authorities to revoke brothel licences *en masse*. In 1905, the Iaroslavl' Police Chief closed all brothels and replaced them with houses of assignation.⁵⁸ In Kiev (Kyiv), the Governor gradually shut down the city's brothels between 1913 and 1916.⁵⁹ An article in the journal *Gorodskoe Delo* (*City Affairs*) published in May 1914 referred to the closure of brothels across Russian cities as 'contagious', as regional authorities in Omsk, Ekaterinoslav and Tomsk had all decided to shut down countless houses of toleration in recent years.⁶⁰ When two Arkhangel'sk brothels were closed in 1916, a local journalist remarked that this followed a trend that began 'several years ago' in Moscow, where brothels were closed around Kuznetskii Most, Tverskaia, Sretenka and Arbatskaia.⁶¹ Regulation

⁵⁶ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 4.

⁵⁷ Bernstein discusses the move to abolish brothel licensing in detail, Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 175-188.

⁵⁸ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 61; 'Kur'eznoe Khodataistvo Politseimeistera', *Odesskii Listok*, 3 July 1912.

⁵⁹ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 142.

⁶⁰ 'Bor'ba s Prostitutsiei', *Gorodskoe Delo*, 10 (15 May 1914), pp. 650-651.

⁶¹ 'Zakrytie Domov Terpimosti', *Arkhangel'sk*, 27 September 1916.

policy granted local authorities significant autonomy, which allowed them to withdraw brothel licences according to their own whims and desires.

One of the most serious accusations of corruption came to light in the capital. A former key administrator of the St Petersburg medical-police committee, Aleksandr Pervushin, was accused of accepting at least ten different bribes from brothel madams between September 1901 and December 1908. The evidence against Pervushin revealed that bribery was an integral part of the work of a medical-police agent. Pervushin allegedly used the threat of closure to demand money from countless brothel keepers across the city, and many people paid him 'out of fear of possible harassment'.⁶² Other madams paid him sums of between fifty and 100 roubles so they could violate regulation policy and open on holy days, such as Christmas and St Paul's Day. Two Jewish brothel keepers, who were expelled to the Pale of Settlement by the St Petersburg District Court, paid Pervushin to allow them to remain in the city and keep their establishments open.⁶³

The popular press used the Pervushin case as evidence for the failure of the local authorities in adequately regulating prostitution. One newspaper remarked that Pervushin had 'enjoyed the trust of his superiors' and that the upcoming trial would fully expose the 'secrets of the terrible reality of regulated prostitution'.⁶⁴ This article also produced a scathing criticism of Pervushin's character and insinuated that he was also sexually involved with the women he exploited. His extortion was described as an 'orgy' and he as a 'sultan [who]

⁶² GARF, f. 102, op. 107, d. 229, l. 7.

⁶³ GARF, f. 102, op. 107, d. 229, l. 8.

⁶⁴ Tainia Nadzora za Razvratom', *Peterburgskaia Gazeta*, 31 May 1913.

chose favourites' who then 'enjoyed the patronage of a member of the managing committee'.⁶⁵ Pervushin's blatant corruption indicated to philanthropic organisations and the wider public that regulation was inherently corrupt and that the system should be abolished. At this point, even the medical branch of the MVD admitted that the system provided ample scope for abuse.⁶⁶ Pervushin's behaviour would not have been out of place within other official institutions, as corruption was a common feature throughout the late imperial civil service. Junior officials' poor wages and the 'absence of a clear framework of legality' encouraged many to take bribes.⁶⁷

Attempts to produce clean, calm and concealed sites of commercial sex were largely unsuccessful. The local governance of regulation, coupled with the low salaries of medical-police agents and a more generally dismissive attitude to prostitutes' welfare, meant that the business of policing prostitution was open to corruption. Brothel madams were able to bend the rules as long as they were in a financial position to pay regular bribes. Rules governing brothel activities provide another example of the imperial state's endorsement of extremely strict policies that officials were unable, or unwilling, to enforce.

Commercial sex in city space

The imperial state attempted to limit the visibility of lower-class sexuality on the urban landscape through the practices of brothel ranking and zoning.

⁶⁵ 'Tainia Nadzora'.

⁶⁶ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 261.

⁶⁷ Waldron, *Governing Tsarist Russia*, p. 85.

Brothels had originally been built on the outskirts of towns and cities, but rapid urbanisation and the expansion of urban centres meant that public establishments came to be located within residential districts and town centres. Residents increasingly petitioned the MVD asking for establishments to be closed down or relocated and, when refused, hurled accusations of corruption at their local medical-police. As already established, local authorities wielded immense power over the everyday functions of city brothels. One significant manifestation of this was their ability to rank brothels in a three-rung hierarchy, based on the amount of tax that a brothel keeper paid to their local police or medical-police committee. Paying higher taxes allowed brothel madams to keep their establishments open for longer and charge higher prices for sexual intercourse. In the first empire-wide survey of prostitution in 1889, 21 per cent of state-licensed brothels were categorised as first class, 34 per cent as second class, and 45 per cent as third class.⁶⁸ In 1899, 57 per cent of St Petersburg brothels were ranked at the 'lowest level' (*nizhnii razriad*) and just 12 per cent were first class.⁶⁹

The impact of these brothel classifications varied from place to place. In Riga, brothel madams of first-class establishments paid higher dues to the medical-police committee of five roubles per prostitute each month, compared with three roubles in second-class brothels and just two roubles for third-class.⁷⁰ When petitioning for a license, prospective Riga brothel madams included the intended class of the brothel, which suggests that the ranking system was well

⁶⁸ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 4-5.

⁶⁹ GARF, f. 564, op. 1, d. 4287, l. 4.

⁷⁰ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23469, lp. 6.

established.⁷¹ A brothel's class dictated the cost per visit and prices varied widely from province to province. In 1889, a visit to a first-class brothel cost two roubles on average in Iaroslavl' province, but three roubles in Estliand province.⁷² In Smolensk in 1912, there were one rouble (*rublevye*), fifty kopeck and thirty-kopeck establishments.⁷³ Brothel rankings had financial implications for brothel madams working under other national systems of regulation. In late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Italy, the state could fix the price of a brothel visit under the *regolamentazione* system and even dictate the percentage of profit that brothel keepers were able to take.⁷⁴ Similarly, in early twentieth-century China, different classes of brothel were required to pay varying levels of tax to the city authorities.⁷⁵

In Russia, local authorities had the power to downgrade establishments, which had the potential to significantly decrease the earnings of both brothel madams and prostitutes. In 1905, St Petersburg's medical-police committee downgraded one brothel from 'second rank' (*vtoroi razriad*) to third, which meant that the brothel keeper had to decrease the price charged for sexual intercourse and reduce the admission hours.⁷⁶ Restricted opening hours for the

⁷¹ For example, two German woman, Ioganna Beier and Zheni Baiser petitioned the medical-police committee asking if they could open second-class establishments in January and August 1911. LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23539, lp. 26; 557.

⁷² The cost of a visit to a second-class brothel was one rouble on average in Iaroslavl' and two roubles in Estliand. Visits to third-class establishments cost between thirty and fifty kopecks in Iaroslavl' and between fifty kopecks and one rouble in Estliand. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 4-5.

⁷³ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 52

⁷⁴ This was legally sanctioned under the Cavour Law of 1860, which implemented the state regulation of prostitution. Italian regulation functioned similarly to Russian *nadzor*, as prostitutes were required to register with the police and attend biweekly medical examinations. This particular law remained in place until 1888, and the regulation of prostitution was installed once again in 1891 until 1958. See Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy*, p. 31.

⁷⁵ Remick, *Regulating Prostitution in China*, p. 113.

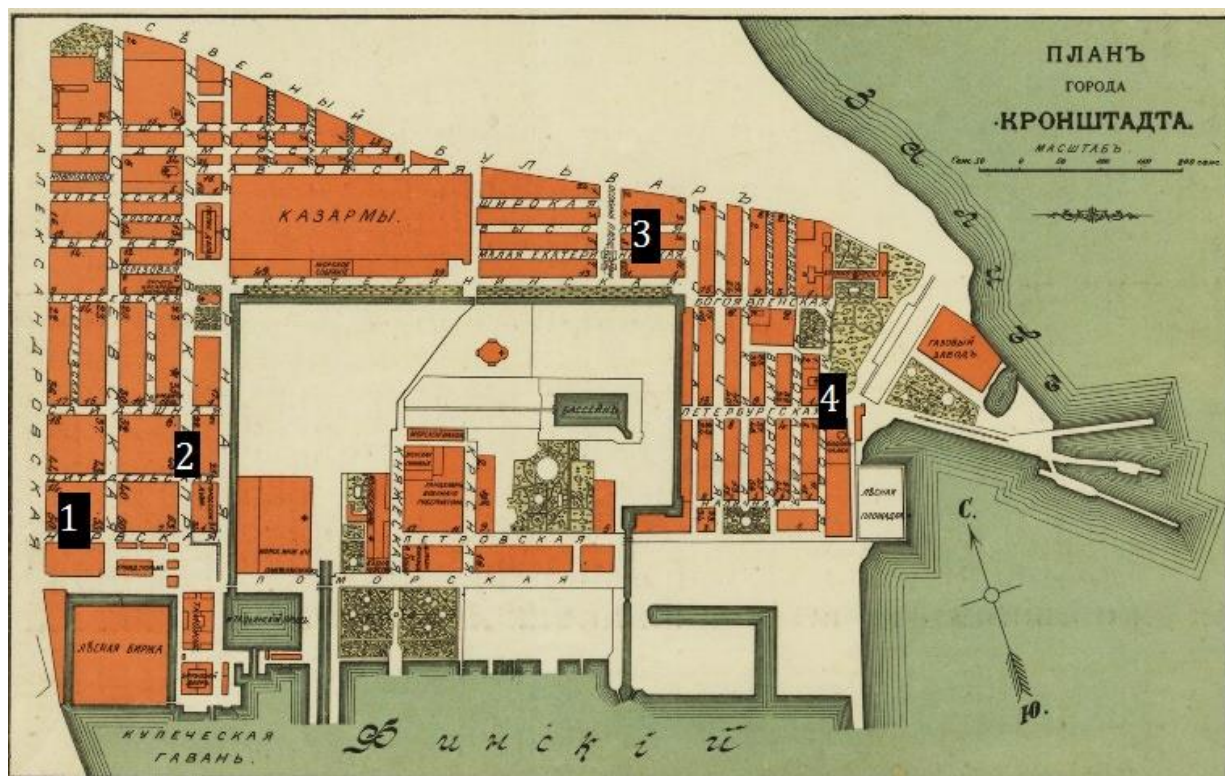
⁷⁶ GARF, f. 102, op. 62, d. 39ch3, l. 10.

lowest class of client demonstrates how city authorities attempted to limit the visibility of lower-class sexuality. Higher-ranking brothels also housed healthier working women. In 1910, 13.6 per cent of all St Petersburg prostitutes in the first rank of brothel were infected with a venereal disease, compared with 47 per cent in the second and third levels.⁷⁷ We can speculate that as the cost of a visit to a higher-ranking establishment was greater, madams in these brothels may have been more willing to send their venereally diseased prostitutes to hospital and remove them from circulation. In lower-class brothels, the financial incentive of keeping *all* prostitutes working regardless of their state of health may have overridden medical concerns.

Local authorities used brothel classifications to construct urban space along the lines of social class. In June 1906, Kronshtadt's Sanitary and Construction Commission announced that they would allow brothels to be opened only within five specific locales across the garrison town. Their recommendations for the location of the brothels can be seen in the figure below.

⁷⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 58

Figure 8: Permitted locations for brothels in Kronshtadt, 1906



1) On Narvskaiia Street, for merchants working at the port and for foreigners.

2) Between Saidashnii and Narvskii Streets, for the intelligentsia.

3) On Shirokaia, Vysokaia and Shkhiperskaia Streets, for the lower ranks of the Navy.

4) On Il'meninovii Street, for the lower ranks of the Navy and craftsmen from the port

5) (Not pictured on the map) Outside of the city towards the sea, for the lower ranks of troops who comprised the permanent Kronshtadt garrison.

Source: RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 165. Map of Kronshtadt in 1913 available via the Russian National Library's online exhibition: 'Kronshtadt: 300 let so Dnia Osnovaniia' <http://expositions.nlr.ru/Kronstadt/>, accessed 29.4.2016.

The Kronshtadt authorities attempted to enforce zoning by situating brothels close to the working locations of specific social groups. For example, brothels for merchants were to be near the Merchant's Harbour (*Kupenchenskaia gavan*), while the lower ranks of the Navy and port workers' establishments were to be in close proximity to the barracks and factories. All applications for the opening of brothels had to be approved by local law enforcement, so it is possible that the Kronshtadt authorities attempted to push the work and leisure spaces of lower-class people to the outskirts of the garrison town. Brothels could also be classified along racial lines and reflect the ethnic prejudices of local law enforcement. For example, in Vladivostok in 1910 the medical-police committee produced a report comparing the medical facilities available in brothels categorised as 'Japanese' versus other 'Russian' brothels.⁷⁸ Similar racialised classifications of sites of commercial sex existed in both Hong Kong and Nigeria under the British Empire, and during the occupation of the Rhineland by French colonial troops in the 1920s.⁷⁹ In all of these contexts, state authorities not only regulated sexuality, but also ordered urban space based on their own definitions of, and assumptions about, the class and race of prostitutes and their clientele.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1811, l. 7.

⁷⁹ P. Howell, 'Prostitution and Racialised Sexuality: the Regulation of Prostitution in Britain and the British Empire before the Contagious Diseases Acts', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 18 (2000), pp. 321-339; J. Roos, 'Women's Rights, Nationalist Anxiety and the "Moral" Agenda in the Early Weimar Republic: Revisiting the "Black Horror" Campaign Against France's African Occupation Troops', *Central European History*, 42 (2009), pp. 473-508. Saheed Aderinto asserts that in Nigeria, most African clients of prostitutes visited brothels, whereas European clients hosted prostitutes in first-class hotels, see S. Aderinto, *When Sex Threatened the State: Illicit Sexuality, Nationalism and Politics in Colonial Nigeria, 1900-1958* (Urbana, 2015), p. 64.

⁸⁰ Hubbard, *Cities and Sexualities*, p. 48.

Kronshtadt's spatial segregation on the grounds of class does not fit with observations of other Russian urban spaces, which raises questions about the gulf between policy and practice. Historians have indicated that late imperial Russian city space was far less divided into class-based districts than other urban settlements of a similar size across Europe and North America. In late nineteenth-century St Petersburg, the urban poor lived 'literally everywhere' and population segregation based on class was limited.⁸¹ In Moscow, all city districts housed lower-class people, who accounted for 50 per cent of residents even around Tverskaia and the Kremlin, areas with the highest land and apartment prices.⁸² Instead of by district, class-based segregation was concealed within buildings. Peasant labourers lived in the cheapest parts of the building to rent, the cellars, and the social class of residents rose by floor.⁸³ As brothels were often located within apartment buildings, they were 'part and parcel of working-class housing' across urban centres.⁸⁴ Like lower-class people, second and third-class brothels were everywhere in larger cities. The St Petersburg medical-committee's annual report from 1899 revealed that there were commercial sex establishments in all nine districts of the city.⁸⁵ In Riga, the medical-police committee remarked that there were brothels on almost every street.⁸⁶

The location of brothels within towns and cities was a contentious issue for both regional authorities and urban residents. In 1902 in Kishinev, local

⁸¹ Bater, 'Between Old and New', pp. 71-73.

⁸² Mazanik, 'The City as a Transient Home', pp. 58-60.

⁸³ Bradley, *Muzhik and Muscovite*, pp. 243-235.

⁸⁴ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 153.

⁸⁵ The largest concentration was in the Aleksandr-Nevskii and Petersburg districts. GARF, f. 564, op. 1, d. 4287, l. 4.

⁸⁶ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23477, lp. 4.

residents petitioned the MVD about the central location of brothels around Iakovlevskii square. The Kishinev department of police produced a map which marked exactly where the twelve brothels were located. According to the police map, some of the brothels were not situated the appropriate 320 metres away from educational and religious institutions. One establishment was just eighty-seven metres from the Jewish Society of Clerks, and several others were not the 'full 150 *sazheni*' away from Kharlampii, Georgii and Vozneseniia (Ascension) churches.⁸⁷

In their petition, the thirty-five Kishinev residents utilised state discourses in an attempt to achieve their own ends. They acknowledged that brothels were a 'necessary evil', but requested that the authorities force brothel keepers to move their premises to more peripheral locations on the city landscape.⁸⁸ Kishinev's brothels were situated close to city churches and this apparently contaminated the Christian morality of urban residents, particularly young people. Because so many brothels were concentrated in one area, they claimed that the 'lewdness' of these establishments, the 'playing of the piano, singing of ugly songs, dancing and drinking', began to spill out and pollute the surrounding streets, violating the principles of containment outlined in Circular 1611.⁸⁹ The petitioners argued that this left urban residents powerless and vulnerable to moral decay, as children, teenagers and families were forced to become 'involuntary witnesses to the ugly scenes'.⁹⁰ The visibility of these establishments also allegedly posed a threat to religious conviction. The

⁸⁷ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch5, l. 10.

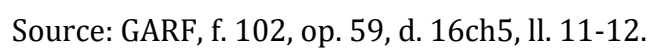
⁸⁸ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch5, l. 1.

⁸⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch5, l. 2.

⁹⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch5, l. 2.

residents reported that the area around the square was inhabited by a 'vast and dense, mostly Christian population' and the proximity of brothels to churches would tempt away 'passers-by [who were] heading into the divine service' (*bozhestvennomy sluzheniiu*).⁹¹ They implored Kishinev City Duma and the Governor of Bessarabia province to move the brothels from the centre to somewhere less 'harmful' to public morality.

⁹¹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch5, ll. 2-3.



The Governor of Bessarabia rejected the residents' petition, arguing that moving the brothels to the outskirts of the city would have a negative impact on property prices there.⁹² He argued that as the establishments were not located on the main street leading to the churches, they did not violate the MVD's regulations.⁹³ We can speculate that there were two potential explanations for the Governor's response; either he endeavoured to avoid the administrative hassle of enforcing relocation, or the brothel madams may have been paying a bribe to keep their establishments in the centre. In both instances, the Governor's response reflects a disparity between public concerns about moral contamination and the authorities' governance of urban space, which was driven by either indifference or financial profit.

A case from Riga in 1900 further illuminates the financial dependence of local administrations on brothel keepers. In October, a group of Riga homeowners unsuccessfully petitioned the medical-police committee to move brothels away from Kliucheva Street in the city centre.⁹⁴ When the Riga medical-police committee wrote to the Lifliand Governor to justify their rejection of the petition, they reminded him that 'brothel madams are heavily taxed which benefits the treasury and city, so they should be allowed to remain'.⁹⁵ The committee's response was also saturated in class prejudices. Moving brothels to the city outskirts where the 'poor working people live' was apparently dangerous because lower-class people left their children 'without supervision',

⁹² GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch5, l. 8.

⁹³ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch5, l. 11. Brothels could be closer than the regulation 320 metres from churches or schools provided that their entrances were not on the same street as these institutions. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 27.

⁹⁴ This street is now Avotu iela in central Riga.

⁹⁵ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23477, lp. 4.

hence they were more vulnerable to moral contamination than the ‘wealthy intelligentsia’ in the city centre.⁹⁶ In 1907, when Riga’s medical-police committee made a list of all the establishments in which prostitution was happening in the city, nine were located on Korolevskaia Street: one hotel, one furnished room and seven so-called ‘dens’ (*pritory*).⁹⁷ This street was right in the very centre of the city, just 190 metres from St Peter’s Church and 210 metres from Ivanskaia Church. In Riga, it may have been financially advantageous for the local authorities to keep brothels right in the centre, despite protests from local communities.

The grievances of city residents also came second to the financial concerns of the local authorities in Tambov province. In 1901, a peasant man, Akim Konsitkin, petitioned the MVD on behalf of a society of local peasants. He claimed that Aleksandra Poliakova’s brothel had been built illegally on so-called ‘peasant land’ in the Iamskii suburb of Kozlov town (Michurinsk).⁹⁸ Poliakova’s brothel apparently overlooked the town square, and so was in a central urban location. The Tambov Provincial Governor rejected the petition on the grounds that brothels had been located near the square for a long time.⁹⁹ The department of police supported this decision, and argued that although the brothel was located in the peasants’ Iamskii suburb, ‘it was not possible to precisely establish the borders of Kozlov town’; hence, the urban boundary was malleable and to be decided only by the authorities based on what was

⁹⁶ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23477, lp. 4.

⁹⁷ The street is now called Riharda Vāgnera iela and is located in the heart of Riga’s old town. LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23575, lp. 479-480.

⁹⁸ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 13ch3, ll. 1-2.

⁹⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 13ch3, l. 6.

economically convenient.¹⁰⁰ Poliakova's brothel stayed put, despite repeated protests from the local community.

In 1910, the Astrakhan' Governor constructed the urban space of Astrakhan' along class lines. The Governor explained that while the fifth district of Astrakhan' had been an acceptable location for brothels a few years previously, the 'boundaries of city had expanded' and the presence of the houses of toleration in the now central district had provoked protest from local residents.¹⁰¹ He decided to close down all of the brothels on two streets in the district and gave madams just two weeks to move their establishments. Despite this, the Governor acknowledged that although there had been an equal number of complaints from residents in the first district, the brothels there would remain because he feared the 'dismal consequences' that mass closure could bring, namely a rise in venereal diseases.¹⁰² At the end of the letter, the Governor remarked that the first district was home to the 'poorest working people'. This suggests that the Governor's reluctance to close the brothels in this area may have been driven by the fear of lower-class sexuality spilling out into other areas of the city, as residents in the first district would be forced to visit alternative houses of toleration. Additionally, as the 'poorest' city residents, those who petitioned for brothel closures in the first district had less political clout given their low social status, so the Governor may have been more comfortable ignoring their complaints.

¹⁰⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 13ch3, l. 12.

¹⁰¹ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 20.

¹⁰² RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 21.

The authorities' perception of the malleability of city space was also evident in a St Petersburg case from 1902. A noblewoman, Mariia Stepanova, petitioned the local department of police four times requesting permission to open a brothel within her house on Malyi Prospekt on Vasil'evskii Island.¹⁰³ In February 1900, the capital's medical-police committee had vowed to move brothels away from the city centre to limit the influence of the 'evil' of prostitution on the 'morality and health of ordinary people'.¹⁰⁴ While Vasil'evskii Island had previously been an acceptable location on the city's outskirts, late nineteenth-century urbanisation meant that medical-police now categorised this area as central St Petersburg. 'Brothels are not tolerated in the city centre', they wrote, 'most of the houses are occupied by families, and there is a horse-drawn railway and quite a few city schools nearby'.¹⁰⁵ Urbanisation posed significant challenges to the place of the brothel in Russian urban society. As urban settlements grew, brothels became more visible on the city landscape. The St Petersburg medical-police now recommended that future brothels be built only in the Vyborg region, a notorious lower-class industrial area located around five kilometres north of the city centre. However, the department of police and head of St Petersburg court overrode the medical-police's decision and granted Stepanova permission to open her establishment in December 1902, as there were apparently already two brothels located on Malyi Prospekt.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, city authorities were willing to bend the principle of

¹⁰³ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch4, l. 1, 3, 11, 15.

¹⁰⁴ GARF, f. 102, op. 55, d. 69, l. 33.

¹⁰⁵ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch4, l. 9.

¹⁰⁶ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch4, l. 19.

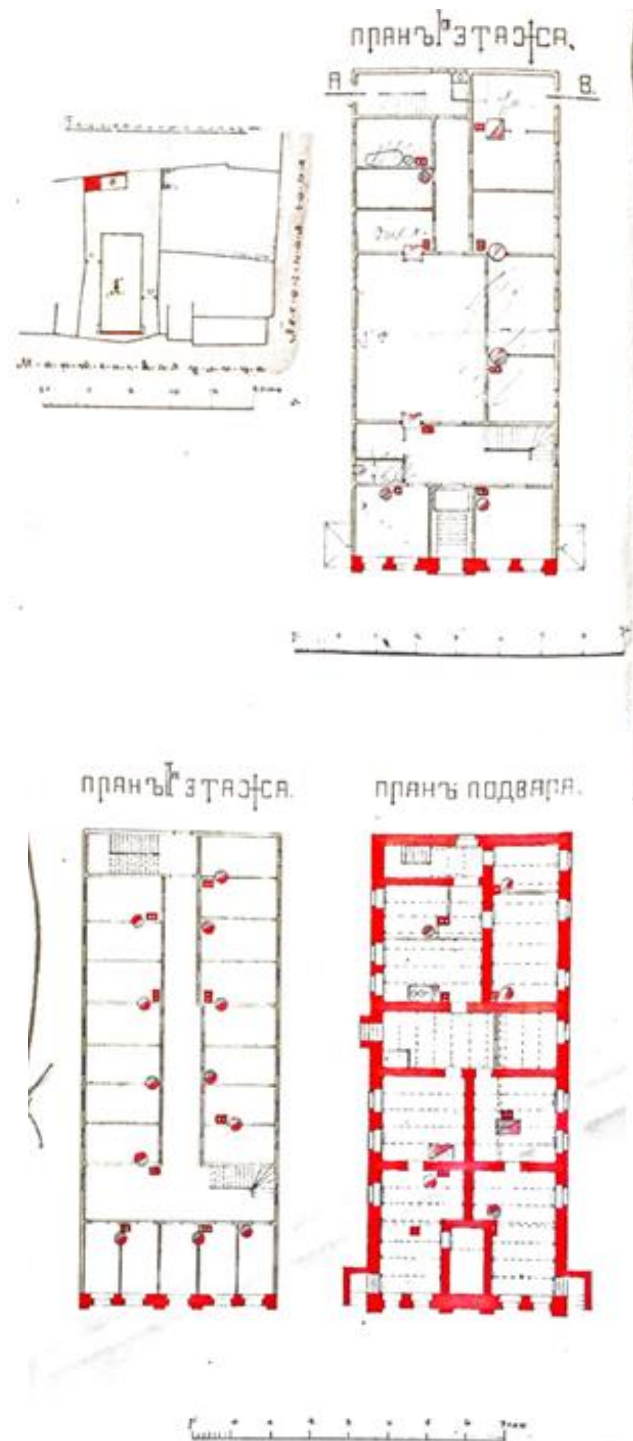
keeping the brothel segregated and contained when motivated by the prospect of the financial gain derived from brothel licences.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that all urban residents reacted to the presence of brothels in their localities in the same way, as some people accepted their existence without protest. In 1909, Semen Katz petitioned the authorities in order to be able to build a wooden two-storey building to house a brothel at number 8 on Martenskaia Street in Revel', a popular location for commercial sex in the city.¹⁰⁷ The city police department informed Katz that he needed to submit a detailed plan of his project for approval and obtain an engineer's certificate before his project could go ahead.¹⁰⁸ The proposal included detailed plans of the two floors, as well as a map of the entrances and image of the façade.

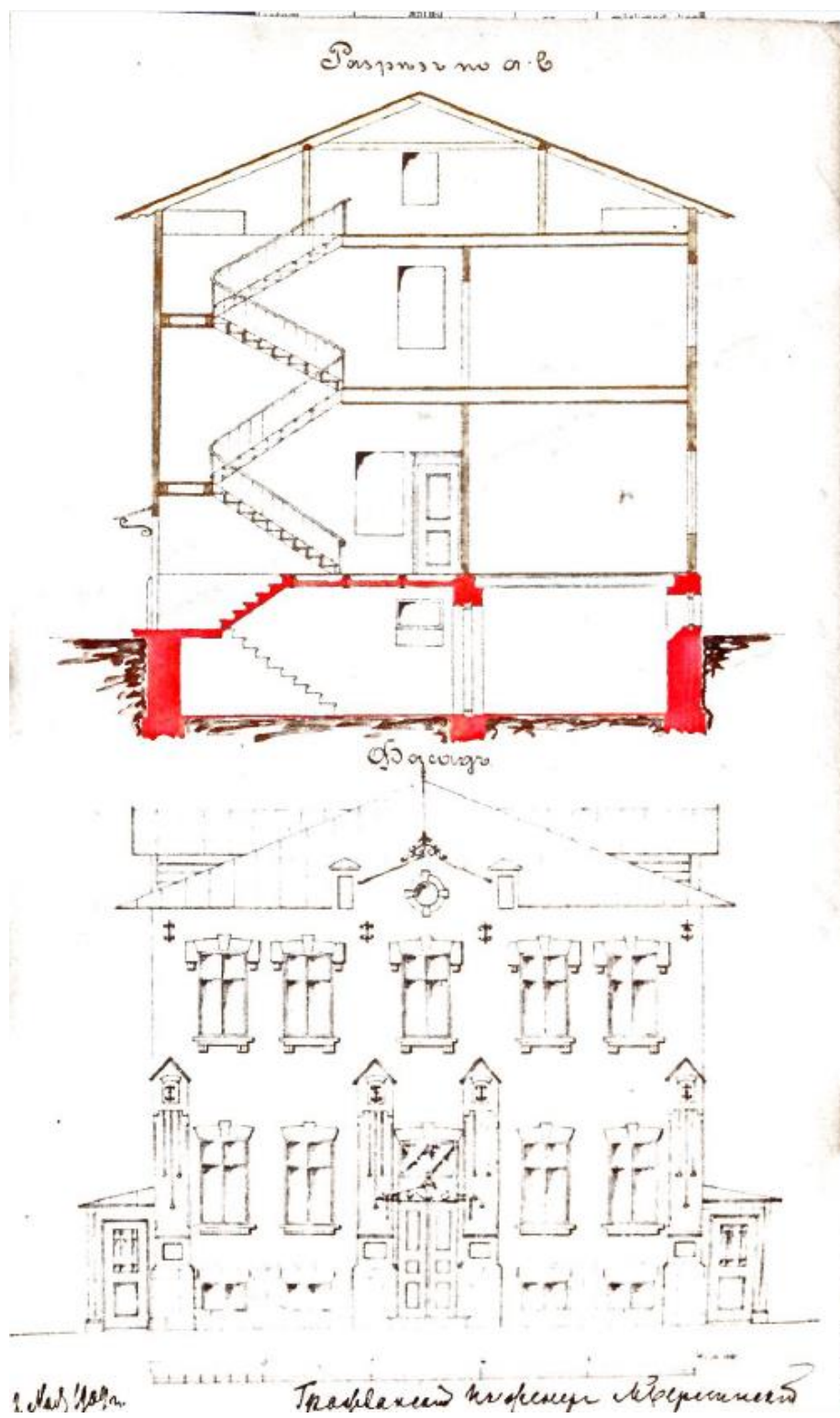
¹⁰⁷ This street is now Mardi tänav in Tallinn. The majority of wooden brothel buildings were destroyed during the aerial bombardment of the city by the Red Air Force in 1944. The original brothel building at number 3 is still standing today, and ironically now houses an AIDs information and support centre. J. Tamm (ed). *Entsüklopeedia Tallinn 1. A-M* (Tallinn, 2004), pp. 195-196. With thanks to Teele Saar of the Estonian Maritime Museum for sharing her Tallinn expertise and providing me with the reference.

¹⁰⁸ EAA, 33.3.2680, lk. 2, 3, 4.

Figure 10: Plans of Katz's proposed two-floor wooden building to house a brothel, 1909



Source: EAA, 33.3.2680 lk. 10.



Another step in this process was obtaining the consent of neighbouring residents, which was vital for the construction of new brothels.¹⁰⁹ Luckily for Katz, the residents of houses at 4, 5 and 16 on Martenskaia Street sent a letter of approval to the Revel' Chief of Police and construction went ahead, two months after his initial petition.¹¹⁰ This case reveals how urban residents had some control over their localities as, at least in theory, they were able to influence the number of brothels in the area and block the petitions that they believed would pose a threat to the tranquillity of their streets. The case of Martenskaia Street also poses questions about the relationship between urban residents and those who worked in the commercial sex industry. In 1903, this particular street was already home to seven brothels, each with between seven and eighteen women working within the establishments.¹¹¹ When Martenskaia residents did complain about prostitution in the area, their collective contempt was directed against *unauthorised* brothels, that is, those establishments that had opened without the approval of the city authorities or local residents. Even so, their solution to this problem was not to remove the brothels, but expand the space of Martenskaia Street in order to accommodate the increasing number of public establishments.¹¹² On this street in Revel', residents were indifferent to the idea of living next door to brothels. It is possible that residents may have been bribed or intimidated by madams, but it could also suggest that prostitutes and brothel keepers were well integrated within this particular urban community, a hypothesis which fits with the ample evidence of city

¹⁰⁹ EAA, 33.3.2680 lk. 2. See also EAA, 33.3.2677, lk. 5.

¹¹⁰ EAA, 33.3.2680 lk. 8.

¹¹¹ EAA, 31.2.4216, lk. 3.

¹¹² EAA, 31.2.4216 lk. 1.

residents resisting the spatial segregation of prostitutes presented in chapter one.

In 1914, the Chief Medical Inspector of the MVD did receive a petition calling for the closure of brothels on Martenskaia Street from a group of restaurant owners with the surname Maksimov. The petitioners claimed that the street's brothel madams allowed the sale of hard liquor within their establishments and that the presence of the brothels was detrimental to public morality.¹¹³ The Revel' Chief of Police dismissed the petition as he suspected it to be motivated by 'malicious intention[s]', given that there had never been any restaurant owners named Maksimov in Revel'.¹¹⁴ For the Police Chief, the petition represented an attempt to gain full control over the city's entertainment industry by a group of jealous individuals. He claimed that the closure of the brothels on Martenskaia Street would cause a surge in clandestine prostitution. It is not possible to know whether the petition was indeed fraudulent or whether Martenskaia madams paid bribes to the local authorities to prevent the closure of their establishments. Instead, this case demonstrates that this street was an established hub of commercial sex in Revel', well recognised by both the authorities and urban residents.

Social class played a significant role in the responses of local communities to brothels. This was most evident within the capital. In November 1907, a St Petersburg landlord, Nikolai Egor'ev, appealed against a decision made by the local medical-police which forbade him from renting out his apartment to

¹¹³ EAA, 31.2.6909, lk. 2.

¹¹⁴ EAA, 31.2.6909, lk. 2.

prostitutes. On 3 October, the medical-police ruled that prostitutes were forbidden from living on Drovianoi Lane because the area was 'populated exclusively by workers' who apparently would not want to be exposed to the 'serious disturbances' caused by prostitutes.¹¹⁵ In his petition, Egor'ev pointed out that commercial sex was well integrated within the urban community in this area: there were already two brothels on the corner of Drovianoi Lane and the embankment of the Priazhki river, and many independent prostitutes lived on the nearby Ekateringrofskii Avenue.¹¹⁶ The department of police reviewed the case and lifted the prohibition in June 1908.¹¹⁷

Other homeowners resented the presence of brothels in their localities, especially when they attracted mainly lower-class clients. Nikolai Poletava, a St Petersburg homeowner, petitioned the MVD asking for a brothel located opposite his property on Vereiskii Street in the Moskovskii district to be moved to the quieter street that ran along Obvodnyi Canal.¹¹⁸ When the St Petersburg medical-police committee investigated the case, they discovered that the majority of customers of this brothel were from the so-called 'labouring classes' or lower-ranks of the military.¹¹⁹ Moskovskii district was also notorious for overcrowding, as thousands of lower-class people rented apartments, cellars and even corners of rooms in order to afford the rising rents in the early twentieth century.¹²⁰ The visibility of lower-class sexuality on his doorstep evidently distressed Poletava, and he believed that moving the brothel away

¹¹⁵ GARF, f. 102, op. 64, d. 7ch182, l. 8.

¹¹⁶ Ekateringrofskii Prospekt is now Rimskogo-Korsakova Prospekt. GARF, f. 102, op. 64, d. 7ch182, l. 1.

¹¹⁷ GARF, f. 102, op. 64, d. 7ch182, l. 16.

¹¹⁸ GARF, f. 102, op. 62, d. 39ch3, l. 1.

¹¹⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 62, d. 39ch3, l. 10.

¹²⁰ Bater, 'Between Old and New', p. 56.

from the street would somehow cleanse the space and attract more 'civilised' residents. Speaking about the Litenyi district, he made clear connections between the visibility of prostitution and low social class, remarking that 'we all know that Basseinaia and Preobrazhenskaia streets used to be full of prostitutes and the residents were more or less indifferent. Now, the population there has changed and there are very few brothels'.¹²¹

Poletava's remarks are particularly interesting within the context of late imperial St Petersburg. In its 1899 report, the St Petersburg medical-police committee revealed that there was just one brothel in the Moskovskii district, compared with seventeen in Aleksandr-Nevskii and eleven in the Peterburgskii district.¹²² Poletava's petition indicates a desire to classify certain parts of the city as distinctly lower-class, both in economic status and in terms of morality, which contradicted the residential patterns of the urban poor who lived all over the city.¹²³ Poletava's chief concern was the visibility of lower-class prostitution, something which he believed was damaging to public morality. He explained that the public 'disturbances' characteristic of brothels would have a 'completely different effect' if they occurred on the main thoroughfares of Nevskii or Moiskoi Prospekt, rather than on one of the smaller canals.¹²⁴ Through this assertion, Poletava attempted to push prostitution to the social and spatial margins of the overcrowded and rapidly urbanising city. The

¹²¹ Preobrazhenskaia Street is now Raishcheva Street and Basseinaia is Nekrasova. Both streets are located in the area between the metro stations Polshchad' Vosstaniia and Chernyshevskaiia.

¹²² GARF, f. 564, op. 1, d. 4287, l. 4.

¹²³ Bater, 'Between Old and New', pp. 71-73.

¹²⁴ GARF, f. 102, op. 62, d. 39ch3, l. 1.

movement of the premises away from the centre would apparently reduce the amount of customers, which he believed was 'not anything to lament'.¹²⁵

City spaces are not static entities, but are produced and reproduced by social, economic and political means.¹²⁶ In various European and North American contexts, city authorities attempted to confine prostitution within specific locations, by permitting the concentration of brothels in 'red light' districts which would allegedly provoke the least amount of public concern.¹²⁷ In the Russian context, despite attempts at containment, commercial sex was visible everywhere, which contributed to some residents' perception of brothels as a threat to morality. For example in Riga in 1901, even the medical-police committee resigned themselves to the fact that there were both state-licensed and clandestine brothels 'located conveniently on almost every street of the city'.¹²⁸ Like Riga and other cities, St Petersburg did not have an established red-light district and local authorities were willing to allow brothels in more central locations for economic gain. Because of this, all city space was apparently vulnerable to sexualisation, as prostitution was visible even on major streets. The St Petersburg medical-police committee attempted to limit the visibility of prostitution in the centre by forbidding independent prostitutes from living in various central spaces, such as: Nevskii Prospekt, Morskaia

¹²⁵ GARF, f. 102, op. 62, d. 39ch3, l. 1.

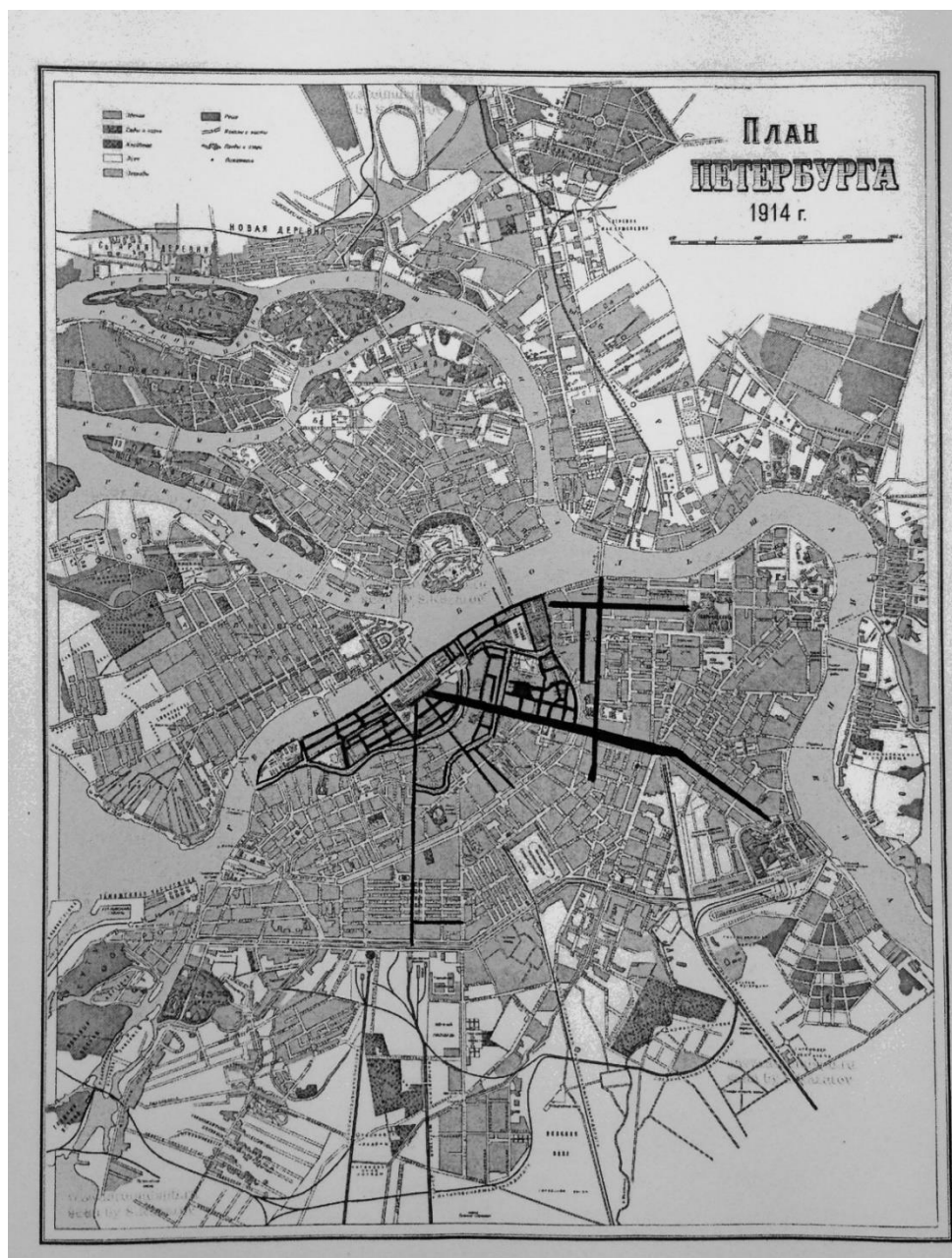
¹²⁶ H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Malden, 1991), p. 33.

¹²⁷ For example, Storyville in New Orleans which existed from 1900 until 1917 see E. Epstein Landau, *Spectacular Wickedness: Sex, Race and Memory in Storyville, New Orleans* (Baton Rouge, 2013). Also, off-street prostitution was concentrated in areas such as Soho in London in the early twentieth century see Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, p. 62. There were two red light districts in France's second city of Marseilles in the early 1900s, see Corbin, *Women for Hire*, p. 180.

¹²⁸ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23477, lp. 4.

Street, both the Bolshaia and Malaia sections of Koniushennai Street and along the Ekaterinskaia and Moiki canals.

Figure 11: Streets in St Petersburg where prostitutes were forbidden from renting accommodation from 1898 onwards.



Forbidden streets included: Nevskii, Liteinyi, Vladimirskii, Voznesenskii and Izmailovskii *Prospekti*; Morskaia, Gorokhovaia, and Gologlia Streets; and the first and second parts of the Admiralteiskii district. Source: TsGIAS Pb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 601, l. 11. Map 'Plan of St Petersburg, 1914' available in B. M.

Kocharkov, *Ocherkov Istorii Leningrada*, vol. 3 (Moscow, 1956).

In 1908, the medical-police committee took further steps to hide the existence of prostitution in St Petersburg by forbidding prostitutes from walking on the streets between 2pm and 8pm.¹²⁹ Given the minimal police presence in the capital, this ambitious rule was impossible to enforce. Russian spending on police per capita was just half of the policing budget of Austria-Hungary, Italy and France and a sixth of Great Britain, hence Russian police agents were usually 'extremely under-equipped, poorly educated and paid less than most factory workers'.¹³⁰ In 1905, the St Petersburg department of police had a shortage of 1,200 patrolmen.¹³¹ In July 1910, the St Petersburg medical-police committee reported that prostitutes completely ignored the 1908 rules, parading along Nevskii Prospekt, between the Moika river and Bolshaia Koniusheennaia Street, in large groups 'provocatively whistling at men' from 11am until 7pm.¹³² An anonymous petition identified the biggest problem as the unwillingness of local policemen to enforce the rules. The petitioner claimed that prostitutes were allowed to roam this area, even around the aptly named Police Bridge (*Politsieskii Most*, since renamed the Green Bridge) as policemen accepted their bribes and turned a blind eye.¹³³ The anonymous author accused the police force of taking the 'criminally extracted money to go and get drunk at the first tavern (*kabak*) they see'.¹³⁴ Rather than acknowledging the obstacles of corruption and a poor police presence, the Mayor of St Petersburg made the rules even stricter, and prohibited prostitutes

¹²⁹ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 117.

¹³⁰ I. Lauchlan, 'The Okhrana: Security Policing in Late Imperial Russia' in I. Thatcher (ed). *Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects* (Manchester, 2005), p. 48.

¹³¹ Weissman, 'Regular Police in Tsarist Russia', p. 48.

¹³² TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 210

¹³³ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 212.

¹³⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 212.

from appearing on the streets between 5pm and 5am.¹³⁵ This example demonstrates the gulf between state ambitions and reality, as well as the complicated relationship that local authorities had with prostitution. This combination of financial interest and the inability, or unwillingness, to enforce policy caused the geography of those on the margins and those at the centre to become intertwined.¹³⁶

Local authorities attempted the zealous policing of urban space in other regional contexts. In the Crimean port of Kerch' in July 1900, the city's mayor issued a list of places where prostitutes could not appear. Registered women were forbidden from walking on the streets after 7pm in the winter and 9pm in the summer, unless in cases of emergency.¹³⁷ They were also expressly prohibited from walking down the central Vorontsovskaiia and Dvorianskaiia Streets, or the seaside promenades, such as Stroganovskaiia Street, Aleksandrovskaiia Embankment and the Seaside Boulevard (*Primorskii bul'var*).¹³⁸ Documents that confirm whether this stringent policing actually happened are unavailable, but it is reasonable to assume that there was a gulf between theory and practice. Kerch' did not have a dedicated medical-police committee, so the regulation of prostitution was the responsibility of the city's police.¹³⁹ The sparsity of policemen was even more acute in regional contexts, especially after the expansion of city spaces and urban populations in the 1890s

¹³⁵ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 117.

¹³⁶ Hubbard argues that in modern Europe, the men in authority who condemned sex workers were often personally and sexually dependent on prostitution, hence prostitutes were simultaneously a necessity and a 'visual incursion on the ordered, modern city'. See P. Hubbard, *Sex and the City: Geographies of Prostitution in the Urban West* (Farnham, 1999), pp. 73-74.

¹³⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, ll. 35-36

¹³⁸ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 35.

¹³⁹ *Vrachebno-politseiskii nadzor*, p. 22.

and early 1900s. The ratio of policemen to city residents varied widely across the empire, from 1:400 in St Petersburg to 1:700-1000 in provincial cities.¹⁴⁰ The tsarist police were a stationary force, and common techniques involved instructing low-ranking policemen (*gorodovye*) to stand at certain points on a street, ideally within hearing distance of one another.¹⁴¹ This lack of mobile policemen would have made the Kerch' mayor's ambitious policies extremely difficult to enforce, so it is reasonable to assume that prostitutes were able to subvert the strict spatial regulations.

Despite various official attempts to contain and conceal prostitution, it was a visible part of the urban landscape in Russian towns and cities. The brothel ranking system was subverted by the fact that lower-class people lived everywhere in major cities, so attempts to confine them to specific districts were resolutely unsuccessful. Policies intent on pushing brothels to the outskirts of urban centres were thwarted by urbanisation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as in this period the 'city centre' was fluid and contested by officialdom and urban residents. Arguably the greatest obstacle to zoning attempts was the unwillingness, or inability, of local authorities to enforce policy. The inherent corruption of the regulation system meant that many low-ranking medical-police agents and policemen had a financial relationship with local brothel keepers, which granted them the ability to stay put despite protests from surrounding communities. A chronically underfunded and understaffed police force also struggled to enforce ambitious

¹⁴⁰ Weissman, 'Regular Police in Tsarist Russia', p. 48.

¹⁴¹ R. W. Thurston, 'Police and People in Moscow, 1906-1914', *Russian Review*, 39:3 (1980), p. 326.

policies of spatial segregation across the empire, so prostitution remained visible in urban space. This chapter will now consider the impact of this visibility on Russia's educated public, who fervently protested against the existence of state-licensed brothels in the early 1900s.

Educated observers and the state-licensed brothel

By the turn of the century, much of Russia's educated public agreed that regulation in its current form was not working and gestured to houses of toleration as the most glaring example of this failure. At the 1897 Congress for the Discussion of Measures Against Syphilis, physicians such as Dr Konstantin Shtiurmer of the St Petersburg medical-police committee presented papers on how regulation's ineffective one-sided medical examinations were contributing to a sharp rise in levels of syphilis.¹⁴² This situation played out most dramatically within the state-licensed brothel. For example, in Kronshtadt in 1903, the port's Medical Inspector reported that 69 per cent of brothel prostitutes had syphilis.¹⁴³ Likewise, in St Petersburg in 1909, 47 per cent of prostitutes working in lower-class brothels were infected with syphilis.¹⁴⁴ This figure was much higher than the overall average for St Petersburg of 28.9 per cent, which included the categories of both brothel workers and independent prostitutes.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Dr Shtiurmer presented a scathing report on regulation at the congress entitled 'Prostitutsiia v Gorodakh'. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 270-271.

¹⁴³ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1063, ll. 2-3.

¹⁴⁴ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 58.

¹⁴⁵ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 57.

Other commentators combined their concerns about the medical failings of regulation with discussions about the detrimental impact that state-licensed brothels had on public morality. Between 1900 and 1914, criticism of the state-licensed brothel by Russian philanthropic groups and physicians gained momentum, driven in part by the emergence of a moral panic with prostitution at its centre: the international crime of sex trafficking, or 'white slavery'.¹⁴⁶ Their voices joined a wider abolitionist transnational discourse which called for an end to all systems of regulation on medical and moral grounds.¹⁴⁷ For example, the Contagious Diseases Acts in Great Britain were repealed in 1886 following immense parliamentary and public pressure.¹⁴⁸ In France, feminist and workers' organisations such as the Democratic League for the Improvement of the Lot of Women and the French Association for the Abolition of Official Prostitution adopted abolitionist stances with regards to state regulation at the turn of the century.¹⁴⁹ Russian representatives joined their European counterparts at international abolitionist congresses in London and Paris.¹⁵⁰ Their participation in international abolitionism fits with the

¹⁴⁶ Russian responses to white slavery will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

¹⁴⁷ During this period, abolitionist groups existed in Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Argentina, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Japan and various other countries. For more information on international abolitionist campaigns see S. A. Limocelli, *The Politics of Trafficking: the First International Movement to Combat the Sexual Exploitation of Women* (Stanford, 2010).

¹⁴⁸ British Parliament debated the Contagious Diseases Acts six times between 1870 and 1886. They were greatly opposed on moral grounds by organisations such as the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts (established 1869) run by Josephine Butler and Elizabeth Wolstenholme. See 'Women's Protest', *Daily News*, (1 January 1870) reprinted in J. Butler, *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade* (London, 1896), pp. 17-19. For a discussion of the arguments against the Acts see M. Hamilton, 'Opposition to the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1864-1886', *Albion: Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 10:1 (Spring 1978), pp. 14-27.

¹⁴⁹ Corbin, *Women for Hire*, p. 231.

¹⁵⁰ These congresses were usually on the theme of 'white slavery' as the abolition of state regulation was regarded as a key part in the fight against international sex trafficking. Russian delegates attended the 1899 and 1913 Congress(es) on the White Slave Traffic in London and the 1904 and 1906 International Conference(s) on the White Slave Traffic in Paris. At the 1913

hypothesis that Russia was not an exceptional model of a modernising state, and that members of Russia's educated society were 'participating in a dialogue that engaged all European elites' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁵¹ Abolitionists were well represented at the First All-Russian Congress for the Struggle Against the Traffic in Women and its Causes and they used state-licensed brothels as symbolic of all regulation's failings in their presentations.¹⁵²

Criticism of brothels by philanthropic abolitionist groups focused on their detrimental impact on public morality. Even state legislation, such as the 1901 MVD circular which raised the minimum age for brothel prostitutes from sixteen to twenty-one, recognised the 'extremely harmful physical and moral effects' of working in brothels.¹⁵³ The St Petersburg branch of the Society for the Preservation of Public Health organised a special commission in 1903 which investigated the effectiveness of regulation.¹⁵⁴ Their report from 20 January focused specifically on brothels' negative impact on people's moral and physical health. The document positioned state-licensed brothels as a foreign invention, arguing that they were 'against the spirit of Christianity and contrary to the fundamental laws of Russia' and that there were 'no persuasive

London congress, delegates agreed that the event would be held in St Petersburg in 1916, although we can assume that the First World War interrupted these plans. Limocelli, *The Politics of Trafficking*, p. 59; Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 290.

¹⁵¹ S. McCaffray and M. Melancon, 'Introduction: A Member of the Family – Russia's Place in Europe, 1789-1914' in S. McCaffray and M. Melancon (eds), *Russia in the European Context, 1789-1914* (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 5. This hypothesis is explored in various contexts throughout the edited volume.

¹⁵² Delegates at the 1910 Congress closed the event by voting in favour of abolitionism. For a detailed discussion of the congress see Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 219-232.

¹⁵³ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 65, l. 3.

¹⁵⁴ The Commission's membership roster boasted various famous feminist abolitionists such as Dr Mariia Pokrovskaja, who consistently campaigned for the abolition of *nadzor* throughout her career as a doctor working with St Petersburg's urban poor.

arguments in favour of their preservation'.¹⁵⁵ The commission claimed that exploitative brothel keepers forced prostitutes to become drunk so that they were willing to take more customers each night, and that the increased level of intercourse made them more susceptible to venereal infection.¹⁵⁶ The raucous atmosphere of the brothel also threatened wider public health. Apparently, prominent 'defenders of the brothel' had suggested inspecting clients as a way to further curb the spread of venereal diseases, but opponents argued that no doctor in his right mind would agree to sit in one of these establishments all night and inspect drunken visitors.¹⁵⁷

The majority of the commission were members of charitable organisations, so their scathing remarks were derived from philanthropic discourse.¹⁵⁸ Some charities used wordplay to express their disapproval of the government's role in the sanctioning of legal prostitution, such as the Society for the Care of Young Girls who swapped the official name of 'house of toleration' to 'house of sanctioned debauchery' (*dom sanktsionirovannogo razvrata*).¹⁵⁹ Organisations such as the Russian Society for the Protection of Women (*Rossiiskoe Obshchestvo Zashchity Zhenshchin*, ROZZh hereafter) campaigned tirelessly throughout the early 1900s for the closure of brothels on the grounds that they

¹⁵⁵ GARF, f. 579, op. 1, d. 2490, l. 1.

¹⁵⁶ GARF, f. 579, op. 1, d. 2490, l. 7.

¹⁵⁷ GARF, f. 579, op. 1, d. 2490, l. 9.

¹⁵⁸ For example, Mariia Pokrovskaiia volunteered for the Society for the Care of Young Girls, Manuil Margulies provided free legal advice to the urban poor of St Petersburg, Ekaterina Gardner was a member of the Women's Mutual Philanthropic Society, and Evgeniia Chebysheva-Dmitrieva was head of the Society for the Prevention of Alcoholism in Women and Children.

¹⁵⁹ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 61.

degraded women and encouraged immorality.¹⁶⁰ One of the most vocal philanthropic critics of state-licensed brothels and regulation more generally was the St Petersburg Club of the Women's Progressive Party, chaired by Dr Mariia Pokrovskaia.¹⁶¹ The Party held its first meeting in 1906, and reiterated its commitment to female equality in politics, marriage, employment and education in its monthly journal *Zhenskii Vestnik* (*The Women's Bulletin*).¹⁶² In October 1913, the Party, with the help of prominent abolitionist and legal scholar Professor Arkadii Elistratov, submitted a bill to the State Duma entitled 'on the abolition of the medical-police supervision of prostitution and the closure of brothels'. The bill attacked brothels from a medical perspective, labelling them as 'one of the most dangerous hotbeds of syphilis'.¹⁶³ They also accused public houses of posing a threat to the 'norm' of sex within marriage, claiming that brothels had 'refined the cult of lustfulness and sexual perversion'. Commentary that linked brothels with other visible manifestations of 'debauchery' were common across philanthropic discourse. For example, in 1914 ROZZh petitioned the Minister of Justice requesting the removal of sexually suggestive adverts in newspapers, even those which did not 'contain anything indecent' at first glance, but would be understandable to 'interested

¹⁶⁰ For a comprehensive discussion of ROZZh's fight against the regulation of prostitution see N. K. Martynenko, *Rossiiskoe Obshchestvo Zashchity Zhenshchin v Bor'be s Prostiutsiei 1900-1915 gg.* (Togliatti, 2006).

¹⁶¹ *Sankt Peterburg Kluba Zhenskoi Progressivnoi Partii*. For a discussion of the opposition of the Women's Progressive Party to the regulation of prostitution see S. Iu. Dergileva and D. S. Gevorgian, 'Voprosy Bor'by s Reglementatsiei Prostitutsii i Torgom Zhenshchinami v Kontse XIX – Nachale XX Veka v Nauchnoi i Obshchestvennoi Deiatel'nosti A. I. Elistratova i V. F. Deriuzhinskogo', *Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo Universiteta MVD Rossii*, 4:60 (2013), pp. 31-37 and O. A. Volkova, 'Deiatel'nost' Zhenskikh Politicheskikh Organizatsii Sankt-Peterburga v Gody Pervoi Rossiiskoi Revoliutsii', *Vestnik Polesskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta: Seriia Obshchestvennykh i Gumanitarnykh Nayk*, 1 (2011), pp. 8-12.

¹⁶² *Zhenskii Vestnik* ran from 1905 until 1918. This publication described itself as 'public science and literary monthly journal, dedicated to the equality and advancement of women'.

¹⁶³ RGIA, f. 1075, op. 2, d. 41, l. 7.

people'.¹⁶⁴ ROZZh claimed that the legal sanctioning of 'open dens of debauchery' made it difficult to remove this kind of advertising from newspapers. Like suggestive adverts, state-licensed brothels were an incursion on public morality as they encouraged people to practise 'sexual perversion', hence their closure was essential for societal moral health.

Commentators on state-licensed establishments swung between presenting brothel workers as the biggest victims of state regulation or as villainous contaminators of public morality. Unlike independent prostitutes, brothel workers were answerable to both their madam and the authorities, so their experiences of regulation were heavily dependent on the nature of their individual brothel keeper. Philanthropic discourse was filled with accounts of the dismal experiences of unnamed brothel prostitutes. Mariia Pokrovskaia claimed that one prostitute in a lower-class brothel had to take between sixty and eighty clients per day during Christmas and Easter and that her madam encouraged her to drink heavily so that she could manage this level of sexual intercourse.¹⁶⁵ M. S. Oncukova, a schoolteacher who interviewed 100 brothel prostitutes at a hospital in Odessa in 1900 claimed that these women lived in the 'most ruinous and depraved conditions', detrimental to their physical and moral health.¹⁶⁶ Other popular writers could not hide their contempt for the women who worked in the commercial sex industry when criticising the state-licensed brothel. One journalist from *Golos Portnogo* (*The Tailor's Voice*) bemoaned the close proximity of brothels to workshops in St Petersburg,

¹⁶⁴ 'Bor'ba s Razvratom', *RZhKVB*, 6 (June 1914), pp. 579-580.

¹⁶⁵ Pokrovskaia, 'Prostitution and Alcoholism', p. 360.

¹⁶⁶ Quoted in Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 152.

arguing that this had a negative impact on the morality of young female needle-workers. The author claimed that 'all the dirt and debauchery' from the nearby brothels was 'pouring' into the workshops, and that the 'air groaned with the ugly chatter of these licentious harlots' (*razvratnye potaskukhi*).¹⁶⁷ The journalist appeared less concerned with ending regulation and more interested in ensuring that registered prostitutes were spatially segregated from other 'respectable' innocent women.

One writer for the monthly St Petersburg journal *Zhizn' dlia Vsekh* (*Life for All*) reported on the views of university students towards brothels, based on data from student surveys in Moscow in 1903-1904 and from St Petersburg in 1912. When asked how they felt about prostitution, students from both cities overwhelmingly responded negatively.¹⁶⁸ Some respondents repeated the narratives of degradation seen in philanthropic discourse, such as one male student who alleged that he felt 'disgusted with himself' after visiting brothels and was 'aware of the harm that he had inflicted on the unfortunate woman'.¹⁶⁹ The most vehement criticisms of state-licensed brothels came from female students, especially those registered on the St Petersburg Women's Higher Courses (*Bestushevki*).¹⁷⁰ These respondents tended to echo feminist discourses about the sexual double standard, which likened regulation to

¹⁶⁷ 'Mezhdu Mastersoi i Pritonom', *Golos Portnogo*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁶⁸ 66 per cent students at Moscow University and 80 per cent at St Petersburg responded 'negatively'. G. Gordon, 'Molodezh' i ee Otnoshenie k Prostitutsii', *Zhizn' dlia Vsekh*, 2 (February 1914), p. 314.

¹⁶⁹ 'Molodezh' i ee Otnoshenie', p. 317.

¹⁷⁰ This institution opened in 1878 and was the most famous women's university in imperial Russia. The university was informally known as the 'Bestuzhev Courses' after the first director, K. N. Bestushev-Riumin and attracted women of all social classes. R. Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism and Bolshevism, 1860-1930* (Princeton, 1989), pp. 82-83.

slavery and attacked the official privileging of male sexual desire over women's safety and freedom.¹⁷¹ One woman highlighted what she regarded as the hypocrisy of the tsarist government in an extended response:

I cannot understand men and what they are driven by. Officially, they establish higher courses for women but then behind-the-scenes there are houses of toleration where women are treated like animals. [...] Just fifty years ago they freed serfs, but women are still rotting in dens of debauchery...¹⁷²

It is important to remember that during this period the vast majority of female students came from professional, civil service or mercantile backgrounds.¹⁷³ In a 1912 *Bestushevki* survey, just 11.5 per cent of the university's 7000 students identified themselves as peasants, the social estate from which the majority of registered prostitutes hailed.¹⁷⁴ Their social background would have certainly influenced their response to brothels and perhaps they would have been more receptive to feminist abolitionist discourses and middle-class notions of discrete and passive sexuality.¹⁷⁵

One feature that ties together the discussions of students, philanthropists and other educated observers is the absence of the voices of brothel workers. When

¹⁷¹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 273-274.

¹⁷² 'Molodezh i ee Otnoshenie', p. 317.

¹⁷³ S. D. Kassow, *Students, Professors, and the State in Tsarist Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989), p. 24. For students numbers, see O. Valkova, 'The Conquest of Science: Women and Science in Russia, 1860-1940', *Osiris* 23 (2008), p. 153.

¹⁷⁴ Kassow, *Students, Professors, and the State*, p. 24.

¹⁷⁵ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 186.

they were called upon for comment, their voices were only audible through the mediation of elite commentators, and in these instances, prostitutes may have responded in specific ways in order to illicit sympathy or achieve certain ends.¹⁷⁶ Various members of educated society were sympathetic to the plight of prostitutes, yet they rarely included the voices of registered women in abolitionist discussions. Not a single registered prostitute attended the 1910 Congress for the Struggle Against the Traffic in Women and its Consequences. Instead, a petition penned by sixty-three registered women, which called for the inspection of male clients, was read aloud on their behalf.¹⁷⁷ Educated commentators mostly spoke *for* and *about* prostitutes, rather than entering into a dialogue with them. This was a common theme across Russian reformers' responses to social problems and indicative of the distance between the (often) elite philanthropists and the lower-class people they attempted to help. For example, Deirdre R. Harshman argues that educated commentators who pushed for housing reform often ignored the concerns of lower-class residents, 'marginalising them in discussions of their own housing'.¹⁷⁸ Adele Lindenmeyr suggests that charitable organisations which were established to address the social problems caused by urbanisation, such as slums, prostitution, homelessness and begging, were mostly concerned with reforming the immoral and unruly poor into a 'sober, educated, industrious and urbanised

¹⁷⁶ Bernstein discusses why some registered prostitutes may have lied about being orphans in surveys to avoid the medical-police contacting their families and to earn the sympathy of their interviewers. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 102.

¹⁷⁷ This petition is available in translation. 'Prostitutes' Petition', trans. L. Bernstein, in Bisha, Gheith, Holden and Wagner (eds), *Russian Women*, pp. 138-140.

¹⁷⁸ D. R. Harshman, 'Cooking Up a New Everyday: Communal Kitchens in the Revolutionary Era, 1890-1935', *Revolutionary Russia*, 29:2 (2016), p. 216.

population'.¹⁷⁹ Philanthropists often regarded lower-class people as lacking in 'morality, essential work skills and values', and corrective philanthropic action was often idealistic, inappropriate for the target group, and too heavily focused on moulding the lower classes to fit the social and cultural 'norms' of educated society.¹⁸⁰

For much of Russia's educated public, the state-licensed brothel was symbolic of the failure of regulation. Philanthropic groups attacked the double-standard of the imperial authorities, arguing that brothel life was akin to slavery and a key driver of the moral deterioration of both registered women and wider society. The abolitionist stance of many Russian charitable organisations permitted transnational collaboration with other feminist groups across the world. Unlike the lower-class urban residents who asked for brothels to be moved away from their homes, elite observers tended to call for the complete abolition of regulation and mass closure of houses of toleration. It is possible that lower-class city residents who were of a similar social standing to the majority of registered women regarded prostitution as an undesirable occupation, but acknowledged that the closure of brothels would deprive registered women of a steady income. Elite observers tended to privilege the

¹⁷⁹ A. Lindenmeyr, *Poverty is Not a Vice: Charity, Society and the State in Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1996), p. 201. It is important to note that Lindenmeyr argues that in Russia, beggars, paupers and even criminals were regarded by their social superiors as 'unfortunates' rather than 'ne'er-do-wells, parasites, or even threats to public order'. This was because of Orthodox Christian ideas regarding charity as a 'matter of conscience, rather than a civic necessity', Lindenmeyr, *Poverty is Not a Vice*, p. 23.

¹⁸⁰ A. Lindenmeyr, 'The Ethos of Charity in Imperial Russia', *Journal of Social History*, 23:4 (1990), p. 686; Lindenmeyr examines the gulf between expectations and realities in late imperial industrial homes for the unemployed (*doma trudoliubiia*) A. Lindenmeyr, 'Charity and the Problem of Unemployment: Industrial Homes in Late Imperial Russia', *The Russian Review*, 45:1 (1986), pp. 1-22.

image of the moral, clean city over the securing of economic alternatives for brothel workers.

Conclusion

The state-licensed brothel in the early 1900s was a visible indicator to state officials, philanthropists, physicians, and the wider public that regulation was not working. The granting of licensing power to local authorities, following the issue of Circular 1611 in 1903, meant that the business of brothel keeping was left more vulnerable to corruption. Brothel classifications restricted opening hours, cost per visit and their location within city space, which meant that brothel keepers often paid bribes to bend the rules of regulation. This widespread rule breaking meant that brothels did not fulfil their intended function as spaces to contain and sanitise prostitution. The visibility, and even audibility, of prostitution ran as an undercurrent in urban residents' complaints about state-licensed brothels. The majority of city dwellers were willing to accept that prostitution was a necessary evil, and the brothel an adequate way to prevent the spread of venereal disease; they just did not want to see this spill out onto their streets.

This study of state-licensed brothels also raises interesting questions about the regulation of lower-class sexuality more generally. Lower-class brothels were pushed to the edges of the city and had restricted opening hours, as can be seen in the examples of St Petersburg and Kronshtadt, which demonstrates a desire to limit the visibility of lower-class sexuality. That being said, the majority of petitions requesting the relocation of brothels to less central locations were rejected by regional authorities, who had the final say over which urban spaces

were acceptable for commercial sex. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that for regional authorities, financial gain overrode the 'protection' of city space from the 'moral contamination' allegedly caused by prostitution. Philanthropic responses to state-licensed brothels positioned lower-class people, and especially registered women, as morally lax and in need of protection. This was even more pronounced in discussions of madams, the subjects of the next chapter, who became targets for the expression of various social, ethnic, and religious prejudices.

4. Malevolent madams: facilitators of prostitution

The tsarist state called on a whole host of individuals to help regulate prostitution in the early 1900s. Brothel madams and those who rented their properties to prostitutes mediated between the police and registered women, functioning as instruments of state power: essential but easily disposable. State legislation positioned these groups as protectors of public health and morality and charged them with shielding young people from the ‘necessary evil’ of regulated prostitution. Facilitators’ central role in policing meant that local authorities often turned a blind eye to cases of abuse, giving brothel madams an elevated status within urban communities, which bred resentment. However, the misconduct of individual facilitators also provided the authorities with a welcome scapegoat for the failings of regulation. These factors contributed to facilitators’ overwhelmingly negative image, and they came to be associated with exploitation, child prostitution and the infamous ‘trade in women’. This chapter will explore how those who helped to facilitate prostitution provided the authorities, press and charitable organisations with an outlet through which the vocalisation of wider social, ethnic and religious prejudices was possible. Brothel madams are the chapter’s primary focus as they were legislated against most stringently, but landlords, landladies and pimps will also be brought into the discussion to demonstrate how the authorities called upon other facilitators to help police prostitution.

The tsarist authorities intended the facilitation of prostitution to be a female-dominated business. From the outset of regulation in 1843, legislation stated

that brothel keepers had to be women.¹ According to Circular 1611 of 1903, women who decided to apply for brothel licences had thirty-three rules to follow, compared with just eleven for prostitutes.² Regulation rigidly defined prostitution solely as a heterosexual transaction, since brothel madams were forbidden from allowing any 'female guests' into their establishments.³ The rules for managers of Moscow 'love hotels' (*doma svidanii muzhchin s zhenshchinami*) stated that 'each can only be rented to two people: one man and one woman'.⁴ The promotion of primarily female facilitation may indicate the authorities' dismissal of the possibility of sexual and romantic interest between madams and prostitutes. Tsarist law did not legislate against female same-sex relations, which demonstrates the official refusal to acknowledge sex between women as anything other than 'innocent'. There is fragmentary evidence to suggest that brothel madams ignored same-sex relations between prostitutes within their establishments, as long as the women continued to generate income.⁵ For landlords, landladies and hotel owners renting to prostitutes, good character and the ability to prioritise state interests took priority over gender.

In order to open a brothel, potential madams had to apply for a licence from their local authority. In theory, medical-police committees were supposed to visit the proposed property to complete a thorough check of its suitability with a doctor and a representative of the police *before* granting a licence.⁶ However,

¹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 22.

² TsGIASPB, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, ll. 33-34.

³ TsGIASPB, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

⁴ TsGIASPB, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 71.

⁵ Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, p. 53, 88.

⁶ TsGIASPB, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

it is unlikely that this happened in practice, given the multiple cases of state-licensed brothels that failed to meet the minimum requirements discussed in chapter three. Madams had to live within their establishments 'without question' and were categorically forbidden from 'engaging in debauchery' themselves.⁷ Homeowners who wished to rent their apartments to prostitutes also had to petition the authorities for permission. In the capital, the police screened the morality of homeowners before allowing them to do so. In 1903, a representative from the St Petersburg medical-police committee filled out a typed form regarding the behaviour of Anna Vladimirova, a potential landlady. The form asked the police to comment on her behaviour, her children, her 'inclinations to drunkenness and violence' and whether she had ever appeared in court.⁸ When Berta Brant applied to the committee as a landlady in February 1910, she was refused on the grounds that she had previously run a brothel over thirty years previously.⁹ Evidently, medical-police committees recognised that renting to prostitutes was a lucrative business and they would only grant this privilege to individuals they could trust.

Brothel madams, rather than homeowners, dominated popular representations of facilitators. Madams were notorious villains in Russian literature and often typecast as foreign, unattractive, overweight and solely interested in their own financial gain. In Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, the ambiguously German or Jewish Anna Ivanova Lippewechsel exploited her tenant Sonia Marmeladova

⁷ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

⁸ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 601, l. 3.

⁹ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 54, 57.

by forcing her into prostitution.¹⁰ The madam in Kuprin's *The Pit*, Emma Edwardovna, was also portrayed as a 'money-grubbing Jewish woman, no longer sexually attractive'.¹¹ However, results from Dubrovskii's empire-wide prostitution survey in 1889 contradict the stereotype of the foreign madam who generated wealth by exploiting her vulnerable social inferiors. Out of the 1214 registered brothel keepers in this year, over half were classified as Russian Orthodox, and just one quarter were Jewish.¹² Like prostitution, brothel keeping was also a lower-class profession, as almost 80 per cent of madams were townswomen, peasants or soldiers' wives.¹³ This chapter will examine the reasons why the cultural representations of brothel madams were so out of touch with reality. Focusing on their three official roles as guardians of public health, protectors of youth and supervisors of lower-class people, the chapter will argue that madams' close ties with law enforcement and status as the 'face' of the failing regulation system contributed to their negative image. The source base of this chapter includes police reports, interactions between madams, lower-class residents and the authorities, as well as journals, newspaper articles and reports by philanthropic organisations. This combination of material moves away from relying solely on cultural

¹⁰ J. A. Cassiday and L. Rouhi, 'From Nevskii Prospekt to Zoia's Apartment: Trials of the Russian Procuress', *Russian Review*, 58:3 (1999), pp. 419-420.

¹¹ Cassiday and Rouhi, 'From Nevskii Prospekt to Zoia's Apartment', p. 421.

¹² The survey claimed that 56 per cent of madams were Orthodox and 52 per cent were identified as ethnically Russian. Twenty-four per cent were Jewish by religion and 27 per cent Jewish by 'nationality'. The other religions represented amongst madams include Protestantism (7 per cent), Islam (5 per cent) and Roman Catholicism (3 per cent). Madams were also listed as German (6 per cent) and Polish (3 per cent). Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 12-13.

¹³ Forty-three per cent were townswomen, 19 per cent were peasants and 17 per cent were soldiers' wives. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 18-19.

representations towards a social history of the facilitation of prostitution in late imperial Russia.

Guardians of public health or exploiters of registered women?

Regulation emphasised the key role of brothel madams in ensuring the health of both prostitutes and the wider public to prevent the spread of venereal diseases. Circular 1611 instructed madams to organise prostitutes' twice-weekly medical examinations and to provide a special room with medical instruments for this purpose.¹⁴ Madams were also required to send diseased prostitutes to hospital on the same day that infection was detected, and to pay for their treatment in full. They had to provide prostitutes with so-called Esmarch mugs (*esmarkhovskie kruzhki*), devices for vaginal douching invented by German surgeon Friedrich August von Esmarch in the late nineteenth century. As well as guaranteeing prostitutes' health, madams were required to keep the women in their establishments 'neat' and prevent them from having sex during menstruation.¹⁵ Some local authorities gave madams specific instructions for the promotion of good hygiene. For example in Moscow, a 1911 circular reminded local police chiefs that brothel madams were required to provide warm water in each bedroom of their establishments to ensure that prostitutes and clients could wash and douche following intercourse.¹⁶

¹⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

¹⁵ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

¹⁶ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 113.

These rules cemented brothel madams' status as protectors of public health and these women sometimes utilised state discourses to their own ends. In Verro in January 1914 a peasant woman, Mariia Lessenberg petitioned her local authorities for permission to open a brothel in the town with her husband, to be located at the end of Georgievskaiia Street. 'Currently, there is not a single brothel in Verro', she began; something that she believed was 'very harmful for health of residents of the town'.¹⁷ Lessenberg evidenced her claim by referencing the dramatic increase in venereal diseases since the city's brothels were closed down, which Verro's medical authorities could apparently verify. In her petition, Lessenberg positioned herself as the solution to Verro's public health problem. Other brothel madams used their central role in regulation to threaten their local authorities. On 26 January 1910, Dar'ia Sherbinina, living in Slaviansk (Sloviansk), Khar'kov province, petitioned the MVD regarding recent requests by the city's residents to move or shut down her establishment. Sherbinina stated that 'the closure of my house can only lead to an increase of unregulated prostitution on the streets', emphasising the vital service that she provided the authorities in keeping prostitution hidden within the walls of her state-licensed establishment.¹⁸

Criticism of the medical failings of regulation often focused on the laxity of individual madams, rather than inherent problems within the system. Certain clients of prostitutes appropriated the state discourses that placed madams in a protective role. For example, in February 1904, the lieutenant N. Timofeev

¹⁷ EAA, 3163.1.1, lk. 59.

¹⁸ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 119.

wrote to the Police Chief of Revel' recounting his recent visit to a city brothel.

He commented:

Last week, my comrades and I went to the charming 'Yellow Monkey' (*Zheltoi Obez'iane*) brothel, and [the madam] demanded that we put forward twenty roubles for the night, and this assured us two 'monkeys', Francis and Gretchen. We were assured that all of the women were healthy by the brothel madam, and now I am definitely ill. The doctor can ascertain to this unfortunate fact...¹⁹

Timofeev was most troubled by the fact that madams were supposed to 'guarantee a healthy visit', yet instead he had experienced 'negligence and complete indifference to the health of the intelligentsia'.²⁰ His indignation indicates that certain clients did not perceive themselves as responsible for their own sexual health, and instead heavily relied on the regulation system for protection. His inclusion of his social class in his petition suggests that he regarded his health to be even more important given that he belonged to the 'intelligentsia'. The imperial authorities reinforced a lack of male responsibility as they did not legally mandate the inspection of all clients. Madams were charged with arranging prostitutes' examinations within their establishments; therefore, they were personally responsible for the health of their guests. In

¹⁹ EAA, 31.2.4326, lk. 6.

²⁰ EAA, 31.2.4326, lk. 6.

light of the petition, Estliand province's medical board went on to investigate the madam to ensure that prostitutes at the 'Yellow Monkey' were in fact examined twice weekly. Eager to continue deflecting responsibility away from the male client, the Police Chief also accused the doctor who had examined the prostitutes at the brothel of negligence. Dr Lozinskii had apparently only performed an 'external' examination 'without using tubes', with the result that he failed to identify the infection.²¹ A senior physician at the hospital of the Estliand Order for Public Charity provided a detailed explanation of the examinations and branded the accusation of negligence 'offensive to doctors'.²² This case illustrates the wider tension between medical professionals and the 'bumbling, recalcitrant, and obscurantist' local and central administration in late tsarist Russia.²³ Public health was at the core of regulation, but law enforcement agents rather than clinical specialists drafted and implemented policy. This meant that doctors faced the challenges of poor facilities and limited allotted time for the examination of registered women. Local authorities regularly questioned doctors' authority and expertise and ignored their requests for additional funding.²⁴

The combination of one-sided examination, poor public health facilities and tensions between clinical experts and police meant that regulation did not reduce levels of venereal disease. Madams too had a part to play in this failure, as regardless of what some claimed, rates of venereal infection were far higher

²¹ EAA, 31.2.4326, lk. 4.

²² EAA, 31.2.4326, lk. 15.

²³ S. G. Solomon and J. F. Hutchinson, 'The Problem of Health Reform in Russia' in S. G. Solomon and J. F. Hutchinson (eds), *Health and Society in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1990), p. ix.

²⁴ The tensions between doctors and the local authorities will be discussed in greater detail in chapter five, using the case study of Libava.

amongst brothel workers than independent prostitutes. In Kronshtadt in 1903, the port's Medical Inspector reported that 69 per cent of brothel prostitutes were infected with syphilis, something that he blamed on brothel keepers' laxity and willingness to illegally recruit syphilitic women.²⁵ Likewise, the 1909 report by the Medical Inspector for the St Petersburg medical-police committee claimed that 47 per cent of prostitutes working in lower-class brothels were infected with syphilis, a figure almost twice as high as the overall average for registered women in the city.²⁶ There are also examples that attest to brothel keepers knowingly employing sick women. In August 1900, the Riga medical-police committee received a letter from a Prussian woman, Anna Shul'ts, requesting her passport so that she could return to her home country. Shul'ts had been working at a brothel on Kliuchevaia Street but now claimed to be suffering from various conditions.²⁷ A doctor's note accompanied her petition, confirming that she was suffering from chronic inflammation of the stomach and lungs, as well as anaemia and a nervous disorder.²⁸ Shul'ts had apparently been showing symptoms from her arrival at the brothel two months earlier, yet the madam of the establishment had still taken her on. Removing a sick, and especially syphilitic, woman from circulation was a legal requirement for madams, but financial incentives could override their obligations. The financial blow of fewer working women and the obligation to cover the cost of prostitutes' treatment may have encouraged brothel keepers to allow diseased

²⁵ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1063, ll. 2-3.

²⁶ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 57, 58.

²⁷ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 243.

²⁸ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 249.

women to continue working and subvert their role as protectors of public health.

As well as ensuring public health, madams had an obligation to look after the women that they employed. They were fully responsible for providing prostitutes with essential items, such as underwear and bed linen, and were forbidden from helping registered women to obtain abortions.²⁹ Circular 1611 also sought to prevent the abuse of prostitutes at the hands of brothel keepers. One rule dictated that debts could not be an obstacle for prostitutes who wanted to leave their brothel. Article 500 of the 1909 Criminal Code stated that the punishment for using debts to force prostitutes to continue working was imprisonment in a correctional house for up to three years.³⁰ All prostitutes' belongings had to be returned to them on their departure, and registered women were allowed to take any dresses, underwear and shoes purchased for them by the madam if they had worked in the brothel for longer than one year.³¹ Despite having the law on their side, prostitutes were still in a vulnerable position. In their 1898 report, the St Petersburg medical-police committee claimed that in sixty-two brothels, 605 women owed their madams over 200,000 roubles.³² Whether this situation improved after the issue of Circular 1611 is questionable, given the ample evidence of corruption and the flouting of the rules of regulation. Additionally, the Circular gave madams other

²⁹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

³⁰ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 121.

³¹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

³² GARF, f. 102, op. 55, d. 69, l. 33.

opportunities for financial exploitation, as they were allowed to take up to three-quarters of prostitutes' earnings.

In cases of abuse, the authorities frequently sided with brothel keepers. In November 1909, Aleksandra Sokolova, a young prostitute from Koven province, wrote to the Mayor of St Petersburg complaining about her violent treatment at the hands of her former madam, Stepanida Miatnikova. When Sokolova decided that she wanted to 'give up this disgraceful path' and leave prostitution, Miatnikova decided to 'take revenge' and with the help of her lover Semen Morozov, apparently beat Sokolova, tore her clothes and struck her so hard with a rod that her hands turned blue.³³ Sokolova also branded Miatnikova as unscrupulous, arguing that she violated regulation by failing to return all of her personal items when she left the brothel. Sokolova also accused Miatnikova of extorting her guests by selling wine, beer and liqueurs for three times the price, and only paying prostitutes once they had convinced clients to buy alcohol.³⁴

When the St Petersburg authorities investigated Sokolova's complaint, they sided with the madam Miatnikova. Medical-police agents interviewed Miatnikova's servant, neighbour and janitor, who all stated that she did not sell alcohol in her establishment and claimed that Sokolova's own lover, Ivan Arentovich, was responsible for her beating.³⁵ Even though the medical-police acknowledged that there had been various complaints of street disturbances

³³ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 57.

³⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 60.

³⁵ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, ll. 58-59.

made against Miatnikova and her lover, they dismissed Sokolova's petition.³⁶ The claims of violence cannot be verified, but the authorities' bias towards the madam is clear. The committee did not investigate Sokolova's main motivation for writing her petition, to retrieve the personal possessions that Miatnikova refused to return. The authorities' outright dismissal of Sokolova's claims of exploitation hints at how corruption could help to ensure the legal immunity of brothel keepers. On the other hand, there is some evidence to suggest that local authorities did occasionally hold madams legally accountable. For example, on 11 October 1909, the Nevel' medical-police closed Gita Sadkina's brothel in the city.³⁷ They acted in response to a long list of illegal acts that had apparently occurred within her establishment, including: violence, theft, the employment of underage prostitutes, the unlicensed sale of alcohol, unregistered visitors, the sale of counterfeit coins and the assault of a police officer.³⁸ Sadkina's brothel closure represents an exception; in the majority of cases the authorities supported brothel keepers' business interests over the wellbeing of individual prostitutes or urban communities.³⁹

Reports of the abuse of prostitutes at the hands of brothel keepers made their way into the popular press. On 23 April 1910, the newspaper *Rech'* (*Speech*) printed an article which connected financial abuse with an apparent increase in the number of prostitutes who died by suicide.⁴⁰ The writer counted seventy-one suicides between 1905 and 1910 in St Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, Riga

³⁶ TsGIA SPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 646, l. 64.

³⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 81, 84.

³⁸ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, ll. 82-83.

³⁹ Further evidence of this can be seen in chapter three on state-licensed brothels.

⁴⁰ *Rech'* was the official organ of the Kadet Party and published in St Petersburg from 1906-1917.

and Kiev, but suspected that the number must be far higher and less reported outside these major centres.⁴¹ His observations fit with specialists' perceptions of an upsurge in suicide around this time. Official statistics noted a 58 per cent increase in the number between 1905 and 1910, and some experts even classified St Petersburg as Europe's suicide capital.⁴² Out of these seventy-one suicide cases recorded in the *Rech'* article, ten women apparently indicated brothel debts and their inability to pay their madams as the reason for their suicide. The *Rech'* journalist referred to these financial obligations as a 'noose from which one cannot free themselves', and included a graphic reference to a case from Vladivostok, where a desperate prostitute hanged herself with her own bed sheets because of the substantial amount of money that she owed her madam.⁴³

The connections made between the financial abuse of prostitutes at the hands of brothel keepers and suicide fit within wider discourses of exploitation from the early twentieth century. Following the decriminalisation of suicide in 1845, the attention of a wide range of public figures shifted onto how the abuse of authority contributed to people taking their own lives, connecting individual acts of exploitation with the 'broader social and political problem' of despotism.⁴⁴ By the turn of the century, doctors, jurists, journalists and writers began to brand the tsarist state's 'moralising paternalism' as socially harmful. They pointed towards the social problems of suicide, hooliganism, poverty and prostitution as ample evidence for the government's failure to protect people's

⁴¹ G. Gordon, 'Prostitutsiia i Samoubiistvo', *Rech'*, 23 April 1910.

⁴² Morrissey, *Suicide and the Body Politic*, pp. 315-316.

⁴³ 'Prostitutsiia i Samoubiistvo'.

⁴⁴ Morrissey, *Suicide and the Body Politic*, p. 269.

welfare.⁴⁵ As the local 'face' of the regulation system, brothel keepers' individual acts of exploitation exemplified the inhumanity of the regulation system for the liberal educated public. As madams personified the failing system, they were widely criticised and vilified in the popular press.

Representations of brothel keepers as exploitative and central to prostitutes' suicides were repeated in other circumstances. In autumn 1913, the Revel' district court heard the case of a young prostitute, Nadezhda Ivanova, who drowned herself close to the town of Gungerburg (Narva-Jõesuu). When establishing the motivations behind Ivanova's suicide, the district court called on six individuals to provide witness testimony. Two of Ivanova's female friends pointed the Estliand authorities in the direction of her boyfriend, a student named Shurka, with whom she apparently had a very unhappy relationship.⁴⁶ The Revel' authorities found Shurka living in St Petersburg. He then implicated an 'auntie' (*tet'ki*), a common expression for a brothel madam, who had apparently forced Ivanova to work at her brothel.⁴⁷ The Revel' district court then reopened the investigation to search for this madam in January 1914.

⁴⁵ Morrissey. *Suicide and the Body Politic*, p. 269.

⁴⁶ EAA, 139.1.4175, lk. 35-36.

⁴⁷ EAA, 139.1.4175 lk. 47.

Figure 12: Photograph of Nadezhda Ivanova (right) and Mariia Sepp, her friend who provided the Revel' district court with testimony in the case.



Source: EAA, 139.1.4175, lk. 1.

The fact that the Revel' authorities ignored the testimony implicating Shurka and reopened their entire investigation based on his suggestions of a coercive 'auntie' demonstrates how compelling the stereotype of the exploitative brothel keeper could be. The authorities requested additional statements from Ivanova's friends, Mariia Piassina, Mariia Sepp and Mariia Doronina. The three women denied that Ivanova was a victim of financial exploitation, stating that she 'lived quite independently', 'never complained about need' and simply 'lived on the money that she earned'.⁴⁸ Sepp explained that she was 'convinced that the student is lying because [Ivanova] never mentioned an "auntie"', and the two other women agreed that they 'could not believe that somebody forced her into a brothel'. Finally, on 27 February 1914, lack of evidence forced the court to drop the idea of an 'auntie' and they dismissed the case.⁴⁹

The well-peddled image of the abusive and coercive brothel keeper could have also provided women who were ashamed of their profession with a justification for their entry into prostitution. In 1916, Zhenni Kast, a former prostitute, appeared in Riga's regional court charged with procuring an eighteen-year-old Estonian woman, Amanda Lekhmus, and forcing her into prostitution. According to the 1909 Criminal Code, the punishment for this kind of procurement ('by deception or abuse of power') was three months' imprisonment.⁵⁰ Lekhmus claimed that Kast had invited her to her apartment at 57 Zvezdnaia Street, and once she arrived, encouraged her to drink vodka until she became very drunk.⁵¹ There was apparently a young man in the

⁴⁸ EAA, 139.1.4175, lk. 61.

⁴⁹ EAA, 139.1.4175, lk. 73.

⁵⁰ TsGIIASPB, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 121.

⁵¹ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 52.

apartment who ‘forcefully put her on the bed and began to fornicate’, paying her ten roubles afterwards, two of which Kast allegedly took for herself. After this, Lekhmus stated that she went to Kast’s apartment twice a week to have sex with men in exchange for money until she contracted gonorrhoea.⁵² The police officer who took Lekhmus’s statement made it clear that he believed that Kast had forced Lekhmus into prostitution. In his report, he stated that although Lekhmus was Estonian, he had questioned her in Russian just so ‘there [could] be no misunderstanding’ about the facts of the case.⁵³

The magistrate of the court heard the testimony of fifteen witnesses in both Russian and Estonian, and none of their statements tallied with Lekhmus’s story. The vast majority of witnesses lived in the same building as Kast, yet still stated that they knew nothing about Lekhmus’s procurement. Mart Sakov, Mariia Rebane, Anna Terras, all residents at number 57, claimed that there had never been any ‘scandals’ within the building or men arriving at Kast’s apartment.⁵⁴ Pavel Kornev, the local police warden, claimed that he had been in Kast’s apartment several times and that he ‘did not find any men or anything that would give [him] a reason to suspect procurement’.⁵⁵ Even Lekhmus’s father Iurii admitted that he did not know whether Kast was involved in procuring his daughter, or whether she had actually ever been to Kast’s apartment.⁵⁶

⁵² EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 52.

⁵³ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 52.

⁵⁴ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 43, 44, 46-49.

⁵⁵ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 37.

⁵⁶ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 54.

It is impossible to fully assess the validity of Lekhmus's accusations. As seen in chapter three, the relationship between local authorities and brothel keepers was often forged on bribes, which allowed them to work outside of the legal constraints of regulation. Kast may have paid off the local authorities and her neighbours to ensure a favourable hearing. Despite this, other evidence from the case suggests that Lekhmus's shame at being involved in prostitution and contraction of gonorrhoea perhaps motivated her complaint. Lekhmus apparently told her father that she had only ever had sexual intercourse twice in her life, omitting any of the references to repeated prostitution from her first statement to the police officer.⁵⁷ In a report from Iur'ev city hospital, the chief doctor stated that Lekhmus discharged herself from the facility long before her treatment was complete.⁵⁸ The court's chief investigator examined the case and concluded that as Lekhmus had repeatedly changed her testimony and that 'the victim herself [did] not inspire confidence', so the court dropped the case due to a lack of evidence on 28 November 1916.⁵⁹

Regulation classified madams as guardians of public health and gave them the personal duty of ensuring that clients did not become infected with venereal diseases. The rules also outlined madams' duties to their employees, whose welfare they were supposed to protect. Since local police organs governed regulation, brothel madams were able to forge favourable relationships with city police, who often supplemented their low wages with bribes and cash gifts. These close ties to law enforcement meant that madams were often granted

⁵⁷ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 54.

⁵⁸ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 31.

⁵⁹ EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 65.

legal immunity, which made it possible for them to subvert their protective role. This situation perpetuated the stereotype of the exploitative brothel keeper, which appeared in the popular press and filtered down into public consciousness.

Custodians of youth or procurers of children?

State regulation marked madams as protectors of children and young people. The imperial authorities insisted that brothel keepers had to be over the age of thirty-five, presumably to discourage new or expectant mothers from applying to manage brothels. Madams were charged with shielding minors from prostitution. Circular 1611 forbade them from living with any of their own children over the age of three and from allowing young students into their establishments. Brothel keepers were expressly prohibited from employing prostitutes under the age of twenty-one.⁶⁰ Failure to observe this rule could result in imprisonment, and if found guilty on more than two occasions, the withdrawal of their licence and a permanent ban on running any future brothels.⁶¹

Russian officialdom took steps to prevent child prostitution in cities. In response to growing pressure from philanthropic organisations and much of educated society, the MVD raised the minimum age for brothel prostitutes from sixteen to twenty-one and independent prostitutes from sixteen to eighteen.⁶²

⁶⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 65, l. 3.

⁶¹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34; GARF, f. 539, op. 1, d. 293, l. 6.

⁶² GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 65, l. 1; TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 32.

From this point onwards, prostitutes under the age of eighteen were legally classed as child prostitutes, and medical-police committees were obliged to place them under the care of their relatives, guardians or local charities. Regional authorities employed their own methods to prevent teenage girls from working as prostitutes. In Arkhangel'sk throughout 1906 and 1907, municipal authorities regularly checked the age of all brothel prostitutes on the police lists, and ordered the Police Chief to remove any underage girls immediately.⁶³ In Moscow in spring 1911, police officers forcibly entered rooms of houses of assignation to ensure that no underage prostitutes were working there.⁶⁴

Even though prohibitive legislation was in place, the tsarist authorities continued to register teenage girls as prostitutes. For example, in January 1909 there were 124 prostitutes under the age of eighteen registered on the capital's police lists.⁶⁵ In May 1909, fifteen-year-old Boleslava Nezhel'ska and sixteen-year-old Ol'ga Musinova were registered as prostitutes in St Petersburg.⁶⁶ In Libava in 1910, there were ten girls between the ages of fourteen and eighteen on the city's police lists, and a further seven underage prostitutes found to be working clandestinely.⁶⁷ The Riga medical-police committee received countless petitions from distraught parents regarding the registration of their underage daughters. 'Our daughter is just fourteen years of age', wrote one mother to the Chief of Police in 1900, 'and through her dissolute lifestyle she has been

⁶³ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3953, ll. 25-26, 54, 126.

⁶⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 115.

⁶⁵ 'Stolichnaia Prostitutsiia', *Russkie Vedomosti*, 4 May 1909. Available in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva (RGALI hereafter) f. 199, op. 1, d. 116, l. 30.

⁶⁶ TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 58, l. 113.

⁶⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 1730, l. 30.

registered onto the police lists'.⁶⁸ Another mother begged the Riga Police Chief to take away her underage daughter's 'passport for sexual intercourse'.⁶⁹ In September 1916, Riga's police sent a fifteen-year-old registered prostitute, Ekaterina Stepanova, to the city hospital for venereal disease treatment.⁷⁰

The above cases illustrate how local authorities often ignored the legislation prohibiting child prostitution. Boris Bentovin, a physician who wrote widely about the regulation of prostitution, argued that raising of the age of registration in 1901 put the St Petersburg medical-police committee in a 'very awkward position' as they had girls as young as twelve registered on their police lists.⁷¹ Perhaps local authorities prioritised keeping track of all those engaged in commercial sex over the protection of teenage girls. In contrast to this reluctance to apply legislation, there are cases which suggest that local authorities punished madams who employed underage prostitutes harshly. For example, Klavdiia Aksenova in Barnaul received a sentence of eight months imprisonment in solitary confinement on 8 January 1916 for procuring two underage girls 'for the purposes of debauchery' and allowing them to work in her brothel.⁷² In another case from Barnaul, Ekaterina Fedoseeva was sentenced to six months in prison for running a secret house of assignation between 1908 and 1914, in which she employed prostitutes under the legal age

⁶⁸ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 252.

⁶⁹ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23466, lp. 380.

⁷⁰ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23559, lp. 449.

⁷¹ Bentovin published several articles in medical journals and wrote two monographs about prostitution: *Torguiushchie Telom: Ocherki Sovremennoi Prostitutsii* (St Petersburg, 1909) and *Deti-Prostitutki* (St Petersburg, 1910). He claimed that the St Petersburg medical-police actually had to lower the age of registration again in 1909 through fear of juvenile (now clandestine) prostitutes spreading venereal disease in the absence of their medical examinations. No confirmation of this alteration was observed in any archival material. Bentovin, *Deti-Prostitutki*, p. 36.

⁷² GARF, f. 125, op. 41, d. 753, l. 4.

of twenty-one.⁷³ Perhaps prosecuting madams like Aksenova and Fedoseeva allowed the imperial state to deflect responsibility away from their lukewarm approach to preventing child prostitution.

Further evidence of this deflection appears in a 1914 case from St Petersburg, where the city authorities accused foreign individuals of facilitating child prostitution with virtually no substantive evidence. In this year, the criminal investigative department (*sysknaia politsiia*) of the St Petersburg police launched an inquiry into a supposed underground organisation comprised mainly of Poles. The Chief of the criminal investigative department sent a circular to all local police officers on 20 May with a list of thirty-three dangerous individuals. The majority hailed from Warsaw province.⁷⁴ The circular was laden with ethnic prejudices, as the Chief claimed that ‘like all Poles, they do not work’, and instead spent their time playing billiards, stealing and procuring young girls.⁷⁵ He named two groups of dangerous child procurers, the first of which comprised three Polish Catholics: Konstantsiia Petrushinskaia, her son Severin Petrushinskii, and his lover Magdalena Zaslavskaia.⁷⁶ Petrushinskii was a ‘known pimp (*al’fons*) and an organiser of lewd apartments’ who seduced young girls and then forced them into prostitution. According to the Chief, Petrushinskii’s mother helped him lure the girls, allegedly housing them in her apartment, dressing them in ‘fancy dresses’ and selling them to visitors.⁷⁷ His lover, Zaslavskaia, was also apparently a ‘known procuress’ (*izvestnaia svodnia*)

⁷³ GARF, f. 125, op. 41, d. 745, l. 4.

⁷⁴ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 10, d. 187, l. 67.

⁷⁵ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 10, d. 187, l. 67.

⁷⁶ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, ll. 68-69.

⁷⁷ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 69.

and an 'accomplice in the seduction of young girls for the purposes of debauchery'.⁷⁸

The second group consisted of a husband and wife from Warsaw, Edmund-Frantsev Ianitskii and Mikhailina Ianitsinskaia, and their twenty-one-year-old 'accomplice' Eva Van'kevich. Ianitsinskaia allegedly ran a secret brothel where she 'lured young inexperienced girls and quickly got them entangled in debts', and Ianitskii was another known 'crook' (*moshennik*) who made his living by 'taking the wages of prostitutes'.⁷⁹ Both spouses already had criminal records for theft and embezzlement. The Police Chief described Van'kevich as the 'closest accomplice' of Ianitsinskaia, and claimed that she played a key role in 'procuring and engaging young girls in debauchery' at Ianitsinskaia's brothel.⁸⁰

When local police officers reported back to the Chief, they shattered the image of two well-coordinated networks of child procurers. On 20 June, the officer in charge of the Spasskaia district informed the Chief that he had worked with the medical-police to investigate Petrushinskii and that he found no evidence of procuring or any other 'improper misconduct'.⁸¹ On 1 July, he conducted further investigations on Petrushinskaia and Zaslavskaia and found 'nothing reprehensible'.⁸² The police attempted to imprison Ianitsinskaia for running an illegal 'apartment of debauchery' but she was acquitted by the court and charged a fine of just three roubles, which also suggests a lack of evidence for her apparent involvement in procuring children.⁸³ Local police officers

⁷⁸ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 69.

⁷⁹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 69.

⁸⁰ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 69, 72.

⁸¹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 18.

⁸² TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 16.

⁸³ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 35.

interviewed Van'kevich and found that she just rented a room from Ianitsinskaia and worked in a printing office. Other tenants and servants living in the apartment verified both of these statements.⁸⁴

The criminal investigative department attempted to deflect responsibility for child prostitution onto one particular minority group: Polish Catholics. Since the Russian seizure of Polish lands in the late eighteenth century, Poles had challenged imperial Russian authority in the uprisings of 1830-1831, 1863 and during the revolutionary years of 1905-1907, and these events crystallised official distrust for this ethnic group. The late nineteenth century saw the official repression of Polish language and culture through policies of Russification and a push for the complete linguistic elimination of Polish in administrative, judicial and educational settings.⁸⁵ The suppression of Polish language and culture contributed to an upsurge of Polish nationalism in the late nineteenth century, as repression encouraged the rise of underground education and publications beyond the government's control.⁸⁶ Stephen D. Corrsin argues that repressive imperial policies towards Polish people meant that they 'had every reason to feel that the Russian authorities saw them as dangerous elements'.⁸⁷ Additionally, Weeks suggests that officials categorised the Catholic Church and clergy as 'anti-government' because of their connections with the Polish patriotic movement, as the Church was the 'only "national" institution that the Poles retained' following their absorption into the

⁸⁴ TsGIA SPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 35.

⁸⁵ S. Kaspe, 'Imperial Political Culture and Modernisation in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century' in J. Burbank, M. von Hagen and A. Remnev (eds), *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700-1930* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007), p. 464.

⁸⁶ S. D. Corrsin, 'Language Use in Cultural and Political Change in Pre-1914 Warsaw: Poles, Jews and Russification', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 68:1 (1990), p. 75.

⁸⁷ Corrsin, 'Language Use', p. 79.

Russian empire.⁸⁸ During this period, the Russian government conflated the ethnic and religious identities of Polish and Catholic, even though fewer than eight million of the eleven million Catholics recorded in the 1897 census were of Polish ethnicity.⁸⁹ The tying together of the two identities meant that Russian officials continued to perceive Polish Catholics as particularly dangerous in the final years of the empire. The police and army's rising distrust of 'enemy aliens' further exacerbated this situation, as they became fixated on the supposed threat of spies following the empire's counterintelligence disaster during the Russo-Japanese War.⁹⁰ The accused groups of Polish Catholics provided the St Petersburg authorities with a welcome scapegoat for child prostitution in a year when the city's police lists included forty-nine girls under the age of eighteen.⁹¹

The visibility of foreigners in the centre of St Petersburg appears to have motivated the accusations against Polish Catholics. The Chief of the criminal investigative department criticised the 'criminals' for appearing on and inhabiting the 'best streets of the capital' such as the *Passazh* shopping precinct on Nevskii Prospekt. He hinted that these individuals were rising above their station, as although the vast majority were either peasants or from the urban lower classes, they apparently lived in 'huge apartments with luxury

⁸⁸ T. Weeks, 'Religion, Nationality or Politics: Catholicism in the Russian Empire, 1863-1905', *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 2 (2011), p. 53.

⁸⁹ Weeks, 'Religion, Nationality or Politics', p. 52.

⁹⁰ E. Lohr, *Nationalising the Russian Empire: the Campaign Against Enemy Aliens During World War I* (Cambridge and London, 2003), p. 18. More information on Russia's counterintelligence failures during the Russo-Japanese War can be found in D. Wolff, 'Intelligence Intermediaries: the Competition for Chinese Spies' in J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective, World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden and Boston, 2005), pp. 305-332.

⁹¹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 45.

bathrooms' that were certainly 'not of modest means'.⁹² This focus on their puzzling material status was retained throughout his description, as the Chief repeatedly referenced the four or five bedroom apartments that each 'criminal' rented on fashionable city centre streets such as Kazanskaia and the Fontanka. The Chief found the prospect of visible lower-class foreigners unsettling, and perhaps the accusations of criminal activity and child prostitution were also intended to put them back firmly into their place.

The deflection of attention away from the state's role in permitting juveniles to work as prostitutes was effective, as popular discourse often placed the blame for child prostitution on individual madams. Like earlier cases of exploitation, popular accounts vilified brothel keepers for allegedly profiting from the business of child prostitution, and contrasted the abusive madam with the innocent child. In a 1900 issue of the monthly feminist journal *Zhenskoe Delo* (*Women's Matters*), one writer reported on a case of child prostitution in Kiev.⁹³ A brothel keeper named Marinskaia was the central villain of this story; a woman who had 'destroyed many young lives' including her own fourteen-year-old daughter's, by forcing girls to work as prostitutes under the threat of violence.⁹⁴ The writer gave a detailed description of the daily routine Marinskaia enforced on the girls living at her house. In the daytime, she sent them out under the supervision of her daughter to steal, punishing those who

⁹² Twenty-nine out of thirty-three listed criminals were described as either peasants or townspeople. TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 1, d. 187, l. 67.

⁹³ The journal ran a 'chronicle' (*khronika*) section that reported news from the previous month. This section included stories on women in universities, suffrage, a women's museum, schools and news from outside Russia.

⁹⁴ 'Priton Razvrata', *Zhenskoe Delo*, 4 (April 1900), p. 129.

came back empty handed. In the evenings, she 'dressed them up in neat frocks (*chisten'kie plat'itsa*) and sent them to the 'vile trade'.

Other accounts of child prostitution in the popular press branded brothel keepers as child-snatchers who lured young girls. Russia's most popular newspaper *Novoe Vremia* (*New Times*) published a graphic article detailing the work of the St Petersburg House of Mercy, a philanthropic organisation presided over by Princess Evgeniia Ol'denburg. Founded in 1863, the organisation endeavoured to provide material support and a moral education to needy young women and girls, the majority of whom were involved in prostitution. In St Petersburg, the House of Mercy provided women and girls with accommodation in one of their dedicated shelters, for adults in the Petersburg district and for minors in Vyborg. They also had links with other charities, and could house needy women at the Mary Magdalene shelter and the apartment for 'work relief' (*trudovaia pomoshch'*), a centre managed by a charity based at Kalinkin venereal hospital.⁹⁵

The article in *Novoe Vremia* branded child prostitution as the 'shame of our society' and lamented the sight of 'girls of ten or twelve years old, publicly offering their bodies in a semi-drunken state', apparently common across the empire.⁹⁶ The journalist claimed that many lower-class girls became prostitutes because their working parents could not supervise them properly, and their poverty meant that they were easily seduced into prostitution by the prospect

⁹⁵ *Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1907* (St Petersburg, 1908), p. 6.

⁹⁶ Vseslav, 'Prizrenie Maloletnikh Prostitutok v Rossii', *Novoe Vremia*, 12 August 1901.

of treats. He recounted an apparent common situation, when an 'auntie' lured a child into prostitution.

The meeting. Flashy surroundings in a manorial style. The auntie offers something so simple and tempting. 'You, come sit, we will have fun, nice gentlemen will arrive. They sing, they treat us, they are all good people who do not wish you any evil and they will just treat you. Why don't you have something to eat? Why will you not come?'⁹⁷

On 10 May 1910, the journal *Golos Portnogo* published an article that further presented brothel keepers as seducers of the innocent.⁹⁸ The writer condemned female proprietors who converted their dress-making workshops into 'houses of procurement' (*doma svodnichestva*), apparently forcing young female apprentices to strip naked for men and plying them with wine, vodka and beer so that they engaged in 'nightly orgies'.⁹⁹ According to the writer, girls from Vilna and Novgorod provinces were the most vulnerable as they were sent by their families to the capital to become honest workers. The writer ended the article with a call to arms that exemplified his paternalistic approach:

Hear my voice of protest and indignation! Save our sisters from depravity. Ruthlessly expose these

⁹⁷ 'Prizrenie Maloletnikh Prostitutok'

⁹⁸ Formerly known simply as *Portnoi* (*Tailor*), at the time of this article's publication, an issue of the journal cost four roubles.

⁹⁹ 'Mezhdu Masterskoi i Pritonom', pp. 9-10.

landlords and landladies as seducers!

(*razvratitel'nits*).¹⁰⁰

Lower-class people who petitioned the authorities repeated this discourse, which suggests that connection between brothel madams and child prostitution was well established. On 2 March 1907, a peasant woman wrote to the Riga Police Chief claiming that her daughter, Emma Nimand, had been seduced into prostitution.¹⁰¹ Nimand had apparently gone missing over a week ago but had now turned up at her mother's house with 'some woman' to ask for help obtaining a residency permit. Nimand's mother was convinced that the woman was trying to force her daughter into a 'licentious life' and asked the police to help find this procuress. It is impossible to assess the validity of the claim, but the fact that Nimand's mother incorrectly described her twenty-one-year-old daughter as 'underage' and called for her to be 'returned to her apartment' may be indicative of an unwillingness to entertain the idea that her daughter may have chosen to work as a prostitute.

The annual reports by the St Petersburg House of Mercy challenge the monolithic narratives of brothel madams seducing young girls into prostitution. Each year, the organisation kept a record of those housed at their shelters and provided short biographies to show how young lower-class girls became involved in prostitution. Across the biographies from 1909, and 1912-1914, only one young girl's story follows the procurement pattern; the fifteen-year-old K. who, following her father's death, was 'deprived of her innocence by

¹⁰⁰ 'Mezhdu Masterskoi i Pritonom', p. 10.

¹⁰¹ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23575, lp. 201.

a train conductor and then fell into the hands of a brothel keeper'.¹⁰² The other biographies provide a complicated picture of child prostitution and show the various reasons behind why children became prostitutes. Out of nineteen girls, eleven allegedly began working as prostitutes following their 'deprivation of innocence' (*lishenie nevinnosti*) at a young age by family members or work colleagues.¹⁰³ Six of these eleven were 'deflowered' and then abandoned by their social superiors, a trope explored in Tolstoy's 1899 novel *Resurrection*.¹⁰⁴ Five out of nineteen girls were convinced to work as prostitutes by their girlfriends or mothers. In the vast majority of cases, the brothel keeper only features at the very end of the biography. Two cases provide examples of the arduous and complex route to the brothel. The first, fifteen-year-old B.'s story from the 1912 report:

She was born in St Petersburg. Her father is a professional rag picker and her mother died when she was eighteen months old. She begged on the street until she was seven, when a woman gave her a job in a cow shed. She stayed until the age of fourteen, when she started work at a sweet factory.

¹⁰² *Otchet Popechitel'nogo Komiteta Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1909* (St Petersburg, 1910), p. 31.

¹⁰³ I have selected accounts of girls between the ages of eleven and seventeen where the biographer explicitly mentions the child's involvement in prostitution. Other biographies reference running away or begging on the streets, so the number of girls involved in prostitution before entering the shelter may have been higher. *Otchet za 1909*; *Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1912* (St Petersburg, 1913); *Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1913* (St Petersburg, 1914); *Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1914* (St Petersburg, 1915).

¹⁰⁴ Tolstoy claimed that the story of Kastusha Maslova was 'nothing out of the ordinary'. Born of a peasant mother, she was seduced by a 'rich young prince'. She then began pregnant and, after a series of unfortunate events, registered as a prostitute. L. Tolstoy, *Resurrection*.

At fourteen, she was forcefully deprived of her innocence by a factory worker. Soon, after she left the factory for the brothel.¹⁰⁵

The second, fourteen-year-old Elizaveta from the 1913 report:

She is the daughter of a nurse. Her mother convinced her to 'walk' (*guliala*, street-walking) and then took the money from her [...] The medical-police committee detained her and sent her to Kalinkin hospital. Following her discharge, she ran away and lived with her friends in hotels. In July 1913, she moved in with a 'landlady' (*khoziaika*, brothel keeper implied). Her mother reported her to the medical-police committee and she was brought to the shelter.¹⁰⁶

These examples, along with many others, demonstrate how those who compiled the House of Mercy's annual reports were keen to show how children's involvement in prostitution was often a result of poverty and sexual abuse. This links with discourse from some members of the educated public on poverty in the late nineteenth century. From the 1860s, journalists, writers and statisticians branded poverty as a social disease, and argued that its consequences of drunkenness, prostitution and begging posed a threat to the 'moral integrity of the Russian people'.¹⁰⁷ Poverty, rather than the malicious

¹⁰⁵ *Otchet za 1912*, p. 16.

¹⁰⁶ *Otchet za 1913*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁷ Lindenmeyr, 'The Ethos of Charity', pp. 645-656.

brothel keeper, pulled young girls into prostitution, and the House of Mercy endeavoured to tackle this by providing housing, education and training for work.

Other charities linked child prostitution and deprivation in the same way. The society *Trudovaia Pomoshch'* (*Work Relief*) frequently published articles in its journal of the same name, which focused on the growing problem of poverty as cities of the empire expanded through industrialisation.¹⁰⁸ One article reported on a meeting of the St Petersburg Club of Public Figures, where a certain I. Diomidova gave a report on the problem of child prostitution. Diomidova stressed that the rapid urbanisation of the late nineteenth century had exacerbated the problem, as parents sent their children to urban centres for work unsupervised, where they were often 'raped, molested or corrupted'.¹⁰⁹ For Diomidova, the key weapons in the fight against child prostitution were compulsory education and housing, so she praised the work of the House of Mercy for providing shelter and moral training to prevent young children from being 'led astray'.

As well as poverty, feminist organisations shifted blame for child prostitution onto the shoulders of the clients who paid for them. The journal *Zhenskii Vestnik* published an article highlighting the hypocrisy of the imperial authorities in their September 1913 issue. The article recounted a recent newspaper story, about a soldier who was caught having sexual intercourse with two young girls that he found on Nevskii Prospekt at 11pm.¹¹⁰ The writer strongly criticised the

¹⁰⁸ Lindenmeyr, 'The Ethos of Charity', p. 685.

¹⁰⁹ 'Detskaia Prostitutsiei i Mery Bor'by s Nei', *Trudovaia Pomoshch'*, 1 (January 1913), p. 75.

¹¹⁰ 'K Voprosu o Detskoi Prostitutsiei', *Zhenskii Vestnik*, 9 (September 1913), p. 195.

fact that the authorities did not hold the soldier legally accountable for his actions, which suggests that the girls were under the legal age of consent of only fourteen.¹¹¹ The individual who caught the soldier and the two girls together took the girls to the police and then for a medical examination, but told the soldier that he would not 'bother him'. The writer condemned this double standard, and called for the soldier to be committed to a prison or psychiatric institution. The abuse of young girls by military personnel also featured in the House of Mercy's annual reports. The biography of eleven-year-old Elizaveta in the 1913 report suggests that there were establishments that specifically marketed for those with a sexual interest in young girls. From the age of ten, Elizaveta had apparently worked as a prostitute at the 'Crossroads' Hotel and at an apartment with a 'special room' where officers could engage in sex with children.¹¹² Similarly in 1900, the weekly magazine *Razvedchik* (*Scout*) reported on a colonel stationed near Samarkand who proposed that the city authorities supply soldiers living in nearby barracks with young teenage girls as amusing 'diversions'.¹¹³

If the caricature of the brothel keeper as procurer of children was not present in the discourse of organisations committed to helping child prostitutes, why did this image persist in the imagination of the popular press? As seen earlier in the chapter, brothel keepers were the 'face' of the regulation system and criticisms of the exploitation and inhumanity of regulation were often aimed directly at them. Rather than tackle the huge social problem of poverty and

¹¹¹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 105.

¹¹² *Ochet za 1913*, pp. 34-35.

¹¹³ Quoted in Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 43.

acknowledge the role of the Russian authorities in registering underage girls, it may have been more convenient for officials and journalists to scapegoat the brothel keeper as a seductress. 'Child procurer' was a label hurled at undesirable individuals, as evidenced by the St Petersburg police's classification of Polish Catholics as an organised criminal network who profited from child prostitution.

Supervisors of lower-class people or vulnerable members of the urban community?

The imperial authorities relied on those who facilitated prostitution to keep track of their local populations. Brothel keepers played a particularly important role in this surveillance as local authorities relied on them to provide accurate lists of all of the women that they employed. In Estliand province in 1912, when brothel keepers failed to meet these requirements, the medical-police committee forced madams to send them a monthly report on arriving and departing prostitutes.¹¹⁴ In Arkhangel'sk in 1909, police agents worked with madams to provide the city's Police Chief with a monthly summary of the number of prostitutes per brothel.¹¹⁵

Other facilitators of prostitution, apart from brothel madams, had duties of surveillance. In the capital, landlords and landladies who rented their properties to prostitutes had to provide the medical-police committee with the

¹¹⁴ EAA, 3163.1.1, lk. 5.

¹¹⁵ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 3999, l. 57.

prostitute's full details from the house book on demand.¹¹⁶ In Revel', hotel owners had to record the names of those visiting prostitutes in their establishments within twelve hours of their arrival, or risk an administrative penalty.¹¹⁷ In Moscow, it was the responsibility of landlords who rented rooms to prostitutes to collect the full names and addresses of any clients staying the night.¹¹⁸ Violation of this could result in the landlord losing their right to rent to prostitutes. Finally, in Dvinsk landlords and innkeepers who allowed prostitution within their properties had to report all visitors and details of their residency permits to the police within twelve hours of their arrival. Failure to do so resulted in either three months' imprisonment or a 500-rouble fine.¹¹⁹ Even prostitutes were encouraged to monitor their own clients. In Moscow in 1910, prostitutes living in furnished rooms had to register the name and place of residence of all guests who stayed the night.¹²⁰ The rules forbade prostitutes from leaving guests unattended in their bedrooms and required them to inform the domestic servant as their client departed. Madams, homeowners, and prostitutes all helped the authorities to keep track of the movement, residency and activities of lower-class people.

Monitoring the lower-class population was an official priority. The authorities were often willing to overlook facilitators' violent or criminal behaviour providing that this was achieved. For example in 1911, Mariia Verzhbitskaia, the wife of a Revel' merchant, petitioned the Estliand Governor complaining

¹¹⁶ The landlords and landladies provided the authorities with a blue page entitled *vypiska iz domovoi knigi*. TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 645, l. 49; TsGIASPb, f. 593, op. 1, d. 643, l. 300, 305.

¹¹⁷ EAA, 30.9.6397, lk. 8.

¹¹⁸ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 70.

¹¹⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 68, d. 7ch112, ll. 5-6.

¹²⁰ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 70.

about the violent behaviour of a local hotel owner. Verzhbitskaia explained that she had found her husband with two young prostitutes at the buffet of the 'Hotel Europe' at three in the morning. The hotel owner, Mrs Zhake, was apparently 'very annoyed' to see Verzhbitskaia there, and proceeded to strike her repeatedly on the head, pull her hair and rip her shawl, injuring her so badly that she 'lay for two days and could not raise [her] head'.¹²¹ When the Estliand authorities investigated the case, they dismissed the accusations of violence, and instead focused on the fact that Zhake failed to register three men in her visitors' book.¹²² The Estliand authorities would tolerate Zhake's violent and criminal behaviour as long as she helped them monitor the local population.

Facilitators' supervisory role and close ties to law enforcement gave them an elevated status, which arguably contributed to their negative portrayals in popular discourse. Finding documentation that challenges contemporary stereotypes is difficult, especially given the ample evidence of corruption and abuse. However, facilitators could also be vulnerable members of urban communities and they faced a whole host of personal and professional challenges. Some brothel keepers saw their profession as just employment, rather than an opportunity for exploitation.¹²³ Facilitators were instruments of state power, but they were easily disposable. As seen in chapter three, provincial governors had the power to revoke brothel licences whenever they saw fit, and houses of toleration were closed *en masse* in Iaroslavl', Kiev, Omsk,

¹²¹ EAA, 30.9.6397, lk. 2.

¹²² EAA, 30.9.6397, lk. 1.

¹²³ Judith and Daniel Walkowitz have explored how in Victorian Britain, brothel keepers could both exploit and be exploited by the prostitutes they employed, as both parties were usually from the urban poor. Walkowitz and Walkowitz, "We are Not Beasts of the Field", pp. 73-106.

Tomsk and Moscow in the early 1900s. Rival business owners, furious residents and corrupt police agents all had the power to destroy facilitators' livelihood and ostracise them from urban communities, although this happened infrequently.

Most complaints from urban residents had little impact on the business of brothel keeping, but some examples show how madams were vulnerable to sabotage. In June 1911, the Narva medical-police committee decided to move the brothels 'Pleva' and 'Golden Anchor' from the central Petrovskii suburb to a more distant part of the urban centre, following a petition sent by eighteen local homeowners.¹²⁴ However, one year later, the authorities discovered that the petition was fraudulent. A man named Ol'kha had reportedly fabricated names and even paid Narva homeowners to sign the document. He had apparently forged the signature of Iurii Grossman, who had worked for the MVD and was 'long dead'.¹²⁵ The affected brothel keepers, Anna Alekseeva, Domna Guzinska and Shifra Rozenberg wrote to the MVD on 21 January 1913 explaining that they were 'unfortunate landladies' and victims of sabotage at the hands of the 'scum of Narva'.¹²⁶ They begged the authorities to investigate the case properly, and either allow them to reopen their brothels or give them a year to sell and liquidate their businesses, as 'the immediate closure [will be] ruinous for us'.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 214.

¹²⁵ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 214. This case is described briefly in Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 180-181.

¹²⁶ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 214.

¹²⁷ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 214.

The popular press had little sympathy for the Narva brothel keepers. *Narvskaiia Gazeta* (*Narva Gazette*) reported on the case on 8 August 1912, and they drew a binary between the 'good' homeowners and the 'evil' madams of Narva. Writing about the homeowners, the journalist stated that he would 'like their efforts to be crowned with success'.¹²⁸ The writer claimed that the 'good intentions' of residents to close Narva's brothels were frequently blocked and that homeowners had 'suffered abuse and public insults at the hands of brothel madams'.¹²⁹ When the Chief Medical Inspectorate reviewed the case in March 1913, they made no mention of any violent behaviour, which suggests that the journalist could have been drawing on popular stereotypes of corrupt and exploitative madams. The Inspectorate did reiterate the brothel keepers' vulnerable position, stating that brothels licences were subject to termination at any given time.¹³⁰

Even though law enforcement frequently sided in favour of madams, those who fell on the wrong side of the local police could be vulnerable to harassment and the withdrawal of their licences. In 1903 and 1904, Anastasiia Gruzintseva, a brothel madam from Stary Oskol in Kursk province petitioned the central MVD several times claiming that her establishment had been closed unfairly by the corrupt police superintendent (*ispravnik*), Gevremnov. In her first petition, Gruzintseva explained that she 'always observed all of the obligations prescribed by law impeccably' and that all of her neighbours 'regarded [her] as a dignified woman'.¹³¹ Gruzintseva claimed that the trouble began in 1897,

¹²⁸ A. B. 'Bor'ba s Domami Terpimosti v Narve', *Narvskaiia Gazeta*, 8 August 1912.

¹²⁹ 'Bor'ba s Domami Terpimosti v Narve'.

¹³⁰ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2332, l. 233.

¹³¹ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 4.

when several suspicious individuals entered her brothel. She contacted the police immediately and called for their arrest but law enforcement 'did not pay any attention'. After her third 'urgent demand', the suspicious individuals were arrested, but Gevremnov apparently took a dislike to her and withdrew her brothel licence on the pretext that she had harboured thieves.¹³² Gruzintseva strongly protested and threatened to report Gevremnov to the Provincial Governor, so he transferred her licence to her sister Nataliia, who had four young children and 'no right to open a brothel' legally.¹³³ After this incident, Gruzintseva claimed that the police harassment intensified. In 1902, the licence was withdrawn again for selling alcohol illegally, yet apparently the only evidence Gevremnov could present for this was two bottles of beer purchased by Gruzintseva for personal consumption. Gruzintseva complained that she could not open another brothel because of the 'unfounded and disgraceful accusations' made against her by Gevremnov.¹³⁴ Stressing the urgency of the matter, Gruzintseva explained that the building, which cost her 10,000 roubles, was no longer of any use to her, as she could not attract lodgers due to its remote location far from the city centre and reputation as a 'whorehouse' (*bardak*).

It is difficult to decipher whether Gruzintseva was actually a victim of police corruption, or whether she was misleading the authorities to achieve specific ends. There are some peculiarities in the case that hint at the possibility of misconduct. The Kursk Governor stated that there was no written record of the

¹³² GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 5.

¹³³ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 5.

¹³⁴ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 6.

offences in the form of a protocol, and that Gevremnov had just extracted evidence through 'personal conversations'.¹³⁵ When pressed for further evidence, Gevremnov suddenly produced a written statement by another brothel madam, Elena Filippovich, who claimed that Gruzintseva had employed clandestine prostitutes 'without medical tickets' in her establishment.¹³⁶ When the authorities questioned local residents, they struggled to find anybody who could corroborate these accusations.¹³⁷ Despite this, the department of police dismissed all of Gruzintseva's petitions.¹³⁸ This case illustrates the power that local police wielded over facilitators of prostitution. If brothel madams had a favourable relationship with the police they could violate regulatory legislation unimpeded, but falling on the wrong side of law enforcement had the potential to make their lives very difficult.

In periods of social and political unrest, ordinary people and the authorities attacked facilitators as emblems of exploitation and subversion. In Warsaw in May 1905, amidst political upheaval across the empire, Jewish lower-class residents rampaged through Jewish-owned brothels and clandestine dens, destroying furniture, looting and beating pimps and madams.¹³⁹ Warsaw residents widely regarded the so-called 'pimp-pogrom' (*alphonsenpogrom*) as a legitimate 'moment of reckoning' against those who facilitated the exploitation of young women in the sex trade, arguably influenced by sensationalised narratives of white slavery.¹⁴⁰ During the First World War,

¹³⁵ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 9.

¹³⁶ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 17.

¹³⁷ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, ll. 19-20.

¹³⁸ GARF, f. 102 d2, op. 60, d. 9ch6, l. 31.

¹³⁹ E. J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: the Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 58-62.

¹⁴⁰ Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil's Chain*, p. 215.

military and civil authorities regarded facilitators and the women that they managed with increased suspicion. In Riga in October 1915, the Police Chief evicted all managers of 'known and secret brothels' from the city, along with a quarter of registered prostitutes, accusing them of subverting the war effort by facilitating the circulation of venereal diseases.¹⁴¹

Competitors posed a threat to madams' business interests and personal safety. In St Petersburg in July 1906, the police's criminal investigative department worked with the medical-police committee to investigate a petition sent by the landlady Sara Tsyporkina accusing a certain Abram Reitenbord of 'insulting her, pounding her with his fists and stalking her lodgers'.¹⁴² The police discovered that Sara, Abram, and their respective spouses rented apartments within the same building, and that the two women both 'kept prostitutes' while their husbands 'served [them] as cats' (*kotki*, slang for pimp).¹⁴³ Business rivalry could have been the motivation behind Abram's beating of Sara: the police remarked that Abram's wife and Sara were always trying to 'lure prostitutes' away from one another.

Madams were also vulnerable to sabotage by other competitors in the entertainment industry. In autumn 1914, a restaurant owner in Revel' petitioned the Estliand Governor requesting the closure of five brothels on Martenskaia Street: 'Victoria', 'Golden Star', 'Manchuria', 'Venice' and

¹⁴¹ Most of the expelled prostitutes had Germanic surnames. The majority of brothel keepers across Lifliand province were identified as ethnically German in the first empire-wide survey of prostitution in 1889. This suggests that the expulsions were motivated by wartime anti-German sentiments as well as distrust of those working in the sex industry. See chapter six and S. Hearne, 'Sex on the Front: Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Russia's First World War', *Revolutionary Russia*, 30:1 (2017), pp. 107-108.

¹⁴² TsGIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 647, l. 1.

¹⁴³ TsGIASPB, f. 593, op. 1, d. 647, l. 1.

‘Manezh’.¹⁴⁴ The petitioner claimed that the establishments were selling alcohol illegally, perhaps in an attempt to remove all competition in his local area. When the Revel’ Police Chief reviewed the case, he dismissed the petition on the grounds that no brothel keeper would risk selling alcohol as they were constantly supervised and risked serious punishment, including expulsion from the city.¹⁴⁵ Although the case ruled in the madam’s favour, the result could have easily been reversed, as brothel madams were vulnerable to the whim of the authorities.

Invisible middlemen: pimps and procurers

Brothel madams and those who rented to prostitutes were the most visible facilitators in regulatory legislation, but they were not the only party mediating between prostitutes and the police. Pimps (*al’fonsi/sutenery*) and procurers (*svodnitsy*) also helped to facilitate prostitution, but their contributions were not officially endorsed and instead they were associated with clandestine prostitution. For example, Circular 1611 stated that it was the duty of medical-police committees to find and prosecute ‘pimps and other people contributing to secret debauchery’.¹⁴⁶ In 1912, the Society for the Care of Young Girls informed the St Petersburg authorities that clandestine prostitutes relied on the help of pimps to avoid registration.¹⁴⁷ Pimps were legislated against in Article 524 in the 1909 Criminal Code, which made the ‘procurement

¹⁴⁴ EAA, 31.2.6909, lk. 2.

¹⁴⁵ EAA, 31.2.6909, lk. 2.

¹⁴⁶ TsGIASPB, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 32.

¹⁴⁷ TsGIASPB, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 60.

(*svodnichestvom*) of a woman younger than twenty-one for the purposes of debauchery' punishable by imprisonment.¹⁴⁸ This law cast procurement as a crime committed primarily by men, as it included a clause about pimping wives, daughters or others under 'his authority or custody', for which the punishment was imprisonment in a correctional facility. Engelstein argues that this anti-pimping legislation 'served to bolster the legitimacy of male control', recognising male independence of action while pushing women into the role of subject, or even object.¹⁴⁹ Pimps and procurers are elusive in archival material. Their lack of endorsement in legislation means that there are no official documents or statistical surveys which indicate the number of people who worked behind the scenes to recruit women into prostitution. The circumstances in which pimps and procurers are drawn to our attention reveal official and popular assumptions about ethnicity, sexuality and criminality.

The Russian imperial authorities presented procurement as something perpetrated by foreigners and evidence of wider criminality. On 20 May 1914, the criminal investigative department of the St Petersburg police informed all district police officers about several 'dangerous and foreign' pimps. Vikentii-Vladislav Shvedzinskii, a thirty-eight-year-old man from Warsaw, was apparently a 'famous pimp and *khipenskii* thief' on the loose in the capital.¹⁵⁰ Petr Iuzvitskii was another '*khipenskii* thief, pimp, and knife maker' from Siedlce province in the eastern portion of the Kingdom of Poland, who had

¹⁴⁸ TsGIASPb, f. 513, op. 117, d. 46, l. 121.

¹⁴⁹ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 92.

¹⁵⁰ This type of theft was a collaboration between prostitutes and their pimps. The Chief of the criminal investigative department described it as when 'a female prostitute lures a man for lewdness and during the act of love; the prostitute's lover secretly steals the client's money and valuables'. TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 10, d. 187, l. 68.

supposedly been expelled from Warsaw for ‘vicious behaviour’ (*za porochnoe povedenie*).¹⁵¹ Another, Vladislav Iarzhombek-Iarzhembskii from Austria, was a pimp ‘well acquainted with the criminal world’.¹⁵² When the Moskovskii district police officer investigated the three men, he found that none had a criminal record, nor had he received any other incriminating reports.¹⁵³ Further documentation to prove, or disprove, that these men were actually pimps has not survived. Instead, these reports reveal the associations made between foreignness, crime, and illicit sexuality in the official imagination.

There is a specific historical context to explain the imperial authorities’ classification of pimping and procurement as foreign. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the emergence of a new moral panic about white slavery or the ‘trade in women’ across Europe and North America.¹⁵⁴ Various states introduced anti-sex trafficking legislation around the turn of the century; the Russian empire followed suit in 1909.¹⁵⁵ The first All-Russian Congress for the Struggle with the Traffic in Women and its Consequences was held in St Petersburg from 21-25 April 1910, and Russian delegates attended earlier

¹⁵¹ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 10, d. 187, l. 72.

¹⁵² TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 10, d. 187, l. 72.

¹⁵³ TsGIASPb, f. 569, op. 10, d. 187, l. 58.

¹⁵⁴ In the United States, this also included the trafficking of women across internal state borders for ‘immoral purposes’. The branding of the perpetrators of this crime as principally Jewish was universal and dates from when the term ‘white slavery’ was coined by British physician Michael Ryan, see M. Ryan, *The Philosophy of Marriage, in its Social, Moral and Physical Relations*, (London, 1843), p. 29. Historians generally agree that although there is some evidence of forced prostitution, the ‘white slave panic’ that infiltrated popular culture, philanthropic activities and even state discourses in the early 1900s was a method to enforce control over migration and female sexuality. See J. Pliley, *Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI* (Cambridge, MA, 2014); Wingfield, ‘Destination: Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Constantinople’; Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, pp. 100-116; Corbin, *Women for Hire*, 280-298.

¹⁵⁵ On 25 December 1909, Russia introduced the law ‘on measures to combat the sale of women for the purpose of debauchery’, see T. A. Rodionova, ‘Vliianie Norm Mezhdunarodnogo Prava na Stanovlenie i Razvitie Otechestvennogo Ugolovnogo Zakonodatel’sstva’, *Vestnik Cheliabinskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, 4:219 (2011), p. 85. Similar laws were adopted in France in 1895, Germany in 1897, the USA in 1910 and Great Britain in 1912.

international conferences. White slavery in most European contexts meant the forced transportation of a woman across national borders for the purposes of prostitution. In Russia, the definition was more fluid as feminist activists conflated *all* forms of brothel prostitution with white slavery.¹⁵⁶ An article in the feminist journal *Zhenskoe Delo* stated that the chief measure to combat the 'trade in women' was the complete abolition of regulation, as the system encouraged sex trafficking to staff the empire's state-licensed brothels.¹⁵⁷ The apparent widespread nature of international sex trafficking was emphasised in popular and medical discourse. In 1914, one article in *RZhKVB* claimed that 10,000 of Constantinople's 36,000 prostitutes were Russian women, delivered to the country by 'agents' and often 'kept in brothels by force'.¹⁵⁸

Historians generally agree that international concern about the 'traffic in women' was a moral panic, and that fears were disproportionate to reality.¹⁵⁹ Instead, panic about white slavery reflected wider societal anxieties about modernity, female mobility and ethnicity. Concern about female mobility was at the centre of Russian responses to reported sex trafficking. In 1899, the Russian MVD debated whether government or private agencies should be installed in coastal ports, to prevent female emigrants leaving 'to start a

¹⁵⁶ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 147.

¹⁵⁷ Z. Voronov, 'Prostitutsiia i Zakon', *Zhenskoe Delo* (April 1900) 4, p. 55.

¹⁵⁸ 'Prostitutsiia v Konstantinopole', *RZhKVB* 6 (June 1914), pp. 578-579.

¹⁵⁹ In their assessment of moral panics, Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda emphasise how the perceived damage, threat or danger of a particular behaviour is often 'above and beyond what a realistic appraisal could sustain', see E. Goode and N. Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: the Social Construction of Deviance*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2009), p. 40. For out-of-proportion Russian public perceptions see Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 129-139. For other examples in international contexts, see D. J. Langum, *Crossing Over the Line: Legislating Morality and the Mann Act* (Chicago, 1994); M. Stange, *Personal Property: Wives, White Slaves and the Market in Women* (Baltimore and London, 1998); E. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain Since 1700* (Dublin, 1977).

dissolute life in a foreign country'.¹⁶⁰ The Russian authorities worked with other national bodies to prevent the installation of 'trafficked' women in Russian state licensed brothels. For example, in September 1903, the Police Chief of Narva assisted the German National Committee for the Fight Against the Traffic in Women by providing them with information on the number of German women working in brothels across the empire.¹⁶¹

In Russian narratives of white slavery, Jewish pimps or migration agents were presented as the chief perpetrators.¹⁶² This may partly have been because the presence of Jews in the facilitation of prostitution was disproportionate to their representation in the population as a whole. Just 4 per cent of the Russian population were Jewish, but a quarter of brothel madams were Jews.¹⁶³ Engelstein argues that this was more as a result of 'place [rather] than ethnic predilection': brothels were predominantly situated in cities and towns and Jews were overwhelmingly urban.¹⁶⁴ This was mandated by the 1882 May Laws, which forbade Jews from setting up permanent residence in the countryside and further pushed this group into urban settlements.¹⁶⁵ Antisemitism also manifested itself in the waves of anti-Jewish pogroms that raged across the Pale of Settlement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

¹⁶⁰ GARF, f. 102, op 55, d. 69, l. 4.

¹⁶¹ EAA, 633.1.33, lk. 38.

¹⁶² Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 161-166.

¹⁶³ Within the Pale of Settlement this representation was even higher, as around 70 per cent of all madams were Jewish. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 164. See also Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice*, pp. 55-56.

¹⁶⁴ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, pp. 307.

¹⁶⁵ These laws were enacted following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II. They reflect the imperial administration's desire to create an urban, segregated Jewish community and to pacify popular antisemitism by 'drawing distinct boundaries between Jews and peasants', see E. M. Avrutin, *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2010), pp. 95-96.

centuries. Rather than acknowledging these attacks as acts of antisemitic violence, the imperial government along with nearly all elements of Russian society perceived the violence as merely ‘protests against Jewish economic exploitation’.¹⁶⁶ In addition to official policies of segregation and organised violence, far right activists and conservative voices frequently attacked Jews as subversive, exploitative and deviant in the Russian press.¹⁶⁷ For the urban lower classes, Jewish people were the ‘welcome scapegoat’ for the social and economic dislocation caused by rapid modernisation.¹⁶⁸

The Jewish perpetrator of white slavery was a common trope repeated across Europe and North America. In the USA, social commentators typecast white slavers as Jews mainly of eastern European, and in some cases, Russian origin.¹⁶⁹ The same could be said for late imperial Austria, where white slavery rhetoric facilitated the ‘language of difference’, contrasting the ‘innocent girls’ with the eastern European and Jewish procurers who apparently captured and enslaved them.¹⁷⁰ In French newspaper coverage of the white slave ‘epidemic’, the procurers’ names were always foreign-sounding and ‘Hebrews’ were

¹⁶⁶ B. Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: the Jewish Encounter With Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002), p. 189.

¹⁶⁷ G. Gilbert, *The Radical Right in Late Imperial Russia: Dreams of a True Fatherland?* (Abingdon and New York, 2016), pp. 70-71.

¹⁶⁸ A. Kappeler, *The Russian Empire: a Multi-Ethnic History*, (London and New York, 2013), p. 271.

¹⁶⁹ George Kibbe Turner, an author and journalist from Chicago, placed the city’s ‘Russian Jews’ at the centre of the white slave trade. G. K. Turner, *The City of Chicago: a Study of the Great Immoralities* (New York, 1907), p. 581. Jean Zimmerman, president of the Chicago Rescue Mission, lamented the entry of the ‘scum, vice and criminal element of south-eastern Europe’ into the US, as they apparently imported white slavery. See J. T. Zimmermann, *Chicago’s Black Traffic in White Girls* (Chicago, 1911), pp. 8-9. Interestingly, between 1910-1915, 72.5 per cent of people convicted for white slavery in the USA were native-born Americans, and only 3.5 per cent were Russian, see Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood*, p. 119.

¹⁷⁰ Wingfield, ‘Destination: Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Constantinople’, p. 292. See also Stauter-Halsted’s work on Austrian Galicia, where she argues that Jews were typecast as ‘natural corrupters of morals’ who infected the Polish national body through their innate deviance and supposed involvement in sex trafficking, Stauter-Halstead, “‘A Generation of Monsters’”, p. 34.

predominantly cast as the guilty party.¹⁷¹ In Russia, reports of the procurement of young women at the hands of unscrupulous Jewish individuals appeared in newspapers, journals and even as full-length monographs.¹⁷²

Despite the prominence of the stereotype of the deviant Jewish procurer, it is difficult to locate the men who actually worked as pimps in archival material. Two cases from the MVD files vividly illustrate these cultural representations. In 1895, a 'known supplier of girls' came to the attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to the newspaper *Kreuzzeitung* (*New Prussian Newspaper*) in December, forty-five-year-old Lazar Shvats was in Hungary procuring young women in order to supply brothels in the distant cities of Alexandria and Cairo.¹⁷³ The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs portrayed Shvats as an insidious threat capable of disguise, as he apparently operated under sixteen different pseudonyms and was able to speak fluently in eight languages. Shvats was Jewish. He kept brothels in Buenos Aires and had spent his childhood in the Black Sea city of Odessa, two cities which had strong connections with white slavery in popular imagination.¹⁷⁴ In 1902, the case of another 'trader' came to the attention of the MVD. The Governor of Vilna province wrote to the department of police in April regarding a so-called

¹⁷¹ Corbin, *Women for Hire*, p. 292.

¹⁷² Bernstein provides a comprehensive list of Russian sources on procurement and discusses references to Jewish agents, Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 147-148, 161-164.

¹⁷³ GARF, f. 102, op. 52, d. 140, l. 1.

¹⁷⁴ GARF, f. 102, op. 52, d. 140, l. 18. Odessa was one of the most active ports in the Russian empire as well as a direct route to Constantinople, which also had a reputation as a 'hub for the white slave trade for centuries'. J. Tanny, *City of Rogues and Schnorrers: Russia's Jews and the Myth of Old Odessa* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2011), p. 52. Buenos Aires also had strong connections with white slavery. Contemporaries perceived the city as the final destination for many 'white slaves' because of the high percentage of Jewish women from the Russian empire working in the commercial sex industry there. D. J. Guy, *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family and Nation in Argentina* (Lincoln and London, 1991); S. McGee Deutsch, *Crossing Borders, Claiming a Nation: a History of Argentine Jewish Women, 1880-1955* (Durham and London, 2010).

notorious 'supplier of prostitutes' (*postavshchik prostitutok*), David Neiman.¹⁷⁵

According to the Governor, Neiman travelled to Vilna to purchase prostitutes and then transported them to his brothels in Odessa and the southern provinces.

There is no documentation revealing the outcome of these cases, but the available information suggests that the Russian authorities were relatively indifferent to the perceived problem of sex trafficking. The department of police sent out a circular to all provincial governors in an attempt to find Lazar Shvats, but it took a full two years for them to track him down in the town of Dubno, where he was working under the pseudonym Gershka Morgulisa.¹⁷⁶ Details of Shvats' case were leaked to the press and published in *Peterburgskaia Gazeta* (*St Petersburg Gazette*) in early 1896, and this evoked greater official concern than the activities of the supposed trafficker.¹⁷⁷ The MVD, the criminal investigative department of the St Petersburg police and the press office all worked together to find the informant.¹⁷⁸ With the case of David Neiman, the authorities found that he had already appeared in court for attempting to procure two prostitutes, Mariia Ibiaskaia and Mikhailina Raidis, for his brothel in Odessa.¹⁷⁹ The Vilna Governor concluded his letter to the department of police by remarking that Neiman left for America in 1900 and that now the investigation was happening there.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁵ Vilna province (*Vilenskaia guberniia*) was comprised of portions of present-day Belarus and Lithuania. GARF, f. 102, op. 56, d. 26ch21, l. 2.

¹⁷⁶ GARF, f. 102, op. 52, d. 140, l. 18.

¹⁷⁷ GARF, f. 102, op. 52, d. 140, l. 8.

¹⁷⁸ GARF, f. 102, op. 52, d. 140, l. 7, 8, 10, 14.

¹⁷⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 56, d. 26ch21, l. 2.

¹⁸⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 56, d. 26ch21, l. 2.

There is a clear disparity between the danger of procurement emphasised in both official discourse and popular culture and the lukewarm approach of officials to prosecuting those perceived to be responsible. This apathy could represent a recognition of the difficulty of policing mobile perpetrators who crossed international borders, especially as the imperial state's attempts to 'know' its mobile population were resolutely unsuccessful.¹⁸¹ Emigration without the approval of the Tsar was officially prohibited in Russia, yet by the turn of the century, between half and 90 per cent of all those leaving the empire departed illegally through a system of migrant-smugglers and bribes.¹⁸² Russian jurists bemoaned how modernisation, namely the development of new modes of transport and communication, facilitated the emergence of new, and importantly, international criminal networks who trafficked women and pornography across national borders.¹⁸³ Despite this, state-driven initiatives to combat these sexual crimes were lukewarm at best, which meant that the burden often fell onto philanthropic groups who lacked the necessary funds and willing volunteers.¹⁸⁴

In 1899, the MVD wrote to the department of police asking whether any 'official and generally reliable' statistics existed on how many young girls were trafficked abroad 'for the purposes of debauchery', illustrating the impossibility

¹⁸¹ Badcock observes how exile in the late imperial period was the 'antithesis of Foucault's modern prison' as the tsarist state did not closely observe or monitor its exiles, let alone know where they actually were. Badcock, *A Prison Without Walls?*, p. 1.

¹⁸² Lohr, *Russian Citizenship*, p. 95.

¹⁸³ Hetherington, "'The Highest Guardian of the Child'", p. 296.

¹⁸⁴ For example, from its inception in 1899, ROZZh fought to install round-the-clock staff at St Petersburg's railway stations to provide support for newly-arrived young female migrants, but they did not receive the necessary funds from the Duma until summer 1914. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 207-208.

of keeping track of mobile people.¹⁸⁵ The anti-sex trafficking legislation of 1909 had little impact, as there were no convictions made under this new law.¹⁸⁶ Stauter-Halstead argues, in the context of partitioned Poland, that the rush of migration out of eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century meant that government officials 'struggled to track the whereabouts of their subjects with any degree of accuracy'.¹⁸⁷ Instead of focusing on prosecuting those responsible for supposed mass procurement, officials in both the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires exaggerated claims of 'lost souls', scams and abuses in order to 'slow the pace of emigration'.¹⁸⁸ Given the chronic underfunding and understaffing of the late imperial police force discussed in chapter three, perhaps Russian officials emphasised the danger of procurement to encourage the population to police itself.¹⁸⁹ This fits with Badcock's observation of Russia as a 'shabby and shaggy beast' rather than 'efficient, zealous empire', as officials empathically failed to know and monitor their populations effectively.¹⁹⁰

This lack of prosecution did not halt the circulation of the stereotype of the deviant Jewish procurer, which often featured in interactions between lower-class people and local authorities. This figure was especially prominent in towns within the Pale of Settlement, where Jews were even more visible in the

¹⁸⁵ GARF, f. 102, op 55, d. 69, l. 4.

¹⁸⁶ Philippa Hetherington observes that although there were trials, no individuals were convicted under the 1909 law. P. Hetherington, 'Victims of the Social Temperament: Prostitution, Migration and the Traffic in Women from Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, 1885-1935,' PhD Dissertation (Harvard University, 2014), p. 6.

¹⁸⁷ Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil's Chain*, p. 138.

¹⁸⁸ Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil's Chain*, p. 138

¹⁸⁹ Weissman argues that municipal authorities expected the general populace to 'police itself' as ordinary policemen were tied to stationary posts. This only began to change right at the end of the imperial period. Weissman, 'Regular Police in Tsarist Russia', p. 49.

¹⁹⁰ Badcock, *A Prison Without Walls?*, p. 4.

business of facilitating prostitution.¹⁹¹ An anonymous petition sent from a Dvinsk (Daugavpils) resident to the department of police in August 1901 accused Jewish tavern-owner Dveira Abeleva of keeping a 'secret den' of underage prostitution on Rizhskaia Street in the city.¹⁹² The petitioner made clear connections between the brothel and criminal activity, accusing Abeleva of creating a base for 'a constant influx of shady characters' and drunken 'scoundrels'.¹⁹³ When the Vitebsk Governor and department of police investigated Abeleva's tavern, they dismissed all of the petitioners' claims, arguing that those who had signed the petition were not even Dvinsk residents.¹⁹⁴ Abeleva's Jewish identity and the strong connections made between Jews, procuring and criminal activity in official and popular discourse may have made her an easy target within the local community for accusations of this kind.

In June 1902, sixteen residents of Tarashcha petitioned the MVD for the closure of a local brothel run by an 'unknown Jew' from Odessa, Gershe Lin.¹⁹⁵ Their complaint was clearly influenced by narratives of white slavery, as they alleged that this individual had snatched children from the local orphanage and installed them as prostitutes in his brothel. The residents reported that when his landlady asked about his profession, Lin had replied that he 'traded in old things at railway stations all over Russia', which hinted at his involvement in

¹⁹¹ Jews account for the majority of brothel keepers in Minsk province (64 per cent), Beassarabia province (79 per cent), Kherson province (83 per cent) and Tavrichesk province (92 per cent). Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 164.

¹⁹² GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 13ch4, l. 1.

¹⁹³ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 13ch4, l. 1, 5.

¹⁹⁴ GARF, f. 102, op. 58, d. 13ch4, l. 4.

¹⁹⁵ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch8, l. 1.

trafficking.¹⁹⁶ The city was allegedly home to other similar establishments, including one located in a grain warehouse ‘derisively named the “Tarashcha Cross”’. The Governor of Kiev later investigated the case and dismissed the residents’ accusations of white slavery. He ruled that the brothel should stay as it was in a ‘more than suitable location’ and its closure could cause more secret prostitution in the city, which was apparently widespread among Jewish domestic servants.¹⁹⁷

In another case from the city of Elisavetgrad, the wife of the Collegiate Assessor, Vera Gogonovskaia, petitioned the MVD on 21 June 1902 to remove a city brothel managed by the ‘Jew Rottenberg’.¹⁹⁸ What appeared to trouble Gogonovskaia most was the establishment’s location close to an agricultural exhibition, a hospital and a market that arrived in the city five times annually.¹⁹⁹ When the Governor of Kherson province investigated the case in October 1903, he refused to close Rottenberg’s establishment on the grounds that there were many other brothels in the area.²⁰⁰ Gogonovskaia’s targeting of this particular brothel demonstrates the potential impact of the stereotype of the Jewish perpetrator in white slavery narratives. In her petitions, she begged the MVD to release residents from the ‘evil’ of this Jewish establishment as it made the surrounding neighbourhood ‘horrible’, without mentioning the other brothels in the area.²⁰¹ These petitions reflect both wider antisemitism and how the

¹⁹⁶ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch8, l. 1.

¹⁹⁷ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch8, l. 6.

¹⁹⁸ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch7, l. 1.

¹⁹⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch7, l. 3.

²⁰⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch7, l. 5.

²⁰¹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch7, l. 1.

discourse of white slavery filtered down into everyday representations of Jewish people.

Discussions of pimps and procurers by educated observers served both as an outlet for antisemitic prejudices and a moralising tool to police the behaviour of young women. In his monograph *The Return of Fallen Girls to Honest Work* (1888), abolitionist physician Dr. V. P. Okorokov portrayed 'exploiters of debauchery' as a well-coordinated network comprised of both men and women. Young girls were apparently sold by 'special merchants', who were either Jewish men known as the 'Maccabees' (*makkaveiamii*) or women known as 'nurses' (*nian'ki*).²⁰² Okorokov was keen to present procurers as an insidious threat, emphasising how they blended into the urban environment and lured women in seemingly ordinary situations. He claimed that:

The traders can be found in urban areas strolling the streets, sitting on the benches of boulevards and standing close to shops, where often homeowners send their mistresses or domestic servants for shopping.²⁰³

This association between shopping and procurement links with wider concerns about female consumers in the late imperial period. Elite commentators declared that women's desire to dress fashionably contributed to moral decline. Naïve lower-class women, especially young shop workers, apparently turned to prostitution in order to afford expensive clothing and their upper-class

²⁰² Okorokov, *Vozvrashchenie k Chestnomu Trudu*, p. 14.

²⁰³ Okorokov, *Vozvrashchenie k Chestnomu Trudu*, p. 14.

counterparts gave into feelings of 'avarice, greed, and passion' by spending outrageous amounts on lavish trinkets.²⁰⁴ The *Passazh* shopping centre was labelled a site of immorality in the capital's boulevard press, as clandestine prostitutes reportedly flocked there to entice customers, disguised as shop clerks or society women.²⁰⁵ Women in this shopping centre were both 'customers and commodities', exchanging money or sex for luxury goods, blurring the lines between prostitutes and 'respectable women'.²⁰⁶ Narratives of procurement began in public spaces like the shopping centre, where apparently unscrupulous individuals used the prospect of pretty items and treats to smear otherwise 'innocent' women.

Procurers also ensnared young women in a variety of other everyday situations. They allegedly scoured hospitals looking for lower-class women soon to be discharged and anxious to find work, and posted fraudulent adverts in newspapers for housekeepers, domestic servants and governesses.²⁰⁷ This discourse of insidious urban danger encouraged women to regard all advances as potential seductions into prostitution, encouraging them to police their own behaviour at all times and avoid interactions with strangers. A similar situation played out in other countries. In France, journalists wrote about the white slave trade in such vivid detail to warn innocent girls of the 'torments that awaited them if they gave into seduction'.²⁰⁸ The German authorities portrayed publications classified as obscene and immoral, known as 'trash', as the

²⁰⁴ Ruane, 'Clothes Shopping in Imperial Russia', p. 773.

²⁰⁵ Schrader, 'Market Pleasures and Prostitution', p. 79.

²⁰⁶ Schrader, 'Market Pleasures and Prostitution', p. 86.

²⁰⁷ Okorokov, *Vozvrashchenie k Chestnomu Trudu*, p. 15.

²⁰⁸ Corbin, *Women for Hire*, p. 291.

‘handmaiden of the menacing white slave trader’, encouraging young women to avoid reading these texts at all costs.²⁰⁹

For philanthropic organisations, the procurement panic at the turn of the century was rooted in wider anxieties regarding urbanisation, poverty and a perceived moral decline. This was especially pronounced given the social distance between elite feminist philanthropists and the lower-class women that they endeavoured to help. ROZZh, Russia’s largest and most influential feminist organisation, committed itself to rescuing the ‘fallen’ and preventing vulnerable women from entering prostitution. Although ROZZh did help to provide some relief for those in need in the form of housing, medical aid and employment, the organisation’s assumptions about class and morality often hindered its efforts. ROZZh members continued to regard young newly arrived peasants as particularly vulnerable to procurement, despite ample evidence suggesting that most women who entered prostitution did so after living in an urban area for an extended period.²¹⁰ When explaining why so many lower-class women became prostitutes, ROZZh cited ‘sexual temptation and harassment’ rather than low wages and long hours.²¹¹ Bernstein argues that ROZZh’s focus on the ensnarement of vulnerable women served to polarise women into ‘good girls’ who could be rescued through moral education, and ‘bad girls’ who refused to conform to ideals of chastity.²¹²

²⁰⁹ K. L. Ritzheimer, *‘Trash’, Censorship and National Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, 2016), p. 115.

²¹⁰ Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 207.

²¹¹ Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 212.

²¹² Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 216.

By stressing the vulnerability of young lower-class women, ROZZh reinforced narratives of insidious danger and encouraged women to modify their behaviour. The society's chairwoman, Princess Evgeniia Ol'denburg, wrote to the Minister of Justice in 1914, complaining about how traders procured vulnerable women via fraudulent newspaper adverts. She attached a clipping of an advertisement for a domestic servant printed in the popular newspaper *Novoe Vremia*. It read:

If you are pretty and younger than twenty-one, I
can offer you a place to work as a housekeeper
(*khoziaika*) for me. I am alone.

I will pay for your journey to me in Petrograd, but
not for the return. The salary is between twenty
and thirty roubles a month with additional gifts. If
you are a young girl (*devitsa*) you will receive
twenty roubles right away. If you want to come,
then fill in the attached form and answer all of the
questions.

Please send your photograph. There are many
cheap places to have your photograph taken and I
will pay for this.²¹³

In their complaint, ROZZh emphasised the naivety of young lower-class women, and their vulnerability at the hands of procurers. Princess Evgeniia called for a

²¹³ GARF, f. 564, op. 1, d. 768, l. 1.

specific crackdown on pimps, arguing that although these advertisements ‘did not insinuate anything indecent’ the message was ‘clear to all parties that might be interested’.²¹⁴ In this statement, the chairwoman acknowledged that women may have been aware that the advertised role involved sexual intercourse, yet still emphasised the need to ‘shield’ these women from dangerous procurers. Here, charity meant speaking *for* lower-class women and dismissing the multifaceted reasons why they may have answered the suggestive advertisement. Like other charitable groups, by constantly grasping for ‘one overarching reason to “explain” prostitution’, ROZZh tended to dehumanise prostitutes as merely victims of oppression and coercion, a notion which fundamentally misrepresented the realities of lower-class women’s lives.²¹⁵

ROZZh’s fixation on procurers luring young women into prostitution through false promises is indicative of the distance between some members of educated society and the lower-class women they attempted to help. ROZZh focused on holding the facilitators of the prostitution exchange accountable, rather than addressing the limited unstable and low paid employment options available to lower-class women.²¹⁶ One journalist from *Novoe Vremia* recommended the creation of an institution for the training of domestic servants to prevent lower-class young girls from entering prostitution, oblivious to the fact that the majority of registered prostitutes were former domestic servants.²¹⁷ The focus

²¹⁴ GARF, f. 564, op. 1, d. 768, l. 2.

²¹⁵ Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 128.

²¹⁶ Stauter-Halstead argues that at a ‘white slavery trial’ in nineteenth-century Galicia, the authorities and press focused on the ‘traffickers’ trickery and coercion’ and ignored the ‘rural and inner-city economic desperation’ that actually drove some of the victims to prostitution. This resolved the Polish middle and upper classes of any ‘complicity or responsibility’. Stauter-Halstead, “‘A Generation of Monsters’”, p. 30.

²¹⁷ ‘Prizrenie Maloletnikh Prostitutok v Rossii’; Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, pp. 177-178.

on the procurer leading girls astray meant that philanthropic organisations often perceived prostitution as a moral, rather than economic, problem. A survey given to former prostitutes by ROZZh demonstrates the preoccupation with morality. Out of twenty-three questions, six were specifically focused on the prostitute's virginity: when she was 'deprived of her virginity', her material situation at the moment of 'deprivation', and what had 'caused her to surrender' in the first place.²¹⁸

A case from St Petersburg in 1902 also demonstrates how ROZZh's preoccupation with procurers blurred their understanding of the real dangers that lower-class women faced. In May 1902, ROZZh reported a suspicious apartment on Sofiiskaia Street to the Mayor of St Petersburg, accusing the landlord, Filimon Zhuk, of purchasing young girls and forcing them to work as prostitutes in his 'secret den of debauchery'.²¹⁹ The department of police investigated the apartment and found that the accusations were groundless. Zhuk was a peasant from Minsk province who worked as a firefighter in the town of Gatchina and on the Warsaw railroad before suffering debilitating injuries.²²⁰ Following his disability, Zhuk and his wife made money by renting out their five-room apartment to twenty-two tenants. Two of the tenants were young needle workers, Efrosin'ia Efimova and Evdokiia Ivanova, and the police reported that there was 'no evidence to suggest that the landlord sold them as public women, or that he worked as a pimp (*zanimaetsia svodnichestvom*).²²¹

²¹⁸ RGIA, f. 1335, op. 1, d. 28.

²¹⁹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch2, l. 6.

²²⁰ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch2, l. 4.

²²¹ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch2, l. 5.

ROZZh's concern for the safety of these two young women was misplaced. When the police interviewed Efimova and Ivanova, they 'categorically denied' that they were involved in prostitution, and asserted that their rent was their only financial obligation to Zhuk.²²² The police also discovered that there was apparently another man causing them anxiety. The two women accused their former employer, the retired lieutenant and landowner, Nikolai Krivoshankin, of harassment, complaining that he constantly pestered them with 'impudent suggestions' and continued to harass them even after they left his service.²²³ This case has clear class connotations. Rather than contacting Efimova and Ivanova, ROZZh jumped to the conclusion that the lower-class landlord was forcing them into prostitution, overlooking the actual threat from the upper-class employer. Lower-class people dominated the business of prostitution, as the majority of brothel keepers were from the lower-class urban population.²²⁴ For philanthropic organisations like ROZZh that were mainly comprised of nobility, the biggest threat to young women, the white slaver, was always their social inferior. This preconception meant that in the case of Efimova and Ivanova, ROZZh failed to acknowledge one of the greatest dangers to young women involved in domestic service, sexual harassment at the hands of their employer.

The perceived explosion in erotic literature and sexualised advertising at the turn of the century could have influenced ROZZh's concern with morality. According to Engelstein, 'audiences rushed to hear the works of Kuzmin,

²²² GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch2, l. 5.

²²³ GARF, f. 102, op. 59, d. 16ch2, l. 5.

²²⁴ In 1889, 43 per cent of brothel keepers across the empire were townspeople and around 18 per cent were peasants. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 19.

Sologub and Artsybashev read aloud' and 'fantastical reports' of young people's sexual experimentation filled the pages of the popular press across the empire.²²⁵ The back pages of newspapers were overflowing with advertisements for contraceptive devices, venereal disease cures, and models offering to pose naked for a fee.²²⁶ In October 1907, *Novoe Vremia* was criticised for printing an advert for pornographic postcards, which demonstrates the effects of the relaxation of newspaper censorship following the 1905 revolutions.²²⁷ The advertisement was addressed to 'all men', and invited them to purchase postcards entitled 'first night' (*pervaia noch*), 'beauties in bathing suits' (*krasavits v kupal'nykh kostiumakh*) or 'risqué coquette' (*pikantnaia koketa*) for around ninety-five kopecks per card.²²⁸ Another postcard was entitled 'morning of the *Parisienne*' (*utro Parizhanki*), conforming to the trend of associating 'Frenchness' with eroticism which was common in Russian pornography at this time.²²⁹ The authorities traced the author of the advert to his printing warehouse in Narva and confiscated 11,119 pornographic postcards.²³⁰ In 1909, ROZZh campaigned to prohibit similarly pornographic newspaper adverts that referenced the openings of 'bureaux for the aim of debauchery'.²³¹

²²⁵ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 376. Engelstein discusses contemporary texts with sexual explicit themes extensively in the same book, pp. 359-420.

²²⁶ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 361.

²²⁷ Following the revolutions of 1905, the new Russian Constitution of 1906 abolished prepublication censorship. On censorship from the beginning of the nineteenth century up until the 1906 abolition, see C. A. Ruud, *Fighting Words: Imperial Censorship and the Russian Press, 1804-1906* (Toronto, 1982).

²²⁸ RGIA, f. 776, op. 9, d. 287, l. 2. Many thanks to Tobie Mathew for this reference.

²²⁹ Rowley, *Open Letters*, p. 121.

²³⁰ RGIA, f. 776, op. 9, d. 287, l. 1.

²³¹ 'Bor'ba s Prostitutsiei', *RZKVB*, 5 (May 1909), p. 284.

The circulation of pornography across international borders became a topic of great concern at the turn of the century, especially in the wake of the white slave panic. The 1845 Criminal Code punished the dissemination of pornography with a minimum fine of 500 roubles and arrest for between seven days and three months.²³² In the early 1900s, a handful of physicians and jurists across Europe and the Russian empire debated the influence of pornography and other lewd forms of ‘public entertainment’ on the spread of venereal disease, the corruption of young children and the ‘physical degeneration of the race’.²³³ Legal experts claimed that consuming pornography at a young age also caused premature sexual awakening, which reportedly forced children to become ‘habitual criminals’ in adulthood.²³⁴ The Russian government, along with thirteen other nations, signed an agreement at the 1910 Paris Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Obscene Publications, but pornographic postcards continued to be sold openly in the capital throughout the 1910s.²³⁵ The increased visibility of pornography, coupled with the international white slave panic, could also provide an explanation for educated society’s fixation on procurers luring young girls into prostitution and their focus on morality rather than the reality of limited available employment options.

Conclusion

Accessing the voice of the facilitator is extremely difficult when researching the regulation of prostitution in the early twentieth century. Late nineteenth-

²³² Hetherington, “‘The Highest Guardian of the Child’”, p. 299.

²³³ ‘Profilaktika Venericheskikh Bolezneie’, *RZKVB* 9, (September 1905), p. 247; Hetherington, “‘The Highest Guardian of the Child’”, p. 298.

²³⁴ Hetherington, “‘The Highest Guardian of the Child’”, p. 298.

²³⁵ Rowley, *Open Letters*, p. 109.

century industrialisation, urbanisation, and modernisation greatly increased the visibility of urban prostitution in cities across the Russian empire. Rather than addressing the multifaceted reasons for women's entry into prostitution, the educated public rallied against brothel madams, pimps and procurers. Facilitators of prostitution personified the failures of state regulation. In the popular press, journalists focused on facilitators' exploitation of prostitutes, their seduction of 'innocents' and their involvement in the transnational crime of sex trafficking. The educated public complained that police corruption subverted brothel keepers' official roles as protectors of public health, morality and young people. This led to the perception of brothel keepers as exploiters, a stereotype that found its way into criminal investigations and journalistic accounts.

The vilification of individual facilitators provided social commentators and officials alike with an outlet for prejudices against various social, ethnic and religious groups. In St Petersburg, the Chief of the police's criminal investigative department typecast all Polish Catholics as child procurers, and writers explained that Jews' apparent innate deviance made Jews the principal perpetrators of the crime of white slavery across Europe. The scapegoating of facilitators in the crimes of child prostitution and sex trafficking also worked as a moralising tool. By encouraging young women to police their own behaviour to avoid seduction, journalists and philanthropic groups ignored crucial social and economic factors that encouraged women's and girls' entry into prostitution, such as limited employment options, sexual abuse and poverty.

Facilitators of prostitution were instruments of state power. The authorities expected them to work closely with law enforcement to form a network for the surveillance of lower-class people. As well as providing medical-police committees with information about registered women, local authorities called on hotel owners and landlords to shift their gaze onto prostitutes' clients. These expectations suggest that the imperial state was also paying attention to those buying sex in urban centres, albeit less systematically. The next chapter shifts the lens onto a specific group of male clients, sailors in the port of Libava, to explore how this surveillance worked in practice.

5. Controlling clients: venereal diseases in the Imperial Navy

In May 1916, the MVD received an anonymous letter from a male teacher living in a rural area, warning about a disease that would allegedly sweep Russia 'off the face of the earth'.¹ 'Syphilis', he wrote, has 'captured the majority of the lower strata of society' and 'reduces human labour to nothing'. Although melodramatic in tone, the anonymous writer's remarks mirror concern within the Russian medical community regarding increasing levels of venereal diseases amongst lower-class people. In 1897, hundreds of doctors, government officials and civil servants met in St Petersburg to discuss measures to combat epidemic syphilis at the first Russian congress dedicated specifically to the cause. Articles in the medical press insisted that syphilis was widespread. A statistical study from 1911 stated that the illness accounted for 10 per cent of all registered diseases across the Russian empire, beaten only by influenza (21 per cent) and malaria (19 per cent).² One survey from 1914 claimed that 10 per cent of all city residents in Revel' were infected with a venereal disease, as well as 6 per cent of St Petersburg inhabitants and almost 5 per cent of all Muscovites.³ This chapter focuses on the individuals that the imperial government attempted to protect from disease through the regulation of prostitution: the male clients of prostitutes. Using the case study of sailors in the Baltic city of Libava in Kurliand province, it will provide an in-depth analysis

¹ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 63.

² 'Otchet o Sostoianii Narodnogo Zdravii i Organizatsiia Vrachebno Pomoshchi v Rossii za 1911 god', *RZhKVB*, 11-12 (November-December 1913), p. 412.

³ I. I. Truzhemeskii, 'Nekotorye Dannye o Rasprostraneni Venericheskikh Boleznei v Revele', *RZhKVB*, 4 (April 1914), pp. 395-396.

of how the authorities explained, and attempted to combat, epidemic levels of venereal diseases at a regional level.

Most Russian physicians generally agreed that venereal diseases were lower-class illnesses and they rarely wrote about the educated elite contracting infections.⁴ In 1897, the MVD's Medical Department claimed that 78 per cent of syphilis sufferers across the empire were 'victims of ignorance and low levels of culture'.⁵ The epidemiological model for infection used by Russian physicians depended on the location of the patient. In the countryside, diseases were supposedly transmitted non-venereally through the 'backward' traditions of communal peasant life and 'ignorance' of rural populations. In urban centres, prostitutes facilitated the circulation of the infection in working-class communities.⁶ Figures from hospitals in the capital cemented the reputation of venereal diseases as lower-class illnesses. In 1910 in Alafuzov men's hospital in St Petersburg, 32 per cent of those who received venereal disease treatment were unskilled labourers and a further 22 per cent were metalworkers, carters, or traders.⁷ Over half of all women treated for venereal infections at St Petersburg's Kalinkin hospital in the same year were registered prostitutes, domestic servants or women 'without an occupation'.⁸ Physicians primarily regarded venereal diseases as lower-class illnesses. Therefore,

⁴ A notable exception was the populist physician Dmitrii Zhbakov of the Pirogov Society, who condemned the hypocrisy of installing surveillance on lower-class people and ignoring the upper and middle-class husbands who transmitted infections to their wives. Engelstein, 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon', pp. 197-198.

⁵ GARF, f. 543, op. 1, d. 440, l. 2.

⁶ For a full discussion of these two epidemiological models see Engelstein, 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon', pp. 169-208.

⁷ K. V. Goncharov, *O Venericheskii Bolezniakh v Sankt-Peterburge* (St Petersburg, 1910), pp. 58-65.

⁸ Goncharov, *O Venericheskii Bolezniakh*, pp. 66-73.

recommendations for preventing their transmission focused on monitoring workers and peasants, rather than their social superiors.

The prevalence of disease within two particular lower-class populations greatly concerned the Russian authorities and medical community. The sexual health of registered prostitutes and military personnel was interconnected and particularly important for the tsarist state. The fate of the Russian empire in the event of enemy attack was dependent on healthy and virile soldiers and sailors. Therefore, prostitutes' bodies needed to be free of disease in order to provide personnel with sexual services, especially as military authorities recommended that enlisted men be stationed far from their families in order to develop kinship bonds within their units.⁹ Despite their health being of paramount importance, both groups experienced higher levels of infection than other lower-class people. An article in *RZhKVB* claimed that levels of syphilis and chancroid were four times higher for soldiers and sailors compared to civilians, and that gonorrhoea was eight times higher.¹⁰ Official statistics estimated that in 1904, 46.5 per cent of all soldiers were syphilitic.¹¹ Similarly, the 1909 empire-wide survey of registered prostitutes claimed that almost 40 per cent had a venereal disease.¹² In the early 1900s, the sexual health of military personnel and registered prostitutes was the subject of intense discussion by

⁹ J. Sanborn, *Drafting the Russian Nation: Military Conscription, Total War, and Mass Politics, 1905-1925* (DeKalb, 2011), pp. 103-104.

¹⁰ 'Otchet o Sostoianii Nardonogo Zdoviia'; 'Otchet o Sanitarnom Sostoianii Russkoi Armii za 1911', *RZhKVB* (November-December 1913), pp. 420-424.

¹¹ A. I. Zav'ialov, S. R. Umts, A. V. Morrison and A. E. Gaidarov, 'Sifilis v Russkoi Armii (s XVIII po nachalo XX stoletiiia)', *Saratovskii Nauchno-Meditsinskii Zhurnal*, 9:3 (2013), p. 559. This article also makes the important point that official venereal disease statistics for the military forces varied widely from source to source in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

¹² *Vrachebno-Politseiskii Nadzor*, pp. 58-59.

the authorities and in the medical press, and both groups were subject to state intervention into their intimate lives.

Previous scholarship has claimed that although prostitutes and philanthropic organisations condemned regulation's one-sided approach to examination and called for the inspection of male clients, little was achieved in practice.¹³ While this assessment may be accurate for the majority of urban clients, the authorities did examine and regulate certain groups of men regularly under the banner of disease control. Like registered prostitutes, these men belonged to controlled populations that had their details registered with their employers or the authorities, such as male migrant workers at a factory and sailors at military ports.¹⁴ Therefore, the control of venereal diseases meant the surveillance of both lower-class male and female bodies. This chapter will examine how the naval and medical authorities at the Port of Emperor Alexander III in Libava attempted to transform the lives of Baltic fleet sailors stationed there, endeavouring to make them comply with the state's healthy ideal.

The control of venereal diseases in the 'lower ranks' of Libava

In 1907, official reports stated that almost three-quarters of all sailors at the Port of Emperor Alexander III had a venereal disease.¹⁵ This represented a

¹³ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 49-50, 302. Engelstein asserts that male clients were 'never subjected to medical intervention', Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, pp. 74-75. Mazanik explains how although the Moscow Committee for the Prevention of Syphilis enthusiastically advocated the inspection of all male clients, it was too difficult to organise in practice. Mazanik, 'Sanitation, Urban Environment', pp. 100-102.

¹⁴ Mazanik mentions how certain workers in Moscow were examined as a precursor for the return of their internal passports at the end of the employment. Mazanik, 'Sanitation, Urban Environment', p. 88.

¹⁵ The assistant to the Chief Medical Inspector of the port reported that 73.1 per cent of all sailors were infected. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 18.

significant rise from the previous year, when 42 per cent of sailors were infected, the majority with gonorrhoea.¹⁶ In both 1906 and 1907, Libava sailors were the most diseased of the entire Russian Imperial Navy, as the overall average across all fleets was just under 18 per cent.¹⁷ Putting these statistics into an international context is difficult, given that other nations did not necessarily produce comprehensive yearly reports on venereal diseases in their respective navies. The material reproduced in historiography mainly focuses on disease levels for soldiers, or the military forces as a whole. Nevertheless, these figures suggest that rates of venereal infection in Libava greatly exceeded averages in other international contexts. David Arnold comments that for British soldiers stationed in India, venereal disease levels peaked at 52 per cent in 1895, but then dropped to 12 per cent in 1906 and to 6 per cent by 1909.¹⁸ Nancy Wingfield suggests that between 1905 and 1906, just 2 per cent of military personnel in the German Empire were diseased and around 4 per cent in the French Republic.¹⁹ In 1910, approximately 20 per cent of the United States Army received venereal disease treatment, a figure that reportedly alarmed the surgeon general.²⁰ In Libava, levels had remained below 20 per cent from the 1890s until 1904, when they began to rise dramatically. This trend can be observed in the following graph.

¹⁶ In 1906, 67 per cent of infected men had gonorrhoea, 17 per cent had syphilis and just over 16 per cent had chancroid. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, ll. 10-12.

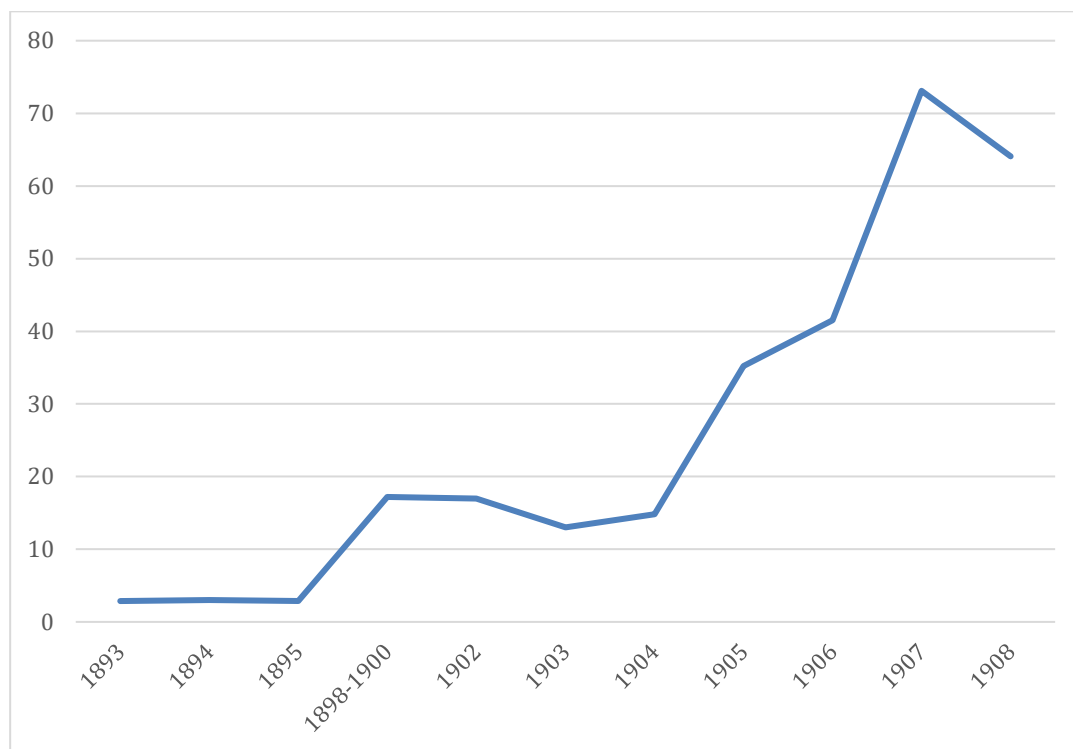
¹⁷ RGAVMF, f. 1483, op. 1, d. 56, l. 10.

¹⁸ D. Arnold, 'Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century India', *Genitourinary Medicine*, 69:1 (1993), p. 4.

¹⁹ N. M. Wingfield, 'The Enemy Within: Regulating Prostitution and Controlling Venereal Disease in Cisleithanian Austria During the Great War', *Central European History*, 46:3 (2013), p. 574.

²⁰ Brandt explains that admissions for venereal disease treatment doubled in the US Army between 1908 and 1910. Brandt, *No Magic Bullet*, p. 98.

Figure 13: Percentage of sailors infected with a venereal disease at the Port of Emperor Alexander III, Libava, 1893-1908



Source: RGAVMF, f, 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 6; RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 18.

These figures horrified the authorities in Libava. Unlike in the rest of the population, venereal diseases in the military context had implications for national security, as the depletion of fighting power owing to illness had the potential to compromise Russian defence. This was especially significant in the early 1900s, given the devastating naval defeats in the recent Russo-Japanese War, when virtually the entire fleet in the Far East was destroyed at the Battle of Tsushima in May 1905.²¹ The revolutionary period of 1905-1906 saw rising discontent amongst the lower ranks, which found expression in the mutiny on

²¹ The financial loss from this battle alone was more than twice the annual budget for the entire naval forces. P. Gatrell, 'After Tsushima: Economic and Administrative Aspects of Russian Naval Rearmament, 1905-13', *Economic History Review*, 43:2 (1990), p. 257.

the battleship *Potemkin*, sailor-led insurrections in the ports of Sveaborg and Kronshtadt, and over 200 further mutinies across the military.²² In the years leading up to the First World War, Libava's civil authorities and the naval authorities at the port adopted various approaches in an attempt to decrease levels of infection. Their approaches swung between protection and punishment, with class prejudices colouring official discussions. Recommendations emphasised the need to protect sailors from 'deviant' clandestine prostitutes, to direct them towards 'appropriate' leisure activities, and to discipline those who failed to comply. Their discussions shed light on who or what the authorities believed to be the greatest contributor to the circulation of venereal diseases: clandestine prostitutes, Libava's municipal government, the city's location or the sailors themselves.

Clandestine prostitutes

Recent research on wartime sexualities has confirmed that prostitutes had no shortage of clients in the Russian military.²³ Brothels were often located in close proximity to military barracks and classified by the local authorities as specifically 'for the lower ranks'.²⁴ In Libava in 1909, Kazarmennaia Street was a prime spot for brothels, and the street name suggests close proximity to the

²² J. Bushnell, 'The Revolution of 1905-06 in the Army: the Incidence and Impact of Mutiny', *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 12:1 (1985), pp. 71-94. On the *Potemkin* mutiny, see R. Zebroski, 'The Battleship *Potemkin* and its Discontents, 1905' in C. Bell and B. Elleman (eds), *Naval Mutinies of the Twentieth Century: an International Perspective* (London, 2003).

²³ Hearne, 'Sex on the Front'. Healey also discusses interactions between soldiers and prostitutes during the First World War, D. Healey, 'Love and Death: Transforming Sexualities in Russia, 1914-1922' in M. Frame, B. Kolonitskii, S. G. Marks and M. K. Stockdale (eds), *Russian Culture in War and Revolution, 1914-22, Book 2. Political Culture, Identities, Mentalities and Memory* (Bloomington, 2014), pp. 158-159.

²⁴ See figure 8 in chapter three.

sailors' barracks (*kazarmy*).²⁵ Based on the ample evidence for clandestine prostitution discussed elsewhere in this thesis, sailors did not just visit state-licensed brothels and registered prostitutes. Indeed, officials used Libava's low number of registered prostitutes as evidence for widespread clandestine prostitution. In 1909, Libava had just three prostitutes per 1000 of the population.²⁶ The Medical Inspector for the Port of Emperor Alexander III noted that Libava's urban population rose significantly between 1900 and 1909, yet the number of registered prostitutes barely increased.²⁷ In light of these figures and widespread infection, the city's police estimated that anywhere between 300 and 3000 women were working clandestinely as prostitutes in Libava.²⁸

Libava's medical-police committee regarded clandestine prostitution as the chief driver behind increasing levels of venereal infection in the port. Confident that regulation accurately detected diseased prostitutes and removed them from circulation, the committee claimed that clandestine prostitutes deliberately thwarted official attempts to protect public health.²⁹ In a 1909 report to the Kurliand provincial medical department, the Chief of Police and the head of the medical-police committee, Colonel Podushkin, claimed that 'women on the sides' of regulation policy conned their clients into believing that they actually worked at brothels, while illegally avoiding registration and medical examinations.³⁰ Podushkin's report suggests that he regarded the regulation system as an effective method to control both disease and female

²⁵ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 588, ll. 5-20.

²⁶ In comparison to the other ports of Nikolaev, which had 4.7 registered prostitutes per 1000 people and Vladivostok, which had 14.2. *Vrachebno-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 61.

²⁷ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 16.

²⁸ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 220.

²⁹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 2.

³⁰ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 2.

sexuality. According to Podushkin, infection occurred when women cunningly deceived sailors, rather than when sailors paid for sex with women that they knew were unregistered. Podushkin named economically vulnerable women as prime candidates for 'secret prostitution', namely laundresses, factory workers and even vagrant women living on the street, who would have perhaps worked as prostitutes sporadically to supplement their low income, or even just for survival. Podushkin's answer was not to provide them with alternative financial assistance, but to ensure that they were arrested and registered onto the police lists in order to protect men's health. Identifying the women who attempted to subvert the authorities' control and bringing them back under police supervision would apparently solve the problem of increased venereal diseases.

The medical-police committee boasted their success in combatting clandestine prostitution, as in their first year of operation they had detained 370 women, compared with the sixty-three arrested before the committee's establishment in 1907.³¹ In his analysis of how disease was spread, Podushkin aligned himself with 'regulationism', an idea supported by a handful of physicians and administrators, which stressed that prostitutes required state control and supervision because they were genetic social defectives prone to moral laxity and laziness.³² These ideas stemmed from theories of criminal atavism, which were popularised internationally by Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso in

³¹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, ll. 108-109.

³² Other prominent supporters of regulation included V. Tarnovskii who wrote *Prostitution and Abolitionism* (1888) in response to the rise of abolitionism in Russia, as well as across Europe and North America. The head of the St Petersburg medical-police committee, A. Fedorov, categorised prostitutes as too lazy to engage in 'honest work'. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 126-127.

the 1870s.³³ Lombroso claimed that all prostitutes, even those who sold sex sporadically, were 'notably abnormal' social defectives who were innately frivolous, voluble, incoherent and improvident.³⁴ Lombroso supported the regulation of prostitution on the premise that prostitutes were allegedly 'psychologically criminal' and thus required state supervision.³⁵ As seen throughout this thesis, countless physicians, philanthropic organisations, feminists, socialists, and City Duma officials denied that prostitutes were innately deviant and criticised regulation on both moral and medical grounds in the late imperial period. Podushkin did not engage with this discourse and instead called for the stricter supervision of 'loose' women to prevent disease circulation.

Sailors' perceptions of the source of their disease undermined Podushkin's claims that clandestine prostitutes were responsible for Libava's rising levels of infection. In autumn 1909, out of the fifty sailors who told the port's Medical Inspector the source of their infection, twenty-one claimed that they had caught their disease at one of Libava's state-licensed brothels, whereas twenty-four reported that they had caught their infection from an independent prostitute.³⁶ It is highly unlikely that sailors would be able to detect the source of their infection with such accuracy, especially as medical experts' diagnoses of

³³ Sharon Kowalsky argues that Lombroso's theories held 'considerable appeal' for some late imperial Russian intellectuals who championed the emergence of his apparent 'scientific' approaches to criminology, a field that had been dominated by more classical ideas in the nineteenth century. S. A. Kowalsky, *Deviant Women: Female Crime and Criminology in Revolutionary Russia, 1880-1930* (DeKalb, 2009), p. 27.

³⁴ C. Lombroso and G. Ferrero, *Criminal Woman, the Prostitute and the Normal Woman*, trans. N. Hahn Rafter and M. Gibson (Durham and London, 2004), pp. 222-223.

³⁵ Lombroso and Ferrero, *Criminal Woman*, p. 221.

³⁶ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 588, ll. 5-20.

venereal diseases in the early 1900s were based on unreliable methodology.³⁷ Instead, the sailors' responses suggest that they regarded brothel prostitutes and women working independently at their apartments as equally infectious, despite there being a greater risk of lax registration in the latter category. In other ports, the authorities claimed that sailors lied about the source of their infection to conceal their visits to unregistered prostitutes.³⁸ However, 4 per cent of men surveyed answered that they had caught their infection 'from a vagrant woman' (*ot brodiachei*), and other responses were much vaguer: 'not in Libava', 'in a beer shop' or 'at an unknown address'. The diverse range of answers suggests that sailors were not afraid of being reprimanded for visiting unregistered prostitutes, so their responses were more likely to reflect their actual perceptions.

Municipal government

There was constant tension between Libava's medical-police committee and the port's medical personnel, who complained that the committee failed to take the medical side of regulation seriously. The port commander attempted to forge cooperation by sending naval physicians to work for the committee.³⁹ In April 1909, naval physician Dr Korvatskii complained that Podushkin did not allow him to actually inspect prostitutes and instead 'left [him] as a spectator',

³⁷ This inaccuracy continued into the 1920s, even after the introduction of the Wassermann (1909) and Kahn (1923) blood tests for syphilis. S. Hearne, 'The "Black Spot" on the Crimea: Venereal Diseases in the Black Sea Fleet in the 1920s', *Social History*, 42:2 (2017), p. 201.

³⁸ In 1916, the Revel' medical-police committee accused sailors at the Port of Peter the Great in Revel' of lying about the true source of their infections. RGAVMF, f. 949, op. 3, d. 4, l. 38.

³⁹ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, l. 5, 8.

something which he found 'not only pointless, but offensive'.⁴⁰ He also claimed that the committee's medical examinations were 'completely without purpose', as the resident physician, Dr Mavritskii, allotted just 3-4 hours twice a week for inspections, leaving himself only two minutes to examine each prostitute.⁴¹ In March 1901, Mavritskii had claimed that his examinations involved the thorough inspection of each prostitute's mouth, throat, vulva, anus and urethra, as well as the vagina and vaginal portion of the uterus using a uterine mirror.⁴² The efficacy of these examinations is questionable if Mavritskii did conduct them in just two minutes. Korvatskii's complaints echoed wider criticisms of the medical failings of regulation. In 1903, the Society for the Preservation of Public Health produced a report which argued that rushed inspections, the infrequent washing of examination instruments, and the difficulty of detecting syphilis in the latent stages of infection undermined any arguments for regulation as an effective method to prevent the spread of venereal diseases.⁴³

Other naval physicians gestured towards the committee's financial mismanagement in their explanations of why regulation in Libava was so ineffective. The assistant to the port's Chief Medical Inspector, Dr Shmidt, claimed that in 1908 over 67 per cent of the committee's total expenditure was spent just on Mavritskii's wages, whereas just 7 per cent funded the necessary facilities and equipment for prostitutes' medical examinations.⁴⁴ When

⁴⁰ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, l. 7.

⁴¹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 25, 218.

⁴² RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 12.

⁴³ The commission's report is also discussed in chapter three on brothels. GARF, f. 579, op. 1, d. 2490, ll. 3-5.

⁴⁴ Between September and November 1908, Dr. Mavritskii received 3250 roubles out of a total expenditure of 4837 roubles, and 320 roubles was spent on inspection facilities and equipment. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 24.

compared with other medical-police committees, Mavritskii's annual salary of 3250 roubles seems disproportionate. In Revel' in 1905, the medical-police committee's one doctor received 1500 roubles per year, around 43 per cent of the medical-police committee's total expenditure.⁴⁵ In 1915, Riga's committee spent just 26 per cent of its annual budget on the wages of four doctors, who received 700 roubles per year each.⁴⁶ Additionally, in Libava medical-police agents for the 'detection of secret prostitutes' received barely 3 per cent of the committee's total expenditure, and their low wages may have encouraged corruption and bribery.⁴⁷

Other physicians blamed the increase in venereal diseases on the ambivalent attitude of Libava's municipal government towards funding regulation. In 1901, the city had a population of around 70,000, but just twenty beds for venereal patients in the hospital.⁴⁸ Countless physicians condemned this as inadequate and called for the municipal government to invest. The medical-police committee repeatedly asked the Kurland Governor for an additional 400 roubles to hire more staff, but he did little more than request the money from the City Duma, who would not provide anything extra.⁴⁹ The Mayor of Libava refused to give any additional funding as the city apparently already had a budget deficit of 40,000 roubles.⁵⁰ Dr Smirnov from Libava's municipal government acknowledged that the local authorities' reluctance to fund

⁴⁵ EAA, 30.6.3628, lk. 6.

⁴⁶ Riga's medical-police committee had an annual budget of 10,740 roubles in 1915. LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23559, lp. 2.

⁴⁷ The committee allocated the agents 130 roubles out of a total expenditure of 4837 roubles. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 24. Further evidence of corruption in other cities can be found in chapter three.

⁴⁸ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 6.

⁴⁹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 2.

⁵⁰ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 223.

regulation caused the system to function ineffectively. He claimed that, in cities such as Libava, Saratov, and Mitava, local governments 'simply shied away under the pretext of lack of funds', arguing that regulation should be funded by the fees and fines paid by prostitutes and brothel keepers.⁵¹ This apathetic attitude left physicians and law enforcement agents frustrated, and in the case of extremely high levels of disease in Libava, forced them to turn their attention towards prostitutes' clients.

Sailors

Sailors stationed at Libava formed part of Russia's Baltic fleet, and their social backgrounds set them apart from the peasant-dominated military forces.⁵² Most sailors in this fleet were from the urban working classes, hailing from more industrialised provinces.⁵³ Eighty-four per cent of naval recruits were literate, and nearly half were younger than twenty-three.⁵⁴ Therefore, sailors in the Baltic fleet did not fit either of the models of disease transmission discussed

⁵¹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 7.

⁵² On the dominance of peasant conscripts and their relationship with high command, see J. Bushnell, 'Peasants in Uniform: the Tsarist Army as Peasant Society', *Journal of Social History*, 13:4 (1980), pp. 565-576.

⁵³ Evan Mawdsley argues that due to the 'specialised complexity' of warships, naval high command preferred to draft in factory workers, rather than peasants. In 1904, less than a quarter of recruits belonged to the peasantry and a third were factory workers. The remainder were unskilled workers, boatmen and artisans. E. Mawdsley, *The Russian Revolution: War and Politics: February 1917-April 1918* (London and Basingstoke, 1978), p. 7. D. G. Kirby comments that in the period 1913-16, 36.2 per cent of men called up for naval service were skilled industrial workers or craftsmen, and only 23.2 per cent were peasants. The literacy rate was 85 per cent during these years. Kirby argues that sailors 'regarded themselves as an elite amongst the armed forces', and that they 'developed a taste for smart living and socialising' in the towns where they were stationed, D. G. Kirby, 'A Navy in Revolution: the Russian Baltic Fleet in 1917', *European History Quarterly*, 4 (1974), p. 347.

⁵⁴ Mawdsley argues that literate recruits were more politically conscious and receptive to revolutionary ideas. The average age in the Baltic fleet was considerably younger than the average age for the Army. E. Mawdsley, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 7. The overall literacy of the Russian Army in 1912 was 76.4 per cent, J. Sanborn, 'The Mobilisation of 1914 and the Question of the Russian Nation: a Re-examination', *Slavic Review*, 59:2 (2000), p. 285.

earlier in this thesis: they were neither 'backward' peasant migrants nor 'victimised' anonymous urban clients. In light of this, official efforts to prevent Libava sailors from contracting venereal diseases vacillated between discipline and welfare. Naval and civil authorities sometimes categorised sailors as agents responsible for their own sexual health, yet on other occasions emphasised how they were easily led astray. These conversations echo the treatment of lower-class people by their social superiors in other contexts. In the Russian Army, the treatment of soldiers by high command was inherently paternalistic, combining 'fatherly concern for the material and moral welfare of the lower ranks with the strictest discipline and punishment'.⁵⁵ Taxation practices across the empire emphasised societal responsibility but rendered lower-class people defenceless, poor and dependent on the Tsar.⁵⁶ The imperial state's methods of paternal rule involved 'discipline and fear but also custodial care and supervision', especially when attempting to rid society of apparent problematic behaviour, such as suicide.⁵⁷

Libava's medical-police committee argued that the poor discipline of sailors caused epidemic venereal diseases. Podushkin advocated 'severe punishments' for drunkenness amongst naval personnel, and condemned sailors' apparently 'terrible behaviour' and heavy drinking which caused 'scandals' in Libava on a nightly basis.⁵⁸ A common theme throughout the medical authorities' discussions was sailors' loss of self-control following alcohol consumption.

⁵⁵ E. Kimerling Wirtschafter, *From Serf to Russian Soldier* (Princeton, 2014), p. 96.

⁵⁶ Y. Kotsonis, *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic* (Toronto, 2014), p. 54.

⁵⁷ See chapter five in Morrissey, *Suicide and the Body Politic*, pp. 128-148.

⁵⁸ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 220.

According to the port's Society of Naval Physicians, the drinking culture and lack of discipline within the Navy played a huge role in mass infection. 'It is not uncommon to meet drunken sailors on the street', they reported, 'and officers reward sailors for good work with a glass of vodka'.⁵⁹ The Society also claimed that sailors mainly socialised in pubs, and that while they probably went to these establishments 'without even thinking about sex', after consuming alcohol and seeing women their 'sexual passion' became awakened. In his study of the Baltic fleet, Evan Mawdsley argues that there was no uniformity of discipline in the naval forces, and that the severity of punishment for misdemeanour varied widely between units.⁶⁰ Therefore, it is possible that discipline in the lower ranks of the Navy at Libava was particularly poor. The Kurland Governor also claimed that alcohol and poor discipline had an impact on infection rates, claiming that the naval lower ranks mainly caught venereal diseases while 'in a drunken state' (*v p'ianom vide*), when they lost their inhibitions and ignored the advice of the port's medical authorities.⁶¹

These discussions optimistically cast sailors as inherently obedient and chaste, and alcohol a force that contaminated their morality and common sense. Therefore, sailors' leisure activities required reform in order to ensure a decrease in infection rates. It is entirely possible that sailors did drink to excess, especially given the cultural significance of alcohol consumption in the late imperial Russian military.⁶² Nevertheless, this focus on the role of alcohol in mass venereal infection provided the authorities with an added justification for

⁵⁹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 7.

⁶⁰ Mawdsley, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 4.

⁶¹ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, l. 46.

⁶² See chapter four in Herlihy, *The Alcoholic Empire*, pp. 52-68.

their attempts to control the off-duty behaviour of naval personnel. In a 1910 public talk delivered in Libava entitled 'Beware and be afraid of venereal diseases!' the medical authorities clearly laid out the connections between alcohol and infection. In 300 words, the speaker reminded sailors not to visit prostitutes on four occasions, and demonstrated how the small mistake of drinking too much alcohol could supposedly ruin the rest of a man's life:

Do not drink! If we get drunk, then we will go to public women. The drunken man is the most easily infected. From a minute's whim, he might be miserable for the rest of his life, but worst of all, he might infect his future wife and children.⁶³

Patricia Herlihy argues that not all attempts to promote temperance in late imperial Russia were efforts to exert social control, or 'ploys of the frightened upper classes' to mould the behaviour of their social inferiors, as temperance was a cross-class movement involving everybody from peasants to physicians and clergymen.⁶⁴ However, in the case of Libava sailors, the authorities' focus on alcohol's role in venereal disease transmission saw several attempts to direct sailors' leisure time. The class connotations are clear, as recommendations focused on the 'lower ranks' and never referred to the need to control officers' drinking or transform their leisure pursuits. In 1901, physicians emphasised the 'need to distract sailors from their desire to drink and engage in debauchery' by organising more 'appropriate' activities, such as

⁶³ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 114.

⁶⁴ Herlihy, *The Alcoholic Empire*, pp. 11-12.

gymnastics and drama clubs, as well as reading groups on history, geography and hygiene.⁶⁵

These recommendations echo a wider European trend of attempts to 'civilise' working-class people at the hands of their social superiors. For the educated public, this often involved guiding lower-class people away from their supposed uncivilised and 'immoral' leisure activities towards more middle-class interests, such as classical art and literature.⁶⁶ Russian physicians' recommendations also promoted the playing of 'outdoor games', reflecting the cultural elite's 'obsession with fresh air and exercise' in the early 1900s, apparently essential for remedying the physical and mental deterioration characteristic of life in overcrowded cities.⁶⁷ On 9 September 1909, the port's Medical Inspector and the chief doctor of Libava's naval hospital declared the need to 'struggle against idleness' (*borot'sia s prazdnost'iu*), something which apparently had an especially negative influence on sailors' morality.⁶⁸ They

⁶⁵ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, ll. 7-8. Similar recommendations were made by the surgeon general for the United States Army in 1910. He advised the introduction of 'recreation and amusement facilities' as well as the formation of temperance societies within the military. Brandt, *No Magic Bullet*, p. 98.

⁶⁶ Stephen Frank's work on rural popular culture demonstrates how educated social reformers criticised, and then attempted to reform, peasant leisure activities into something more 'respectable'. S. P. Frank, 'Confronting the Domestic Other: Rural Popular Culture and its Enemies in Fin-de-Siecle Russia' in S. P. Frank and M. D. Steinberg (eds), *Lower-Class Values, Practices and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1994). Brad Beavan explores how British middle-class social reformers promoted 'good' leisure activities for working-class men in order to resolve issues of social instability. B. Beavan *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain, 1850-1945* (Manchester, 2005). Paula Bartley also examines the promotion of middle-class leisure activities in women's reform institutions in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century England. P. Bartley, *Prostitution: Prevention and Reform in England, 1860-1914* (London and New York, 2000), pp. 55-58. Lynn Abrams examines middle-class contempt for working-class leisure activities in Imperial Germany, L. Abrams, *Workers' Culture in Imperial Germany: Leisure and Recreation in the Rhineland and Westphalia* (London and New York, 2002).

⁶⁷ L. McReynolds and C. Popkin, 'The Objective Eye and the Common Good' in C. Kelly and D. Shepherd (eds), *Constructing Russian Culture in the Age of Revolution: 1881-1940* (Oxford, 1998), p. 77; S. Lovell, *Summerfolk: A History of the Dacha, 1710-2000* (Ithaca and London, 2003), p. 102.

⁶⁸ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, l. 18.

recommended that sailors be encouraged to engage in 'rational entertainment' (*razumnoe razvlechenie*), namely crafts, reading, swimming and other sports. Occupying sailors' free time was seemingly the key to preventing them from contracting venereal diseases. The port authorities' classification of certain forms of entertainment as 'rational' allowed them to condemn a wide spectrum of behaviour as inappropriate or harmful.

The port authorities in Libava encouraged sailors to educate themselves on the negative effects of venereal diseases. Libraries were to be stocked with official books and brochures on the dangers of alcoholism, prostitution and venereal diseases written in plain and easily accessible Russian, rather than 'unusual academic discourse'.⁶⁹ The military authorities encouraged the distribution of brochures with titles such as 'Quick, to the doctor!' and the quirky popular idiom 'You cannot hide an awl in a sack' (*shilo v meshke ne utaish'*) to sailors across the empire.⁷⁰ In April 1910, Riga's Society for the Guardianship of Public Welfare asked the Medical Inspector of the Navy for financial assistance to publish and distribute over 10,000 leaflets on the dangers of 'sexual diseases' to low-ranking naval personnel.⁷¹ Educational brochures continuously reminded sailors that their individual choices had a substantial impact upon wider society and even national security. The reminder demonstrates an attempt to mould sailors into what Judith Surkis describes as the ideal 'hygienic citizen': whose sexuality required close control in order to 'preserve and

⁶⁹ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, l. 18.

⁷⁰ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 748, l. 1, 5. An awl is a needle with a handle used by craftsmen for cutting tough fabrics. This instrument could not be hidden in a sack as its needle edge would poke through the fabric. It roughly translates as 'the truth will always find its way out' and in this case, is used to discourage sailors from keeping their venereal diseases a secret from their commanding officers.

⁷¹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 130.

perpetuate “humanity””.⁷² One 1911 publication explained to sailors in the Baltic fleet how their individual and social responsibilities were entwined:

The sailor must take care of his own health and remember that he is in the service of the Emperor and motherland, but also for himself and his family. He should never hide his illnesses and should report them immediately.⁷³

Like other navies across Europe before the First World War, the imperial authorities in Libava did not consider immediate and regular sexual satisfaction essential for sailors’ wellbeing, and instead encouraged sailors to pursue more long-term traditional relationships or remain abstinent.⁷⁴ The commander of the port argued that venereal diseases were lower for soldiers in the port’s fortress artillery because the majority were in stable relationships with women.⁷⁵ Naval physician Dr Ziberg agreed that soldiers were able to form permanent relationships with domestic servants and kitchen staff as they worked on land, and were less likely to pay for sex because of their lower

⁷² Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen*, p. 41.

⁷³ Quoted in S. V. Bezriadin, ‘Organizatsiia i Deiatel’nost’ Korpusa Voenno-Morskikh Brachei Russkogo Flota vo Vtoroi Polovine XIX-Nachale XX vv., PhD Dissertation (Voronezh State Pedagogical University, 2014), p. 84.

⁷⁴ Mark Harrison discusses how in the late nineteenth century, the promotion of continence, sexual self-control and a more tolerant attitude to the marriage of military personnel emerged in military literature, apparently in the hope that ‘marriage would discourage more casual liaisons’. The move towards the promotion of contraceptives and chemical prophylactic treatment occurred in the advent of the First World War, following advances in the treatment of syphilis and gonorrhoea. M. Harrison, ‘The British Army and Venereal Disease During the First World War’, *Medical History*, 35:2 (1995), p. 137. Even during World War One, the USA’s military authorities promoted sexual continence. General Order No. 77 issued in December 1917 to the American Expeditionary Forces forbade all American military personnel from visiting French brothels while fighting in Europe. This was heavily criticised by some medical officers who believed sexual intercourse to be necessary for soldier’s wellbeing and for the safety of the French female population, who were reportedly more vulnerable to rape and abduction following the order. Brandt, *No Magic Bullet*, pp. 101-102.

⁷⁵ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 217.

wages.⁷⁶ Physicians like Ziberg correlated soldiers' apparent preference for long-term relationships over paid encounters with their lower infection rates.

The term 'bad disease' (*durnaia bolezn'*) was used as a synonym for venereal disease, which emphasises how the naval authorities conflated medical problems with issues of sexual morality.⁷⁷ A series of public lectures delivered in Libava in April 1910 even promoted the ideal of sexual continence for sailors. One talk reminded naval personnel that 'without a doubt, the most reliable and moral means to reduce venereal diseases is to abstain from extramarital intercourse' (*vnebrachnaia snosheniia*).⁷⁸ Another condemned married men who visited prostitutes as 'unscrupulous and immoral'.⁷⁹ The speakers recognised that this was merely 'wishful thinking' and went on to discuss prophylactic treatments. However, the lecturers' categorisation of sexual intercourse with prostitutes as immoral demonstrates their rejection of regulation as a method to protect public health and morality through the strict containment and control of prostitution. This links with wider criticisms of regulation's degenerative effect on morality voiced by much of educated society in the early 1900s. The merging of moral and medical issues reflected a call by prominent physicians for 'intensified moral vigilance' at the 1897 Congress on Syphilis, where many advocated the prohibition of alcohol and the education of

⁷⁶ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 217. In 1901, the Society of Naval Physicians in Libava outlined the differences in soldiers' and sailors' wages in a report on prostitution in the port. Low-ranking soldiers received on average a monthly wage of between twenty-two and thirty-one kopecks, whereas in the Navy, men could receive anything from fifty-two kopecks to one rouble and twenty kopecks, depending on their unit. Sailors also had more free time during the autumn and winter months and were more likely to be dismissed during quiet periods. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 7.

⁷⁷ D. V. Liventsev, 'Bor'ba s "Durnymi" Bolezniami na Rossiiskom Imperatorskom Flote', *Kul'tura i Fizicheskoe Zdorov'e*, 4 (2012), pp. 85-87.

⁷⁸ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 117b.

⁷⁹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 114.

young people ‘in the spirit of “moral cleanliness”’ to prevent the spread of diseases.⁸⁰

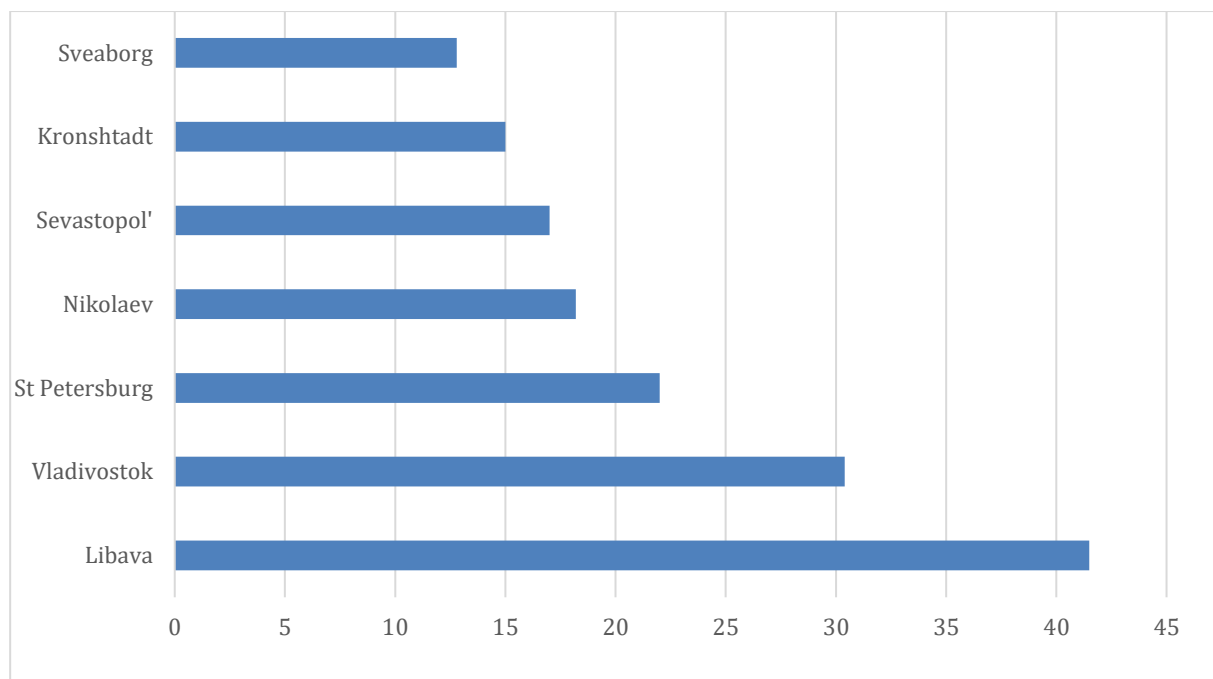
Libava

Venereal diseases in Libava were substantially higher than in other ports across the Russian empire. In 1906, levels of venereal infection in Libava port were almost twice as high as St Petersburg and three times higher than Kronshtadt.⁸¹ The disparity between infection rates in Libava and other important Russian ports is summarised in figure 14.

Figure 14: Percentage of sailors infected with a venereal disease in ports across the Russian empire, 1906

⁸⁰ Engelstein, ‘Morality and the Wooden Spoon’, p. 196.

⁸¹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, ll. 10-12.



Source: RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, ll. 10-12.

Naval doctors emphasised the corrupting influence that Libava city had on naval recruits. Sailors could easily access Libava from the Port of Emperor Alexander III, as the two destinations were connected by an electric tram system.⁸² With its predominantly male population, the city apparently offered 'a greater opportunity for illicit sexual relations and the spread of venereal diseases'.⁸³ One physician reported that in any of Libava's twenty-seven beer markets, twenty-two tea houses, twenty inns or six bathhouses, men were guaranteed to find 'satisfaction for their sexual needs'.⁸⁴ The authorities also recognised that like other large port cities, Libava attracted hundreds of prostitutes.⁸⁵ Physicians noted a correlation between sailors' time spent in the

⁸² RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 11.

⁸³ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 12.

⁸⁴ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 940, l. 12.

⁸⁵ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 16. The 1909 survey of prostitution across the Russian empire revealed that Libava was home to 51 per cent of all prostitutes in Kurliand province.

city and the likelihood of them contracting infection. In 1908, 44 per cent of those in service at Libava for three years became infected, compared with 30 per cent of those in their first year of service and 7 per cent in service for less than a year.⁸⁶ In the same year, 66 per cent of recruits caught their infection in Libava, and just 30 per cent outside the city. It is possible that sailors mainly contracted their venereal diseases in Libava just because it was the closest urban settlement to the military port, and the port and city were well connected by public transport. However, naval physicians repeatedly questioned why sailors' infection rates in Libava were so much higher than in other ports, such as Vladivostok or St Petersburg, and concluded that it must have been something to do with the particulars of the Baltic city.

Some medical professionals gestured to the characteristics of the Baltic provinces when attempting to explain why diseases were so common in Libava. In 1913, an article in *RZhKVB* suggested that the Baltic provinces were particularly infectious spaces. The author argued that the provinces of Estliand and Kurliand had seen huge increases in venereal infection in recent years, as in Revel', the number of people with venereal diseases jumped from 8 per cent in 1875 to 55.8 per cent in 1911.⁸⁷ The author explained that this 'astonishing rate' of infection was due to the geographical position of the Baltic provinces, which all had good railway connections to central and eastern Russia, as well as western Europe.⁸⁸ The Baltic coast was also home to several major resorts,

Sixty-five per cent of Lifliand province's prostitutes lived in Riga, and 87 per cent of prostitutes in Kherson province either lived in Odessa and Nikolaev. *Vrachebno-Politseiskii Nadzor*, p. 10, 12, 22, 26.

⁸⁶ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 11.

⁸⁷ 'Rasprostranenie i Bor'ba s Polovym Bolezniami', p. 273.

⁸⁸ 'Rasprostranenie i Bor'ba s Polovym Bolezniami', p. 274.

and as the area was well connected to the capital by rail and steamship, tourists flocked there during the summer months.⁸⁹

These remarks echo the connections Russian officials elsewhere in the empire made between venereal disease transmission and migration, as discussed earlier in this thesis. When Libava's military Port of Emperor Alexander III was opened in August 1893, the city's commercial port was an important centre of emigration from the Russian empire, especially for Jews fleeing the pogroms and discrimination of the Pale of Settlement.⁹⁰ The Libava-Romny railway connected the city with inland provinces, as the line ran from the coast at Libava to the provinces of Vilna, Kovno, Minsk and Poltava. As a key exit point from the Russian empire, a substantial portion of the city's population was transient. In 1912 and 1913, 106,471 people emigrated through Libava, whereas the city's registered population was just 90,000 in 1909.⁹¹ Emigrants swelled the city in the early 1900s, especially after the state relaxed emigration laws and launched its own direct passenger line from Libava to New York in 1906.⁹² Shipping companies provided facilities for first, second and third-class passengers to stay in Libava before their departure, in order to complete their medical examinations and even obtain a passport from the Kurliand Governor.⁹³ The

⁸⁹ L. McReynolds, *Russia at Play: Leisure Activities at the End of the Tsarist Era* (Ithaca and London, 2003), pp. 177-180.

⁹⁰ For a focused study of Jews and emigration from the port of Libava, see N. J. Evans, 'The Port Jews and Libau, 1880-1914', *Jewish Culture and History*, 7:1-2 (2004), pp. 197-214. For a comprehensive discussion of the planning and construction of the Port of Emperor Alexander III with illustrations, see R. V. Kondratenko, 'Voennyi Port Imperatora Aleksandra III v Libave', *Tsitadel'*, 2:5 (1997) and 1 (1998), pp. 9-18.

⁹¹ The majority of emigrants hailed from Minsk, Volyn and Grodno provinces. V. Kukushkin, *From Peasants to Labourers: Ukrainian and Belarusian Immigration from the Russian Empire to Canada* (Montreal, 2007), p. 53. The Chief of Police for Libava gives the 90,000 figure in a letter to the Kurliand medical department in April 1909. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 2.

⁹² T. Balkelis, 'Opening Gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish Migrations from the Lithuanian Provinces, 1867-1914', *Ethnicity Studies*, 1-2 (2010), p. 60

⁹³ Kukushkin, *From Peasants to Labourers*, p. 52.

city's police held Libava's transient population responsible for the prevalence of venereal diseases in the lower ranks of the Navy, implicating women who were allegedly working as prostitutes on a temporary basis without registering with the police as the chief culprits.⁹⁴ Therefore, Libava was a city of constant movement with a large transient population, factors that further cemented its reputation as a hub for venereal disease transmission in official imagination.

Libava was situated on the Baltic coast on the north-western periphery of the Russian empire. High rates of venereal infection for sailors stationed there dovetailed with other official statistics that presented imperial outposts as infectious spaces. In 1909, around 36 per cent of registered prostitutes living across European Russia had a venereal disease, yet infection levels were between 12-20 per cent higher in the Kingdom of Poland, Siberia and the Caucasus.⁹⁵ Within European Russia, prostitutes in the Baltic provinces were more likely to be diseased, as the number of infected women reached 63 per cent in Estliand province and 42 per cent in Kurliand.⁹⁶ Higher levels of infection in these regions could actually be a result of the poorer facilities and minimal police presence outside major urban centres. However, contemporary educated observers used these figures as evidence for the supposed cultural backwardness and 'deviance' of the empire's non-Russian, non-Orthodox populations. For example in 1905, the medical department of Estliand province classified the non-Russian population as culturally and socially inferior. The department claimed that due to the epidemic levels of syphilis, the indigenous

⁹⁴ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 2.

⁹⁵ *Vrachebno-Politseiskii Nadzor*, pp. 58-59.

⁹⁶ *Vrachebno-Politseiskii Nadzor*, pp. 10-11, 26-27.

population was 'on the way to degeneration' (*vyrozhdenie*), and used the apparent prevalence of 'epileptics and idiots suffering from various deformities' across the province as evidence for this assertion.⁹⁷

The connections made between non-Russian populations, poor hygiene and illicit sexuality are evident elsewhere in the empire. The tsarist authorities in Tashkent blamed the spread of water-borne diseases on the indigenous population's apparent poor hygiene and backward customs.⁹⁸ The Russian medical community lamented the apparent widespread 'degenerative' sexual practices typical of the 'savage morals' of the native populations in Central Asia and the Caucasus.⁹⁹ Russian, and later Soviet, physician Aleksei Sysin claimed that 30 per cent of the Yakut population were infected with syphilis in the late imperial period.¹⁰⁰ The classification of people who were not ethnically Russian as morally inferior and unhygienic was not just a feature of the Russian empire. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, educated elites across the British and German empires championed the supposedly 'superior' white European morals and hygienic practices over the 'backward' customs of indigenous subject populations.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ EAA, 30.6.3628 lk. 2-4.

⁹⁸ J. Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society in Tashkent, 1865-1923* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007), p. 93.

⁹⁹ Medical experts classified 'pederasty' and 'boy prostitution' (*bachevastvo*) as commonplace amongst local communities in these regions. Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, p. 97.

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in S. A. Scott, 'Venereal Diseases in the Soviet Union', *British Journal of Venereal Diseases*, 21:1 (1945), p. 4.

¹⁰¹ On the German empire see Walther, *Sex and Control*. On the British empire Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics*.

Controlling the public health crisis

The port, medical and civil authorities in Libava grappled to curb the epidemic levels of venereal diseases in sailors. As discussed earlier in this chapter, official attempts to reduce venereal diseases focused on the control of sailors' bodies. Some practices saw the installation of pseudo-regulation over sailors, similar to the corporeal control of prostitutes under the system of *nadzor*. The poor sexual health of sailors and the prostitutes whom they visited had the potential to harm the empire by depleting a valuable supply of manpower. Therefore, the sexual health of both sailors and prostitutes was a matter of public interest in Libava, and they endured similar treatment at the hands of medical authorities. This section will tease out the similarities in the corporeal regulation of Libava sailors and prostitutes, before discussing the biggest difference in the treatment of the two groups: the promotion of prophylactic treatment.

The majority of physicians in the early twentieth century strongly defended their right to exercise patient confidentiality, regarding it as a moral obligation to their patient rather than a legal regulation.¹⁰² State directives often overrode the interests of physicians, who found themselves forced to alert the authorities in extreme cases, such as when treating highly infectious diseases like smallpox and cholera.¹⁰³ Prostitutes were never granted patient confidentiality, as medical-police committees and hospitals contacted each other regarding prostitutes receiving venereal disease treatment. At the 1897 Syphilis

¹⁰² Physicians took an oath on the completion of medical school in which they promised to uphold medical secrecy. F. Bernstein, 'Behind the Closed Door: VD and Medical Secrecy in Early Soviet Medicine', in F. Bernstein, C. Burton and D. Healey (eds), *Soviet Medicine: Culture, Practice, and Science* (DeKalb, 2010), p. 96.

¹⁰³ Bernstein, 'Behind the Closed Door', p. 96.

Congress, physicians agreed that removing the stigma of venereal diseases by maintaining 'full patient confidentiality in the military ranks' was essential to reduce levels of infection.¹⁰⁴ However, in Libava, sailors did not enjoy any semblance of patient confidentiality. The Medical Inspector of the port agreed to keep a 'special list' of all sailors who had received treatment for venereal diseases apparently 'for statistical purposes'.¹⁰⁵ Once they had received treatment, physicians were to record the rank, full name and description of treatment onto a sailors' 'cheque' which was then presumably passed on to the port authorities.¹⁰⁶ Documents survive from 1909, 1911 and 1912, which indicate that the Medical Inspector of the port sent the port commander weekly reports on hospital admissions for venereal diseases.¹⁰⁷ Although sailors' names were omitted from the reports, the name of their unit and ship was always recorded so anonymity was impossible.

Like prostitutes, sailors supposedly had a societal obligation to keep themselves healthy and were issued with a set of instructions to achieve this aim. As noted in chapter four, Circular 1611 dictated that brothel keepers had to provide prostitutes with so-called Esmarch mugs, which were devices for vaginal douching.¹⁰⁸ Prostitutes also had to wash themselves with cold water between clients.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, the medical authorities gave Libava sailors directives to follow for hygiene and disclosure before and after sexual intercourse. Sailors were to rub a 'greasy material' such as Vaseline or oil onto

¹⁰⁴ GARF, f. 543, op. 1, d. 440, ll. 5-6.

¹⁰⁵ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, l. 20.

¹⁰⁶ RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, ll. 19-20.

¹⁰⁷ These lists can be found for autumn 1909, RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 588; for autumn 1911, RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1953; and for 1912, RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 648.

¹⁰⁸ TsGIASPB, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 34.

¹⁰⁹ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 26.

their penises before having sex, wash their genitals ‘immediately after’ and then go to the ship’s infirmary as soon as possible for prophylactic treatment.¹¹⁰ From 1909, the naval health department recommended that low-ranking sailors were to undergo corporeal examinations once a week, a similar frequency to registered prostitutes.¹¹¹ In Libava, sailors and prostitutes were controlled and monitored populations whose personal information and bodies were to be readily available to the local authorities for inspection.¹¹²

Those in authority continually reminded both low-ranking sailors and prostitutes of their low social standing and attempted to limit their visibility in urban space. In 1903, Circular 1611 forbade prostitutes from ‘obscenely’ appearing in the windows of apartments; disturbing and ‘enticing’ passers-by on the streets; walking together in public places; and sitting in the stalls at the theatre.¹¹³ In the absence of clear naval regulations, sailors were often subject to the whim of their commander who could forbid various activities, such as entering restaurants or taverns; smoking in public; riding in trams; and, like prostitutes, sitting in theatre stalls.¹¹⁴ In Revel’, certain brothel keepers refused to allow low-ranking sailors to enter their establishments.¹¹⁵ High command forbade Baltic fleet sailors in Kronshtadt from walking down one side of the

¹¹⁰ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1658, l. 114.

¹¹¹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2236, l. 53.

¹¹² This situation was not unique to Russia. In late nineteenth-century France when prostitution was policed under the *réglementation* system, sailors had to pass medical examinations before being allowed on shore leave. If found to be infected, they were forced to remain aboard or immediately hospitalised. Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen*, p. 220. Likewise, Daniel Walther argues that in the German colonial context, doctors were able to submit more people to medical supervision than was possible in Germany. In the colonies, both European and non-European soldiers were examined, along with prostitutes and indigenous groups. Walther, *Sex and Control*, p. 2.

¹¹³ TsGIA SPb, f. 569, op. 18, d. 4, l. 33.

¹¹⁴ Mawdsley, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 5.

¹¹⁵ Such as Filler’s establishment on the corner of Izrail’skaia and Martenskaia streets. EAA, 31.2.4216, lk. 4.

main street (Nikolaivskii Prospekt) and a sign in Petrovskii Park read 'no admittance to the lower ranks and dogs'.¹¹⁶

The most notable difference in the regulation of Libava sailors and prostitutes was that sailors were actively encouraged to seek prophylactic treatment after intercourse. Although brothel madams had to provide prostitutes with instruments for vaginal douching post-coitus, it is unclear whether this was recommended for hygienic purposes or to prevent the spread of diseases. Circular 1611 did not give prostitutes or madams any concrete information about prophylactic measures, yet they were advertised widely in magazines and newspapers.¹¹⁷ Regulation policy focused on removing diseased prostitutes from circulation, rather than preventing their infection in the first place. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there was a surge in medical interest in both the prevention and cure of venereal diseases in the Russian military. Doctors began to treat sailors with Protargol (silver proteinate): a post-coitus treatment for gonorrhoea involved the sailor urinating, washing his penis in soap and water and then a physician injecting the diluted solution directly into his urethra.¹¹⁸ This method was often unreliable and ineffective, but some physicians in the imperial period championed its efficacy.¹¹⁹ Three

¹¹⁶ Mawdsley, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 5.

¹¹⁷ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 347.

¹¹⁸ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 43

¹¹⁹ According to physician's data from 1916, this method reduced gonorrhoea levels by 10 per cent in the Russian Army, see Zav'ialov, Umts, Morrison and Gaidarov, 'Sifilis v Russkoi Armii', p. 558. Additionally, Avgust Zort, State Councillor and Flagship Doctor for the Baltic fleet, found that in 1910, 7.3 per cent of sailors in the Baltic fleet used prophylactics and of these, just 0.4 per cent subsequently caught a venereal disease. In the Black Sea fleet in the same year, 9 per cent of the whole command used prophylactics and 0.7 per cent of these became ill afterwards. RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2236, l. 54. An article in *RZhKVB* also praised the success of this so-called 'preventative douching' in the Russian Navy. 'Rasprostranenie i Bor'ba s Polovym Bolezniami, Glavnym Obrazom v Revele', *RZhKVB*, 9-10 (September-October 1913), pp. 273-274.

years later, the first effective cure for syphilis was developed at the laboratory of German immunologist Paul Ehrlich, known as Salvarsan or the 'magic bullet'.¹²⁰

In 1909, high command recommended the use of prophylactic means (*profilakticheskoe sredstvo*) for all sailors in the Navy. Naval authorities stressed that using preventative measures to protect against diseases was the sailor's individual responsibility, and that sailors had a duty to their country and unit to seek medical help as soon as possible following any so-called 'suspicious intercourse'.¹²¹ Sailors could also buy prophylactics for personal application. Libava port's Medical Inspector advocated the sale of condoms on ships for a 'significantly reduced price'.¹²² He also wanted 'Viro' packages to be widely available for personal use, which included small tubes of Vaseline and other antiseptic solutions.¹²³ While prostitutes had a legal obligation to stop working once they had caught a disease, sailors had a societal obligation to prevent becoming infected in the first place.

How successful were prophylactic measures in preventing the spread of venereal diseases for Libava's sailors? The diversity of clinical opinion often thwarted attempts to promote prophylactics. In 1905, *RZhKVB* published an 'extensive review' of available prophylactic treatments conducted by Dr Ludvig Iakobzon, a physician who published widely on sexuality in the pre-

¹²⁰ Brandt, *No Magic Bullet*, p. 40.

¹²¹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 51.

¹²² RGAVMF, f. 928, op. 1, d. 587, l. 18.

¹²³ These packages were distributed widely to armed and naval forces across Europe at this time. For example, before the ban on the sale of contraceptives in 1913, in the German colony of German South West Africa, soldiers received 2189 'Viro' packages between 1904 and 1908, Walther, *Sex and Control*, pp. 93-94.

revolutionary and early Soviet periods. Iakobzon commended the ‘very reliable means of [gonorrhoea] prevention’ that existed for men, which were endorsed by various European physicians.¹²⁴ He championed the ‘excellent results’ of the Protargol method, used by Doctors Frank, Blockuzewsky and Michels in Germany. Iakobzon also noted the discrepancies in physicians’ grasp of the method, which were potentially dangerous. Berlin pharmacist Noffke reportedly recommended that the Protargol solution was injected into the urethra with ‘the help of a sharp needle’ and a certain Dr Gaideburov advised men to wash their penises with 96 per cent alcohol after sexual intercourse.¹²⁵ The disparity of clinical opinion continued throughout the article. Despite Iakobzon’s praise of the Protargol method (when correctly administered), the journal’s editor tacked a small note on the end of his article, explaining that due to his ‘negative opinion on pharmaceutical personal prophylactics’, he did not recommend any of the methods to the public. Additionally, Iakobzon dismissed all eleven varieties of condom as unreliable, whereas the port authorities in Libava endorsed them as an entirely acceptable preventative method. The lack of clear ideas about the epidemiology of venereal diseases meant that medical practitioners often gave conflicting and ineffective advice.¹²⁶

There was also a significant gulf between state ambitions and realities. In August 1909, the Naval Minister explained that although he understood the benefits of post-coitus prophylactics, he did not believe that they should be compulsory for all naval personnel.¹²⁷ Even if high command had made post-

¹²⁴ ‘K Lichnoi Profilaktike Venericheskikh Boleznei’, *RZhKVB*, 5 (May 1905), p. 429.

¹²⁵ ‘K Lichnoi Profilaktike’, p. 429.

¹²⁶ Bernstein, *Sonia’s Daughters*, p. 75.

¹²⁷ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 1581, l. 50.

coitus prophylactic treatment mandatory, the naval authorities did not have the staff or facilities to enforce this practice. Discipline varied widely across fleets and units, and so did the number of sailors who followed official advice with regard to prophylactic treatment. In 1910, just 7.3 per cent of the entire Baltic fleet used prophylactic packages, and just 17.8 per cent of one unit in the Black Sea fleet.¹²⁸ In 1913, Avgust Zort, prominent naval physician and flagship doctor of the Baltic fleet, reported that prophylactic use in the Navy was ‘not particularly brilliant’ (*ne osobenno blestiashchi*) as on average, only between 7-12 per cent of sailors actually bothered to use preventative treatments.¹²⁹ Zort advocated a move towards enforcement, calling for ‘mandatory regulations and punitive measures’ as he had little faith in sailors’ self-regulation. Zort’s comments point towards one of the fundamental challenges faced by the imperial authorities. Despite moves towards the increased supervision of military personnel, the authorities failed to develop any meaningful methods for actually controlling the private and intimate lives of sailors. While the state owned sailors’ bodies in one sense, their ability to control their health and discipline was limited.

Conclusion

This chapter has overturned the perception that all clients of prostitutes were anonymous and never under surveillance. Military personnel were a valuable resource for the tsarist state, and their health was especially important

¹²⁸ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2236, l. 54.

¹²⁹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2236, l. 54.

following increasing rates of venereal infection in the early 1900s. In Libava, the civil and naval authorities swung between punishment and protection when attempting to protect sailors' health. They positioned sailors as victims who required protection from 'devious' clandestine prostitutes keen to infect them, while simultaneously advocating greater discipline to transform sailors' behaviour. Even when recommending discipline, the authorities were quick to emphasise alcohol's damaging influence on sailors' behaviour. In contrast, official policy towards prostitutes just focused on ensuring their registration, rather than attempting to protect them from contracting disease. Prostitutes, rather than sailors, were the responsible party in the transmission of venereal diseases.

There were some similarities in the authorities' treatment of prostitutes and other lower-class communities. The lower ranks of the Navy were subject to corporeal examinations with a similar frequency to independent prostitutes and certain officers attempted to limit the visibility of Baltic fleet sailors in urban space. Despite this, there were some fundamental differences in how the tsarist state exercised its authority over prostitutes and other lower-class people. Prostitutes' health was rarely discussed by the authorities, unless in reference to their infectious potential. Unlike Libava sailors, prostitutes in the city did not have easy access to prophylactic treatments and often their medical examinations were rushed and completely inadequate. Keeping prostitutes' bodies healthy was an official priority only because their disease had a direct impact on men's health.

High levels of venereal disease provided medical professionals with evidence that regulation in its current format was not working to protect public and military health. If the authorities struggled to ensure the sexual health of military personnel during peacetime, the mass mobilisations and social dislocation of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) and the First World War (1914-1917) rendered their efforts completely unsuccessful. The turmoil of conflict widened the gulf between the imperial state's ambitious attempts to control the movement and bodies of its populace and the contrasting reality. The next chapter will focus on how the flashpoints of war further exacerbated the failure of regulation, leading ultimately to its abolition in summer 1917.

6. Regulation in conflict: the place of *nadzor* in the Russo-Japanese and First World Wars

War threw Russia's already-failing system of regulation into chaos. Conflict in the east between 1904 and 1905 and in the west between 1914 and 1917 caused the mass movement of a substantial portion of the empire's population. Millions of soldiers were mobilised along the Russian railway lines, towards Manchuria in 1904 and then to the western provinces one decade later. At the same time, refugees fled conflict and the authorities expelled 'undesirable' social and ethnic groups from their localities. Mass movement loosened the imperial state's tenuous grip over lower-class populations, particularly women who worked as prostitutes. Wartime overcrowding in railway towns and ports further stretched the examination and treatment facilities for registered prostitutes and their military clients. The colossal financial cost of both conflicts meant that local and central governments made funding regulation an even lower priority than in peacetime. This chapter will examine how war further illuminated and aggravated the tsarist authorities' failure to impose control over registered women and prevent the spread of venereal diseases.

The subject of heterosexual prostitution during wartime has been neglected in the Russian context, but there is a wealth of valuable studies in global settings.¹ Research has explored relationships between prostitutes and their military clients and interrogated how state authorities sought to control both men's and

¹ With the exceptions of Hearne, 'Sex on the Front' and Healey 'Love and Death'.

women's bodies through anti-venereal disease campaigns.² Other scholarship has focused more specifically on clients and the ways in which constructions of masculinity and social class affected soldiers' experiences of prostitution.³ Studies have also examined women's entry into the business of commercial sex and how the social dislocation and economic turmoil of wartime coincided with a rise in prostitution.⁴ Historians of the twentieth century have explored the ways in which war granted the state additional mechanisms to both control and persecute prostitutes, and even force women to enter the sex industry.⁵ These works provide an excellent body of literature for the study of wartime prostitution in Europe, North America and colonial Africa.

The first conflict under consideration in this chapter is the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), which has attracted significant attention from both social and cultural historians. Scholarship has stressed the global nature of the conflict, and explored its impact in India, Germany, Korea and Great Britain.⁶ Historians have explored the cultural influences of the war, particularly the racialised

² L. Bland and F. Mort, 'Look Out for the "Good Time" Girl: Dangerous Sexualities as a Threat to National Health' in B. Schwarz (ed). *Formations of Nations and People* (London, 1984); Harrison, 'The British Army and the Problem of Venereal Disease'; B. Taithe, *Defeated Flesh: Medicine, Welfare and Warfare in the Making of Modern France* (Lanham, 1999); A. F. Timm, 'Sex With a Purpose: Prostitution, Venereal Disease and Militarized Masculinity in the Third Reich' in D. Herzog (ed). *Sexuality and German Fascism* (New York, 2005), pp. 233-255.; Wingfield, 'The Enemy Within'.

³ See chapter six in Levine, *Prostitution, Race and Politics*, pp. 145-176; C. Makepeace, 'Male Heterosexuality and Prostitution During the Great War: British Soldiers' Encounters with Maisons Tolérées', *Cultural and Social History*, 9:1 (2012), pp. 65-83.

⁴ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 42-44; C. Clinton, *Public Women and the Confederacy* (Milwaukee, 1999).

⁵ V. Harris, *Selling Sex in the Reich: Prostitutes in German Society, 1914-1945* (Oxford, 2010); Y. Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution During World War II and the US Occupation* (London and New York, 2003); J. Lie, 'The State as Pimp: Prostitution and the Patriarchal State in Japan in the 1940s', *Sociological Quarterly*, 38:2 (1997) pp. 251-263.

⁶ For example, the following edited collections engage with this issue at length: R. Kowner (ed). *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 2007); J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden, 2007).

ways in which the Russian popular press and intelligentsia represented the Japanese enemy.⁷ Others focus on the home front, connecting widespread unrest amongst mobilised soldiers with the revolutions of 1905-1906.⁸ Despite this substantial body of literature, very few studies engage with gender and sexuality, and prostitution is completely absent from these discussions.⁹ This chapter will use prostitution as a lens to examine the wider social impact of the war, focusing on the railway towns along the Trans-Siberian.

This chapter also focuses on Russia's First World War (1914-1917), which has been the subject of increased interest from social historians in recent years. Studies that have focused on policies of forced migration enacted against Jews and ethnic Germans have been particularly successful in illustrating the social dislocation of the conflict for those living in the provinces that comprised Russia's western front.¹⁰ Research into gender and sexuality has effectively

⁷ P. Bushkovitch, 'The Far East in the Eyes of the Russian Intelligentsia'; R. Stites, 'Russian Representations of the Japanese Enemy'; T. Filippova, 'Images of the Foe in the Russian Satirical Press' all in Steinberg, Menning, Schimmelpennick van der Oye, Wolff and Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, vol. 1.

⁸ J. Kusber, 'Soldiers' Unrest Behind the Front After the End of the War' in R. Kowner (ed), *Rethinking the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905, vol. 1: Centennial Perspectives* (Folkestone, 2007), pp. 281-290; J. Bushnell, 'The Spectre of Mutinous Reserves: How the War Produced the October Manifesto' in Steinberg, Menning, Schimmelpennick van der Oye, Wolff and Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, vol 1, pp. 333-348; Sanborn, *Drafting the Russian Nation*, pp. 13-26.

⁹ Tatiana Filippova examines the gendering of racist representations of Japanese women in the Russian satirical press. T. Filippova, 'Images of the Foe in the Russian Satirical Press' in Steinberg, Menning, Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, vol 1, pp. 411-424. Yulia Mikhailova and Ikuta Michiko demonstrate the central place of Russian women in the conflict, see Y. Mikhailova and I. Michiko, 'Forgotten Heroes: Russian Women and the War' in Kowner (ed), *Rethinking the Russo-Japanese War*, pp. 202-217. With regards to prostitution, Bernstein pays brief attention to prostitutes in the Russo-Japanese War in her discussion of prostitutes' medical examinations, see Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 56, 259.

¹⁰ P. Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia During World War One* (Bloomington, 1999); A. V. Prusin, 'The Russian Military and the Jews in Galicia, 1914-1915' in E. Lohr and M. Poe (eds), *The Military and Society in Russia, 1450-1917* (Leiden, 2002); E. Lohr, *Nationalising the Russian Empire*; J. Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse: the Great War and the Destruction of the Russian Empire* (Oxford, 2014); J. Sanborn, 'Unsettling the Empire: Violent Migrations and Social Disaster in Russia During World War I', *Journal of Modern History*, 77:2 (2005), pp. 290-324.

emphasised how mass mobilisation and social dislocation resulted in the destabilisation of peacetime sexual behaviour and understandings of sexuality.¹¹ Russian language studies have also focused on the military authorities' concern about the moral and sexual lives of soldiers, owing to an apparent explosion in prostitution and promiscuous sex during the war years.¹² Others have explored how the entry of women, such as military nurses, into the male sphere of war contributed to their association with prostitution and casual sex in the imagination of military personnel.¹³

The geographical focus of this chapter is on areas either *en route* to, or directly within, theatres of conflict. For the Russo-Japanese War, the focus is on Enisei and Irkutsk provinces, as well as the Trans-Baikal region.¹⁴ In 1904, the newly completed Trans-Siberian railway ran through these provinces, and the line facilitated the mass movement of hundreds of thousands of soldiers to the eastern theatre of war. For the First World War, the focus shifts to the Russian western front, particularly the provinces of Vilna, Polotsk, Grodno and Warsaw in the Pale of Settlement, as well as the Baltic provinces of Estliand and Lifliand.¹⁵ This follows a recent historiographical trend that emphasises the plurality of experiences of war and revolution outside of the cities of Moscow

¹¹ Healey, 'Love and Death', pp. 153-162.

¹² A. B. Astashov, 'Seksual'nyi Opyt Russkogo Soldata na Pervoi Mirovoi i Ego Posledstviia dlia Voiny i Mira', *Voenno-Istoricheskaia Antropologiya: Ezhegodnik*, (2005-6), pp. 367-382; E. S. Seniavskaia, 'Bez Baby i Bez Vina i Voina ne Nuzhna: Problemy Frontovoi Morali v Period Pervoi Mirovoi Voyny', *Istoricheskaia Psikhologiya i Sotsiologiya Istorii*, 1 (2013), pp. 32-38.

¹³ L. Stoff, *Russia's Sisters of Mercy and the Great War: More Than Binding Men's Wounds* (Lawrence, 2015) pp. 266-294; Healey, 'Love and Death', p. 155.

¹⁴ Enisei province (*Eniseiskaia guberniia*) is now Krasnoiarsk territory (*Krasnoiarskii krai*). The Trans-Baikal region (*Zaibikal'skii oblast'*) is now Trans-Baikal territory (*Zaibikal'skii krai*).

¹⁵ This region was known as the eastern front by Western European Allies and the northwestern front by the Central Powers.

and St Petersburg.¹⁶ This chapter will show the similarity between official responses to prostitution and venereal diseases in both the Russo-Japanese and First World Wars. In looking at both conflicts, it will demonstrate that the imperial authorities faced similar challenges on opposing peripheries of empire, yet refused or were unable to provide the necessary facilities to reform the failing *nadzor* system.

The Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905

The conflict between Russia and Japan lasted just eighteen months, beginning with Japan's declaration of war at Port Arthur in February 1904 and ending with the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth in September 1905. Russia lost substantial territory, as Japan gained control over Korea, a large portion of South Manchuria and the southern part of Sakhalin Island. The empire also suffered tremendous human losses, as estimates for the total number of casualties range from 43,300 to 139,000.¹⁷ At the Battle of Mukden alone (20 February – 10 March 1905) 90,000 Russian soldiers were killed, wounded or taken prisoner.¹⁸ The financial cost of the war was extraordinary. The Russian government accrued two billion roubles in foreign loans and the total

¹⁶ A. B. Retish, L. G. Novikova and S. Badcock 'Introduction: a Kaleidoscope of Revolutions'; M. R. Baker, 'War and Revolution in Ukraine: Kharkiv Province's Peasants' Experiences of War, Revolution, and Occupation, 1914-18'; M. C. Hickey, 'Smolensk's Jews in War, Revolution, and Civil War' all in A. B. Retish, L. G. Novikova and S. Badcock (eds), *Russia's Home Front in War and Revolution, 1914-1922, Book 1. Russia's Revolution in Regional Perspective* (Bloomington, 2015).

¹⁷ Rotem Kowner cites two German sources in his textbook which listed the total number of Russian casualties as 43,300 and 71,453, see R. Kowner, *The A to Z of the Russo-Japanese War* (Lanham and Toronto, 2009), p. 81. Soviet demographer Boris Tsezarevich Uralnis gives the much higher estimate of 139,000 in B. Ts. Uralnis, *Voyny i Narodonaselenie Evropy* (Moscow, 1960), p. 365.

¹⁸ B. W. Menning, *Bayonets Before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861-1914* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992), p. 194.

expenditure throughout the course of the conflict reached 6.554 billion roubles.¹⁹ The financial impact of the war, coupled with dissatisfied mutinous reserves, further galvanised the mass waves of political and social unrest that broke across the empire throughout 1905-1907.²⁰ Substantial military expenditure, widespread labour unrest and global economic downturn left the tsarist government on the verge of bankruptcy in 1905.

If regulation was chronically underfunded, understaffed and ineffective during peacetime, the conflict greatly exacerbated the situation. Continued military defeats throughout 1904 and 1905 necessitated mass mobilisation, so 1,754,146 reserves were drafted from 673 different districts and eight Cossack districts.²¹ As reserves moved eastwards along the Trans-Siberian railway, regional governors lamented the increased visibility of prostitution and venereal diseases in provincial towns. Urban centres became overcrowded and facilities markedly stretched. Mass mobilisation further challenged the tsarist authorities' ability to achieve the fundamental aims of regulation: to police prostitution and prevent venereal disease transmission. The gulf between state ambitions and realities widened, and the exceptional situation of the conflict provided further evidence that regulation was completely ineffective and unenforceable.

¹⁹ On foreign loans and their impact on domestic politics, see P. Waldron, 'Russia's Finances and 1905' in F. Fischer von Weikersthal, F. Grüner, S. Hohler, F. Schedewie and R. Utz (eds), *The Russian Revolution of 1905 in Transcultural Perspective: Identities, Peripheries and the Flow of Ideas* (Bloomington, 2013), pp. 311-324. On the total expenditure, see B. Ananich, 'Russian Military Expenditures in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-5', trans. D. Wolff, in Steinberg, Menning, Schimmelpennick van der Oye, Wolff and Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, vol. 1, p. 450.

²⁰ Bushnell, 'The Spectre of Mutinous Reserves', pp. 333-334.

²¹ 131 of these regions were mobilised on more than one occasion. J. Kusber, *Krieg und Revolution in Russland, 1904-1906* (Stuttgart, 1997), p. 62.

Policing prostitution along the line of mobilisation

Unsurprisingly, prostitution in the Siberian provinces predated the conflict. In 1889, there were ninety state-licensed brothels in the region and 467 registered prostitutes.²² These relatively modest figures are indicative of the sparse and inadequate police presence in many Siberian towns around the turn of the century.²³ Clandestine prostitution was reported to be a widespread method of alleviating economic hardship, particularly for female criminals and women who voluntarily followed their husbands into Siberian exile.²⁴ From 1891, the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway facilitated the migration of thousands of railway workers from the western provinces. For example, in 1905, 57,881 people worked on the Siberian railway and 35,667 on the Trans-Baikal line.²⁵ Railway workers provided both registered and clandestine prostitutes with an ample customer base. The vast majority of the railway workers were migrants aged between twenty-one and forty; single, or at least, living apart from their wives and families; and earning wages 30 per cent higher than their European Russian counterparts.²⁶ By the outbreak of war in February 1904, the Trans-Siberian railway was able to transport troops across

²² Across Amur, Zabaikal, Primor, and Iakutsk *oblasti*, and Enisei, Irkutsk, Tobol' and Tomsk provinces. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 3.

²³ H. Reichmann, 'The 1905 Revolution on the Siberian Railroad', *Russian Review*, 47:1 (1988), p. 31.

²⁴ Women whose husbands were imprisoned in Aleksandrovsk and Nerchinsk *katorga* or transfer prisons lived in squalid conditions in the nearby family barracks. Official reports noted that many women turned to prostitution due to a lack of paid employment in these regions. Badcock, *A Prison Without Walls?*, p. 55.

²⁵ Reichmann, 'The 1905 Revolution', p. 27.

²⁶ Reichmann, 'The 1905 Revolution', pp. 29-30.

the empire, further increasing the customer base for women engaging in prostitution.²⁷

Railway construction also aided Siberian urbanisation, as new or previously undeveloped urban centres grew substantially in size and offered greater opportunities for commercial sex.²⁸ Between 1897 and 1905, Chita's population increased by over 260 per cent, and Krasnoiarsk's by 170 per cent.²⁹ The general population and registered prostitute population rose in tandem, particularly in the Trans-Baikal region, home of the Trans-Baikal railway. In 1889, there were only two legal brothels and 27 registered prostitutes recorded in this region. Chita had just one brothel and sixteen prostitutes; Verkhneudinsk one brothel and six prostitutes; and Nerchinsk had only two registered prostitutes working in the town.³⁰ As noted earlier, these low figures are indicative of sparse policing rather than an absence of prostitution, as officials at the Nerchinsk *katorga* prison frequently reported that convicts' wives engaged in clandestine prostitution in the absence of other paid labour.³¹ By 1909, legal prostitution had greatly expanded in the region, as there were

²⁷ Transportation was at a limited capacity at the outbreak of war. Keishi argues that the carrying capacity of the railway was grossly miscalculated. In 1904, the Trans-Siberian was only single track, and as the Lake Baikal line was not completed, all railway traffic had to cross the lake either by boat or sled, depending on season. See O. Keishi, 'Japan's Monetary Mobilisation for War' in D. Wolff, S. G. Marks, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, J. W. Steinberg and Y. Shinji (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 2 (Leiden, 2007), p. 256.

²⁸ Westwood uses two examples to emphasise the impact of the railway on urban development. Firstly, Slavgorod, which was founded in 1910, and secondly, the population of Tomsk province which increased nine times over between 1900 and 1909. See Westwood, *A History of the Russian Railways*, p. 116.

²⁹ Chita's population rose from 11,848 in 1897 to 42,735 in 1905. Krasnoiarsk's increased by 26,000 in 1897 to 47,006 by 1905. T. I. Zhrebtsova, A. V. Konstantinov, V. S. Kulakov and A. I. Lytsus', 'Chita' in *Entsiklopediia Zabaikal'ia* <http://encycl.chita.ru/encycl/concepts/?id=2111>, accessed 8.3.2016. RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 97.

³⁰ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 31.

³¹ S. Badcock, 'From Villains to Victims: Experiencing Illness in Siberian Exile', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 65:9 (2013), p. 1733.

now 231 registered prostitutes and twenty-one brothels across the province: 100 women working in Chita; seventy-four in Verkhneudinsk (Ulan-Ude); and thirty-nine in Nerchinsk. A medical-police committee was established at Mysovsk (Babushkin), which became the eastern terminus of the ferry across Lake Baikal after the establishment of the Trans-Siberian railway.³² In Enisei province, Krasnoiarsk's registered prostitution population grew from sixteen in 1889 to sixty by 1909.³³ Surveys and reports speak only to numbers of legally registered prostitutes, so levels of clandestine prostitution were likely to have been even higher.

Even though prostitution had existed before the construction of the Trans-Siberian, central government claimed that the railway imported commercial sex into provincial towns, particularly during the war. The Russian Imperial Army conducted four mobilisations between April and August 1904 to bolster corps on their way to Manchuria.³⁴ Halfway through these mobilisations in June 1904, the MVD informed the GUMKh that it was now essential to strengthen, and in some cases establish for the first time, *nadzor* at six stations in Irkutsk province: Taishet, Nizhneudinsk, Tulun, Innokent'evskii, Zima and Irkutsk.³⁵ Soldiers apparently stopped off in these towns for their allotted day of rest (*dnevka*) while *en route* to the eastern theatre of war. Each town needed a dedicated doctor, police constable and medical supplies, as these urban settlements had none of the facilities required for prostitutes' legally mandated examinations. Before the construction of the railway, Irkutsk was the chief site

³² *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, pp. 48-49.

³³ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 31; *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor*, pp. 48-49.

³⁴ Bushnell, 'The Spectre of Mutinous Reserves', p. 335.

³⁵ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 6.

of provincial legal prostitution, as in 1889 over 90 per cent of the province's registered prostitutes lived in the city.³⁶ There were no state-licensed brothels or registered prostitutes in Taishet, Tulun, Innokent'evskii and Zima in this year, so we can assume that prostitutes living in these areas worked clandestinely, undetected by the minimal local police force characteristic of rural areas.³⁷

War and transport innovation brought these towns under the gaze of the tsarist medical police, which provides another example of how the development of technology gave the imperial state new opportunities for monitoring its populace in modernising Russia.³⁸ Given the importance of military health for national security, the presence of soldiers' bodies in the context of wartime made these previously unpoliced areas subject to state intervention. The department of police singled out railway stations as sites of surveillance and requested the installation of police sergeants (*uriadnik*) in apartments at each of the six aforementioned stops along the Trans-Siberian route.³⁹ In doing this, the tsarist police attempted to reconstruct railway stations, transforming their status as 'loci of anonymity' to 'mapped, surveyed, colonised, possessed and

³⁶ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 31.

³⁷ The ratio of policemen to residents often reached 1:700 or more in provincial towns across the empire. Even as towns and cities grew substantially through urbanisation, the number of policemen remained static. For example, in Tomsk, the number of residents doubled between 1892 and 1908, yet the city gained no policemen. Weissman, 'Regular Police', p. 48.

³⁸ From 1909, the MVD stipulated that registered prostitutes had to attach a photograph to their medical ticket to ensure that they attended their medical examinations rather than sending other women in their stead. 'K Registratsii Prostitutok', *RZhKVB*, p. 282. This practice was introduced around the turn of the century, during the expansion of photographic businesses and when photographs began to be frequently used in popular journals. N. Raab, 'Visualising Civil Society: the Fireman and the Photographer in Late Imperial Russia, 1900-1914', *History of Photography*, 31:2 (2007), p. 152. In addition, Louise McReynolds discusses how the new forensic technologies of fingerprinting and photography in the late nineteenth century allowed Russian law enforcement to demonstrate their 'control over criminality' to the public. McReynolds, *Murder Most Russian*, pp. 152-153.

³⁹ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 18.

regulated' spaces.⁴⁰ As provincial towns in Irkutsk province developed as a result of increased migration and technological development, they lent themselves to new methods of control and governance.

The focus on increasing surveillance in these spaces reflects a wider association of railway stations with disorder, disease, and crime in the late imperial period. Frithjof Schenk notes that in the late nineteenth century, railway tracks, stations and train carriages became synonymous with terrorist activity, as synchronised train timetables allowed terrorists to carry out coordinated attacks on high-ranking officials and even the Tsar himself.⁴¹ Railways and disease were connected in official imagination, especially given that the 1892 cholera epidemic spread with 'unprecedented rapidity' due to the construction of a new railway network stretching from the Caucasus to Poland.⁴² For charitable organisations like ROZZh, railway stations were a key setting for the procurement of 'innocent' peasant women into prostitution, so volunteers waited at stations to prevent new arrivals to the city from falling into the hands of so-called white slavers.⁴³ During the mass mobilisation of the Russo-Japanese War, riots and pogroms erupted along the lines of the Russian railways. The MVD counted 107 disorders in conjunction with the October and

⁴⁰ S. Bieri and N. Gerodetti, "'Falling Women" – "Saving Angels": Spaces of Contested Mobility and the Production of Gender and Sexualities Within Early Twentieth-Century Train Stations', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 8:2 (2007), pp. 217-218. Gerodetti and Bieri analyse the 'sexual geography' of railway stations in early twentieth-century Switzerland. They argue that, for Swiss social reformers, train stations represented the meeting point of the 'innocent' rural and the 'deviant' urban: 'a border-land, an exit or an entry, a location of dislocations' see N. Gerodetti and S. Bieri, '(Female hetero)Sexualities in Transition: Train Stations as Gateways', *Feminist Theory*, 7:1 (2006), p. 76.

⁴¹ The attacks on Tsar Alexander II in 1869 and the Minister of Internal Affairs Viacheslav von Plehve in 1904 were both coordinated with the use of train timetables. F. B. Schenk, 'Attacking the Empire's Achilles Heels: Railroads and Terrorism in Imperial Russia', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 58 (2010), pp. 232-253.

⁴² Henze, *Disease, Health Care and Government*, p. 38.

⁴³ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 207.

December mobilisations of 1904.⁴⁴ Newspapers reported in lurid detail on excessive alcoholic consumption by enlisted men, who apparently vandalised their home villages and railway stations on their journeys eastwards.⁴⁵

The police's attempts to increase surveillance along the railway line were resolutely unsuccessful. In November 1904, GUMKh was still waiting for the Irkutsk Governor to provide the necessary funds for the six police sergeants' salaries.⁴⁶ The Military Council sent the funds to the Governor on 23 November 1904, but on 28 February 1905, the Governor was still unsure about where the sergeants should be stationed, which indicates that the proposed enhanced policing was yet to be implemented along the railway line.⁴⁷ In September 1904, the Irkutsk Military Governor remarked that due to the mass movement of troops along the Trans-Siberian, prostitution was 'more widespread than ever before' in Irkutsk.⁴⁸ Local authorities struggled to police prostitution at other railway junctions. In July 1904, the Orenburg Governor asked the MVD for financial assistance to improve the functioning of the medical-police committees in Orenburg and Cheliabinsk, as a 'substantial number of troops' spent their days off at these towns while journeying east.⁴⁹ The Governor asked for 2,380 roubles to pay the salaries of six police agents, two clerks and two paramedics across Orenburg and Cheliabinsk, a modest police presence for towns of 72,000 and 20,000 people respectively.⁵⁰ When the MVD eventually

⁴⁴ Bushnell, 'The Spectre of Mutinous Reserves', p. 335.

⁴⁵ Herilhy, *The Alcoholic Empire*, pp. 95-96.

⁴⁶ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 28.

⁴⁷ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 62, 86.

⁴⁸ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 43.

⁴⁹ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 19.

⁵⁰ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 24. Statisticheskogo Komiteta Ministerstva Vnutrennikh Del, *Pervaiia Vseobshchaia Perepis' Naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii, XXVIII: Orenburgskaia Guberniia* (St Petersburg, 1904), p. viii.

replied three months later, they refused to pay the full costs and argued that the Chief Medical Inspector had already sent medical personnel to Orenburg and Cheliabinsk earlier that year.⁵¹ As in peacetime, the central MVD and local authorities were often unwilling to provide the necessary funds and staff to ensure that regulation functioned adequately.

The case of Krasnoiarsk epitomises how war further aggravated the imperial authorities' inability to police prostitution. Krasnoiarsk was an important junction on the Trans-Siberian, so troops frequently passed through on their journeys east. In December 1905, the Krasnoiarsk Office for Charitable Organisations reported that the number of troops living in the city had significantly increased because of the conflict. Before the 'eruption of war with Japan', the garrison comprised 1500 soldiers.⁵² However, in late 1905, even though the war had ended, 5000 soldiers were apparently still in Krasnoiarsk, spilling out of the military barracks into private housing and various buildings across the city. These masses of soldiers encroached on the already stretched medical facilities for Krasnoiarsk's local population, which had almost doubled in the eight years since the 1897 census.⁵³

Local government in Krasnoiarsk saw a correlation between the mass arrival of soldiers and a sharp increase in the number of registered prostitutes, something for which both the police and medical authorities were drastically unprepared. Even by summer 1904, the city's facilities were stretched to full

⁵⁰ 'Sifilis v Irkutske', *RZhKVB*, 8 (August 1904), p. 192.

⁵¹ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 29.

⁵² RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 97.

⁵³ The population was 26,000 in 1897 and 47,006 by 1905. RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 97.

capacity. In a letter to the MVD in September 1904, the Irkutsk Military Governor wrote about the wartime situation at Krasnoiarsk City Hospital:

Prostitutes gather for their inspections long before the appointed hour, and they walk in crowds along the city streets, close to the gates of the hospital. They crowd together in large numbers (more than forty) in the waiting room, which also serves other patients. Often drunken prostitutes have an unpleasant effect on the incoming crowd. They disturb the peace with their loud talking, cursing and sometimes fighting. They leave lots of dirt and rags, which they have used to wipe themselves before their medical examinations.⁵⁴

In his description of medical examinations, the Governor presented registered women as a drunken and disruptive mob. Barely able to contain his disgust, he claimed that the disorderly and dirty bodies of prostitutes posed a grave threat to public morality. This rhetoric of filth and societal contamination can be understood using Mary Douglas' concept of dirt. The Governor urged the MVD to provide funds to establish an examination point (*smotrovyi punkt*) for prostitutes away from the hospital, using the threat of dirt to justify the reorganising and 'cleansing' of urban space.⁵⁵ As seen earlier in this thesis,

⁵⁴ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 43. This document is described briefly in Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 56.

⁵⁵ M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London and New York, 1966), p. 2.

prostitutes routinely transgressed the regulatory policies intended to limit their visibility. In the context of wartime Krasnoiarsk, this subversion became even more pronounced, as mass overcrowding and poor facilities brought large groups of registered women into public spaces. This heightened visibility generated concern regarding the unavoidable contact between prostitutes and ordinary people, namely prostitutes' supposed contaminative effect on public morality.

Curiously, the Irkutsk Military Governor blamed the current 'abnormal scene' on the reluctance of the Krasnoiarsk city authorities to fund a separate examination space. However, the Krasnoiarsk Duma had rejected a proposal for a separate space in June 1904 because of the exponential costs that the war had inflicted on the city. The Duma reported that housing troops in private apartments across Krasnoiarsk cost an additional 17,000 roubles and providing financial aid for the families of wounded or killed soldiers an extra 5000 roubles.⁵⁶ As the Duma thought that these 'costs would continue indefinitely', they could not spare the 1895 roubles needed to install a special examination facility unless given extra money from the Minister of Finance. After months of correspondence between the Enisei Governor and the central government, the Minister of Finance released just 1000 roubles to the Krasnoiarsk authorities to install the examination facility in March 1905. The case of Krasnoiarsk highlights two fundamental problems of regulation seen throughout this thesis:

⁵⁶ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 48. Local government bodies provided substantial amounts of money for families of the wounded and killed. For example, Moscow Provincial Zemstvo set aside 300 thousand roubles, Khar'kov Provincial Zemstvo 140 thousand roubles, and St Petersburg Provincial Zemstvo 100 thousand roubles. T. Yoshifuru, 'Unsuccessful National Unity: the Russian Home Front in 1904' in D. Wolff, S. G. Marks, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, J. W. Steinberg and Y. Shinji (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 2 (Leiden, 2007), p. 327.

the inability, or unwillingness, of the tsarist authorities to provide the necessary funds or facilities, and the lack of coordination between various branches of central and regional government.

Preventing venereal disease transmission in Siberia

In summer 1904, the medical press reported that incidence of venereal infection in the military had reached crisis point. An article in the August 1904 edition of *RZhKVB* claimed that due to mass mobilisation, 60 per cent of all patients in Manchurian military hospitals now had a venereal disease.⁵⁷ The military's medical authorities feared that levels would increase significantly as reserves continued to be drafted from the military districts of Kazan, Moscow and Kiev in autumn 1904.⁵⁸ The imperial authorities did not pursue any specific policy to combat venereal diseases in wartime, nor were any arrangements for the establishment of specialist medical facilities included in official mobilisation plans. Despite this, official statistics indicated that just 7 per cent of all soldiers were hospitalised with venereal diseases in the period 1904-1905. Levels of infection actually declined by 12 per cent in towns and 8 per cent in the countryside.⁵⁹ The discrepancy between these figures and the perceived increase in infection could be due to limited available statistics during the war years, or indicative of a moral panic driven by the social and economic dislocation of the conflict.

⁵⁷ 'Sifilis v Irkutske', p. 192.

⁵⁸ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 1.

⁵⁹ Zav'ialov, Umts, Morrison and Gaidarov, 'Sifilis v Russkoi Armii', p. 559.

Certain authorities were quick to blame clandestine prostitutes for the perceived increase in venereal infection. In June 1904, the MVD sent a circular to all provincial governors regarding the apparent epidemic infections amongst troops travelling on the Trans-Siberian railway. Commanders reported 'sharp outbreaks' of disease following soldiers' periods of leave, especially when they had been housed in local apartments rather than in military barracks or tents.⁶⁰ As the apartments were private spaces outside the supervision of the military authorities, the MVD cast them as hubs of clandestine prostitution. The 'strengthening of the supervision of prostitution' in towns along the Trans-Siberian was apparently of the upmost importance. In a similar vein, the Ministry of Defence reported that high command noticed a 'sharp increase' in levels of infection when soldiers stopped off at the Cheliabinsk 'food station' (*prodovol'stvennyi punkt*) and stayed overnight in private apartments.⁶¹ These reports emphasised the local population's supposed infectious potential, and classified contact with residents of towns along the Trans-Siberian railway as detrimental to soldiers' health. The categorisation of local populations as dangerous and diseased links with discussions of the infectious potential of imperial peripheries, as discussed in the previous chapter.

Despite attributing some blame to clandestine prostitutes, the MVD were keen to emphasise how the apparent low cultural development and unhygienic practices of recruits influenced rising infection levels. In correspondence with the War Minister, the MVD purported that syphilis was mainly spread through

⁶⁰ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 7.

⁶¹ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 1.

non-sexual means, referencing the findings of the 1897 Congress on Syphilis.⁶² In this June 1904 letter, the MVD reminded the War Minister that the most prominent doctors in Russia shared this opinion. To combat the problem, the MVD recommended that doctors in military districts should pay special attention to recruits' sexual health during the drafting process, and send any sick men immediately to hospital rather than onto the trains bound for the theatre of war.⁶³ The MVD explained that there was currently no viable solution to the problem, and claimed that levels of disease would decrease naturally when the population became 'more conscious of the need to seek medical help'.⁶⁴ This reluctance to take action was driven by the assumption that venereal disease transmission was the inevitable result of the ignorance and poor hygienic habits of lower-class people. In the same month, an article from the medical press adopted a similar *laissez-faire* attitude. After rejecting several suggestions for how to treat diseased soldiers, the writer concluded that 'once they have reached a certain cultural level; every soldier will be able to avoid contracting an infection from a sick comrade'.⁶⁵ Contemporary medical reports further reflect this laxity. One 1906 study reported that 18 per cent of syphilis patients at hospitals in Khabarovsk (*Primorskaia oblast'*) were in the tertiary stage of the disease, suggesting that they were already infected when they were drafted.⁶⁶

⁶² A report on the congress by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Ivan Goremykin, claimed that 78 per cent of all syphilis patients in Russia were 'victims of ignorance and low levels of culture'. GARF, f. 543, op. 1, d. 440, l. 2.

⁶³ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 3.

⁶⁴ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 3.

⁶⁵ 'K Voprosu o Lechenii Sifilisa v Voiskakh', *RZhKVB* (June 1904), pp. 672-673.

⁶⁶ Zav'ialov, Umts, Morrison and Gaidarov, 'Sifilis v Russkoi Armii', p. 559.

Given that the majority of recruits would have been from the Russian countryside, these remarks reflect the wider perceptions of the Russian medical community, whose epidemiological understandings of syphilis transmission depended on the location of the patient. In the countryside, many physicians claimed that syphilis was spread in the absence of sexual contact, influenced by the perception that peasants were sexually innocent and unhygienic. Only in cities, which were full of ‘unwed and sexually hungry males’ and ‘destitute and unsupervised females’, did syphilis transmission become sexual.⁶⁷ In their diagnoses of syphilis, Russian physicians paid far more attention to cultural and social considerations than to clinical evidence. This demonstrates how venereal diseases ‘adapt to their cultural landscape’, and change along with the social transformations of a particular period.⁶⁸ Official discourse in the early 1900s expressed great concern about the intersections between disease, mass migration, urbanisation and the breakdown of traditional family structures.⁶⁹ During the Russo-Japanese War, the railway was at the centre of all explanations for the increase in venereal disease. The new technology facilitated the mass transportation of sick reserves across the country, as well as encouraging the increase of prostitution in provincial towns.

The extraordinary cost of the Russo-Japanese War strained the budgets of local authorities, making them less able to provide money and facilities for the already-underfunded and understaffed regulation system. Throughout the

⁶⁷ Engelstein, ‘Morality and the Wooden Spoon’, p. 169.

⁶⁸ Engelstein, ‘Morality and the Wooden Spoon’, p. 180.

⁶⁹ Bradley discusses how official and philanthropic discourse in Moscow connected mass migration with a breakdown in traditional morals and family virtues, Bradley, *Muzhik and Muscovite*, pp. 194-248.

conflict, an average of 7000 men per month were sick or wounded, which meant that hospitals were stretched beyond full capacity.⁷⁰ In light of this, registered prostitutes in the Trans-Baikal region could only receive treatment at hospitals in their birth regions, or pay an expensive upfront fee of one rouble and twenty-six kopecks per day.⁷¹ As the majority of registered prostitutes were migrants living away from their birth regions, we can assume that they would have had to choose between either paying the steep fee or, more likely, leaving their illnesses untreated. The actions of the medical-police committee of Stretensk in the Trans-Baikal region provide us with an example of how this policy played out in practice. The medical-police committee detected syphilis in Varvara Dergunova, a young registered prostitute, in October 1904.⁷² Stretensk hospital, located in her birth region, refused to accept her for treatment because of the overflow of military patients. Instead, the committee sent Dergunova to Nerchinsk city hospital, around 100km west. When she was unable to pay the hospital fees upfront, the hospital refused her admission once more. The added stress of wounded soldiers on city hospitals meant that regulation failed to achieve its most basic objective: the temporary removal of syphilitic prostitutes from circulation to prevent the spread of venereal disease.

Central government blocked the efforts of municipal authorities to adapt to the additional stress that the conflict placed on hospitals. In June 1904, the Military Governor of Trans-Baikal region asked the MVD for permission to treat prostitutes in military infirmaries, as there was no longer any space in civilian

⁷⁰ F. Patrikeeff and H. Shukman, *Railways and the Russo-Japanese War: Transporting War* (London and New York, 2007), p. 106.

⁷¹ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1611, l. 26.

⁷² RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1611, l. 51.

hospitals.⁷³ The Governor complained that the lack of beds made it impossible to implement regulation in accordance with Circular 1611, as the absence of adequate treatment facilities discredited the medical examinations. The MVD finally responded seven months later and refused the request on the basis that hospitals were already 'constantly busy'. Admitting syphilitic prostitutes would allegedly 'damage the interests of the population', presumably as it would increase contact between prostitutes and the general public, and leave fewer beds for the treatment of soldiers.⁷⁴ The MVD recommended that the already-stretched municipal governments paid for the establishment of free treatment centres for registered prostitutes in towns along the Trans-Siberian, such as Chita and Verkhneudinsk. The municipal authorities in Chita ridiculed this recommendation, writing that the idea that the local government could afford to build new facilities existed only on 'fictitious paper' (*na bumage fiktivno*).⁷⁵ The MVD's response reveals how their unwillingness to adapt regulation to wartime circumstances and provide further funding challenged the functions of regulation. If prostitutes could not receive treatment, regulation was failing to achieve its most basic aim of preventing the spread of venereal diseases.

The combination of inadequate facilities and funding affected the efficacy of regulation elsewhere in Siberia. Between August 1904 and February 1905, the Enisei Provincial Governor wrote to the MVD on four occasions requesting the installation of twenty beds specifically for syphilitic women, most likely prostitutes, at Krasnoiarsk City Hospital.⁷⁶ He also requested money to install a

⁷³ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1611, l. 26.

⁷⁴ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1611, l. 58.

⁷⁵ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 68.

⁷⁶ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1611, l. 27, 32, 56, 65.

separate examination facility for prostitutes elsewhere in the city. In March 1905, the Minister of Finance finally approved the request, but granted the municipal authorities only a limited amount of financial support and stressed the temporary nature of this agreement.⁷⁷ The MVD reduced the funding significantly in 1906, motivated by the 'extraordinary costs caused by the war with Japan'.⁷⁸ Additional funding in this year would have been crucial, given that hundreds of thousands of troops were travelling westwards during demobilisation. In February 1906, an article in *Novoe Vremia* claimed that approximately 900,000 soldiers would be on their way back to the European provinces by June of the same year.⁷⁹

The mass expenditure of the conflict meant that funding for regulation was now an even lower priority for central government. Wartime circumstances stretched the imperial authorities' already-inadequate medical-police force and treatment facilities further, which made the failures of regulation policy even more apparent. Provincial authorities struggled to obtain the essential financial support from central government to keep certain populations segregated. In the absence of separate facilities, the contact between prostitutes and the public increased. The challenges of mass mobilisation meant that soldiers were forced to stay in private apartments during leave, where they apparently were exposed to clandestine prostitutes from the local Siberian population. Without a substantial financial commitment from central government, *nadzor* failed to achieve one of its key aims of preventing the spread of venereal diseases.

⁷⁷ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1611, l. 71.

⁷⁸ RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1611, l. 118.

⁷⁹ *Novoe Vremia*, 9 February 1906. Clipping found in RGIA, f. 1288, op. 12, d. 1622, l. 110.

Despite this, regulation remained in place until the end of Russia's next major conflict, to which this chapter now turns its focus.

The First World War, 1914-1917

During the First World War, the tsarist government, military authorities and medical professionals struggled to regulate the bodies of the populace. The conflict caused huge population displacement, brought about by the mass mobilisation of troops westwards and the mass movement of civilians from the front line to the Russian interior. Despite extensive plans for the evacuation of casualties, thousands of wounded soldiers were stranded in railway stations across the western provinces of the empire.⁸⁰ By 1917, an estimated 5 per cent of the empire's total population were refugees displaced from their home regions.⁸¹ Increasing levels of venereal diseases amongst military and civilian populations and the heightened visibility of clandestine prostitution accompanied this social dislocation. The conflict posed a further challenge to the tsarist authorities' weak control over its lower-class populations, particularly registered prostitutes. This situation forced officials to shift their attention away from the control of prostitutes' bodies onto the sexual lives of military personnel, destabilising the official gendering of responsibility for venereal disease transmission.

⁸⁰ For example, 3000 casualties were stranded in Pinsk station in August 1914 without any food or organised transportation. P. Waldron, "A Sad and Heart-Rending Landscape": Summer 1914 and the Politics of Russia's Wounded', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 94:4 (2016), p. 648.

⁸¹ Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking*, p. 3.

Policing prostitution on Russia's western front

'Spy mania' gripped the Russian empire during the First World War, as various groups from high ranking army officers to registered prostitutes became targets for accusations of espionage.⁸² Even before the war, late nineteenth-century military statisticians collected data on the ethnic composition of the empire's population and marked Jews, Poles and Muslims as 'alien' in comparison with 'patriotic' ethnic Russians.⁸³ Prompted by the counterintelligence disasters of the Russo-Japanese War, in 1910 the Army and police compiled statistics on the number and location of foreigners, especially those with connections to the German or Austrian military.⁸⁴ During the conflict, military commanders and provincial authorities treated certain subjects of the empire with suspicion, especially following the Imperial Army's substantial defeats and retreats of spring and summer 1915. Local authorities hurled accusations of treason at entire ethnic and religious groups, particularly ethnic Germans and Jews.⁸⁵ On 28 July 1914, the tsarist government issued a War Statute that granted the Army absolute power over civilian authorities in localities where troops were present. Military commanders cleansed localities of the ethnic and national groups that they deemed 'unreliable', accusing Germans and Jews of espionage and ordering their forced deportation.⁸⁶

⁸² These included Lieutenant Colonel Sergei A. Miasoedov who was executed in spring 1915 and Vladimir Sukhomlinov (Minister of War 1909-1915), who was accused of treason in March 1916. According to Fuller, these men were vilified across all section of Russian society, and their names 'became synonyms for traitor', see W. C. Fuller, *The Foe Within: Fantasies of Treason and the End of Imperial Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2006), p. 8.

⁸³ P. Holquist, 'To Count, to Extract, to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia' in R. G. Suny and T. Martin (eds), *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin* (Oxford, 2001), p. 115.

⁸⁴ Lohr, *Nationalising the Russian Empire*, p. 18.

⁸⁵ Lohr, *Nationalising the Russian Empire*, p. 19.

⁸⁶ Sanborn, 'Unsettling the Empire', p. 306.

Military officials expelled the entire Jewish population of Novoaleksandriia (Pulawy) as early as September 1914.⁸⁷ In spring 1915, military commanders ordered the expulsion of Jews from Kovno and Kurliand provinces, and the Military Districts of Dvinsk and Warsaw.⁸⁸ Over the course of the conflict, the Army deported between half a million and one million Jews and 250,000 Russian-subject Germans from areas under military rule.⁸⁹

On 26 May 1915, the Army's Chief of Staff sent out a report warning of a 'German-Jewish organisation' that apparently paid syphilitic prostitutes to lure and infect Russian officers.⁹⁰ The Chief emphasised the insidious nature of this threat to national security and ordered the increased surveillance of hotels, furnished rooms and even 'suspicious private apartments'. If found, these women were to be imprisoned, deported or tried under martial law. This report was issued in order to discourage military personnel from having sexual intercourse with prostitutes who, as discussed earlier in this chapter, were examined and treated less frequently during wartime. The marking of all prostitutes as potential saboteurs encouraged soldiers to treat all women who sold sex with suspicion. The classification of the subversive organisation as 'German-Jewish' reflects a wider attack on these groups of people throughout the conflict.

Attempts to cleanse localities of these so-called dangerous prostitutes were unsuccessful. In the Warsaw Military District, military authorities ordered the

⁸⁷ Gatrell, *Whole Empire Walking*, pp. 17-18.

⁸⁸ E. Lohr, 'The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages and Violence During World War I', *Russian Review*, 60 (2001), pp. 410-411.

⁸⁹ Lohr, 'The Russian Army', p. 404, 406.

⁹⁰ RGIA, f. 1298, op. 1, d. 2400, l. 194.

deportation of Germans, Jews and 'suspicious people' in December 1914.⁹¹ However, on 24 June 1915, the Second Army's Department of Intelligence wrote to warn the Warsaw Chief of Police that there were 'still many German prostitutes who [were] likely to be involved in some form of military espionage' living in the city.⁹² Before the war, German women accounted for just over 3 per cent of prostitutes across Warsaw province, and it is likely that they remained a minority in the early 1900s.⁹³ Two locations were reportedly dens of prostitute spies: the hotels 'Poloniia' and 'Narodnaia'. Here, the administration and orchestra were both apparently comprised of dubious characters, classified ambiguously as Austrians, Germans and Jews. The Department of Intelligence ordered that Warsaw be 'searched and cleared' of all 'suspicious elements', who were then to be deported to the remote provinces of Russia.

In response to the Department of Intelligence's request for information about prostitutes involved in 'military espionage', district police officers produced lists of foreign prostitutes living in Warsaw. As of 30 June 1915, there were seventeen German and Austrian prostitutes and seven 'German-Russian' women working in brothels across the city.⁹⁴ Some of these women lived in the same district, such as Germans Amiliia and Ol'ga Dosh who lived at 22 Berezovaia Street and Austrians Sofiia and Vanda Struklikevich, who lived at 33 Pivnaia, both located just metres from Warsaw's Old Town market place. Other

⁹¹ The Second Army issued a directive on 27 December 1914 which ordered the deportation of all German men over the age of fifteen to areas 'beyond the Vistula river', which runs through Warsaw. One month later, the same army ordered that this be extended to 'all Jews and suspicious people'. Sanborn, 'Unsettling the Empire', p. 307.

⁹² GARF, f. 220, op. 1, d. 1645, l. 1.

⁹³ Dubrovskii's 1889 survey also indicated that 18 per cent of registered prostitutes in Warsaw province were Jewish. Polish women accounted for 75 per cent of all registered prostitutes across the province. Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, pp. 26-30.

⁹⁴ GARF, f. 220, op. 1, d. 1645, ll. 32-33.

'suspicious elements' included Austrian, and most likely Jewish, members of the orchestra and waiting staff at the hotel 'Poloniia': Lehr Granz, Perkuz Goshlind and Zaidler Satednan.⁹⁵ Records that indicate how the Department of Intelligence used this information have not survived, so it is impossible to know whether these people were deported. Instead, these reports reveal that certain groups of Germans and Austrians, such as prostitutes, were able to live and work in this occupied military zone, more than six months after the initial call for their deportation. The experiences of these registered women in Warsaw reveals the inability of local governments to completely enforce their own policies. In wartime Warsaw, the military authorities did not notice these foreign women initially, hence their identification as prostitutes allowed them a greater deal of residential flexibility.

Elsewhere along Russia's western front, prostitutes were at the centre of official concern surrounding security, hygiene and morality. In October 1915, the Duty General for the Commander of Armies on the Western Front wrote to the Chief of Staff for the First Army, warning him of the most sinister 'method of Austro-German military intelligence': the collection of military information by both registered and clandestine prostitutes.⁹⁶ He explained that this had been allowed to happen because of the 'abundant prostitution' in the regions of the front, and that now the Commander recognised the need to begin registering prostitutes and checking their 'political reliability' (*politicheskaia blagonadezhnost'*). The prevalence of prostitution in this region was

⁹⁵ GARF, f. 220, op. 1, d. 1645, l. 5.

⁹⁶ Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv (RGVIA hereafter) f. 2106, op. 8, d. 217, l. 9.

characteristic of wartime, when both supply and demand expanded significantly. Deportations and the movement of the front line left thousands of women as refugees without any means of support and the mass movement of soldiers to the front provided an ample customer base. Just as before the war, local authorities struggled to register all women who were selling sex. The military authorities had control of all civil affairs in this region from the outbreak of conflict in summer 1914, but had not taken steps to ensure the official registration of all prostitutes until autumn 1915.

Regional authorities struggled to control the movement of prostitutes, both across provincial borders and even within restricted military spaces. On 30 December 1916, Evgeniia Trifonova made her way into the soldiers' barracks at Kreslavka (Krāslava) disguised as a military nurse. The Chief of the Russian Army's counter-intelligence division identified her as an 'undocumented prostitute' from the city of Dvinsk, located around forty kilometres east of Kreslavka.⁹⁷ On 17 November 1915, Rokhamima Nanos, a registered prostitute, arrived in the town of Disna (Dzisna) without any identity papers or permission to travel.⁹⁸ Her movement caught the attention of the Chief of the counter-intelligence division of the First Army, who then wrote to the Polotsk Police Chief. Rather than punishing or forcefully expelling Nanos for her violation, the Chief instructed the local authorities merely to ask her to return to her hometown of Polotsk.⁹⁹ The leniency of the authorities may have even encouraged the greater mobility of women on the police lists during this period.

⁹⁷ RGVIA, f. 2106, op. 8, d. 387, l. 11.

⁹⁸ RGVIA, f. 2106, op. 8, d. 217, l. 24.

⁹⁹ RGVIA, f. 2106, op. 8, d. 217, l. 24.

In November 1915, a colonel from the Gendarme Corps reported on three young refugee women renting an apartment together in Disna whom he considered suspicious. The colonel suggested that these women were working as clandestine prostitutes and asked the local police to investigate why they had been visiting the military barracks of the First Army.¹⁰⁰ The entry of these women into restricted military spaces suggests that as in peacetime, the registration of women as prostitutes and the control of their movement was imperfect and incomplete.

Despite the authorities' laxity, the extent to which women registered as prostitutes had freedom of movement during wartime is questionable. Case studies from the Vilna province medical-police lists in November 1915 reveal the ways in which the location of conflict dictated migration. Nadezhda Skok, a peasant woman from the city of Slonim in Grodno province, travelled 150 kilometres west to Belostok (Białystok) in January 1915, where she worked at the buffet of the restaurant 'Akvarium' for eight months, before moving 570 kilometres northeast to the city of Polotsk.¹⁰¹ Skok left Belostok in August 1915, and her movement mirrors the withdrawal of Russian troops following the bombardment of the city and its German occupation.¹⁰² Likewise, Ol'ga Nerubets moved from Belostok to Orel for one week in August 1915 before relocating to Khar'kov for three months. In November, she made the 1000 kilometre journey to Polotsk, where she began living and working at the 'Grant-

¹⁰⁰ RGVA, f. 2106, op. 8, d. 261, l. 9.

¹⁰¹ RGVA, f. 2106, op. 8, d. 217, ll. 15-17. The territory of Grodno province now comprises mainly Belarus, but also smaller parts of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. The cities of Slonim and Polotsk are now located in Belarus.

¹⁰² G. L. Vejas, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 60.

Otdel'. Nerubets' surname suggests that she could have been Jewish, therefore her movement away from the Pale of Settlement in August may have been in response to the antisemitic violence characteristic of the 'scorched earth' policy perpetrated by the Russian Army during their retreat east in summer 1915.¹⁰³ Following the Russian Army's retreat, the German Army occupied Grodno province, which displaced women like Skok and Nerubets from their home region.

Records from the northwestern provinces support the hypothesis that both changing spheres of conflict and wartime prejudices dictated the movement of registered women. Between July and September 1915, German forces took control of Vilna and Kurliand provinces and the city of Riga became a battleground.¹⁰⁴ The German High Sea Fleet blockaded the Gulf of Riga in August 1915, which closed all Baltic ports. In the same year, five women with Germanic names from Kurliand, Vilna and Lifliand provinces were inscribed onto the Arkhangel'sk police lists, a city whose prostitute population had predominantly hailed from the Arkhangel'sk, Vologda and Iaroslavl' provinces between 1902 and 1909.¹⁰⁵ In the same year, groups of prostitutes arrived in Arkhangel'sk from other provinces in the Russian interior. Almost 22 per cent of all applications submitted to the Arkhangel'sk Police Chief in 1915 came from peasant women who hailed from Viatka province.¹⁰⁶ In 1915, Viatka was home to many evacuated foreign soldiers and prisoners of war from Germany,

¹⁰³ Sanborn, 'Unsettling the Empire', pp. 309-310.

¹⁰⁴ A. Parrott, 'The Baltic States from 1914 to 1923: the First World War and the Wars of Independence', *Baltic Defence Review*, 8:2 (2002), p. 136.

¹⁰⁵ The migration of prostitutes to Arkhangel'sk is discussed in more detail in chapter two. GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 4163, l. 6, 45, 197, 207, 238.

¹⁰⁶ Now Kirov *oblast'*. GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 4163, l. 18, 22, 87, 97, 234.

Austria-Hungary and Turkey, whom the authorities attempted to segregate from the local population.¹⁰⁷ Residents of Viatka province resented this influx of foreigners, whose presence had a negative impact upon the availability of work and food. Peasants in the province regarded these detainees as ‘physical incarnations of the enemy’, and relations between the two groups were tense, and sometimes violent.¹⁰⁸ There were riots, expulsions and rumours of so-called ‘German pogroms’ across Viatka province during wartime.¹⁰⁹ There were no women from Viatka on the Arkhangel’sk police lists either in 1902, or between 1905 and 1909, so migration in 1915 could have been in response to Viatka’s wartime tensions.

In other cases, the authorities in the Baltic provinces attempted to cleanse their localities of women registered as prostitutes, perhaps with the aim of limiting the spread of venereal disease. The provinces of Estliand and Lifliand were strategically significant to the Russian empire as they were home to the Baltic ports of Riga and the Port of Peter the Great in Revel’. Riga, as the capital of Lifliand province, was the centre of Baltic regional government and amongst the top industrial centres across the entire empire, ranking second only to St Petersburg for pre-war imports.¹¹⁰ In 1908, the provinces of Estliand and Lifliand were among the most economically advanced in the empire, ranking fourth and fifth out of the fifty provinces of European Russia for industrial

¹⁰⁷ S. V. Kazakovtsev, ‘Viatskaia Guberniia v 1914-1917 gg: Voina, Vlast’ i Naselenie’, *Novyi Istoricheskii Vestnik*, 20 (2009), pp. 20-21.

¹⁰⁸ A. Retish, *Russia’s Peasants in Revolution and Civil War: Citizenship, Identity, and the Creation of the Soviet State, 1914-1922* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 43.

¹⁰⁹ Sergei Kazakovtsev argues that although these massacres of Germans were unlikely to have happened in practice, the rumours were a ‘manifestation of mass sentiment’ at the time. Kazakovtsev, ‘Viatskaia Guberniia’, p. 19.

¹¹⁰ Henriksson, ‘Riga: Growth, Conflict’, pp. 179-180; M. F. Hamm, ‘Riga’s 1913 City Election: a Study in Urban Politics’, *Russian Review*, 39:4 (1980), p. 442.

production and for the number of industrial workers per 100 inhabitants.¹¹¹ Following the 1915 German invasion of the nearby Kurliand and Vilna provinces, the protection of Estliand and Lifliand became even more urgent. Local authorities required a healthy population to protect these important industrial regions. Prostitutes' association with venereal disease may have been enough to convince local authorities that they posed a threat to the security of the Baltic provinces. In winter 1915, the Chief of Police in Iur'ev reportedly expelled all registered prostitutes from the city.¹¹² However, despite their removal, there were still many women working as prostitutes in Iur'ev throughout 1916, and countless women were sent to the city hospital for venereal disease treatment.¹¹³ In this city, as elsewhere on Russia's western front, the authorities were ambitious about controlling population movement and disease, but in the context of war, their results were less convincing.

In October 1915, the Chief of the Armies on the Northern Front and Riga's Chief of Police issued an order expelling 296 women identified as prostitutes from Riga, sending them elsewhere in the Russian empire.¹¹⁴ According to the order, all prostitutes in the city were subject to deportation, but only a quarter of the prostitute population were actually expelled.¹¹⁵ The overwhelming majority of these expelled women hailed from the Baltic provinces and had Germanic

¹¹¹ T. U. Raun, 'The Estonians', in E. C. Thaden (ed). *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855-1914* (Princeton, 1981), p. 290.

¹¹² EAA, 242.1.800, lk. 46.

¹¹³ EAA, 330.1.2395. This file includes countless referrals written by the Iur'ev medical-police committee that sent women with venereal diseases to Iur'ev city hospital for treatment throughout 1916. The involvement of the committee in this matter suggests that these women were working as prostitutes.

¹¹⁴ GAAO, f. 37, op. 1t2, d. 4163, ll. 243-252.

¹¹⁵ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23555, lp. 159. Riga's prostitute population was 1207 in 1914 according to the records of the city's medical-police committee. LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 23557, lp. 394.

surnames, so the deportations hint at more general wartime anti-German sentiments. Riga's Police Chief also ordered the eviction of all brothel keepers from Riga in the same month.¹¹⁶ In 1889, almost 65 per cent of brothel keepers across Lifliand province were German, and as it is unlikely that the ethnic composition would have altered significantly before the First World War. Therefore, this eviction order could also represent discrimination against this group.¹¹⁷ Riga's Chief of Police predominantly evicted prostitutes to cities in the western borderlands or interior provinces of European Russia, such as Khar'kov, Ekaterinoslav and Orel.¹¹⁸ These regions absorbed many refugees fleeing conflict on the western front. By May 1916, 7 per cent of Ekaterinoslav's population and 3.3 per cent of Khar'kov's population was made up of refugees.¹¹⁹ Forced from their homes, these women joined the growing number of the empire's refugees, which reached at least 3.3 million people by the end of 1915.¹²⁰

War further aggravated the inability of the tsarist authorities to control population movement. As seen in chapter two, local authorities theoretically had strict control over the movement of prostitutes, yet in practice, registered women routinely transgressed the rules and moved across provincial borders without the correct documentation. The social dislocation of mass mobilisation and forced expulsions rendered the imperial state's ambitious attempts to monitor the movement and activities of registered prostitutes resolutely

¹¹⁶ LVVA, f. 51, apr. 1, l. 273, lp. 85.

¹¹⁷ Dubrovskii, *Prostitutsiia*, p. 14.

¹¹⁸ Eighty-five women were sent to Khar'kov, thirty to Ekaterinoslav and thirty to Orel.

¹¹⁹ Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking*, pp. 54-55.

¹²⁰ P. Gatrell, *Russia's First World War: a Social and Economic History* (Edinburgh, 2005), p. 77.

unsuccessful. Women were able to slip under the radar of their local authorities and often their migration patterns were subject to the changing spheres of conflict. Just as in the Russo-Japanese War, rising levels of venereal infection amongst military personnel indicated to the imperial authorities that their attempts to monitor all women selling sex were resolutely unsuccessful.

Controlling venereal diseases in the military

In a similar way to the Russo-Japanese War, the wartime circumstances of 1914-1917 further stretched the tsarist authorities' lukewarm financial commitment to *nadzor* and the inadequate medical facilities for the treatment of both prostitutes and their clients. Throughout the conflict, hospitals were overcrowded with little space for venereal patients, as over five million men were hospitalised for an average of three to four weeks each.¹²¹ Around 2.5 million military personnel contracted disease and 2.6 million men were wounded.¹²² This accumulation of sick and wounded soldiers put more pressure on medical facilities across the empire, which countless public health experts and state officials had already described as completely inadequate before the war. From the outset of the conflict, there were huge shortages of doctors and other medical personnel to treat casualties.¹²³ To make matters worse, physicians who had previously carried out the inspection of prostitutes were drafted into the war effort. In June 1916, the Health Department of the

¹²¹ Gatrell, *Russia's First World War*, p. 65.

¹²² P. Waldron, 'Health and Hospitals in Russia During World War I' in C. Bonfield, J. Reinartz and T. Huguet-Termes (eds), *Hospitals and Communities, 1100-1960* (Oxford, 2013), p. 364.

¹²³ Waldron, "A Sad and Heart-Rending Landscape", p. 653.

Naval Fortress in Revel' complained that because of 'wartime conditions', just one doctor was now responsible for treating 400 prostitutes and 150 of their clients for venereal disease each month.¹²⁴ Staff shortages and soaring rates of infection meant that military authorities and medical personnel now focused their attention more directly on the regulation of clients rather than prostitutes. As seen in chapters two and five, certain local authorities monitored men under the banner of venereal disease control before 1914, singling out sailors and industrial workers for corporeal surveillance. After 1914, faced with depleted staff, limited supplies, and mounting military defeats, the authorities moved away from regarding diseased military personnel as victims of ignorance or clandestine prostitutes, and began to vilify them as deliberate shirkers.

In early 1915, sailors infected with venereal diseases in the Baltic fleet were transferred from the overcrowded Kronshtadt Nikolai Naval Hospital to a facility at Gel'singfors (Helsinki) port.¹²⁵ Medical personnel in Gel'singfors expressed their disgust at the Kronshtadt patients, evidently irritated that their hospital facilities were being stretched further, even in light of chronic bed shortages. Aleksandr Semenov, a junior doctor in Gel'singfors, reported on one Kronshtadt sailor:

He behaved in such a way to sabotage his treatment so that he could stay longer at the hospital. He made up all kinds of illnesses, and Dr Kochetkov called him a fake (*simulant*) in his

¹²⁴ RGAVMF, f. 949, op. 3, d. 4, l. 35.

¹²⁵ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2510, l. 1.

report. There is no doubt that such a person will try to become infected again or artificially cause irritation to his [urethral] canal so he can return to the hospital. He was covered in tattoos with indecent content, which characterised him to some extent. When he was discharged from the hospital, he said 'all the same, I will come again soon'. I told him that he should not dare to come, even in the event of illness, and I have not seen him since.¹²⁶

This vilification of male bodies was not unique to Russia. In her work on Britain during the First World War, Joanna Bourke observes that men's bodies became 'blameworthy' as wartime propaganda continued to produce images of shirking or malingering soldiers who deliberately became injured or infected in order to avoid service.¹²⁷ The shift of attention away from prostitutes' bodies onto military clients is also evident in a report sent by a group of physicians to the Health Inspector of Revel' port in November 1914. To control levels of apparently epidemic venereal disease, the doctors recommended the compulsory examination of all new recruits on arrival as well as cooks, bakers and messengers working in the port.¹²⁸ The Revel' authorities were eager to regulate military personnel's sexual lives in order to control disease, and infected sailors were required to provide exact information about the source of their infection to the Health Department of the port. For example, on 4

¹²⁶ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2510, l. 8.

¹²⁷ J. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, 1996), pp. 81-83.

¹²⁸ RGAVMF, f. 949, op. 3, d. 4, l. 2.

November 1915 the sailor Peter Falomev reported that he caught his infection at the brothel 'Venice' in Revel' from a woman named Ellie working in room seven. Grigori Spirin named Polunina in room twelve of the brothel 'Manchuria' as the source of his infection.¹²⁹ Although doctors still presumed prostitutes to be the source, sailors now had a national obligation to protect their own sexual health and readily share information about their sexual encounters.

The medical authorities at Revel' port struggled to implement their ambitious attempts at corporeal regulation. Frustrated as levels of venereal disease continued to rise, at their May 1916 meeting the Revel' medical-police committee blamed sailors for spreading venereal diseases. They correlated an apparent increase in alcohol abuse with a rise in infection, something that they claimed was the fault of sailors. According to the committee, more and more prostitutes were attending their medical examinations hungover (*sostoianii pokhmel'ia*).¹³⁰ Prostitutes apparently informed the committee that their sailor clients brought alcohol to the establishments in which they worked, as the sale of hard spirits was illegal in brothels. The medical police committee also accused sailors of lying to medical personnel about the source of their infection. When asked, sailors allegedly always answered that they had caught their disease at the brothels 'Venice' or 'Manchuria', two establishments frequented almost exclusively by the lower ranks of the Navy.¹³¹ The committee believed that sailors deliberately lied about their disease as they were afraid of telling their military superiors that they had visited 'secret dens' or the private

¹²⁹ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2510, l. 29.

¹³⁰ RGAVMF, f. 949, op. 3, d. 4, l. 37.

¹³¹ RGAVMF, f. 949, op. 3, d. 4, l. 37.

apartments of unregistered prostitutes.¹³² When they failed to impose control over the bodies of sailors, the committee presented military personnel as deliberately subversive, and no longer blameless clients.

Men in the military who contracted venereal diseases received little sympathy from the authorities. The chief naval medical unit in Petrograd issued a circular in November 1915 recommending that diseased sailors no longer needed the 'forced idleness' of restful treatment, and should instead participate in manual labour for the war effort.¹³³ Military personnel were even accused of deliberately seeking out infection by their contemporaries. One Soviet memoirist accused his fellow soldiers of selfishly 'organising orgies' with diseased prostitutes with the aim of being removed from active service.¹³⁴ Although evidence for this is limited, historian Aleksandr Astashov argues that excerpts from letters and memoirs reveal that soldiers were, at the very least, indifferent to contracting diseases. One officer from the 33rd Army Corps bragged in a personal letter: 'I cannot stop whoring; I just try to keep going regardless of venereal diseases'.¹³⁵ On the other hand, the vilification of military personnel as deliberate transgressors could also reflect wider frustrations on the part of military authorities, who were unable to control the sexual activities of their men despite attempts at regulation. The Russian Army's retreat westwards in summer 1915 saw huge losses of human life and territory, and

¹³² RGAVMF, f. 949, op. 3, d. 4, l. 38.

¹³³ RGAVMF, f. 408, op. 1, d. 2877, l. 1.

¹³⁴ K. Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Bloomington, 2011), p. 108.

¹³⁵ Cited in Astashov, 'Seksual'nyi Opyt', p. 373.

the subversive diseased sailor or soldier may have provided civilian authorities with a welcome scapegoat.

Conclusion

Prostitution and venereal diseases in wartime Russia were important issues for central, provincial, medical and military authorities. At the heart of official discourse from both the Russo-Japanese and the First World Wars was the perception that the movement of masses of the population contributed to social disorder and a rise in prostitution and disease. The Trans-Siberian railway facilitated the movement of troops and civilians eastwards in the early 1900s causing prostitution to flourish in places where it had not been previously subject to surveillance. Mass mobilisation in the First World War brought thousands of young men to Russia's western borderlands, where the authorities reported flagrant prostitution and an abundance of venereal diseases. As sections of the population moved *en masse*, order was allegedly thrown into disarray.

In both conflicts, wartime mass movement further highlighted the tsarist state's inability to keep its lower-class population rooted and known to the authorities. Local government struggled to keep track of registered prostitutes, whose movement was supposed to be closely monitored. Lack of funding meant that prostitution was policed even more inadequately than in peacetime, so we can assume that thousands of clandestine prostitutes were able to slip through the net of *nadzor*. Central government's lukewarm financial commitment to regulation had consequences for the sexual health of military personnel, as

officials reported higher levels of venereal diseases during the war years. During wartime, the authorities' focus shifted more overtly onto the sexual behaviour and habits of men. In the Russo-Japanese War, medical and military authorities blamed conscripted recruits for importing syphilis from the countryside. Ten years later, the same voices vilified prostitutes' clients in the military as fraudulent and deliberately transgressive. Arguably, this shift from ignorant peasants to subversive recruits reflects a wider transformation in discussions of sexuality after the revolutions of 1905 and 1906. Increased peasant mobility, the participation of lower-class people in the uprisings of 1905 and the 'perceived rise in "unmotivated" crime and sexual "perversion"' challenged the educated public's perceptions of peasants as sexually innocent and culturally ignorant.¹³⁶

Regulation was widely criticised in medical, legal and philanthropic discourse even before the Russo-Japanese War, but the circumstances of the First World War further aggravated the system's inadequacy and failure to achieve its objectives. The regulation of prostitution was abolished while Russia was still at war on 19 July 1917. Following the February revolution and the fall of the autocracy, the Central Sanitary Commission for the Struggle with Venereal Diseases under the authority of the Provisional Government recommended the closure of all state-licensed brothels and the cessation of registering women as prostitutes.¹³⁷ Members of the Commission asserted that a serious effort to combat venereal diseases was now required, as levels continued to rise following the turmoil of war and revolution. The new approach was to focus on

¹³⁶ Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, p. 210, 254.

¹³⁷ RGVA, f. 2018, op. 1, d. 322, l. 13.

improving the sexual health of men and women through widespread public treatment. This method paved the way for the Bolsheviks, who later adopted this approach in an attempt to treat prostitution and venereal diseases as matters of social hygiene.

Conclusion

This thesis began by posing three central research questions. How did regulation function in practice? How did the system fit with wider attempts to regulate lower-class people? Why was the system so unsuccessful at containing prostitution and preventing the spread of venereal diseases? It has shown, through the examination of correspondence sent between and to those in authority, that the regulation of prostitution was not just a set of rules experienced by registered prostitutes, but instead a system that was negotiated and resisted by various groups of lower-class people. Crucially, it has illustrated how reactions to the regulation system were complicated and rooted in the significant social and economic transformations of the last two decades of tsarist rule. In these short concluding remarks, I will return to each of the initial research questions before sketching out some avenues for further research.

Regulation in practice

Regulation was not just a policy enforced from the top down onto a compliant population. Registered women were not objects of state policy who passively accepted regulation. Instead, many women sought to negotiate the rules of regulation to achieve their own ends in various ways. Chapter one revealed how some registered prostitutes threatened to work clandestinely if their demands were not met and called on the authorities to uphold their legal rights. Others went on strike for better conditions or refused to attend their obligatory medical examinations. However, women's experiences of regulation varied widely, and not all registered women were actively willing, or able, to challenge

those in positions of relative authority. Prostitutes were vulnerable to abuse at the hands of medical-police agents and other provincial authorities. In times of social upheaval, registered women were treated with suspicion and subject to deportation, as seen in chapter six. Medical-police committees' financial dependence on cash gifts from madams meant that brothel workers were often unable to legally challenge their exploitative managers. Even educated observers committed to exposing the detrimental impact of regulation on both registered women and the wider public continuously marginalised prostitutes in their discussions. This marginalisation was a common feature of charitable organisations in the late imperial period.¹ Philanthropic groups such as ROZZh and the Women's Progressive Party called for the complete abolition of regulation. However, when registered women did protest against regulation's injustices, they complained about police corruption and one-sided medical examinations instead of supporting abolitionism. Rather than providing one straightforward explanation for how *nadzor* functioned in practice, this thesis has explored the multiple ways in which registered women experienced and resisted the policing of prostitution. The term 'prostitute' itself was complicated and signified a range of different meanings: a seasonal occupation; a slur for women who transgressed societal norms of female behaviour; a financial stopgap during a period of desperation; or a legal status with corresponding rights.

Brothel madams, male clients and urban residents had an equally complicated relationship with the regulation system. Chapter three has shown how urban

¹ Lindenmeyr, 'The Ethos of Charity in Imperial Russia', p. 686.

residents' reactions to state-licensed brothels ranged from repulsion to indifference. Some madams had close ties to law enforcement, which granted them flexibility over the running of their establishments. Others were victimised by medical-police agents who were often able to manipulate regulation policy to achieve certain ends. Above all, this thesis has shown the diversity of interactions with, and reactions to, the regulation system. Petitions written to the authorities have helped to illuminate this complexity, as well as to show how ordinary people utilised specific discourses to obtain particular outcomes. When certain registered women wrote to the authorities to protest against brothel closures, they borrowed the language of prominent advocates of regulation who stressed the need to segregate prostitutes from the 'respectable' public, as seen in chapter one. In order to secure her removal from the police lists, a woman might express a desire to leave 'debauchery' and return to 'honest labour', echoing discourses of philanthropists intent on rescuing women from the commercial sex industry through moral education.

Chapter four revealed how brothel madams drew on the state discourses that placed them in protective roles to challenge attempts to close down their establishments. As the moral panic over widespread sex trafficking gathered momentum across Europe and North America around the turn of the century, ordinary urban residents drew on the main stereotypes of the saga to add weight to their petitions, namely the deviant Jewish procurer and the innocent young victim. This thesis has shed light on the sophisticated ways in which lower-class people communicated with those in authority. In line with the work of Engel, Pyle, Sanborn, and Verner, this study has shown how the relationship

between the lower classes and the authorities was one of interaction and constant negotiation, rather than of blind obedience.²

Crucially, this study has built on the approaches of Badcock, Henze, and Hickey to demonstrate the importance of looking beyond the metropole in order to understand the application of empire-wide policy.³ As provincial administrators and police forces were in charge of implementing regulation, the extent to which policy was applied depended very much on local priorities, as well as the social, economic and environmental characteristics of a particular place. Chapters one and two demonstrated how in Arkhangel'sk, Riga and Nizhnii Novgorod during the annual fair, the police were either unconcerned by, or unable to prevent, the movement of registered prostitutes, who were able to leave the police lists with relative ease. Chapter five shed light on the contrast between the authorities' stated ambitions and the resources made available to implement policy, which greatly affected their ability to achieve their objectives of rooting out clandestine prostitutes and preventing the circulation of venereal diseases. Looking beyond St Petersburg has also illuminated the official perception of imperial peripheries as particularly infectious spaces. During the mass mobilisations of the Russo-Japanese War, the MVD were quick to blame the local population for rising levels of venereal infection amongst recruits. Likewise, chapter five showed how educated commentators used statistics on venereal diseases in Libava and the Baltic provinces as evidence of the apparent

² Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound*; Pyle, 'Peasant Strategies for Obtaining Aid'; Sanborn, 'Conscription, Correspondence, and Politics'; Verner, 'Discursive Strategies in the 1905 Revolution'.

³ Badcock, *Politics and the People*, pp. 14-28; Henze, *Disease, Health Care and Government in Late Imperial Russia*, pp. 51-96; Hickey, 'Discourses of Public Identity', pp. 616-621.

cultural backwardness of the non-Russian, non-Orthodox, indigenous populations.⁴

Controlling lower-class people

This thesis builds on the work of Bernstein, Engel, Engelstein and Healey to show how the intersections between gender and social class are important for understanding the nature and regulation of sexuality.⁵ The regulation system granted the tsarist authorities a mechanism to monitor various groups of lower-class people. First and foremost, local authorities used regulation to police the behaviour and bodies of lower-class women, who were vulnerable to forced registration at the whim of law enforcement. Chapter one demonstrated how the medical-police committees in both St Petersburg and Riga often conflated 'promiscuity' and clandestine prostitution when justifying the need to bring individual women under surveillance. In encouraging the wider public to expose clandestine prostitutes in order to prevent the spread of venereal diseases, those in authority reinforced the idea that wider society needed to police female behaviour in the interests of public health. Discussions regarding procurement and white slavery also served as a moralising tool for young lower-class women. Chapter four illuminated how educated observers imposed their own standards of behaviour onto their social inferiors by privileging

⁴ Sahadeo and Healey have also discussed the connections between non-Russian populations, poor hygiene and deviant sexuality. Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society in Tashkent*, p. 93; Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, p. 97.

⁵ Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 41-72; Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, pp. 166-173; Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, pp. 254-298; Healey, *Homosexual Desire*, pp. 21-49.

narratives of entrapment and seduction and ignoring the realities of poverty and economic instability.⁶

Epidemiological understandings of venereal disease transmission also hinged on social class. Chapters two and five illuminated how Russia's medical community categorised venereal diseases as lower-class illnesses, spread through the 'backward' customs of peasant communities or promiscuity of male and female urban workers.⁷ Although women bore the brunt of medical surveillance, this thesis has shown that the authorities monitored the bodies and behaviour of certain groups of lower-class men.⁸ In some local contexts, the authorities placed facilitators of prostitution in a supervisory role, and encouraged them to keep a record of any male clients who entered their properties. Chapter two showed how certain groups of male and female migrant workers were required to undergo medical examinations to prevent venereal disease transmission.⁹ The case study of sailors at the Port of Emperor Alexander III in Libava provided a vivid example of the regular inspection of male bodies for the purposes of venereal disease control. Interventions into the lives of Libava sailors were paternalistic, combining strict discipline with custodial care.¹⁰ Just like registered prostitutes, sailors' bodies were objects of the imperial state towards which policy was directed. Chapter five traced the

⁶ In line with Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 128, 212, 216. Stauter-Halstead, "A Generation of Monsters", p. 30.

⁷ This builds on the argument presented in Engelstein, 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon'.

⁸ In contrast to Bernstein and Engelstein, who argue that male clients were not routinely examined. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, pp. 49-50, 302; Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, pp. 74-75.

⁹ This speaks to Mazanik's argument that 'the mechanism of controlling venereal disease was integrated in the general policy of controlling the poor', Mazanik, 'Sanitation, Urban Environment', p. 88.

¹⁰ Kimmerling Wirschafter, *From Serf to Russian Soldier*, p. 96; Kotsonis, *States of Obligation*, p. 54; and chapter five in Morrissey, *Suicide and the Body Politic*, pp. 128-148.

similarities between the treatment of prostitutes and sailors, as both were obliged to keep themselves healthy, denied patient confidentiality and prohibited from appearing in certain urban spaces. During the flashpoint of wartime, official attention was focused more directly on the regulation of male military bodies, as seen in chapter six.

Through the regulation system, the imperial authorities attempted to push lower-class sexuality to the social and physical margins of urban life. This thesis has shown how the marking out of what Hubbard describes as the 'moral geography' of particular localities was dependent on the specific priorities of local administrations.¹¹ As seen in chapter three, the brothel classification system decreased the opening hours for lower-ranking establishments and the cost per visit.¹² Given the financial implications of these restrictions, madams who managed second and third-class establishments were far more likely to allow diseased brothel workers to continue serving customers. In certain garrison towns like Kronshtadt and Libava, the municipal authorities attempted to situate brothels close to the working locations of their clients. Medical-police committees were in charge of issuing brothel licences, so they decided where prostitution was permitted to occur within urban space. However, chapter three showed that as those working for medical-police committees were motivated by profit, attempts to keep prostitution within officially specified locations were predominantly unsuccessful. Despite official plans for physical marginalisation, lower-class prostitutes - like other members

¹¹ Hubbard, *Cities and Sexualities*, p. 34.

¹² Similar restrictions existed in Italy, Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy*, p. 31, and in China, Remick, *Regulating Prostitution in China*, p. 113.

of the urban poor – were visible all across Russian cities in the late imperial period.¹³

Criticisms of regulation by the educated public emphasised the negative impact of Russian modernisation on the morality of lower-class people. Officials and philanthropists linked the increased migration of young peasant women away from the traditional patriarchal family structures of the countryside with a perceived moral decline. Greater opportunities for affordable foreign travel coincided with moral panic about the trafficking of lower-class women and the increased visibility of pornography in popular newspapers.¹⁴ Elite commentators stressed how peasant migrants and female urban workers were constantly vulnerable to seduction and procurement in the modern city, at their places of work or at the shopping centre.¹⁵ The conviction that lower-class women were incapable of making ‘appropriate’ choices and, therefore required interventions by their social superiors, underpinned many of these discussions. Chapters three and four showed how urban residents, educated elites and the popular press directed their condemnation of the regulation system against other groups of lower-class people, namely brothel madams. By focusing on the stereotype of the exploitative, non-Russian, non-Orthodox madam, upper-class

¹³ Bater, ‘Between Old and New’, pp. 71-73; Bradley, *Muzhik and Muscovite*, pp. 243-235; Mazanik, ‘The City as a Transient Home’, pp. 58-60.

¹⁴ Hetherington argues that in the early twentieth century, Russian jurists became increasingly concerned about ‘the ways in which new modes of transport and communication’ facilitated the emergence of ‘particularly heinous international criminals’, such as traders in women and pornographic literature. Hetherington, ‘“The Highest Guardian of the Child”’, p. 296. Stauter-Halstead situates the moral panic regarding the traffic in women within wider anxieties about the mass migration of people from the Polish lands as a result of developments in transportation before the First World War, see chapter five in Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil’s Chain*, pp. 137-168. Wingfield argues that the ‘ever-expanding and improving communication and transportation networks’ as well as the ‘anonymity of the growing metropolises in Habsburg central Europe’ featured heavily in debates on white slavery in late imperial Cisleithania. Wingfield, ‘Destination: Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Constantinople’, pp. 291-292.

¹⁵ Ruane, ‘Clothes Shopping in Imperial Russia’; Schrader, ‘Market Pleasures and Prostitution’.

observers absolved themselves of any responsibility for the class structures and economic instability that contributed to the entry of lower-class women into prostitution. The lower class and ethnically 'other' madam provided people across the social spectrum with an outlet to vocalise their ethnic, religious and class prejudices.

Failures of regulation

This thesis has mapped attempts to police prostitution onto the shifting social and economic landscape of modernising Russia. It has argued that early twentieth-century urbanisation, industrialisation and developments in transportation further widened the gulf between state ambitions and reality.¹⁶ As chapter three has demonstrated, carving out an appropriate space for prostitution within the empire's rapidly expanding urban centres was a complex process of negotiation between registered prostitutes, their managers, urban communities and the police. Local authorities were often financially dependent on the dues and bribes of brothel keepers and prostitutes, which allowed those in the business of commercial sex to subvert official attempts at spatial segregation. In light of this, attempts to limit the visibility of prostitution through policies of zoning were resolutely unsuccessful. Instead, commercial sex manifested itself everywhere across Russian cities: in bathhouses, brothels, beer halls, furnished rooms, taverns, railway stations and restaurants.

¹⁶ Badcock and Lohr explore the gulf between state ambitions and realities in their respective monographs. Badcock, *A Prison Without Walls*; Lohr, *Russian Citizenship*, pp. 90-95.

Developments in technology, transportation and medicine provided the imperial government with new opportunities for governance around the turn of the century, as seen in chapters two and five.¹⁷ However, state ambitions were often impossible to enforce and people routinely subverted official aims.¹⁸ Chapter six illustrated how the tsarist authorities endeavoured to bring previously unpoliced spaces under their gaze during the expansion of the Trans-Siberian railway, yet could not provide the funds to ensure the necessary police presence. As seen in chapter five, the high command in the Russian Imperial Navy was unable to force sailors to receive prophylactic treatment as naval authorities lacked the staff and adequate facilities. The tsarist state also consistently struggled to impose control over its mobile populations.¹⁹ In fact, attempts to limit the movement of registered prostitutes through regulation actually afforded them greater mobility. Regulation policy dictated that registered prostitutes were required to give their internal passports to the local police, after which their medical ticket became their main form of identification. Chapter two has shown that this policy placed registered prostitutes in an advantageous position. If they were able to obtain the approval of their local police chief, they were able to move around frequently to locations of their

¹⁷ On the use of fingerprinting and forensic photography in the late nineteenth century, see McReynolds, *Murder Most Russian*, pp. 152-153. Holquist examines how military and civilian authorities used statistics to classify and monitor populations in the late imperial and early Soviet periods, Holquist, 'To Count, To Extract, To Exterminate'.

¹⁸ As demonstrated in Moon, 'Peasant Migration, the Abolition of Serfdom, and the Internal Passport System', p. 356.

¹⁹ Badcock argues that escape from exile was 'endemic' in the last decades of tsarism, and that the imperial state consistently failed to keep track of the activities and location of its exiled population. Badcock *A Prison Without Walls?*, pp. 130-137. On the rapid expansion of illegal emigration around the turn of the century, see Lohr, *Russian Citizenship*, pp. 90-95. On those who escaped from carceral institutions in the late imperial period see Siegelbaum and Moch, *Broad is My Native Land*, pp. 336-337. Alexander Morrison examines unauthorised migration to Turkestan in A. Morrison, 'Peasant Settlers and the "Civilising Mission" in Russian Turkestan, 1865-1917', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 43:3 (2015), pp. 393-396.

choice. They also had the opportunity to live in urban centres on a more permanent basis without having to return to their birth regions to renew their internal passports. This unique legal status of registered prostitutes as people 'in-between' granted them greater flexibility than the average migrant. If women wanted to remove themselves from the police lists, they were often able to leave their locality and slip under the radar of law enforcement. Despite their attempts to 'know' all prostitutes, the tsarist authorities had absolutely no idea of the number of women selling sex across the empire.

Another weakness of the tsarist authorities was their reliance on ordinary people to help enforce their ambitious policies. The late imperial police force was chronically understaffed, especially outside the capital.²⁰ Medical-police committees struggled to secure the appropriate funding for the most basic medical supplies and equipment, let alone for the salaries of police agents. In light of this situation, medical-police committees called on clients of prostitutes and wider urban communities to expose those working clandestinely. The low wages of those working for medical-police committees opened up new avenues for bribery and corruption, and helped to forge an informal relationship between prostitutes and those who policed them. Additionally, it is evident that the imperial authorities overestimated how far registered prostitutes were excluded from wider 'respectable' urban communities.²¹ Landlords and landladies often refused to abide by regulations intent on keeping prostitutes

²⁰ As Weissman observes, the underfunded and understaffed tsarist police depended on the general population to 'police themselves', Weissman, 'Regular Police in Tsarist Russia', p. 49.

²¹ Engel argues that registered prostitutes were excluded from wider urban communities. Engel, *Between the Fields and the City*, p. 168. Bernstein has contradictory ideas about the extent of exclusion. In one part of her book, she states that it was 'extremely difficult' for women to leave the police lists, and then later on argues that women were able to discard their medical tickets and integrate back into urban communities. Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, p. 39, 79-82.

segregated within urban space, perhaps motivated by their own financial gain. The thousands of 'secret prostitutes' in imperial Russia existed both because of an inadequate police force but also because many people were not invested in the supposed benefits of the regulation system. Some clients were keen to denounce unregistered women as seen in chapter one, but the vast majority were unperturbed by paying for sex with clandestine prostitutes. As we saw in chapters five and six, the majority of infected sailors were reluctant to expose the names of the women that they had sex with, and instead gave vague or stock responses when questioned by the naval authorities. Discourses of the inhumanity of the regulation system and the exploitation of prostitutes filled the pages of the popular press and reports written by philanthropic organisations. As the first decade of the 1900s came to a close, fewer voices were left defending regulation on public health grounds, and calls for its complete abolition were amplified.

Final reflections

It is impossible to ever truly know all of the women who sold sex in late imperial Russia. If the authorities consistently failed to keep track of all women working as prostitutes, we cannot, as historians, expect to uncover all of their experiences. Registered women mainly appear in archival material when they were entering or leaving prostitution, so it is difficult to piece together their everyday encounters with their clients, madams and wider urban communities. Many women moved in and out prostitution sporadically and temporarily, and disappeared from the historical record once their names were erased from the

police lists. Furthermore, the imperial authorities had no idea about the actual number of prostitutes across the empire, and urbanisation, industrialisation and mass migration caused their tenuous grip over lower-class populations to become increasingly slippery. One of the most important conclusions arising from this thesis is the implausibility of regarding prostitutes as completely distinct from other groups of lower-class people. They were peasants, workers, migrants and urban residents. Therefore, this thesis has shown how regulation was a system that touched the lives of various groups of female and male lower-class people. The exploration of how policies related to sexuality had an impact on various groups of lower-class people could be taken forward to inform new social histories of the late Russian empire.

This thesis has shed light on how the tsarist state attempted to mould the lives and bodies of military personnel to fit a healthy and virile ideal. Chapter five showed how various philanthropic groups, physicians and naval authorities promoted abstinence, temperance and a greater state interference into the lives of enlisted sailors. Developments in the fields of venereology and sexology around the turn of the century brought the issue of individual responsibility for sexual health to the forefront of discussions regarding increasing levels of venereal infection. An interrogation of how military and civil authorities used sexuality in their constructions of the ideal masculine soldier or sailor would aid a fuller exploration of how the imperial state attempted to monitor the bodies and behaviour of lower-class populations, building on Sanborn and Petrone's work on constructions of military masculinity.²² Studying military

²² Sanborn, *Drafting the Russian Nation*; Petrone, *The Great War*; K. Petrone, 'Masculinity and Heroism in Imperial and Soviet Military-Patriotic Cultures' in B. Evans Clements, R. Friedman

personnel would help to develop the expanding historiographical field of masculinity in modern Russia, as well as to situate the Russian empire within a global trend of shifting sexual mores in light of modernisation, urbanisation and scientific development.²³

Finally, this study has demonstrated the importance of looking beyond the often anomalous capital city to understand how policies related to sexuality functioned in practice. The ways in which the regulation of sexuality varied regionally is an important consideration for future research. Widening the qualitative focus to examine how legislation related to same-sex relations, fornication, abortion, and adultery as well as how prostitution functioned at a regional level would help to firmly situate the history of sexuality within the context of the multi-ethnic and multilingual Russian empire. Studying the application of legislation using case studies such as the Baltic provinces, Siberia, Central Asia and the Caucasus will allow us to draw a fuller national picture and reveal how the imperial centre attempted to impose control over the culturally and ethnically distinct periphery. The inclusion of a variety of policies related to sexuality will draw on and develop one of the key arguments of this thesis: that the regulation of prostitution fit with wider attempts by the tsarist authorities to monitor lower-class people. Examining a combination of official documentation and petitions written to the authorities will reveal whether

and D. Healey (eds), *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 172-193.

²³ Worobec, 'Masculinity in Late-Imperial Russian Peasant Society'; B. A. Engel, 'Marriage and Masculinity in Late-Imperial Russia: the "Hard Cases"'; S. A. Smith, 'Masculinity in Transition: Peasant Migrants to Late-Imperial St Petersburg' all in B. Evans Clements, R. Friedman and D. Healey (eds), *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture* (Basingstoke, 2002). R. Friedman, *Masculinity, Autocracy and the Russian University, 1804-1863* (New York, 2005).

lower-class people resisted other attempts to monitor their sexuality, or whether the regulation of prostitution was the anomaly.

Bibliography

Archival sources

State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF)

- F. 102: Department of Police, Ministry of Internal Affairs
- F. 124: Criminal Department of the Ministry of Justice
- F. 220: Office of the Warsaw Chief of Police
- F. 539: Personal fond of Vasilii Vasil'evich Vodovozov
- F. 543: Manuscript collection from Tsarskoe Selo Palace
- F. 564: Personal fond of Anatolii Fedorovich Koni
- F. 579: Personal fond of Pavel Nikolaevich Miliukov

Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI)

- F. 199: Personal fond of Dmitrii Nikolaevich Zhbakov

Russian State Military History Archive (RGVIA)

- F. 2018: Central Medical Soviet
- F. 2106: Headquarters of the First Army

Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA)

- F. 776: Main Administration for the Press, Ministry of Internal Affairs
- F. 796: Office of the Synod
- F. 1075: Personal fond of Aleksei Illarionovich Filosofov
- F. 1288: Main Administration for Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs
- F. 1298: Administration of the Chief Medical Inspector
- F. 1335: Russian Society for the Protection of Women

Central State Historical Archive of St Petersburg (TsGIASPb)

- F. 513: St Petersburg Executive City Board

F. 569: St Petersburg Municipal Government and Police

F. 593: St Petersburg Medical-Police Committee

Russian State Archive of the Navy (RGAVMF)

F. 408: Administration of the Imperial Navy's Health Department

F. 928: Port of Emperor Alexander III

F. 949: Naval Fortress of Emperor Peter the Great

F. R1483: Administration of the Naval Forces of the Red Army

State Archive of Arkhangelsk Oblast (GAAO)

F. 37: Arkhangelsk City Police Department

National Archives of Estonia (EAA)

F. 30: Estliand Provincial Government

F. 31: Estliand Department of Health

F. 33: Estliand Department of Construction

F. 139: Tallinn District Prosecutor

F. 151: Tallinn District Court

F. 242: Riga District Prosecutor

F. 330: Tartu District Police

F. 351: Vijandi District Chief of Police

F. 430: Judge for Tartu-Võru District (10th Division)

F. 633: Narva City Police

F. 3162: Pärnu Medical-Police Committee

F. 3163: Võru Medical-Police Committee

Latvian State Historical Archives (LVVA)

F. 51: Riga City Police Department

Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv (TsDIAK)

F. 2090: District Inspector for Kharkiv Factory District

F. 335: Temporary Governor-General for Odessa and Kherson provinces

Newspapers and periodicals

Arkhangel'sk

Golos Portnogo

Gorodskoe Delo

Narvskaia Gazeta

Novoe Vremia

Odesskii Listok

Peterburgskaia Gazeta

Rech'

Russkie Vedomosti

Russkii Zhurnal Kozhnikh i Venericheskikh Boleznei

Trudovaia Pomoshch'

Zhenskoe Delo

Zhenskii Vestnik

Zhizn' dlia Vsekh

Published primary sources

Bentovin, B., *Deti-Prostitutki* (St Petersburg, 1910).

——— *Torguiushchie Telom: Ocherki Sovremennoi Prostitutsii* (St Petersburg, 1909).

Bibikov, S. D., *Arkhangel'skaia Guberniia: ee Bogatstva i Nuzhdy po Obzoru 1912* (Arkhangelsk, 1912).

Butler, J., *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade* (London, 1896).

Chekov, A., *The Schoolmistress and Other Stories*, trans. C. Garnett (London, 1930).

Dubrovskii, A., *Prostitutsiia v Rossiiskoi Imperii po Obsledovaniiu 1-go Avgusta 1889 goda* (St Petersburg, 1890).

Elistratov, A. I., *O Prikreplenii Zhenshchiny k Prostitutsii (Vrachebno-Politsieskii Nadzor)* (Kazan, 1903).

Fedorov, A., *Ocherk Vrachebno-Politseiskogo Nadzora za Prostitutsiei v Sankt-Peterburge* (St Petersburg, 1897).

Glavnoe Upravlenie po Delam Mestnogo Khoziaistva, *Vrachebnoi-Politseiskii Nadzor za Gorodskoi Prostitutsiei* (St Petersburg, 1910).

Golubtsov, N. A., *Obzor Arkhangel'skoi Gubernii za 1911 god* (Arkhangel'sk, 1912).

Goncharov, K. V., *O Venericheskie Bolezniakh v Sankt-Peterburge* (St Petersburg, 1910).

Kanatchikov, S., *A Radical Worker in Tsarist Russia: the Autobiography of Semen Ivanovich Kanatchikov*, ed. and trans. R. E. Zelnik (Stanford, 1986).

Kuprin, A., *Iama: The Pit, a Novel in Three Parts*, trans. B. G. Guernsey (North Charleston, 2013).

Kuusinen, A., *Before and After Stalin: a Personal Account of Soviet Russia from the 1920s to the 1960s*, trans. P. Stevenson (London, 1974).

Lombroso, C., and Ferrero, G., *Criminal Woman, the Prostitute and the Normal Woman*, trans. N. Hahn Rafter and M. Gibson (Durham and London, 2004).

Norman, A. S., *Pochemu Neobkhodimo Zaselenie Arkhangel'skoi Gubernii* (St Petersburg, 1909).

Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1907 (St Petersburg, 1908).

Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1912 (St Petersburg, 1913).

Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1913 (St Petersburg, 1914).

Otchet o Deiatel'nosti Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1914 (St Petersburg, 1915).

Otchet Popechitel'nogo Komiteta Sankt-Peterburgskogo Doma Miloserdiia za 1909 (St Petersburg, 1910).

Okorokov, V. P., *Vozvrashchenie k Chestnomu Trudu Padshikh Devushek: Sfera Deiatel'nosti Uchrezhdenii Marii Magdaliny v Moskve* (Moscow, 1888).

Pokrovskaiia, M., 'Prostitution and Alcoholism', trans. T. L. Polowy, in R. Bisha, J. M. Gheith, C. Holden and W. G. Wagner (eds), *Russian Women, 1698-1917: Experience and Expression, an Anthology of Sources* (Bloomington, 2002), pp. 359-362.

'Prostitutes' Petition', trans. L. Bernstein, in R. Bisha, J. M. Gheith, C. Holden and W. G. Wagner (eds), *Russian Women, 1698-1917: Experience and Expression, an Anthology of Sources* (Bloomington, 2002), pp. 138-140.

Ryan, M., *The Philosophy of Marriage, in its Social, Moral and Physical Relations* (London, 1843).

Sosnovskii, I. V., *Vsepoddanneishii Otchet o Sostoianii Arkhangel'skoi Gubernii za 1909 god* (Arkhangel'sk, 1911).

Tarnovskii, V. M., *Prostitutsiia i Abolitsionizm* (St Petersburg, 1888).

Tolstoy, L., *Resurrection*, trans. L. Maude (Mineola and New York, 2004).

Tsentral'nyi Statisticheskii Komitet, Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del, *Pervaia Vseobshchaia Perepis' Naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii 1897 g.* 1 edn. (St Petersburg, 1897).

——— *Spiskii Naselennykh Mest Rossiiskoi Imperii, Arkhangel'skaia Gubernia* (St Petersburg, 1861).

——— *Pervaia Vseobshchaia Perepis' Naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii, I: Arkhangel'skaia Guberniia* (St Petersburg, 1899).

——— *Pervaia Vseobshchaia Perepis' Naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii, XXVIII: Orenburgskaia Guberniia* (St Petersburg, 1904).

Turner, G. K., *The City of Chicago: a Study of the Great Immoralities* (New York, 1907).

Zimmermann, J. T., *Chicago's Black Traffic in White Girls* (Chicago, 1911).

Online sources

Russian National Library, 'Kronshtadt: 300 let so Dnia Osnovaniia' <http://expositions.nlr.ru/Kronstadt/>, accessed 29.4.2016.

Zherebtsova, T. I., Konstantinov, A. V., Kulakov, V. S., and Lytsus', A. I., 'Chita' in *Entsiklopediia Zabaikal'ia* <http://encycl.chita.ru/encycl/concepts/?id=2111>, accessed 18.3.2016.

Secondary literature

Abrams, L., *Workers' Culture in Imperial Germany: Leisure and Recreation in the Rhineland and Westphalia* (London and New York, 2002).

Aderinto, S., *When Sex Threatened the State: Illicit Sexuality, Nationalism and Politics in Colonial Nigeria, 1900-1958* (Urbana, 2015).

Ananich, B., 'Russian Military Expenditures in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-5', trans. D. Wolff, in J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden, 2007), pp. 449-464.

Anderson, B. A., *Internal Migration During Modernisation in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Princeton, 1980).

Andrew, J., *Narrative, Space and Gender in Russian Fiction: 1846-1903* (Amsterdam and New York, 2007).

Arnold, D., 'Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century India', *Genitourinary Medicine*, 69:1 (1993), pp. 3-8.

Astashov, A. B. 'Seksual'nyi Opyt Russkogo Soldata na Pervoi Mirovoi i Ego Posledstviia dlia Voyny i Mira', *Voenno-Istoricheskaia Antropologiya: Ezhegodnik*, (2005-6), pp. 367-382.

Avrutin, E. M., *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2010).

Badcock, S., *A Prison Without Walls?: Eastern Siberian Exile in the Last Years of Tsarism* (Oxford, 2016).

——— 'From Villains to Victims: Experiencing Illness in Siberian Exile', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 65:9 (2013), pp. 1716-1736.

——— *Politics and the People in Revolutionary Russia: A Provincial History* (Cambridge, 2007).

——— 'Women, Protest and Revolution: Soldiers' Wives in Russia During 1917', *International Journal of Social History*, 49 (2004), pp. 47-70.

Baker, M. R., 'War and Revolution in Ukraine: Kharkiv Province's Peasants' Experiences of War, Revolution, and Occupation, 1914-18' in S. Badcock, L. G. Novikova and A. B. Retish (eds), *Russia's Home Front in War and Revolution, 1914-22, Book 1: Russia's Revolution in Regional Perspective* (Bloomington, 2015), pp. 111-142.

Balkelis, T., 'Opening Gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish Migrations from the Lithuanian Provinces, 1867-1914', *Ethnicity Studies*, 1-2 (2010), pp. 41-66.

Baron, N., and Gatrell, P., 'Population Displacement, State-Building and Social Identity in the Lands of the Former Russian Empire, 1917-23', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 4:1 (2003), pp. 51-100.

Bartley, P., *Prostitution: Prevention and Reform in England, 1860-1914* (London and New York, 2000).

Bater, J., 'Between Old and New: St Petersburg in the Late Imperial Era' in M. F. Hamm (ed). *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, 1986), pp. 43-78.

——— *St Petersburg: Industrialisation and Change* (Montreal, 1976).

Beavan, B., *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain, 1850-1945* (Manchester, 2005).

Beizer, M., *The Jews of St Petersburg: Excursions Through a Noble Past*, trans. M. Sherbourne (New York and Philadelphia, 1989).

Bernstein, F., 'Behind the Closed Door: VD and Medical Secrecy in Early Soviet Medicine', in F. Bernstein, C. Burton and D. Healey (eds), *Soviet Medicine: Culture, Practice, and Science* (DeKalb, 2010), pp. 92-110.

Bernstein, L., *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995).

Bezriadin, S. V., 'Organizatsiia i Deiatel'nost' Korpusa Voenno-Morskikh Brachei Russkogo Flota vo Vtoroi Polovine XIX-Nachale XX vv., PhD Dissertation, (Voronezh State Pedagogical University, 2014).

Bieri, S., and Gerodetti, N., "'Falling Women" – "Saving Angels": Spaces of Contested Mobility and the Production of Gender and Sexualities Within Early Twentieth-Century Train Stations', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 8:2 (2007), pp. 217-234.

Bland, L., and Mort, F., 'Look Out for the "Good Time" Girl: Dangerous Sexualities as a Threat to National Health' in B. Schwarz (eds), *Formations of Nations and People* (London, 1984), pp. 131-151.

Boag, P., *Same Sex Affairs: Constructing and Controlling Homosexuality in the Pacific Northwest* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2003).

Bortz, J., *Revolution Within the Revolution: Cotton Textile Workers and the Mexican Labour Regime, 1910-1923* (Stanford, 2008).

Bourke, J., *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, 1996).

Bradley, J., *Muzhik and Muscovite: Urbanisation in Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1985).

Brandt, A. M., *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States Since 1880* (New York and Oxford, 1987).

Bristow, E. J., *Prostitution and Prejudice: the Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Oxford, 1982).

——— *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain Since 1700* (Dublin, 1977).

Brower, D. R., *The Russian City Between Traditional and Modernity 1850-1900* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990).

Burds, J., *Peasant Dreams and Market Politics: Labour Migration and the Russian Village, 1861-1905* (Pittsburgh, 1998).

——— 'A Culture of Denunciation: Peasant Labour Migration and Religious Anathematisation in Rural Russia, 1860-1905', *Journal of Modern History*, 68:4 (1996), pp. 786-818.

——— 'The Social Control of Peasant Labour in Russia: the Response of Village Communities to Labour Migration in the Central Industrial Region, 1861-1905' in E. Kingston-Mann and T. Mixter (eds), *Peasant Economy, Culture and Politics of European Russia 1800-1921* (Princeton, 1991), pp. 52-100.

Bushkovitch, P. 'The Far East in the Eyes of the Russian Intelligentsia' in J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden, 2007), pp. 349-364.

Bushnell, J., 'The Spectre of Mutinous Reserves: How the War Produced the October Manifesto' in J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden, 2007), pp. 333-348.

——— 'The Revolution of 1905-06 in the Army: the Incidence and Impact of Mutiny', *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 12:1 (1985), pp. 71-94.

——— 'Peasants in Uniform: the Tsarist Army as Peasant Society', *Journal of Social History*, 13:4 (1980), pp. 565-576.

Camiscioli, E., *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Durham and London, 2009).

Cassiday, J. A., and Rouhi, L., 'From Nevskii Prospekt to Zoia's Apartment: Trials of the Russian Procuress', *Russian Review*, 58:3 (1999), pp. 413-431.

Clinton, C., *Public Women and the Confederacy* (Milwaukee, 1999).

Corbin, A., *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France After 1850*, trans. A. Sheridan (Cambridge, 1990).

Corrsin, S. D., 'Language Use in Cultural and Political Change in pre-1914 Warsaw: Poles, Jews and Russification', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 68:1 (1990), pp. 69-90.

——— 'Warsaw: Poles and Jews in a Conquered City' in M. F. Hamm (ed). *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, 1986), pp. 123-175.

Cox, R. B., 'Industrialisation, 1881-1913' in F. W. Thackeray (ed). *Events that Changed Russia Since 1855* (Westport, 2007), pp. 51-64.

Crisp, O., 'Labour and Industrialisation in Russia' in P. Mathias and M. M. Postan (eds), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol 7, pt. 2 (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 308-415.

Dergileva, S. Iu. and Gevorgian, D. S., 'Voprosy Bor'by s Reglementatsiei Prostitutsii i Torgom Zhenshchinami v Kontse XIX – Nachale XX Veka v Nauchnoi i Obshchestvennoi Deiatel'nosti A. I. Elistratova i V. F. Deriuzhinskogo', *Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo Universiteta MVD Rossii*, 4:60 (2013), pp. 31-37

Donovan, B., *White Slave Crusades: Race, Gender and Anti-Vice Activism, 1887-1917* (Champaign, 2010).

Douglas, M., *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London and New York, 1966).

Engel, B. A., 'Women and Urban Culture' in W. Roslyn and A. Tosi (eds), *Women in Nineteenth-Century Russia: Lives and Culture* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 19-40.

——— *Breaking the Ties That Bound: The Politics of Marital Strife in Late Imperial Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2011).

——— 'Marriage and Masculinity in Late-Imperial Russia: the "Hard Cases"' in B. Evans Clements, R. Friedman, and D. Healey (eds), *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 113-132.

——— *Between the Fields and the City: Women, Work and Family in Russia, 1861-1914* (Cambridge, 1996).

——— 'Peasant Morality and Pre-Marital Relations in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia', *Journal of Social History*, 23:4 (1990), pp. 695-714.

——— 'St Petersburg Prostitutes in the Late Nineteenth Century: A Personal and Social Profile', *Russian Review*, 48:1 (1989), pp. 21-44.

Engelstein, L., *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca and London, 1992).

——— 'Lesbian Vignettes: a Russian Triptych from the 1890s', *Signs*, 15:4 (1990), pp. 813-831.

——— 'Morality and the Wooden Spoon: Russian Doctors View Syphilis, Social Class and Sexual Behaviour, 1890-1905', *Representations*, 14 (1986), pp. 169-208.

——— 'Syphilis, Historical and Actual: Cultural Geography of a Disease', *Reviews of Infectious Diseases*, 8:6 (1986), pp. 1036-1048.

Epstein Landau, E., *Spectacular Wickedness: Sex, Race and Memory in Storyville, New Orleans* (Baton Rouge, 2013).

Evans, N. J., 'The Port Jews and Libau, 1880-1914', *Jewish Culture and History*, 7:1-2 (2004), pp. 197-214.

Farnsworth, B., and Viola, L., (eds), *Russian Peasant Women* (Oxford, 1992).

Figes, O., 'The Russian Revolution of 1917 and Its Language in the Village', *Russian Review*, 56:3 (1997), pp. 323-345.

Filippova, T., 'Images of the Foe in the Russian Satirical Press' in J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden, 2007), pp. 411-424.

Fitzpatrick, S., *The Russian Revolution* (Oxford, 2008).

Fitzpatrick, S., and Gellately, R., 'Introduction to the Practices of Denunciation in Modern European History', *Journal of Modern History*, 68:4 (1996), pp. 747-767.

Frank, S. P., 'Narratives Within Numbers: Women, Crime and Judicial Statistics in Imperial Russia, 1834-1913', *Russian Review*, 55:4 (1996), pp. 541-566.

——— 'Confronting the Domestic Other: Rural Popular Culture and its Enemies in Fin-de- Siècle Russia' in S. P. Frank and M. D. Steinberg (eds), *Lower-Class Values, Practices and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 74-107.

Freeze, C. Y., "'She Done Him In': Marital Breakdown in a Jewish Family' in C. D. Worobec (ed). *The Human Tradition in Imperial Russia* (Lanham, 2009), pp. 129-140.

Freeze, G. L., 'Profane Narratives About a Holy Sacrament: Marriage and Divorce and Late Imperial Russia' in M. D. Steinberg and H. J. Coleman (eds), *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007), pp. 146-178.

——— 'Krylov vs. Krylova: "Sexual Incapacity" and Divorce in Tsarist Russia' in W. B. Husband (ed). *The Human Tradition in Modern Russia* (Wilmington, 2000), pp. 5-18.

Friedman, R., *Masculinity, Autocracy and the Russian University, 1804-1863* (New York, 2005).

Frierson, C. A., *All Russia is Burning!: A Cultural History of Fire and Arson in Late Imperial Russia* (Seattle, 2002).

——— *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (New York and Oxford, 1993).

Fuller, W. C., *The Foe Within: Fantasies of Treason and the End of Imperial Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2006).

Garon, S., 'The World's Oldest Debate? Prostitution and the State in Imperial Japan, 1900-1945', *American Historical Review*, 98:3 (1993), pp. 710-732.

Gatrell, P., *Russia's First World War: a Social and Economic History* (Edinburgh, 2005).

——— *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia During World War One* (Bloomington, 1999).

——— 'After Tsushima: Economic and Administrative Aspects of Russian Naval Rearmament, 1905-13', *Economic History Review*, 43:2 (1990), pp. 255-270.

——— *The Tsarist Economy, 1850-1917* (London, 1986).

Gerodetti, N., and Bieri, S., '(Female hetero)Sexualities in Transition: Train Stations as Gateways', *Feminist Theory*, 7:1 (2006), pp. 69-87.

Gibson, M., *Prostitution and the State in Italy, 1860-1915* (Columbus, 1990).

Gilbert, G., *The Radical Right in Late Imperial Russia: Dreams of a True Fatherland?* (Abingdon and New York, 2016).

Gilfoyle, T. J., 'Prostitutes in the Archives: Problems and Possibilities in Documenting the History of Sexuality', *American Archivist*, 57 (1994), pp. 514-527.

Glickman, R., *Russian Factory Women: Workplace and Society 1880-1914* (Berkeley, 1984).

Goldsmith, R. W., 'The Economic Growth of Tsarist Russia, 1860-1913', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 9:3 (April 1961), pp. 441-475.

Goode, E., and Ben-Yehuda, N., *Moral Panics: the Social Construction of Deviance*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2009).

Grenoble, L., *Language Policy in the Soviet Union* (Boston, 2003).

Guy, D. J., *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family and Nation in Argentina* (Lincoln and London, 1991).

Hamilton, M., 'Opposition to the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1864-1886', *Albion: Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 10:1 (Spring 1978), pp. 14-27.

Hamm, M. F., 'Introduction' in M. F. Hamm (ed). *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, 1986), pp. 1-8.

——— 'Riga's 1913 City Election: a Study in Urban Politics', *Russian Review*, 39:4 (1980), pp. 442-461.

Harris, V., *Selling Sex in the Reich: Prostitutes in German Society, 1914-1945* (Oxford, 2010).

Harrison, M., 'The British Army and Venereal Disease During the First World War', *Medical History*, 35:2 (1995), pp. 133-158.

Harshman, D. R., 'Cooking Up a New Everyday: Communal Kitchens in the Revolutionary Era, 1890-1935', *Revolutionary Russia*, 29:2 (2016), pp. 211-233.

Healey, D., 'Love and Death: Transforming Sexualities in Russia, 1914-1922' in M. Frame, B. Kolonitskii, S. G. Marks and M. K. Stockdale (eds), *Russian Culture in War and Revolution, 1914-22, Book 2. Political Culture, Identities, Mentalities and Memory* (Bloomington, 2014), pp. 158-159.

——— 'Masculine Purity and "Gentlemen's Mischief": Sexual Exchange and Prostitution Between Russian Men, 1861-1941', *Slavic Review*, 60:2 (2002), pp. 233-265.

——— *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia: the Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent* (Chicago and London, 2001).

Hearne, S., 'Sex on the Front: Prostitution and Venereal Diseases in Russia's First World War', *Revolutionary Russia*, 30:1 (2017), pp. 102-122.

——— 'The "Black Spot" on the Crimea: Venereal Diseases in the Black Sea Fleet in the 1920s', *Social History*, 42:2 (2017), pp. 181-204.

Henriksson, A., 'Riga: Growth, Conflict and the Limitations of Good Government, 1850-1914' in M. F. Hamm (ed). *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, 1986), pp. 177-208.

Henze, C. E., *Disease, Health Care and Government in Late Imperial Russia: Life and Death on the Volga, 1823-1914* (London and New York, 2011).

Herlihy, P., *The Alcoholic Empire: Vodka and Politics in Late Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 2002).

Hershatter, G., *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Berkeley, 1997).

Henriot, C., *Prostitution and Sexuality in Shanghai: a Social History, 1849-1949* (Cambridge, 2001).

Hetherington, P., "'The Highest Guardian of the Child": International Criminology and the Russian Fight Against Transnational Obscenity, 1885-1925', *Russian History*, 43 (2016), pp. 275-310.

——— 'Victims of the Social Temperament: Prostitution, Migration and the Traffic in Women from Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, 1885-1935,' PhD Dissertation (Harvard University, 2014).

Hickey, M. 'Smolensk's Jews in War, Revolution and Civil War' in S. Badcock, L. G. Novikova and A. B. Retish (eds), *Russia's Home Front in War and Revolution, 1914-22, Book 1: Russia's Revolution in Regional Perspective* (Bloomington, 2015), pp. 175-214.

——— 'Discourses of Public Identity and Liberalism in the February Revolution: Smolensk, Spring 1917', *Russian Review*, 55:4 (1996), pp. 615-637.

Holquist, P., 'To Count, to Extract, to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia' in R. G. Suny and T. Martin (eds), *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 111-144.

Howard, J., *Men Like That: A Southern Queer History* (Chicago, 1999).

Howell, P., *Geographies of Regulation: Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the Empire* (Cambridge, 2009).

——— 'Venereal Disease and the Politics of Prostitution in the Irish Free State', *Irish Historical Studies*, 33:131 (2003), pp. 320-341.

——— 'Prostitution and Racialised Sexuality: the Regulation of Prostitution in Britain and the British Empire before the Contagious Diseases Acts', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 18 (2000), pp. 321-339.

Howell, P., Beckingham, D., and Moore, F., 'Managed Zones for Sex Workers in Liverpool: Contemporary Proposals, Victorian Parallels', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 33:2 (2008), pp. 233-250.

Hubbard, P., *Cities and Sexualities* (Abingdon and New York, 2012).

——— *Sex and the City: Geographies of Prostitution in the Urban West* (Farnham, 1999).

Jenkins, S., 'Aliens and Predators: Miscegenation, Prostitution and Racial Identities in Cardiff, 1927-47', *Cultural and Social History*, 11:4 (2014), pp. 575-596.

Johnson, R. E., *Peasant and Proletarian: the Working Class of Moscow in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Leicester, 1979).

——— 'Peasant Migration and the Russian Working Class: Moscow at the End of the Nineteenth Century', *Slavic Review*, 35:4 (1976), pp. 652-664.

Kaiser, D. H., *The Workers Revolution in Russia, 1917: the View From Below* (Cambridge, 1987).

Kappeler, A., *The Russian Empire: a Multi-Ethnic History* (London and New York, 2013).

Kaspe, S., 'Imperial Political Culture and Modernisation in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century' in J. Burbank, M. von Hagen and A. Remnev (eds), *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700-1930* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007), pp. 455-493.

Kassow, S. D., *Students, Professors, and the State in Tsarist Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989).

Kazakovtsev, S. V., 'Viatskaia Guberniia v 1914-1917 gg: Voina, Vlast' i Naselenie' *Novyi Istoricheskii Vestnik*, 20 (2009), pp. 18-25.

Keishi, O., 'Japan's Monetary Mobilisation for War' in D. Wolff, S. G. Marks, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, J. W. Steinberg and Y. Shinji (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 2 (Leiden, 2007), pp. 251-270.

Kimerling Wirschafter, E., *From Serf to Russian Soldier* (Princeton, 2014).

Kirby, D. G., 'A Navy in Revolution: the Russian Baltic Fleet in 1917', *European History Quarterly*, 4 (1974), pp. 345-58.

Knežević, J., 'Prostitutes as a Threat to National Honour in Habsburg-Occupied Serbia During the Great War', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 20:2 (2011), pp. 312-335.

Kondratenko, R. V., 'Voennyi Port Imperatora Aleksandra III v Libave', *Tsitadel'*, 2:5 (1997) and 1 (1998), pp. 9-18.

Kotsonis, Y., *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic* (Toronto, 2014).

——— 'Arkhangelsk, 1918: Regionalism and Populism in the Russian Civil War', *Russian Review*, 51:4 (1992), pp. 526-544.

Kowalsky, S. A., *Deviant Women: Female Crime and Criminology in Revolutionary Russia, 1880-1930* (DeKalb, 2009).

Kowner, R., *The A to Z of the Russo-Japanese War* (Lanham and Toronto, 2009).

——— *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 2007).

Kukushkin, V., *From Peasants to Labourers: Ukrainian and Belarusan Immigration from the Russian Empire to Canada* (Montreal, 2007).

Kusber, J., 'Soldiers' Unrest Behind the Front After the End of the War' in R. Kowner (ed). *Rethinking the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905, vol 1: Centennial Perspectives* (Folkestone, 2007), pp. 281-290.

——— *Krieg und Revolution in Russland, 1904-1906* (Stuttgart, 1997).

Laite, J., 'Immoral Traffic: Mobility, Health, Labour and the "Lorry Girl" in Mid-Twentieth Century Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, 52 (2013), pp. 693-721.

——— *Common Prostitutes and Ordinary Citizens: Commercial Sex in London, 1885-1960* (Basingstoke, 2012).

——— 'Historical Perspectives on Industrial Development, Mining and Prostitution', *Historical Journal*, 52:3 (2009), pp. 739-761

Langum, D. J., *Crossing Over the Line: Legislating Morality and the Mann Act* (Chicago, 1994).

Lauchlan, I., 'The Okhrana: Security Policing in Late Imperial Russia' in I. Thatcher (ed). *Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 44-63.

Leasure, J. W., and Lewis, R. A., 'Internal Migration in Russia in the Late Nineteenth Century', *Slavic Review*, 27:3 (1968), pp. 375-394.

Lefebvre, H., *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Malden, 1991).

Levine, P., *Prostitution, Race and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (New York and London, 2003).

Lie, J., 'The State as Pimp: Prostitution and the Patriarchal State in Japan in the 1940s', *Sociological Quarterly*, 38:2 (1997) pp. 251-263.

Limocelli, S. A., *The Politics of Trafficking: the First International Movement to Combat the Sexual Exploitation of Women* (Stanford, 2010).

Lincoln Fitzpatrick, A., *The Great Russian Fair, Nizhnii Novgorod, 1840-90* (New York, 1990).

Lindenmeyr, A., *Poverty is Not a Vice: Charity, Society and the State in Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1996).

——— 'The Ethos of Charity in Imperial Russia', *Journal of Social History*, 23:4 (1990). pp. 679-694.

——— 'Charity and the Problem of Unemployment: Industrial Homes in Late Imperial Russia', *Russian Review*, 45:1 (1986), pp. 1-22.

Liubichankovskii, S. V., 'The Myth of Authority and the Authority of the Myth: Was the Russian Governor the Undisputed Master of His Province?', *Russian Studies in History*, 53:5 (2014), pp. 30-37.

Liventsev, D. V., 'Bor'ba s "Durnymi" Bolezniami na Rossiiskom Imperatorskom Flote', *Kul'tura i Fizicheskoe Zdorov'e*, 4 (2012), pp. 85-87.

Lohr, E., *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union* (Cambridge and London, 2012).

——— *Nationalising the Russian Empire: the Campaign Against Enemy Aliens During World War I* (Cambridge and London, 2003).

——— 'The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages and Violence During World War I', *Russian Review*, 60 (2001), pp. 404-419.

Lovell, S., 'Finding a Mate in Late Tsarist Russia', *Cultural and Social History*, 4:1 (2007), pp. 51-72.

——— *Summerfolk: A History of the Dacha, 1710-2000* (Ithaca and London, 2003).

- Luddy, M., *Prostitution and Irish Society, 1880-1940* (Cambridge, 2007).
- Luker, N., *Alexander Kuprin* (Boston, 1978).
- Mahood, L., and Littlewood, B., 'The "Vicious Girl" and the "Street Corner" Boy: Sexuality and the Gendered Delinquent in the Scottish Child-Saving Movement, 1850-1940', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 4:4 (April 1994), pp. 549-578.
- Makepeace, C., 'Male Heterosexuality and Prostitution During the Great War: British Soldiers' Encounters with Maisons Tolérées', *Cultural and Social History*, 9:1 (2012), pp. 65-83.
- Martynenko, N. K. 'Rossiiskie Blagotvoritel'nye Obshchestva v Zashchite Zhenshchin ot Prostitutsii v Kontse XIX – Nachale XX Vekov', *Vestnik Volzhskogo Universiteta im. V. N. Tatishcheva*, 5 (2010), pp. 1-12.
- *Rossiiskoe Obshchestvo Zashchity Zhenshchin v Bor'be s Prostiutsiei 1900-1915 gg.* (Togliatti, 2006).
- Mawdsley, E., *The Russian Revolution: War and Politics: February 1917-April 1918* (London and Basingstoke, 1978).
- Mazanik, A., 'Sanitation, Urban Environment and the Politics of Public Health in Late Imperial Moscow', PhD Dissertation (Central European University, 2015).
- 'The City as a Transient Home: Residential Patterns of Moscow Workers Around the Turn of the Twentieth Century', *Urban History*, 40:1 (2013), pp. 51-70.
- McCaffray, S., and Melancon, M., 'Introduction: A Member of the Family – Russia's Place in Europe, 1789-1914' in S. McCaffray and M. Melancon (eds), *Russia in the European Context, 1789-1914* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 1-10.
- McCracken, J., *Street Sex Workers' Discourse: Realising Material Change Through Agential Choice* (Abingdon and New York, 2013).
- McDermid, J., and Hillyar, A., *Women and Work in Russia, 1880-1930: a Study in Continuity Through Change* (Abingdon and London, 1998).
- McGee Deutsch, S., *Crossing Borders, Claiming a Nation: a History of Argentine Jewish Women, 1880-1955* (Durham and London, 2010).
- McMahon, A. M., 'Mill Town: Prostitution and the Rule of Lumber in Lake Charles, Louisiana, 1867-1918', *Louisiana Historical Association*, 45:2 (2004), pp. 151-171.
- McReynolds, L., *Murder Most Russian: True Crime and Punishment in Late Imperial Russia* (Ithaca and London, 2013).
- *Russia at Play: Leisure Activities at the End of the Tsarist Era* (Ithaca and London, 2003).

McReynolds, L., and C. Popkin, 'The Objective Eye and the Common Good' in C. Kelly and D. Shepherd (eds), *Constructing Russian Culture in the Age of Revolution: 1881-1940* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 57-105.

Menning, B. W., *Bayonets Before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861-1914* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992).

Mikhailova, Y., and Michiko, I., 'Forgotten Heroes: Russian Women and the War' in R. Kowner (ed). *Rethinking the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905, vol 1: Centennial Perspectives* (Folkestone, 2007), pp. 202-217.

Miller, B. R., *Rural Unrest During the First Russian Revolution: Kursk Province, 1905-06* (Budapest, 2013).

Mironov, B., *The Standards of Living and Revolutions in Russia, 1700-1917* (Abingdon and New York, 2012).

Mixter, T., 'The Hiring Market as Workers' Turf: Migrant Agricultural Labourers and the Mobilisation of Collective Action in the Steppe Grainbelt of European Russia, 1853-1913' in E. Kingston-Mann and T. Mixter (eds), *Peasant Economy, Culture and Politics of European Russia 1800-1921* (Princeton, 1991), pp. 294-340.

Moon, D., 'Late Imperial Peasants' in I. D. Thatcher (ed). *Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 120-145.

——— 'Peasant Migration, the Abolition of Serfdom and the Internal Passport System in the Russian Empire, c. 1800-1914' in D. Eltis (ed). *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives* (Stanford, 2002), pp. 324-357.

——— *The Russian Peasantry 1600-1930: The World that the Peasants Made* (London and New York, 1999).

Morrison, A., 'Peasant Settlers and the "Civilising Mission" in Russian Turkestan, 1865-1917', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 43:3 (2015), pp. 387-417.

Morrissey, S. K., *Suicide and the Body Politic in Imperial Russia* (Cambridge, 2006).

Nathans, B., *Beyond the Pale: the Jewish Encounter With Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002).

Novikova, L. G., *Provintsial'naia 'Kontrevoliutsiia': Beloe Dvizhenie i Grazhdanskaia Voina na Russkom Severe, 1917-1920* (Moscow, 2011).

——— 'Northerners into Whites: Popular Participation in the Counter-Revolution in Arkhangelsk Province, Summer-Autumn 1918', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60:2 (2008), pp. 277-293.

Panin, S. E., *Prostitutsiia v Rossii v XIX-XX vv. Materialy k Bibliografii na Russkom Iazyke* (Penza, 2005).

Parrott, A., 'The Baltic States from 1914 to 1923: the First World War and the Wars of Independence', *Baltic Defence Review*, 8:2 (2002), pp. 131-158.

Patrikeeff, F., and Shukman, H., *Railways and the Russo-Japanese War: Transporting War* (London and New York, 2007).

Petri, O., 'At the Bathhouse: Municipal Reform and the Bathing Commons in Late Imperial St Petersburg', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 51 (2016), pp. 40-51.

Petrone, K., *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Bloomington, 2011).

——— 'Masculinity and Heroism in Imperial and Soviet Military-Patriotic Cultures' in B. Evans Clements, R. Friedman and D. Healey (eds), *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 172-193.

Pick, D., *Faces of Degeneration: a European Disorder, c.1848-c.1918* (Cambridge, 1989).

Plakans, A., and Lipša, I., 'Stigmatised Cohabitation in the Latvian Region of the Eastern Baltic Littoral: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *History of the Family*, 20:4 (2015), pp. 530-545.

Pliley, J., *Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI* (Cambridge, MA, 2014).

Prusin, A. V., 'The Russian Military and the Jews in Galicia, 1914-1915' in E. Lohr and M. Poe (eds), *The Military and Society in Russia, 1450-1917* (Leiden, 2002), pp. 525-544.

Putnam, L., *The Company They Kept: Migrants and the Politics of Gender in Caribbean Costa Rica, 1870-1960* (Chapel Hill, 2002).

Pyle, E. M., 'Peasant Strategies for Obtaining State Aid: a Study of Petitions During World War I', *Russian History*, 24:1-2 (1997), pp. 41-64.

Raab, N., 'Visualising Civil Society: the Fireman and the Photographer in Late Imperial Russia, 1900-1914', *History of Photography*, 31:2 (2007), pp. 151-164.

Raun, T. U., *Estonia and the Estonians*, 2nd edn (Stanford, 2001).

——— 'The Estonians', in E. C. Thaden (ed). *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855-1914* (Princeton, 1981), pp. 387-356.

Reichmann, H., 'The 1905 Revolution on the Siberian Railroad', *Russian Review*, 47:1 (1988), pp. 25-48.

Remick, E. J., *Regulating Prostitution in China: Gender and Statebuilding, 1900-1937* (Stanford, 2014).

Retish, A., *Russia's Peasants in Revolution and Civil War: Citizenship, Identity, and the Creation of the Soviet State, 1914-1922* (Cambridge, 2008).

Retish, A. B., Novikova, L. G., and Badcock, S., 'Introduction: a Kaleidoscope of Revolutions' in S. Badcock, L. G. Novikova and A. B. Retish (eds), *Russia's Home Front in War and Revolution, 1914-22, Book 1: Russia's Revolution in Regional Perspective* (Bloomington, 2015), pp. 1-15.

Ritzheimer, K. L., *'Trash', Censorship and National Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, 2016).

Rodionova, T. A., 'Vliianie Norm Mezhdunarodnogo Prava na Stanovlenie i Razvitie Otechestvennogo Ugolovnogo Zakonodatel'stva', *Vestnik Cheliabinskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, 4:219 (2011), pp. 82-86.

Roos, J., 'Women's Rights, Nationalist Anxiety and the "Moral" Agenda in the Early Weimar Republic: Revisiting the "Black Horror" Campaign Against France's African Occupation Troops', *Central European History*, 42 (2009), pp. 473-508.

Rosen, R., *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (Baltimore, 1982).

Rowland, R. H., *Spatial Patterns of Urban In-Migration in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia: a Factor Analytic Approach* (Norwich, 1982).

Rowley, A., *Open Letters: Russian Popular Culture and the Picture Postcard, 1880-1922* (Toronto and London, 2013).

Ruane, C., 'Clothes Shopping in Imperial Russia: the Development of a Consumer Culture', *Journal of Social History*, 28:4 (1995), pp. 765-782.

Ruud, C. A., *Fighting Words: Imperial Censorship and the Russian Press, 1804-1906* (Toronto, 1982).

Sahadeo, J., *Russian Colonial Society in Tashkent, 1865-1923* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007).

Sanborn, J., *Imperial Apocalypse: the Great War and the Destruction of the Russian Empire* (Oxford, 2014).

——— 'Unsettling the Empire: Violent Migrations and Social Disaster in Russia During World War I', *Journal of Modern History*, 77:2 (2005), pp. 290-324.

——— *Drafting the Russian Nation: Military Conscription, Total War and Mass Politics, 1905-1925* (DeKalb, 2003).

——— 'The Mobilisation of 1914 and the Question of the Russian Nation: a Re-examination', *Slavic Review*, 59:2 (2000), pp. 267-289.

——— 'Conscription, Correspondence and Politics in Late Imperial Russia', *Russian History*, 24:1/2 (1997), pp. 27-41.

Saunders, D., 'Regional Diversity in the Later Russian Empire', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 10 (2000), pp. 143-163.

Schenk, F. B., "'The New Means of Transportation Will Make Unstable People Even More Unstable': Railways and Geographical Mobility in Tsarist Russia", in J. Randolph and E. M. Avrutin (eds), *Russia in Motion: Cultures of Human Mobility Since 1850* (Urbana and Springfield 2012), pp. 218-234.

——— 'Attacking the Empire's Achilles Heels: Railroads and Terrorism in Imperial Russia', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 58 (2010), pp. 232-253.

Schrader, A., 'Market Pleasures and Prostitution in St Petersburg' in M. P. Romaniello and T. Starks (eds), *Russian History Through the Senses: From 1700 to the Present* (London, 2016), pp. 67-94.

Scott, S. A., 'Venereal Diseases in the Soviet Union', *British Journal of Venereal Diseases*, 21:1 (1945), pp. 2-7.

Seniavskaia, E. S., 'Bez Baby i Bez Vina i Voina ne Nuzhna: Problemy Frontovoi Morali v Period Pervoi Mirovoi Voyny', *Istoricheskaia Psikhologiya i Sotsologiya Istorii*, 1 (2013), pp. 32-38.

Siegel, G., 'The Fallen Woman in Russian Nineteenth-Century Literature' in H. G. Lunt (ed), *Harvard Slavic Studies*, vol. 5 (Cambridge, MA, 1970), pp. 81-108.

Siegelbaum, L. H., and Moch, L. P., *Broad is My Native Land: Repertoires and Regimes of Migration in Russia's Twentieth Century* (Ithaca and London, 2014).

Sippial, T. A., *Prostitution, Modernity and the Making of the Cuban Republic, 1840-1920* (Chapel Hill, 2013).

Smith, H., *Masculinity, Class and Same-Sex Desire in Industrial England, 1895-1957* (Basingstoke, 2015).

Smith, S. A., 'Masculinity in Transition: Peasant Migrants to Late-Imperial St Petersburg' in B. Evans Clements, R. Friedman and D. Healey (eds), *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 94-112.

Solomon, S. G., and Hutchinson, J. F., 'The Problem of Health Reform in Russia', in S. G. Solomon and J. F. Hutchinson (eds), *Health and Society in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1990), pp. ix-xiv.

Stange, M., *Personal Property: Wives, White Slaves and the Market in Women* (Baltimore and London, 1998).

Stauter-Halstead, K., *The Devil's Chain: Prostitution and Social Control in Partitioned Poland* (Ithaca and London, 2015).

——— 'Moral Panic and the Prostitute in Partitioned Poland: Middle-Class Respectability in Defence of the Modern Nation', *Slavic Review*, 68:3 (2009), pp. 557-581.

——— “‘A Generation of Monsters’: Jews, Prostitution and Racial Purity in the 1892 L’viv White Slavery Trial’, *Austrian History Yearbook*, 38 (2007), pp. 25-35.

Steinberg, M. D., and Frank, S. P., ‘Introduction’, in S. P. Frank and M. D. Steinberg (eds), *Cultures in Flux: Lower-Class Values, Practices, and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 3-10.

Stites, R., ‘Russian Representations of the Japanese Enemy’, in J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden, 2007), pp. 395-410.

——— *The Women’s Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism and Bolshevism, 1860-1930* (Princeton, 1989).

Stoff, L., *Russia’s Sisters of Mercy and the Great War: More Than Binding Men’s Wounds* (Lawrence, 2015).

Surkis, J., *Sexing the Citizen: Modernity and Masculinity in France, 1870-1920* (Ithaca and London, 2006).

Taithe, B., *Defeated Flesh: Medicine, Welfare and Warfare in the Making of Modern France* (Lanham, 1999).

Tanaka, Y., *Japan’s Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution During World War II and the US Occupation* (London and New York, 2003).

Tanny, J., *City of Rogues and Schnorrers: Russia’s Jews and the Myth of Old Odessa* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2011).

Tamm, J., (ed). *Entsüklopeedia Tallinn 1. A-M* (Tallinn, 2004).

Thatcher, I. D., ‘Late Imperial Urban Workers’ in I. D. Thatcher (ed). *Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 101-119.

Thurston, R. W., ‘Police and People in Moscow, 1906-1914’, *Russian Review*, 39:3 (1980), pp. 320-338.

Tikhonov, B. V., *Pereseleniia v Rossii vo Vtoroi Polovine XIX Veka* (Moscow, 1978).

Timm, A. F., ‘Sex with a Purpose: Prostitution, Venereal Disease and Militarized Masculinity in the Third Reich’ in D. Herzog (ed). *Sexuality and German Fascism* (New York, 2005), pp. 223-255.

Tsvetkov, M. A., *Izmenenie Lesistosti Evropeiskoi Rossii s Kontsa XVII Stoletiia po 1914 god* (Moscow, 1957).

Tugan-Baranovsky, M. I., *The Russian Factory in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. A. Levin and C. S. Levin, 3rd edn (Homewood, 1970).

Urlanis, B. Ts. *Voiny i Narodonaselenie Evropy* (Moscow, 1960).

Valkova, O., 'The Conquest of Science: Women and Science in Russia, 1860-1940', *Osiris*, 23 (2008), pp. 136-165.

Vejas, G. L., *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge, 2004).

Verner, A., 'Discursive Strategies in the 1905 Revolution: Peasant Petitions from Vladimir Province', *Russian Review*, 54:1 (1995), pp. 65-90.

Volkova, O. A., 'Deiatel'nost' Zhenskikh Politicheskikh Organizatsii Sankt-Peterburga v Gody Pervoi Rossiiskoi Revoliutsii, *Vestnik Polesskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta: Seriya Obshchestvennykh i Gumanitarnykh Nayk*, 1 (2011), pp. 8-12.

von Geldern, J., 'Life in Between: Migration and Popular Culture in Late Imperial Russia', *Russian Review*, 55:3 (1996), pp. 365-383.

Waldron, P., "'A Sad and Heart-Rending Landscape": Summer 1914 and the Politics of Russia's Wounded', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 94:4 (2016), pp. 634-659.

——— 'Russia's Finances and 1905' in F. Fischer von Weikersthal, F. Grüner, S. Hohler, F. Schedewie and R. Utz (eds), *The Russian Revolution of 1905 in Transcultural Perspective: Identities, Peripheries and the Flow of Ideas* (Bloomington, 2013), pp. 311-324.

——— 'Health and Hospitals in Russia During World War I' in C. Bonfield, J. Reinartz and T. Huguet-Termes (eds), *Hospitals and Communities, 1100-1960* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 363-386.

——— *Governing Tsarist Russia* (Basingstoke, 2007).

Walkowitz, J., *Prostitution in Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge, 1980).

Walkowitz, J. R., and Walkowitz, D. J., "'We are Not Beasts of the Field": Prostitution and the Poor in Plymouth and Southampton Under the Contagious Diseases Acts', *Feminist Studies*, 1:3-4 (1973), pp. 73-106.

Walther, D. J., *Sex and Control: Venereal Disease, Colonial Physicians and Indigenous Agency in German Colonialism, 1884-1914* (New York and Oxford, 2015).

Weeks, T. R., 'Religion, Nationality or Politics: Catholicism in the Russian Empire, 1863-1905', *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 2 (2011), pp. 52-59.

——— 'Russification: Word and Practice, 1863-1914', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 148:2 (2004), pp. 471-489.

Weinberg, R., *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa: Blood on the Steps* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1993).

Weissman, N., 'Regular Police in Tsarist Russia, 1900-1914', *Russian Review*, 44:1 (1985), pp. 45-68.

Westwood, J. N., *A History of the Russian Railways* (London, 1964).

Wildman, A., *The End of the Russian Imperial Army: the Old Army and the Soldiers' Revolt (March-April 1917)* (Princeton, 1980).

Wingfield, N. W., 'The Enemy Within: Regulating Prostitution and Controlling Venereal Disease in Cisleithanian Austria During the Great War', *Central European History*, 46:3 (2013), pp. 568-598.

——— 'Destination: Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Constantinople: "White Slavers" in Late Imperial Austria', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 20:2 (2011), pp. 291-311.

Wolff, D., 'Intelligence Intermediaries: the Competition for Chinese Spies' in J. W. Steinberg, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick Van der Oye, D. Wolff and S. Yokote (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective, World War Zero*, vol. 1 (Leiden and Boston, 2005), pp. 305-332.

Worobec, C. D., 'Masculinity in Late-Imperial Russian Peasant Society' in B. Evans Clements, R. Friedman and D. Healey (eds), *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 76-93.

Yoshifuru, T., 'Unsuccessful National Unity: the Russian Home Front in 1904' in D. Wolff, S. G. Marks, B. W. Menning, D. Schimmelpennick van der Oye, J. W. Steinberg and Y. Shinji (eds), *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, vol. 2 (Leiden, 2007), pp. 325-356.

Zav'ialov, A. I., Umts, S. R., Morrison, A. V., and Gaidarov, A. E., 'Sifilis v Russkoi Armii (s XVIII po Nachalo XX Stoletiiia)', *Saratovskii Nauchno-Meditsinskii Zhurnal*, 9:3 (2013), pp. 556-561.

Zebroski, R., 'The Battleship *Potemkin* and its Discontents, 1905' in C. Bell and B. Elleman (eds), *Naval Mutinies of the Twentieth Century: an International Perspective* (London, 2003), pp. 7-25.