

The Temperance Movement: Alcohol and Politics in fin-de-siècle Russia

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ABSTRACT

This MA thesis is devoted to the history of the temperance movement in Russia in the late 19th-early 20th centuries. The focus of the work is made on a comparative study of religious temperance organizations in the imperial capital and the provincial city of Kazan. This center-periphery investigation contributes to the study of social and political dynamics in the imperial space, and aims at understanding the goals, rhetoric, the activities of local social organizations and the public sphere. As I argue here, the temperance movement was politicized in the Russian empire and its actors used a discourse about sobriety to assert their own interests and reform agendas.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANTS – Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society

KTS – Kazan Temperance Society

NART - Natsional'nyj Arhiv Respubliki Tatarstan (National Archive of the Republic of Tatarstan)

RGIA - Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Istoricheskij Arhiv (Russian National Historical Archive)

ROC – Russian Orthodox Church

WCTU - Woman's Christian Temperance Union

Archival materials:

- 1) f. – fund (*fond*),
- 2) r. – register (*opis'*)
- 3) u. - storage unit (*edinitsa khranenia*)
- 4) b.s. – back side of the document (*obratnaja storona*).

INTRODUCTION

Background & Problem Statement

The 19th century witnessed the rise of various reformist movements at both international and local levels, such as clean-living crusades, public health campaigns, and temperance activism.¹ In the period of 1885-1913, 14 international anti-alcohol conferences were held in Europe, raising a wide variety of questions on degeneracy, morality, sexual life, and political rights. The alcohol problem was framed within broader discussions on individual health being a collective concern on the one hand, and the role of the state in national welfare, on the other. At the international level, the medical treatment of alcoholism was given priority over traditional moral discourse.² Following a constructivist approach proposed by sociologists Peter Conrad and Joseph Schneider, it can be stated that both medicalization and scientification of alcoholism gradually transformed the designations of deviant drinking from sin to sickness.³ Nevertheless, this transformation was not so unambiguous in Russia where the state and the Orthodox Church traditionally played a great role in regulating social and political life.

Anti-alcoholic movements in the United States (WCTU's international activities, for example) and in various European countries undoubtedly influenced and inspired 'the invention' of alcoholism as a social problem in the Russian empire. As scholar of American temperance movement, Joseph Gusfield, puts it, "[n]aming a condition a 'social problem' frames a phenomena as pathological, troublesome behavior".⁴ Industrialization and

¹ An interesting observation on the 'cycles' of reformist movements in: Ruth Clifford Engs, *Clean Living Movements: American Cycles of Health Reform* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2000)

² Johan Edman, "Temperance and Modernity: Alcohol Consumption as a Collective Problem, 1885-1913," *Journal of Social History*, 49, no. 1 (2015): 20-52

³ Peter Conrad and Joseph W. Schneider, *Deviance and Medicalization: from Badness to Sickness* (St. Louis, Missouri, 1980), xi

⁴ Joseph R. Gusfield, *Contested Meanings. The Construction of Alcohol Problems* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 17

modernization entailed the transformation of the way of life from traditional to modern, and they were perceived as a cause of social deviations and degeneration. Various social groups such as parish priests, physicians and even state officials conceptualized alcoholism as a threat to the health of the social organism. The alcohol problem was the channel through which the actors of the temperance movement tried to influence society, and to promote their own reform agendas. The activists harnessed social problems as a way to assert their autonomy and social significance.

Relevance & Focus of the Study

This work examines the temperance movement in the late Russian Empire and approaches it as a socially significant practice aimed at transforming society. I focus on the comparative analysis of Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society in St. Petersburg and the Kazan Temperance Society in the provincial city of Kazan - two of the largest temperance organizations at the time. This center-periphery comparison will reveal important different dynamics in capital (social and workers) and Kazan (religious). The purpose of the comparative analysis is not to narrate a story of rivalry or suppression but considers two different scenarios for the development of anti-alcohol movements. This research is the part of the so-called provincial studies turn that by some scholars was defined as “a new and promising direction in Russian scholarship that studies the provinces (*provintsiia*) both as an object of ideological reflection and a distinctive semiosphere producing its own discourses and texts.”⁵ Similarly, the part of this thesis on the Kazan Temperance Society seeks to understand the functioning of the provincial organization in the Kazan urban landscape, and to reconstruct its narratives in relation to various social and ethnic groups.

⁵ Otto Boele, “Review of Vladimir Abashev’s *Perm' kak tekst*,” in *Slavic Review*, 60, No. 4 (2001): 891

Since the societies under investigation were religious,⁶ this comparison will provide a deeper understanding of the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the movement, its relationship with the authorities, as well as with civilian temperance activists. In this thesis, I will demonstrate that both religious (moral) and medical arguments were used by the temperance organizations to legitimize certain policies and political agendas and show that sobriety discourse was highly politicized in the late Russian Empire. Finally, I will argue that religion, politics, and medicine came together in the service of sobriety lobbied by the temperance organizations.

The notions of the ‘public sphere’ and ‘civil society’ in relation to the tsarist Russia

Social and political life in late imperial Russia is often presented as the “immature” public sphere in the all-powerful autocratic state. Nevertheless, a number of scholars point out that there was a nascent public engagement functioned within to the state. Historians have developed the concept of “*obshchestvennost*” as an alternative to the phenomenon of the public sphere or civil society in the West, but with specific cultural connotations. Another important issue is the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church (its leaders, priests, parishioners) in social life. One of the main question that emerges is whether it possible to single out voluntary church organizations as separate actors of the *obshchestvennost*?

Jürgen Habermas, in his classic work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), describes public sphere as a field of negotiation and communication between individuals and groups who represent conflicting interests. These diverse constituencies had a certain weight and acquire social, economic and/or political resources to mediate between a

⁶ The Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society was opened by the priest Alexander Rozhdestvensky at the church, the Kazan temperance society was in close contact with the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church and disseminated ultra-conservative Orthodox rhetoric.

private individual and the government, or to counter the latter's initiatives.⁷ In sociological and historical accounts, the emergence and rise of the public sphere(s) in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries depended on the development of new social groups (middle class, *Bürgertum*), the spread of public opinion within new media, and the localization of individuals in public places - cafes, salons, or clubs.⁸ Habermas builds his investigation on a comparative analysis of public realms, and the circumstances that determined its formation in Germany, France, and the UK. In a similar vein, the idea of representation within functioning institutions in a welfare state has become central to the conceptualization of civil society and in democratic theory as such.⁹

The dissolution of the Soviet Union triggered a quest for researching civil society in the former socialist countries. The words of Antonio Gramsci that “[i]n Russia the state was everything, civil society was primordial and gelatinous,”¹⁰ became for many scholars the starting point for exploring the public sphere in Russia. By analogy with the long history of this phenomenon in the West, scholars traced the emergence of civil society and the public sphere in other countries and regions. Among social historians of the late Russian empire, there are two opposite points of view: some scholars, such as Joseph Bradley, are convinced about the existence of civil society in the pre-revolutionary period;¹¹ others, like Lutz Häfner, do not

⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), 27

⁸ Ibid., Pp. 27-31

⁹ For comparison, one can look at the definition of civil society proposed by Ernst Gellner:

Civil Society is that set of diverse non-governmental institutions which is strong enough to counterbalance the state and, while not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of the peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent it from dominating and atomizing the rest of society.

Ernst Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals* URL: <http://gellnerpage.tripod.com/liberty.html> (Access Date: January 01, 2018)

¹⁰ Cited in: Adele Lindenmeyr, “Primordial and Gelatinous:” Civil Society in Imperial Russia,” in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 12, 3 (Summer 2011): 705–20

¹¹ Joseph Bradley, *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia: Science, Patriotism, and Civil Society* (Cambridge, MA, 2009)

agree with such far-reaching conclusions of historians who “assume the existence [of civil society] a priori” and “evaluate every effort of society toward emancipation from state tutelage as a sign of civil society.”¹² In my opinion, both visions are problematic. The first, seeking to discover a viable public sphere under the tsarist regime, blindly adopts foreign notions and applies them to Russian reality without terminological criticism. This exercise seems to be problematic because the concept of civil society is incapable of embracing the historical peculiarities of the public realm in Russia and remains alien to its initial development. Another extreme is to emphasize the lack of civic engagement in such an autocratic state as imperial Russia, or to indicate its failure in competition with the state. As the sociologist Vadim Volkov points out, “[t]he problem is that the concept of civil society as *grazhdanskoe obshchestvo* when applied to the Russian political context turns near empty and devoid of history behind it. However, [...] this is not the problem of applicability, but rather that of cross-cultural translation.”¹³

In contrast to existing approaches, the history of concepts (*Begriffsgeschichte*) suggests studying and apply the vocabulary that the contemporaries used for understanding social and political processes in the Russian empire. A number of scholars propose the concept of *obshchestvennost'* as an alternative to the public sphere to describe “an advanced and educated part of society that thinks with categories of public welfare and progress.”¹⁴ The word *obshchestvennost'*, which originated from *obshchestvo* (society), has two main connotations: “1) a certain group of people sharing a set of civic virtues’ or ‘a “progressive” part of society’;

¹² Bianka Pietrov-Ennker (Pietrow-Ennker) and Galina Ulrianova, eds., *Grazhdanskaia identichnost' i sfera grazhdanskoi deiatelnosti v Rossiiskoi imperii: Vtoraia polovina XIX–nachalo XX veka* [Civic Identity and the Sphere of Civic Activity in the Russian Empire in the Second Half of the 19th and the Beginning of the 20th Centuries] (Moscow: Rosspen, 2007), 43; 46

¹³ Vadim Volkov, “Obshchestvennost': Russia's Lost Concept of Civil Society,” in *Civil Society in the European North*. K. Heikkinen and E. Zdravomyslova, eds. (St. Petersburg, FL: Center for Independent Social Research, 1996)

¹⁴ Yasuhiro Matsui, ed., “Introduction,” in *Obshchestvennost' and Civil Society in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia. Interface between state and Society* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 2

2) an active social agency, socially-active groups of people.”¹⁵ Based on these definitions, the scholar Yasuhiro Matsui concludes that *obshchestvennost*’ “is a social or public identity constructed through discursive and practical activities, and distinguished from the state, society in general and narod.”¹⁶ Interestingly, historians who deal with this phenomenon often understand the concept not as an imagined space of publicity, but as a distinct entity of people who claimed their opposition to the state, or were close, for example, to the *intelligentsiia*. In my opinion, *obshchestvennost*’ should be understood not only as “an imagined collective agent” or as a “discursive referent” of the government, but rather as a public platform for various activists. In addition, this notion implied the formation of a special kind of social and political identity and the process of self-organization.

Joseph Bradley, the prominent scholar of the civil society in late imperial Russia, investigates public initiatives within the study of societies, clubs, and voluntary associations that flourished in the late imperial period and existed separately from the state. This approach is consistent with Habermas’ conclusions that the public sphere is created through the segmentation of society and its localization in clubs, salons, and cafes. The societies, which often issued their own newspapers and had hierarchies and income, were largely independent and created institutions for social interaction. Bradley argues that:

[a] study of associations highlights the relationship between state and society in authoritarian regimes where civil society is most vigorously contested. Because authoritarian regimes close the channels of representative politics and make it difficult for their subjects to act freely in concert, associations demonstrate the potential for the self-organization of society.¹⁷

The post-emancipation era was a period of intensive formation of voluntary organizations and local societies. Throughout the Russian Empire, there were many professional and amateur

¹⁵ Ibid., 1-2

¹⁶ Ibid., 2

¹⁷ Bradley, *Voluntary Associations*, 1

scientific associations, educational and charitable organizations, sports and military clubs, salons, societies to promote the healthy lifestyle, societies of art lovers and others.¹⁸ By the beginning of the 20th century, more than 10,000 voluntary associations existed in Russia.¹⁹ Students of the public sphere in Russia attempted to classify these non-governmental institutions and organizations. However, religious societies are often neglected from the scope of public initiatives and are not considered as a part of *obshchestvennost'*. Therefore, this thesis pays particular attention to the role of the Orthodox Church in the social and political processes in late imperial Russia, and considers communities of laymen, religious organizations, priests congresses as an integral part of public initiative.

Historiography

As Mary Douglas points out in the preface to the *Constructive Drinking* collection, throughout the 20th century, experts and the public figures were highly concerned about alcohol-related issues. As a result, the pathology-centered discourse became prevailing in alcohol studies. Anthropologists present an alternative way of examination of alcohol consumption patterns by challenging such common assumptions as ethnic or racial predisposition to drunkenness, a direct correlation between crime and alcoholism, and other long-established narratives.²⁰ In my opinion, the cross-cultural studies of drunkenness and other anthropological approaches have great potential due to distancing from a deliberately negative attitude towards drinking practices. For this work, it is also crucial to problematize and investigate how cultural stereotypes emerged about Russian habitual drunkenness and how the alternative ideology of sobriety was forged.

¹⁸ Anastasia Tumanova, ed., *Samoorganizaciya rossijskoj obshchestvennosti v poslednej treti XVIII-nachale XX vv.* [Self-organization of the Russian obshchestvennost' in the last third of the XVIII - early XX centuries] (Moscow, 2011)

¹⁹ Bradley, *Voluntary Associations*, 1

²⁰ Mary Douglas, "A Distinctive Anthropological Perspective," in *Mary Douglas: Selected Works. Vol. 10. Constructing Drinking* (London And New York, 2010), 3

The approach elaborated by sociologist Joseph R. Gusfield, presenting the alcoholism question as a constructed social problem, is highly important for the methodology of the current work. In his monograph *Symbolic crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (1963), Gusfield demonstrates that drinking and abstinence became symbols of social status in 19th century America. Proponents of temperance presented themselves as granters of values and, through a call for moral reforms, aimed to restore or increase their social prestige. At the same time, the temperance movements cannot be classified as unambiguously conservative and aimed only at reviving traditions. Many sobriety organizations and activists advocated reforms and progressive development. Contrary to the conventional view of the movement as retroactive, its proponents used modern ways to legitimize and enhance their social status.

An interesting approach to studying temperance activism during the long 19th century is the application of feminist theory to reformist movements. Barbara Epstein, a historian and theorist of feminism, in her analysis of the American temperance movement uses the concept of proto-feminism to emphasize the opposition among female practitioners. Proto-feminist ideology was manifested through the antagonism of female 'sober' consciousness to male drinking culture. Nevertheless, the peculiarity of this movement was that it arose among 'middle class' women and was based on religiosity and Victorian morality. Another monograph, by the historian Ian Tyrrell, analyses the sobriety discourse within the case study of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the largest international women's temperance organization, which was powerful in the second half of 19th century. Investigating the ideological platform of the organization, the author identifies the semiotic conflicts that existed between the universalist agenda of the Union and the religious form of cultural imperialism that it proposed. In contrast to the American temperance movement, in Russia this discourse primarily remained a territory of male influence. This MA thesis will briefly touch

upon the topic of the image and role of women, but it will not be placed to the center of the narrative.

Alcohol and abuse studies also lay in the field of social history. The works of the historian David Christian are devoted to the alcohol consumption in the context of the history of food and drinks in Russia. In his *Social and Economic History of Food and Drink*, Christian applied Marxist theory to argue that the anti-alcohol pogroms of grog-shops by peasants in 1850s were directed not just against high prices for alcoholic beverages, but also against the exploitation of the ruling class.²¹ The more recent work by the American historian Patricia Herlihy, *The Alcoholic Empire*, is classic in the study of anti-alcohol activism in imperial Russia. Following the author, I argue here that the temperance movement was politicized and turned into an instrument of opposition to authorities.²²

With a wide corpus of literature devoted to the American temperance movement and a sufficient number of works on the European context,²³ Russia in this respect still remains *terra incognita*. Contemporary historiography on the topic is mainly focused on the economic history and the alcohol policy of the Russian state,²⁴ while the historiography of the temperance movement and anti-alcohol initiatives of particular organizations and participants is relatively

²¹ R.E.F. Smith and David Christian, *Bread and Salt. A Social and Economic History of Food and Drink in Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 1984)

²² Patricia Herlihy, *The Alcoholic Empire. Vodka and Politics in late Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 2002)

²³ Barbara Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity. Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1981); Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World. Woman's Empire: the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective 1880-1930* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Holly Fletcher, *Gender and the American Temperance Movement of the Nineteenth Century* (NY, Routledge, 2007); Irma Sulkunen, *History of the Finnish Temperance movement: Temperance as a Civic Religion* (Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1990), etc.

²⁴ The important contribution to this field: Kate Transchel, *Under the influence: working-class drinking, temperance, and cultural revolution in Russia, 1895–1932* (Pittsburgh, 2006); Irina Takala, «Veseliye Rusi». Istoriya alkogolnoy problemy v Rossii [“The Joy of Rus.” The History of the Alcohol Problem in Russia] (St. Petersburg, 2002); Andrey Nikolayev, *Russkoye pianstvo: ot traditsii k politike* [Russian Drunkenness: From Tradition to Politics] (Tol'yatti, 2007), and others.

small.²⁵ My aim is to contribute to the field by engaging a comparative investigation of two temperance organizations in late tsarist period.

The first chapter of the thesis will be devoted to the multifaceted temperance movement, its history and development in the Russian empire. This chapter sheds light on the main actors of the social phenomenon: the alcohol and temperance policy of the state, the Russian Orthodox Church and other religious groups, as well as the professional communities. In the second chapter, I will examine the St. Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society, which was turned into the All-Russian Brotherhood by the emperor in 1914 and lost its social autonomy. I will trace the trajectory of the development of the public organization to a state institution of imperial scale. I also intend to analyze the transformation of the rhetoric of the Society (Brotherhood), which was established aiming at preaching abstinence among workers, and with the outbreak of World War I shifted its rhetoric to a nation-wide audience. The third chapter will consider the history and activities of the Kazan Temperance Society. Here, the emphasis will be placed on the construction of the image of an internal enemy, which was based on ethnic and religious characteristics, undertaken by the Society and on preaching sobriety in the urban space. In the conclusion, I offer a comparative analysis of two organizations and the findings on the specifics of the temperance movement in the Russian Empire.

²⁵ See also: Laura Phillips, *Bolsheviks and the Bottle: Drink and Worker Culture in St. Petersburg, 1900-1929* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000); Page Herrlingey, *Working Souls: Russian Orthodoxy and Factory Labor in St. Petersburg, 1881-1917* (Bloomington: Slavica, 2007); McKee "Sobering up the Soul of the People: the Politics of Popular Temperance in Late Imperial Russia," in *Russian Review*, 58 (Apr. 1999): 212-233.

CHAPTER 1 – MULTIPLE SOBRIETIES: THE ACTORS AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE RUSSIAN TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

In 2010, the current Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation Vladimir Medinsky published *The Myths about Russia: Russian Drunkenness, Sloth, Roads and Fools*, in which he attacked the long-standing stereotypes about Russians and accuses foreign countries of creating these myths. One of the curious statements was the attempt to create a narrative, representing ‘*the Russian nation*’ as the one of historically non-drinking and hardworking people. In the chapter *Nonalcoholic Rus*’ the author wrote:

Drinking as such did not exist in Rus’. There was no problem - there was no fear of the problem. There was no punishment for drunkenness, and there was no cure for its consequences.²⁶

Aiming at deconstruction of the narrative of the excessive drinking, he seeks to create a positive image of Russians as a nation and to emphasize its *Sonderweg*. The romanticization of the past and the apparent anti-westernism of the book clearly correlate with historical politics and the official rhetoric of contemporary Russia. Taking Medinsky’s piece as an example, one can observe how the topics of drunkenness and sobriety have become the subject of historical and political manipulations.

In this light, the historical inquiry into the ideas and representations of drunkenness remains relevant for a deeper understanding of social dynamics and state policy-making. In this chapter I will trace how the views on the Russian habitual drunkenness have shaped, and functioned within, the public discourse in the second half of the 19th - early 20th centuries. I present the main actors of the movement - the state, the Russian Orthodox Church, and

²⁶ Vladimir R. Medinsky, *O russkom p'janstve, leni, dorogah i durakah* [About Russian drunkenness, laziness, roads and fools] (Moscow, 2010), 38

professionals, and examine their goals and rhetoric. Throughout this chapter, I will try to answer the questions of what was the sobriety program for the actors and what were advocates of sobriety really fighting for?

1.1 State Policy on Alcoholism and Temperance

According to *The Tale of Past Years*, one of the medieval chronicles of Kievan Rus, the prince Vladimir the Great choosing a state religion, renounced Islam by saying that “drinking is the joy of all Rus, we cannot exist without that pleasure”²⁷. These lines became the cornerstone of the discourse on Russian habitual drunkenness and obtained special relevance in public debates on alcoholism in the late imperial period.

The publication Ivan Pryzhov’s book *The History of Taverns in Russia in Connection with the History of Russian People* in 1868 initiated heated discussions on the state’s alcohol policy. In contrast to the traditional vision of “the joy of Rus”, Pryzhov asserted that “drunkenness did not exist in pre-Muscovite Russia, it was not a vice corroding the national organism”.²⁸ According to him, drunkenness began to spread in Russia after the return of Ivan the Terrible from the campaign to the capture of Kazan, when the tsar had commanded to establish the first royal tavern. Thus, for the historian of the second half of the 19th century the spread of taverns, and drunkenness, was due to the growing expansion of the state to collect taxes on the sale of alcohol.

Essentially, the state was the main actor and primary beneficiary of the turnover of alcohol in modern-era Russia. As the historian David Christian shows, during the long 19th century a third of the state budget of the Russian Empire was collected through the sale of alcoholic

²⁷ *Povest' vremennyh let* [The Tale of Past Years] (St Petersburg, 1996), 39

²⁸ My translation, A.S.

Ivan G. Pryzhov, *Istoriya kabakov v Rossii v svyazi s istoriej russkogo naroda* [The History of Taverns in Russia in Connection with the History of Russian People] (Kazan, 1914, 2nd ed.), 10

beverages.²⁹ By the end of the century, the state alcohol policy shifted dramatically. Following the intensification of the anti-alcohol rhetoric among different groups of the population, the state started its involvement in the fight against alcoholism.

The project of fourth state alcohol monopoly was presented at the State Council, approved by the emperor, and subsequently enacted in more than 25 provinces in 1895. The Minister of Finance, Sergei Witte, who initiated the liquor monopoly, described the process of its adoption as follows:

I must say that the alcohol monopoly was mainly aimed at the possible decrease of drinking during the period of my management and due to the covenant of the deceased Emperor Alexander III. I say 'possible' because this reduction can be achieved by mechanical, police measures and by regulation. There is no doubt that the strong overall sobriety of the people is perhaps conceivable only through the wide dissemination of culture, education, and financial wealth.³⁰

According to Witte, the main motivation in providing the governmental measures was to eradicate alcoholism. However, the situation changed significantly with the appointment of Vladimir Kokovtsov to the post of minister of finance and with the outbreak the Russo-Japanese War. As Witte argued later, Kokovstov "drew attention to the monopoly mainly from the standpoint of the fiscus to derive from this reform the most revenue." While Witte admitted that the monopoly increased the level of drunkenness among the population, he noted that "every Minister of Finance would do exactly the same."³¹

The state's next step to address the issue of public health was the establishment of guardianships of popular temperance in 1895. These governmental organizations were mainly engaged in educational activities and propagation of sobriety by cultural means. However, the ambiguous alcohol/temperance policy of the state seeking to control public health and increase

²⁹ David Christian, *Living Water: Vodka and Russian Society on the Eve of Emancipation* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1990), 386-387

³⁰ My translation. A.S.

Sergei U. Witte, "Vinnaja monopolija" [Alcohol monopoly] in *Vospominaniya. Carstvovanie Nikolaja II.* (Leningrad, 1924, Vol. 1.): 67-68 (in Russian)

³¹ Ibid., 68

the budget simultaneously, earned much public criticism. Mikhail Chelyshev, an influential temperance activist, merchant, and a member of the Third Duma, accused these pseudo-sobering measures:

The people [*narod*] cannot be kept in darkness and obscurity about the dangers of alcoholic beverages. It is a crime to deceive them and to sell them a poison, a poison for the entire population and, most importantly, for the future generation of Russia, under the state Eagle.³²

Thus, both in the press and Duma speeches state revenues from the monopoly were openly called the “drunken budget”, and the government was accused of purposefully alcoholizing people.

To sum up, state measures to control alcohol distribution in the country were counterproductive. On the one hand, the state had an incentive to benefit from the sale of alcohol. On the other, it was necessary to create new institutions responsible for the health of citizens, forming the image of a modern welfare state. The state chose an ambivalent policy and advocated for the moderate consumption of alcohol and improvement of the drinking culture instead of total temperance.

1.2 Professional Communities and the ‘Invention’ of Alcoholism as a Social Problem

At the turn of the 20th century, public health concerns at the levels of professional communities, public opinion and state institutions were extremely high. The American bacteriologist Charles-Edward Amory Winslow called this period “the great sanitary awakening,” implying the profound advance in sanitation and public health. With the increasing prestige of scientific

³² My translation. A. S.

Mikhail D. Chelyshev. *Rech'i, proiznesennye v Tret'ej Gosudarstvennoj Dume o neobhodimosti bor'by s p'janstvom i po drugim voprosam* [Speeches in the Third State Duma on the need to combat drunkenness and other issues] (St Petersburg, 1912), 668

knowledge, “public health became a societal goal and protecting health became a public activity.”³³ In many countries, public health activists and professionals positioned themselves as reformers and critics of the social system. The development of natural sciences and medicine resulted in the penetration of the scientific language and some pseudo-scientific theories (such as the theory of degeneracy which was very popular at that time) into the public discourse.

In the late Russian empire, the term *ozdorovlenie*, or rehabilitation, was eventually applied to attempts to reform the social order.³⁴ As the historian Daniel Beer demonstrates, many opposition-minded contemporaries used biomedical theories to denounce the ill-being of the existing order and stated the degradation of population that was frequently represented as a single social organism. Like many of their foreign colleagues, Russian professionals, and civil society (*obshchestvennost'*) saw themselves as reformists and nation-builders, and science was viewed as the flagship of enlightenment.³⁵

In the second half of the 19th century, medical authorities, criminologists, psychologists started to conceptualize chronic alcoholism as a disease rather than a moral failure. Doctors, physicians, lawyers and other professionals initiated publishing projects, actively opposed the ‘*alcohol problem*’ and recognized the fight against alcoholism as a “common cause” (*obshchee delo*). The norm of abstinence had become not only a matter of public morality but also of public health, for which professional communities considered themselves more responsible than the state that benefited from the alcohol sales. In Daniel Beer’s opinion, “[a]ll strata of society who were engaged in temperance activity, from the followers of Tolstoi to the Russian

³³ *A History of the Public Health System*. URL:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK218224/> (Access Date: March 04, 2018)

³⁴ Daniel Beer, *Renovating Russia: The Human Sciences and the fate of Liberal Modernity, 1880-1930* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008), 8-10

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 10-14

Orthodox Church, from Octobrist Duma deputies to the socialists, condemned the status quo. Such condemnation came unavoidably be directed at the tsarist state.”³⁶

At the beginning of the 20th century, the medicalization of drunkenness was repeatedly emphasized in a number of professional articles. The prominent neurologist and psychiatrist Vladimir M. Bekhterev described this process in Russia as follows:

a few years ago, drunkenness was not considered as a disease but as a vice, which depended on free will of the drinker. In these latter days, science radically changed its view on drunkenness, and alcoholism has been recognized as a real and serious disease, which manifests itself in physical and mental symptoms and requires special treatment. However, this medical view has been slowly spread in the real life due to the long-held social prejudice against a person who was exposed to this poison. Until now, alcoholics from the streets are being kept in prisons and for those who seek medical help, there is no place in hospitals [...].

Bekhterev, like many doctors of the time, consistently advocated the decriminalization of drunkenness and the creation of special dispensaries and sobering-up centers for alcoholics. At the Pirogov congresses, doctors often promoted the medical control over such problems as drunkenness, drug addiction, and prostitution. They also spoke in favor of strengthening *zemstvo* medicine and increasing the autonomy of medical experts. Bekhterev succeed and in 1912, on his initiative, the first Experimental Clinical Institute for Drunkenness Studies was opened in Russia with a laboratory and a hospital for addicts.³⁷

Moreover, alcoholism was also accused of being a source of many social problems associated with industrialization and urbanization. The question of habitual drunkenness also arose as a national trait and the cause of population dysfunction. Some of the doctors were supporters of the theory of population degeneration. For example, the influential physician Nikolai I. Grigoriev wrote in 1908: «every drunkard is dangerous not only for himself

³⁶ Ibid., P. 74

³⁷ Vladimir M. Bekhterev, “Voprosy alkogolizma i mery bor'by s ego razvitiem” [Alcohol issues and measures to combat its development], in *Klassiki russkoj mediciny o dejstvii alkogolja i alkogolizme*, eds. V.S. Vorob'ev (Moscow, 1988), 69

personally, but also for his offspring, he can be dangerous for the family and the whole society».³⁸ Excessive drunkenness was also associated with an increase in crime, murders, social deviations and ill-being in families. Public discourse about sobriety has also become a platform for supporters of the theory of degeneration and eugenics for expressing their views. In 1910, a Russian publisher and temperance activist Dmitriy Borodin translated a letter and an essay by the well-known Swiss psychiatrist and eugenicist August Forel. Due to the letter, Forel was personally acquainted with Borodin in the international anti-alcohol congresses in Paris and Vienna and the international congress of criminalists in St. Petersburg. In the essay, the author discussed the need for total control over the alcohol problem on the part of society and the state, advocated the opening of private sobriety societies and discussed the problem of wine monopoly, so acute for Russia those times. Forel's commitment to the ideas of eugenics was vividly present in the text. For instance, Forel believed that alcoholism threatens the death of the entire social organism and asserted that alcohol consumption is “a gangrene, which will complete the already begun degeneration of the white race.”³⁹

The temperance movement was used by intellectuals as a means for advancing reform agendas and as a source of acquiring social prestige. Many temperance advocates represented themselves as vanguards of the movement and intended to participate in social activism and modernization process. Non-religious abstinents claimed that they were fighting for a shared endeavor — the cause of people's sobriety, — and described themselves as *intelligentsia*, and thus constituted an imagined community. Nikolai I. Grigoriev asserted that the temperance movement could be successful and prosperous only if “the struggle against drunkenness will

³⁸ Nikolai I. Grigoriev, *Alkogolizm kak obshchestvennoe zlo* [Alcoholism as social evil] (St. Petersburg, 1908) 3

³⁹ Dmitriy Borodin, *Professor A. Forel' po voprosu o bor'be s p'janstvom* [Professor August Forel on the issue of fighting against drunkenness] (St. Petersburg, 1910), 2

find more supporters among intelligentsia.”⁴⁰ By this, he stressed the leading role of the intelligentsia in the cause of sobriety and the fate of the country.

Talking about the Temperance Movement, — a concept that has become firmly embedded in the academic toolkit of students of sobriety, — and has been transformed into a historiographic cliché, - one most often reproduces the narrative of the actors of this phenomenon. Indeed, the activists themselves often used the phrase “temperance movement” implying the broad and inclusive nature of the phenomenon. What then did they mean by the *trezvennicheskoe dvizhenie*? Presumably, rhetorically expanding the boundaries of the common cause to the level of social movement, teetotalers strived to legitimize it in the public eye and increase its influence and potential. Thus, for public proponents of sobriety, it was important to belong to a certain social or professional group, as well as to have a sense of the common cause.

Doctor Alexander M. Korovin was a prominent temperance figure, and the chairman of the First Moscow Temperance Society. In his report *The Movement of Sobriety in Russia* brought together rural Orthodox and urban secular societies and united them into one movement. Summing up the activities of Russian temperance organizations, he concluded with eight interesting propositions:

- 1) the recent (just 10 years-long) existence [of temperance organizations in Russia]; 2) their rapid ubiquitous expansion even in the remote corners of Siberia, where sobriety has begun to shine in the complete darkness. 3) Temperance societies are the main guiders of knowledge and moral principles, they create the new hygienic invigorating atmosphere where simple people begin to live by those aspects of their souls that otherwise would never have awakened and have not attached *narod* to universal ideals. 4) Temperance societies contribute to the destruction of those social barriers that have been inherited from the abolished (38 years ago) serfdom: people [*narod*] are accustomed to seeing the intellectual [*intelligent*] not as a ‘master’ but as a mere mortal, and therefore treat scientific truths with trust and respect. 5) Temperance societies give Russian thinking people the opportunity to get close to their people [*narod*] and study them in their everyday life. 6) The fact of the temperance societies’ development in the villages and on the initiative of commoners, with the insignificant participation of an enlightened part of society, attests to the small responsiveness of our best people to some pressing issues of their homeland. <...> 7) The

⁴⁰ Nikolai I. Grigoriev, *O russkikh obshchestvakh trezvosti i ob ih dejatel'nosti v bor'be s p'janstvom* [On Russian temperance societies and their activities to combat drunkenness] (St. Petersburg, 1894), 6.

popularity of temperance societies demonstrates how much ordinary people have accumulated an uncontrollable desire for a meaningful and ennobled existence. 8) Temperance societies are destined to leave a deep imprint in the history of Russian culture.⁴¹

Evidently, Korovin wrote his program of sobriety from the position of the intelligentsia and saw its enlightenment mission in conveying the temperance message to ordinary people. As it can be seen, the image of *narod* as dark, illiterate and drunk was a common way of depiction among representatives of temperance activists. Nevertheless, Korovin stressed the desire for rapprochement with the people and wrote that the practice of sobriety had removed social barriers between peasants and other estates (point 4), meaning that in one organization different people could be gathered, regardless of social status, united by one goal.

Many of the liberal reformers spoke in favor of popular education and the introduction of human rights and liberties. These temperance proponents also considered the extreme poverty and the poor living and working conditions as the primary reasons for people's drunkenness. Lev Dembo, an activist of the medical Commission on Alcoholism, wrote in 1913:

Nowadays an artisan is put in very ungrateful living conditions due to the increasingly developing abnormal supply and demand relations <...> Bad earnings, bad, and often disgusting living conditions, poor food, tiring routine, and completely exhausting labor that reaches up to 18 hours a day during the season, mental darkness - these are the living conditions of a significant majority of petty working people.⁴²

For many liberal thinkers with their reformist and alarmist agenda, sobriety was a symbol of modernity, which was appealing to them. Joining the abstinence camp often meant opposing the state and its policy of 'alcoholization' of the population. Thus, the temperance movement in the Russian empire became a battleground for various social groups and interests.

⁴¹ Alexander M. Korovin, "Dvizhenie trezvosti v Rossii" [The movement of sobriety in Russia] in *Dlja chego ljudi odurmanivajutsja?*, Bordanov, G., ed. URL: <https://med.wikireading.ru/26461> (Access date: 27 May, 2018).

⁴² Lev Dembo, *Ocherk deyatel'nosti komissii po voprosu ob alkogolizme za 15 let, 1898-1913*. [The outline of the Commission's on the issue of alcoholism activities for 15 years, 1898-1913] (St Petersburg, 1913), 45-47.

1.3 In the Name of God and Sobriety: Russian Orthodox Church and Religious Groups in the Fight against Drunkenness

The leading role in the temperance movement belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church: its individual activists, parish societies and institutions. Local temperance organizations began to appear in Russia predominantly in rural areas in the second half of the 19th century. One of the first societies was established in 1882 at the parish school in the village of Tatevo (Smolensk province) by the teacher Sergey A. Rachinskiy and local priests. The procedure for joining the organization consisted of solemnly uttering the oath of sobriety that entitled the membership to a year. Over 8 years the number of its members increased from 70 to about 1000. The example of Tatevo is indicative, but not exclusive. At the turn of the century, a large number of organizations were rapidly blossoming in various cities and villages. According to the historian Alexander Afanasyev, by 1911 already 1873 temperance organizations functioned in the Russian empire (without Poland and Finland), with more than half a million members. 95% of the societies were religious and only 5% were secular.⁴³

It was important for the ROC to demonstrate the primacy and the historical role in the “solemn duty of sobriety.” At the first years of 20th century, the Holy Synod issued a document emphasizing the active involvement of clergy in the fight against alcoholism:

as early as the fifties of the last century, with the existence of the farming system, the Holy Synod blessed the clergy with an example of personal sober life and preaching about the benefits of temperance to promote the good resolve of some urban and rural societies to abstain from wine.⁴⁴

Alternatively, the historian Arthur McKee notes that the ROC temperance campaign began in 1889, when the Chief Procurator Konstantin Pobedonostsev again called upon the parish

⁴³ Alexander Afanasyev, *Trezvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v period mirnogo razvitiya. 1907 - 1914 gody: opyt ozdorovleniya obschestva* [The temperance movement in Russia during the period of peaceful development. 1907 - 1914: the experience of improving the society] (Tomsk, 2007), 41-42.

⁴⁴ RGIA, f. 797, r. 80, u. 141a, Pp. 3a.

priesthood “to enter into an unceasing struggle with drunkenness.”⁴⁵ Undoubtedly, such close attention of the church hierarchs towards the ideology of sobriety signaled that the latter has already become an essential part of public discourse. As I argue here that the “inner mission” of the Church against drunkenness was an answer to long-standing challenges and should be considered in a broader socio-political context.

Social and political processes at the turn of the 20th century influenced the Church and accelerated the clash of the Orthodox Church and ‘modernity’.⁴⁶ The missionary work changed the direction along with the urbanization and industrialization. A threat to Orthodoxy was seen now in radical intellectuals, who predominantly criticized the official church, and in the working class, among whom atheism was widespread. The increase in church press circulation, including brochures for the common people, and the expansion of church societies and brotherhoods, should have contributed to proselytize “in the Word to illiterate peasants, freethinking nobles, and dissenting schismatics.”⁴⁷ One of the tools of preaching among various social groups was the sobering missionary work.

The proliferation of the temperance societies and strengthening of the anti-alcohol rhetoric of the Church was the response to the emergence of another significant force in the temperance arena – the movement of the ex-peasant from Samara, Ivan A. Churikov or *bratets Ivanushka*. His followers, who called themselves *brattsy churikovtsy*, numbered about a hundred thousand people by the 1910s, and were condemned by the official church. Arthur McKee believes that the emergence of this phenomena demonstrates that “the Church was

⁴⁵ Arthur W. McKee, “Sobering up the Soul of the People: the Politics of Popular Temperance in Late Imperial Russia,” in *Russian Review*, No. 58 (1999): 223.

⁴⁶ Vera Shevtsova, *Pravoslavie v Rossii nakanune 1917 goda* [Orthodoxy in Russia on the eve of 1917] (St. Petersburg, 2010), 15.

⁴⁷ Gregory Freeze, *The Parish Clergy in Nineteenth-Century Russia: Crisis, Reform, Counter-Reform* (Princeton, 1983), xix.

unable to feed the spiritual hunger of thousands of its members.”⁴⁸ These times, charismatic church leaders who appealed to *narod*’s sobering. Canonized in 1990 “nationwide father” (*vsenarodnyi batyushka*) John of Kronstadt (*Ioann Kronshtadtskiy*) was an example of such a person.

John of Kronstadt energetically participated in anti-alcohol activities and was an honorary member of the Kazan Temperance Society. In addition, he was the organizer of the famous House of Diligence, which was engaged in the help and organization of life of the lower strata of the population. The dialogic nature of this approach was manifested in intercession into socially unprotected strata of the population, thereby consolidating ‘popular love’. Encouraging the creation of sobriety societies is also an important sign of the Church's search for a way of communicating with the public.

Thus, the main actors of the temperance movement in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries were the state, the Church and religious groups, as well as professional associations. Each of the participants was forced to declare a monopoly on the anti-alcoholic discourse and practices, and also to use them in their own interests. In the next two chapters, I will examine in more detail and compare the activities, self-positioning and ideology of the two religious sobriety societies - in St. Petersburg and Kazan.

⁴⁸ McKee, *Sobering up*, 217.

CHAPTER 2 - SOBERING UP THE NATION: HISTORY AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ALEXANDER NEVSKY TEMPERANCE SOCIETY IN ST. PETERSBURG

2.1 Alcohol and the City

At the turn of the century St. Petersburg was the place of social and ethnic contrasts. Social diversification was due to the modernization and urbanization processes, as well as the immigration of peasantry (*otkhodniki*) who were seeking for temporary employment. The influx of low-skilled work force has gradually changed the landscape and the fabric of the capital; 68.6% of them in 1910 were recent peasants. For half a century urban population has grown by more than a million: from 490,808 people in 1856 to 1,566,000 people 1910.⁴⁹ According to data for 1894, the inhabitants of the working quarters (like Alexandro-Nevskaya, Narvskaya, Vyborgskaya parts of the city) lived in the most cramped conditions - here there were 2.5-3 residents per one room of housing, while the population density in the city average was about 1.6 people in a room.⁵⁰ These social processes shifted the perception of the urban space and shaped the mental map of St. Petersburg. The neighborhoods that developed on the southern outskirts of the city around factories and plants became associated with poverty, crime, unsanitary conditions and social unrest. One of such acknowledged ‘sins’ of the urban poor was, of course, alcoholism. As the historian Kate Transchel states,

lower-class Russians lent substance to upper-class fears of chaos and anarchy resulting from drunkenness. The romantic images of the happy-go-lucky muzhik began to flock to fade to squalid and overcrowded settlements and as the working class began to resemble more ominous unwashed masses of industrial Europe – criminal, drunk, and debauched.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Michael E. Hamm, *The City in late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, 1986), 66.

⁵⁰ *Statisticheskoy ocherk Sankt-Peterburga. Plany goroda i teatrov* [Statistical essay of St. Petersburg Plans of the city with theatres] (St. Petersburg, 1894), 15.

⁵¹ Transchel, *Under the influence*, 33.

Activists of the Orthodox Church, gradually losing its status alongside the strengthening of the labor movement, rushed headlong into fighting this ‘vice’ of contemporary society.

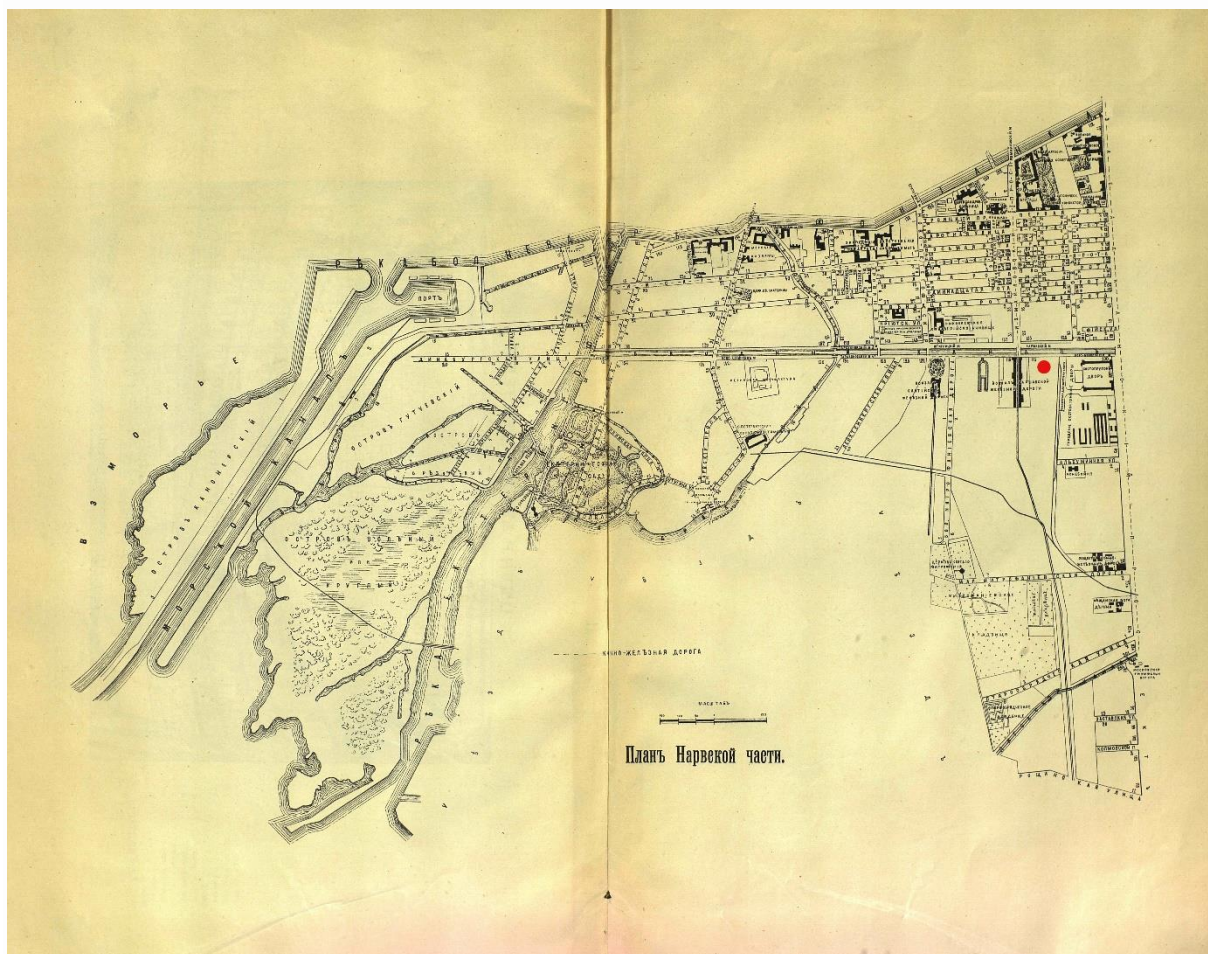


Figure 1. The Church of the Resurrection of Christ (a red spot) on the map of the Narvskaya district of St. Petersburg, late 19th century⁵²

2.2 The Sobering Mission among Workers

The opening of the Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society (the ANTS) at the Church of the Resurrection of Christ (“Varshavka”, Obvodny Channel, 116) was a significant social phenomenon in turn-of-the-century St. Petersburg. The newly opened temperance organization was a branch of the famous Society for the Propagation of Religious and Ethical Education⁵³

⁵² The picture is taken from the book *Statisticheskoy ocherk*. A red spot was made above.

⁵³ Original and full name of the Society: *Obshchestvo rasprostraneniya religiozno-nravstvennogo prosveshcheniya v duhe Pravoslavnoy tserkvi*.

which (along with other ecclesiastical entities) was energetically involved in educational and charitable activities. The religious society was located in the industrial zone on the outskirts of the capital and aimed at “affirming and spreading in all layers of the Russian people the true concepts of Orthodox faith and piety through spiritual conversations, reading and publishing of literature.”⁵⁴

The Society was founded in 1898 by the priest Alexander Rozhdestvensky (1872-1905). As it is shown on the Figure 1, the Church of the Resurrection of Christ was located in the industrial zone, as the Society planned to deploy church-educational activities among the working population. The reason for the foundation of this organization was the necessity of preaching a moderate and religious way of life. Father Alexander Rozhdestvenskiy was metaphorically called an apostle of sobriety, and in 1916 essay on the history of the Society was characterized as follows:

Who among the temperance activists did not pronounce with reverence the name of the founder of this society, of Father Alexander Vasilyevich Rozhdestvenskiy? The deceased deeply believed in the great future of the Russian people, whom he loved with all his heart, believed in its ability for a high spiritual uplift and in the possibility of a spiritual revival of the unfortunate victims of factory life, which the capital's life ruined instead of feeding and releasing to their native villages, where they are impatiently awaited by a hungry and sick families. Father Alexander gave himself completely to the service of the people. “There, he said - there, where there are many smoking pipes ... There the rumbling of wheels and the clang of metal drowns the spiritual essence of man, they blot out the image of God ... There living people are needed ... There are many people's grief ... There are people-stones ... We will work there!”⁵⁵

From the passage cited above it can be seen that the priest perceived sobriety as a path to ‘the spiritual recovery’ of the working masses, whom he considered to be fallen in the very mode of their lifestyle. The smoking factory pipes were seen by him as a place that decomposes a person physically and morally.

⁵⁴ *Otchet o dejatel'nosti Obshhestva rasprostraneniya religiozno-nravstvennogo prosveshheniya za 1915 god* [Report on the activities of the Society for the Propagation of Religious and Moral Enlightenment in 1915] (Prague, 1916), 3.

⁵⁵ *K istorii Vserossijskogo Aleksandro-Nevskogo Bratstva trezvosti* [To the history of the All-Russian Alexander Nevsky Temperance Brotherhood] (Petrograd, 1916), 7-8.

The example of the ANTS vividly shows that the religious temperance activists strived to influence the stratum of the population they thought to be the most distant from religious life, and to restore the authority of the priesthood and the Orthodox Church. Regarding this issue, Kate Transchel argues that “[v]iewing drunkenness as a vice that separated the individual from God, Rozhdestvenskiy saw the creation of the temperance society a way to strengthen the Church’s social role and to reinvigorate pastoral practice”.⁵⁶

After the death of Rozhdestvensky in 1905, the ANTS was led by his successor, Pyotr Alekseevich Mirtov (1871-1925), who made a huge contribution to the development of ideas and practices of the temperance movement, not only in St. Petersburg but throughout the empire. Archpriest Mirtov was an extraordinary person: a candidate of theology, he was also a member of the Council of the Society for the Propagation of Religious and Ethical Education, a member of the Commission under the Society for the Preservation of Public Health, and a member of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society.⁵⁷ Under his editorship, a number of Orthodox and temperance journals were published including *Otdyh Hristianina* (*Relaxation of a Christian*), *Trezvaja Zhizn'* (*Sober Life*), *Voskresnyj Blagovest* (*Sunday Evangelism*).

The ANTS founders closely linked temperance with religious missionary work. Limiting alcohol consumption had never been the ultimate goal of religious temperance ideologists; the true value of sobriety was spiritual cleansing, rebirth, and self-improvement. In the magazine *Otdyh Hristianina*, the idea of spiritual trepidation was formulated: “From physical abstinence, rise to spiritual one, from the sobriety of the body, as its healthy state, go to the sobriety of the spirit.”⁵⁸ In principle, sobriety was an act of self-discipline of not only physical but also moral and spiritual matter. However, unlike Protestant teetotalers in America and European countries,

⁵⁶ Transchel, *Under the influence*, 53-54.

⁵⁷ Original Name: Imperatorskoe Pravoslavnoe Palestinskoe Obshchestvo

⁵⁸“Obet trezvosti” [Vow of sobriety], in *Otdyh Khristianina*, No 2 (1902): 5-6.

Russian temperance activists did not pay so much attention to the idea of free will and self-control. The key for the ANTS practitioners and Mirtov in particular was to enhance the status of pastoral work. It was the mission of the shepherd (*pastyr'*), that is, the Orthodox priest, to conduct the lost sheep to God, to the righteous life and to sobriety as its integral part. It is noteworthy that the pastors' vocabulary was loaded with medical and biological terms to explain their special mission in the contemporary society. For example, Mirtov argued that the Orthodox Church was "especially reflexive to the diseases that society suffers from" and "is able to cure them".⁵⁹ Asserting the leading role of a priest in moral education and spiritual and physical sobriety, he also formulated the principle of "the pastor's solicitude about the soul" which assumes "a duty that is imperatively imposed on each pastor in order to take into account the real needs of the current historical moment."⁶⁰ The founders of the ANTS felt the historical need for preaching sobriety among the poor population of St. Petersburg and realized this as a missionary duty of the Orthodox Church. Thus, the temperance mission had a much more global goal than controlling and eliminating addictive drinking.

During the Revolution of 1905, "the working question" provoked heated discussions among the teetotalers, and anti-revolutionary rhetoric intensified in the pages of the Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society editions. Between 1905-1908, a considerable number of publications appeared in the journal *Trezvaya Zhizn'* devoted to the topic of the labor movement and the Revolution bearing such names as *To the Workers*, *The Working Issue*, *Christianity and Socialism*, and *Drunkenness and Strikes*. One of the first publications during this period was about the relationships between workers, the government and the Church. According to the

⁵⁹ Pyotr A. Mirtov, *Pastyrskaja sovest' pred voprosom o bor'be s alkogolizmom* [Pastoral conscience and the question of the fight against alcoholism] (St. Petersburg, 1912), 4.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

author, Christian doctrine and missionary activity must actively resist anarchy, which proceeds from the disobedience to the government. Developing a scenario of loyalty, the author argued:

Which obligations does the Church impose on workers? I will not talk about thrift, aspiration for social order, serviceability in work. I will not talk about family responsibilities either. There is now a duty, of which time itself is reminiscent. This is obedience to the authorities. I decide to speak about this duty in the interests of the workers themselves, because where there is no power, there is no freedom ... Where the power falls, there is either an unlimited or tyrannical arbitrariness accompanied by the slavery of workers. The current “freedom fighters” are enslaved by workers' parties or unions, which the workers use as an instrument of fighting the government.⁶¹

In their rhetoric, the temperance activists put together the Revolution, chaos and alcoholism. During the revolutionary events of the early 20th century, they demonstrated absolute loyalty to the state. In the programmatic publication called *Worker! Be yourself a friend, and not an enemy*, the author referred to a hypothetical representative of the working class and offered him a simple and universal answer to the questions:

Worker!

1. Who deceives you? 2. Who is ruining your health? 3. Who is emptying your pocket? 4. Who spoils your children? 5. Who reduces your work capacity? 6. Who leads you to disability? 7. Who extends the working day? 8. Who reduces the wages?

Vodka! If the worker is sober, educated, and not exhausted, the working day is short. In the USA, for 8 working hours a worker manages to earn as much as our worker cannot accomplish in 12 hours. But the capitalist does not press him there, does not appoint unnecessary hours. [Worker!] Do not waste your energy for drunkenness – and you will work more intelligently, will have more time to study, but skillful work and training will always reduce the working day.⁶²

The strikes and uprisings of the First Russian Revolution enhanced the fear of the parish clergy over the working masses. At the same time, vodka became a participant in revolutionary events and was demonized and personified.

⁶¹ “Rabochii vopros” [The Workers’ Question] In *Trezvaja Zhizn’*, No. 12 (1905): 99.

⁶² “Rabochij! Stan' sam sebe drugom, a ne vragom!,” [Worker! Be yourself a friend, and not an enemy], in *Trezvaja zhizn’*, No. 11, (1908): 46.

In my opinion, the temperance movement was politicized, and its participants reacted to the most important state events. One author commented on the adoption of the Manifesto on the Improvement of the State Order in 1905:

The manifesto of October 17, which turned the Russian inhabitants into Russian citizens, made it possible to consolidate in societies and unions. Like mushrooms after the rain, [political] parties began to appear one by one. But you cannot find one party now - this is the Party of People's Sobriety ... Meanwhile, this party is necessary, wine is a universal enemy, with whom each and every one must fight without distinction. We need little: now in Russia there are a lot of temperance societies, it is necessary to knock them into one "All-Russian Union of Sobriety Societies".

This can be seen as an application for political representation and an intention to expand the space of communication on socially important issues through various channels. Such a channel, according to the author of the article, should be the Party of People's Sobriety. Through participation in public and political life, sobriety propagandists seek to become a significant force in the imperial space.

2.3 The Women's Question

Abroad, especially in the United States, the temperance movement gave voice to women who opposed "the dominance of drunken male culture." As the historian Ruth Engs argues, "[t]he women's rights movement was intimately entwined with temperance and health-reform agitation."⁶³ Proto-feminist activism was directed against "drunken husbands, ill health, and tight corsets." For middle-class women, the temperance organizations functioned as women's clubs, exempting them from domestic routine and submission to their husbands. Thus, sobriety served as a platform for women's struggle for political rights and freedoms. American temperance activists sympathized with abolition of slavery in the South, considering it as the metaphor of their own enslavement and dependent state. One of most influential temperance organization of the 19th century was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Its activists

⁶³ Engs, *Clean Living Movements*, 46.

developed the ideas of abstinence, fought for the emancipation of women and at the same time shared the strict Victorian morality. The organization engaged in political lobbying for prohibition and energetically developed international activities.⁶⁴

Interestingly, Russian teetotalers were familiar with the activities of the Union and even translated some of its works. Although radical feminist ideas did not take root on Russian soil, their traces are sometimes found in the publications of the ANTS. In 1905, *Trezvaja Zhizn'* published an article that was devoted to the woman's "conscious struggle" against male drunkenness. The language of the article was reminiscent of the Marxist vocabulary:

In the struggle of women with alcoholism, Russia is the most backward country. The conscious attitude of Russian women in this struggle was expressed by very rare protests against drunkenness <...>.⁶⁵

And further, the author included educated women in the common cause of sobriety:

A Russian woman of an intelligent class has enough independence, enough taste for social activities, so that we wish to see her into a serious struggle with alcoholism, with its wide enlightening and moralizing impact.⁶⁶

In 1908, the editors of the magazine once again brought American teetotalers as an example to ones in Russia and expressed the hope that they would soon be found only among victims, but also the fighters:

Only the Russian land did not present women as fighters for sobriety. Meanwhile, a Russian woman is a great woman with a mighty spirit, magnanimous heart and strong will.⁶⁷

The authors conveyed an appeal not *to* a woman herself but rather *for* a woman. In other words, the rare texts about women were directed to other male activists to manifest and reconsider the role of women in the Russian temperance movement.

⁶⁴ Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World*, 8-20

⁶⁵ *Trezvaja Zhizn'*, No.11 (1905): 129-130

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 131

⁶⁷ "Rol' zhenshchiny v bor'be s p'janstvom," in *Trezvaja Zhizn'*, No.4 (1908): 41

Undoubtedly, the leading role in the social movement in Russia belonged to men and, predominantly, to the low-rank clergy. I can suggest several reasons why in the beginning of the 20th century, these rare references to women began to appear in the ANTS' press. My conviction is that practices and ideas of sobriety have largely come to Russia from abroad. The greatest influence on the global temperance network was provided by American crusaders, among whom were many feminists. Following *Zeitgeist*, Russian abstinentes took part in the international conferences and hygienic exhibitions and brought new ideas at home. Thus, the Russian temperance activism did not develop in a vacuum but there was a constant communication and exchange with foreign teetotalers. Thus, religious actors were interested in appealing to it as an important source of social prestige. Secondly, a woman who traditionally played an important role in rural life was for parish priests another referent of the spread of influence.

2.4 “The Empire of Sobriety”

At the turn of the 20th century, the ANTS expanded its activities, and was known abroad, where temperance propagandists went to participate in congresses and hygienic exhibitions. In 1909, the Holy Synod singled out the Society as an exemplary religious organization for its time.⁶⁸ A wide range of activities of the religious institution included: reading sermons and lectures, organizing thematic exhibitions, concerts, opening reading rooms and teahouses, opening Sunday schools, publishing and distribution of magazines and popular brochures.

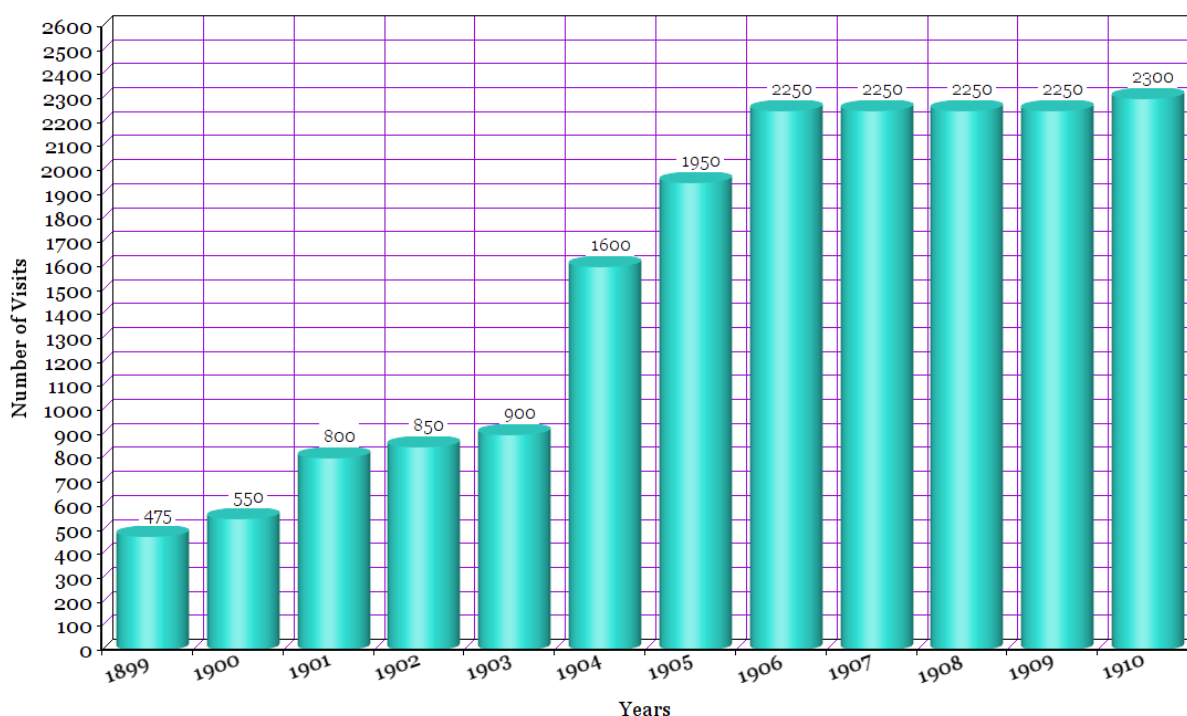
According to the data recorded by the ANTS, from 1899 to 1910 the number of readings and lectures increased from less than 100 to 780.⁶⁹ Over these 10 years, more than 11,600

⁶⁸ *Po zaprosu sekretarja Gos. Dumy o prinjatyh Duhovnym vedomstvom merah bor'by s p'janstvom. Kanceljarija ober-prokurora Sv. Sinoda. III Otdelenie* [At the request of the Secretary of the State Duma on measures taken by the Spiritual Office to combat drunkenness. Office of the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod. Third Department], RGIA, f. 797, r. 80, u. 141a, part 1, P. 14.

⁶⁹ *Chteniya s tumannymi kartinami* [Lectures with diapositives], RGIA, f. 575, r. 12, u. 76.

liturgical and extracurricular meetings were conducted by the Society's activists, which were audited by millions of people. The statistics of visits to sermons and meetings from 1899 to 1910 indicate their steady growth as it is represented on the Figure 2:

Figure 2. Statistics of visits to sermons and meetings, 1899-1910



The number of members who joined the Society from 1899 to 1910 with a monetary contribution was 85.7%, and without - 14.3%. The total number of members reached a peak in 1906 when it was about 80 thousand people and received about 75 thousand rubles as admission fees.⁷⁰

Over the ten-years period, the Society opened 12 branches (*otdelenie*) in different districts of the capital and the province. The departments organized their own religious and educational

⁷⁰ *Chislo chlenov, vstupivshih v obshchestvo s denezhnym vnosom i bez vnosa, 1899-1910 gg.* [The number of members who joined the society with a monetary contribution and without a contribution, 1899-1910], RGIA, f. 575, r. 12, u. 69

activities and created a network between the temperance center and the ‘periphery’. The capital Society closely interacted and co-opted provincial temperance organizations as its ‘satellites’. Some activists even strived to turn the ANTS into a single All-Russian temperance union.⁷¹

They describe the expansion of society in this way:

the activities of the Society were more and more developing and expanding. It sought to spread its influence over wider areas ... This desire to go wider and deeper was the main characteristic of all the temperance work of the Society in recent years, which explains that the Alexander Nevsky Society, from an inconspicuous institution, grew to the size of an all-Russian institution, becoming the leader and standard-bearer of the entire Russian temperance movement of recent years.⁷²

The territorial expansion and incorporation of an increasing number of regional temperance societies indicates that the ANTS sought to spread its influence over more and more people and regions and to not only be a local and narrowly oriented organization but a significant institution of imperial scale. The struggle for abstinence, that is the complete eradication of drunkenness as a collective and individual calamity, determined the ultimate rhetoric of the Society. With the development and growth of influence, the ANTS has also expanded its political involvement and lobbying. Using the government as a formal ally, the Society pursued its own goals and interests at the expense of the state and was at the same time an important actor in the social realm.

Gradually, the Society occupied a central place among other temperance organizations of the Russian Empire and therefore it came under the close attention and ‘care’ of the state. The public organization began to receive significant contributions from the government in 1912 when the emperor granted to the Society an imperial yacht “Marevo” for the establishment there of a floating church and an anti-alcohol museum.

⁷¹ *Trezvaja Zhizn'*, No. 11 (1908).

⁷² *K istorii*, 13

The turning point in the ANTS' history was 1914 when by the decree of the emperor it was transformed into the All-Russian Alexander Nevsky Temperance Brotherhood (the ANTB). On October 16, Nicholas II inscribed on the report of the Synodal Chief Procurator with his own hand: "May God help the Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood in the holy cause of fighting drunkenness."⁷³ In my opinion, such a gesture meant subordinating the public activities of the former Society to the state with the aim of eliminating a strong player in the public sphere.

In the charter adopted by the Brotherhood in 1914 it was stated that the organization "is aimed at combating popular drunkenness on the Orthodox Christian basis by all available Christian and cultural means to promote the soul-saving and enlightening tasks of the Orthodox Church".⁷⁴ After re-qualification, the ANTB introduced a compositional membership system. Now members of the society were divided into 5 categories: active, honorable, life members, sympathizers and so-called 'teetotalers'. The last category was the simplest one. In order to become a teetotaler, it was necessary to pay a one-time fee of not less than 30 kopecks to the cashier of the ANTB, and in the presence of the priest after the common prayer to utter the following oath:

Lord, I, your servant (name), realizing all the filth of drunkenness and sins that come from him, I swear in front of the icon of the Holy Prince Alexander Nevsky not to drink any malt beverages and to lead others to a sober path.⁷⁵

Those people who expressed an aspiration for abstinence and agreed to pay annually 1 ruble 20 kopecks of membership fee, were recognized as active members of the Society. In order to become a life member, it was necessary to deposit at least one hundred rubles at a time and be elected at a meeting of the Council of the Brotherhood.

⁷³ *K istorii*, 19-20

⁷⁴ *Delo departamenta narodnogo prosveshhenija. Ustav* [The document of the Department of Public Education. The Charter], RGIA, f. 733, r. 196, u. 867, P. 7-b.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

To illustrate its spread and expansionist intentions, the ANTB produced a map of European Russia depicting recently incorporated private and religious temperance organizations. St. Petersburg (including Peterhof, Tsarskoe Selo and Shlisselburg) was the genuine capital of the temperance world with the greatest concentration of temperance associations and largest number of activists. Western cities such as Novgorod, Pskov, Mitava and Lublin also had a large number of members. The largest number of organizations were concentrated in the following cities: Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Uglich, Rybinsk, Pereslavl, Vologda. Many members were also in the cities of Moscow, Kaluga, Orel, Tula, Tambov, Ryazan, Vladimir; Ekaterinoslav, Kharkov, Poltava, Zhytomyr, and Kiev. The extreme southern points were Stavropol, Vladikavkaz, and Astrakhan. This map represents an imaginary 'empire of sobriety', spreading over the real geographical space of the Russian Empire. Having acquired the status of the All-Russian organization, the Brotherhood was actively developing expansionist and imperial-wide activities.

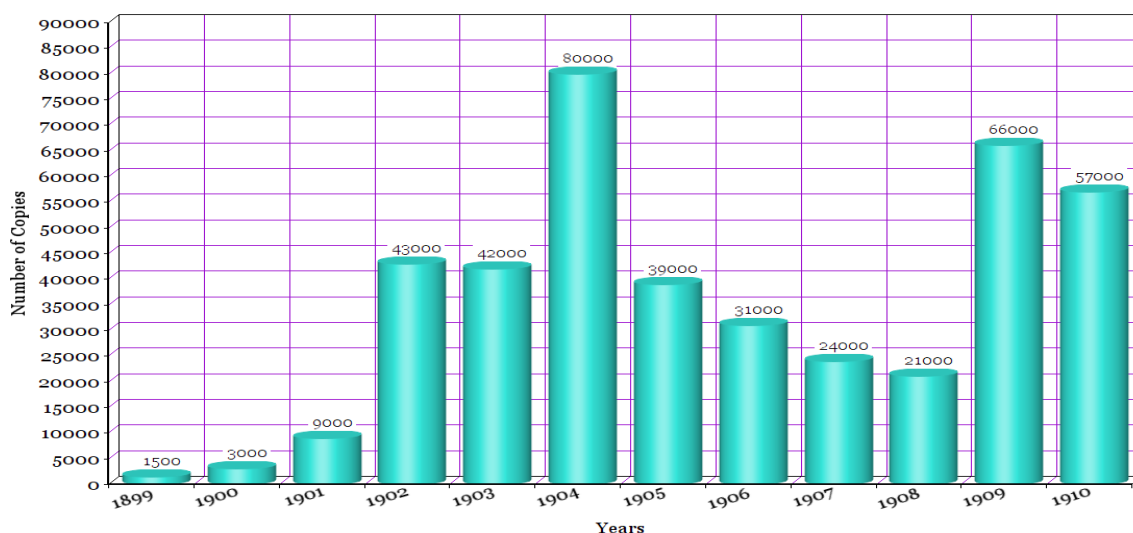
After the reorganization, the Brotherhood significantly expanded its authorities. However, its public activities were no longer as intense and diversified as ones in the past. The newly formed Brotherhood of Sobriety was under the control of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, and its activities were administrated by the Holy Synod. Direct management of the organization was carried out by the Council of the Brotherhood, which held annual and extraordinary meetings. Archbishop of Novgorod Arseny was appointed chairman of the Brotherhood. Among its members were also the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod Vladimir K. Sabler, the Minister of Finance Peter L. Bark and other prominent figures. I believe that the demonstrative inclusion of the high-ranking officials in the Society symbolized the decorative effect of its autonomy after becoming a state structure.

2.5 Publishing Activities of the ANTS (ANTB)

In the second half of the 19th century the number of printed products intensified greatly. A significant part of this literature was one ‘for the people’. The publication of newspapers, magazines, brochures and leaflets contributed to the expansion of the platform for public discussions and influenced readers. The case study of the ANTS (ANTB), one can observe how much printing materials helped teetotalers in propagation.

The organization had its own press organ: the Printing House of the Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society. During the period from 1900 to 1917, the Society published many books and brochures, as well as 3 magazines, the total circulation of which was about 3 million copies.⁷⁶ As it is shown on the Figure 3, the number of copies issued for sale per year was unstable but underwent considerable growth with the opening of its own printing house in 1908.⁷⁷

Figure 3. The number of copies issued for sale per year



⁷⁶ *K istorii*, 11-13.

⁷⁷ *Aleksandro-Nevskoe obshchestvo trezvosti. Izdatel'skaja dejatel'nost' obshchestva* [Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society. Publishing Activities of the Society]; RGIA, f. 575, r. 12, u. 78.

Trezvaja Zhizn' was first released as a free supplement to the magazine *Otdyh Hristianina*, but from the second half of 1904 it turned into an independent monthly journal. The edition was distributed by mail to private subscribers, as well as organizations, libraries, and schools. The circulation of the mailing reached 2,000 copies. Among other, the ANTS printing house published a textbook of sobriety, which described food substances, gave characteristics to various drinks, and a special place was given to the effects of alcohol on the human body.⁷⁸

An important feature of religious activists was the demonization of alcohol and the focus of fear not on the drunkard but on alcoholic products. Unlike many propagandists, for whom the fear of crime and chaos was focused on the “illiterate and dark *narod*”, in the rhetoric of the sobriety religious society the object of fear was the “demon rum”. Thus, alcoholism obtained evil agency, and the real actor was not a weak-willed drunkard but Alcohol. Ordinary people were often portrayed as poor, suffering, on the wrong path, and in need of Orthodox enlightenment. According to this narrative, a drunkard was a man who has lost his way, possessing less power over himself than drinking alcohol over him.

Addressing the *narod* as a reference group was another ideological exercise of the teetotalers. In contrast to the negative labeling of workers and their way of life as dangerous, revolutionary and drunk (in a broader metaphorical sense) by default, the villagers were frequently presented as an idealized community that has preserved genuinely Russian customs and faith. The attitude of the temperance activists to the workers and peasants as two different social groups in many ways repeated the rhetoric of the Russian Orthodox Church at the turn of the century.

A poor, uneducated, hard-working rural *muzhik* often became a protagonist of parables and moralistic stories of the Russian temperance literature. The villager usually turned out to

⁷⁸ Alexander L. Mendelson, *Uchebnik trezvosti* [The textbook of sobriety] (St. Petersburg, 1913).

be a weak-willed poor who repented and recovered from drunkenness, and the reader is asked to sympathize with him. The worker was portrayed as a man inclined to meanness, rebellion and greed. His propensity for drunkenness is a reflection of his inner predisposition for destruction and debauchery, which is fatal to the entire imperial nation and the state.

However, the aim of the temperance literature was not only to create an image of the enemy and expose the worker, but rather to produce a narrative of moral retrieval and recovery. Such, for example, was the moralistic story of the worker Semyon, who abandoned a factory temperance club for Socialist ideas, took up the path of crime and ended up in prison. In the traditions of the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky, it was shown by the author how the prison and difficulties. Semyon was released from the prison as a renewed and repentant man:

This is my fault and no one else! I am guilty because I renounced Christ, and traded His teaching to the teachings of people, because I preferred hatred to Christian love, forgiveness and the Christian feat of perfect mildness. <...>

Lord! I believe, I want to believe, I'm afraid not to believe ... I'm afraid of happiness built on blood, and the cries of dying people. I see how a minute ago the Party's 'pure' slogans were polluted with the filth of everyday vanity, meanness, deceit, hypocrisy; I fear to fall into deception; I fear to acquire violence instead of the promised freedom, instead of equality – to have anger, and instead of fraternity - total estrangement.⁷⁹

Such are the confessions and lamentations of the factory worker, who in the end rejected “the intoxication of Socialism” for the sake of “the sobriety of faith”.

A very interesting source for studying the language of temperance is the collections of poems published by the Society. In these poems, temperance practitioners expressed their views on the religious missionary, and attitudes toward the role of the people in drunkenness and sobriety. One such collection was *Drug trezvosti (The Friend of Sobriety)*, published in 1911 and intended to disseminate these ideas among schoolchildren. The book begins with *A Prayer of Nondrinkers*, which gives an idea of the dichotomy of ‘holy sobriety’ and ‘sinful

⁷⁹ *Trezvaja Zhizn'*, No. 1 (1907): 91-93

drunkenness', which decomposes body and soul. In the collection, the *Hymn of Sobriety* was also published, whose authors were inclined to demonize the mundane world a la Manichaeism: "We carry the testimonies of pure sobriety / In the realm of vice and evil."⁸⁰ A number of poems were addressed also to the "long-suffering Russian people". The author of one appealed to the peasants calling them brothers: "Our village is covered in darkness - / Evil here reigns everywhere, / The poison of damned drunkenness / Like a cloud hanging over it."⁸¹ The verses described the tragic realities of the Russian village: poverty, illiteracy, 'depravity', and drunkenness was named as the cause of this and the main enemy of a good life. Diagnosing the extinction of the Russian people from drunkenness, religious nondrinkers had their own recipe for national revival vividly expressed in the poem *To the Russian people*:

The whole your life, brother, was soaked in alcohol, / There are signs of death! / Get up, wake up, the hero of the Holy Russia! / Throw this dope, and get sober, / Your path is wide, not narrow: / Faith, learning, and labor!⁸²

The image of "the hero of the Holy Russia" ("*svjatorusskij bogatyr*") can be interpreted as the call to the Russian people or to the whole nation, which must overcome its main enemy - drunkenness.

2.6 Temperance at the Service of the Nation

With the extension of the ANTS activities, and, subsequently, with its transformation into the Brotherhood, the vocabulary of the organization has changed markedly becoming more universalist. Since alcoholism was declared to be an all-Russian evil, contributing to the

⁸⁰ In original: "Трезвости чистой несем мы скрижали / В царстве порока и зла".

Drug trezvosti. Sbornik stihotvorenij dlja obshhestv trezvosti i nachal'nyh shkol [A friend of sobriety. Collection of poems for Temperance Societies and Primary Schools], St. Petersburg, 1911, P. 4

⁸¹ In original: "Мраком покрыта наша деревня, / Зло в ней повсюду царит, / Пьянства проклятого зелье / Тучей над нею висит." Ibid., P. 11

⁸² In original: "Спиртом вся жизнь, брат, твоя пропиталась, / Признаки гибели есть! / Встань же, проснись, богатырь святорусский! / Брось ты дурман, отрезвись, / Путь пред тобой ведь широкий, не узкий: / Веруй, учись и трудись!" Ibid., 10.

degeneration of the entire population of the empire, the organization began to use in its rhetoric new categories (such as the *nation*) in order to unify the victims of alcoholism.

The mobilization of the nationalist vocabulary was not a new strategy for the temperance activists of the 19th century. Mary Clement Leavitt, the founding member of the WTCU and an American schoolteacher, in her rhetoric underlined the superiority of Americans: “America should see that she is the Messiah of the nations; that she is to give other nations better than they ever dream of.”⁸³ Many of the special practices and vocabulary were adopted by the temperance movement in Russia from the United States and the Nordic countries. One of the most striking examples of such transfers is the translation and publishing in 1914 in St. Petersburg the pamphlet *Anti-Alcoholic Education of Youth and its Relation to National Progress* which was initially printed in Boston, Massachusetts. In the pamphlet, the author claimed that

the nation is strong insofar as the people forming it are strong, discreet, equitable and developed physically, because they can most effectively develop their forces within the limits that do not damage the public good. <...> First of all, upbringing in temperance is directed to raising sobriety, understood as a means, and not as a self-sufficient goal. It would be superfluous to recall that alcoholism undermines the realization of the ideals of supreme national life, undermining physical strength...⁸⁴

It was also stated that “[t]he Motherland is waiting for every citizen to help the progress of the nation.”⁸⁵ In the given context, the imported concepts such as ‘*a citizen*’ and ‘*a nation*’ were mobilized at the service of the multi-ethnic empire and the construction of *the imperial nation*.

After the outbreak of the First World War and the introduction of the ‘dry law’ in Russia, the rhetoric of the ANTS significantly transformed, and along with it other connotations were

⁸³ Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World. Woman's Empire: the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective 1880-1930* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 11.

⁸⁴ *Antialkohol'noe obrazovanie junoshestva i ego otnoshenie k nacional'nomu progressu G-zhi Stoddard (Boston)* [Antialcoholic education of youth and its relation to national progress by Ms. Stoddard (Boston)] (St. Petersburg, 1914) 1-2.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

introduced into its understanding of the “nation”. Along with the creation of the All-Russian Brotherhood, the magazine *Sober Life* was published under the new name of the “*Native Life*”, raising a wider range of socially important issues. Eventually, the focus shifted from close attention to sobriety on the life to the royal family, the utterances of the emperor, news from the front, and the location of the army. Sobriety gradually become an optic through which activists covered the course of the war and state policy. In addition to the internal enemy - alcohol - Russia had an external one, with whom there was a real war. In the rhetoric of the teetotalers, the merging of the two images gradually took place and the collaboration with one enemy was regarded as aiding in the destruction of the “nation”. Assistance to the Slavic peoples was reflected in the construction of a new type of community - the “Slav nation” (*‘slavjanskaja natsiia’*):

We, teetotalers, in the name of truth and for the welfare of Russia, will call for all the friends of our dear country, and let our voice be heard to the entire population of the Russian land. Be sober and give up drinking because of the great danger of our external enemies who now so insidiously and barbarically armed against us by war, and from the danger of our domestic drunken vegetation and the degeneration of our glorious Slav nation.⁸⁶

Temperance propagandists appealed to the salvation of a single soul and the whole *narod*, and sobriety was presented as a matter of both personal purification and national revival. Fear of the regress of the nation was embodied in the ‘evil’ and ‘sin’ of drinking alcohol. Identifying the internal enemy and representing him as alien to the nation and the imperial organism was an important task for legitimizing the anti-alcoholic political project. In this context, the ideological platform of the ANTS in many respects coincided with the state interests.

⁸⁶ In original: “Мы, трезвенники, во имя правды и ради благополучия России, кличем клич всем друзьям нашего дорогого отечества, и пусть голос наш будет слышен всему населению русской земли. Трезвитесь все и бросьте пьянство из-за той великой опасности внешних врагов наших, ныне так коварно и варварски ополчившихся на нас войною, и от опасности нашего внутреннего в стране пьяного прозябания и вырождения нашей славной славянской нации.” *Narodnaja Zhizn’*, No. 22, (1915): 12-13

Thus, the case of Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society demonstrates the functioning of the religious institution, which was an important constituent of the public sphere and urban landscape. The ANTS was deeply integrated into the social and religious life of the capital and was aimed at propagating sobriety among workers. My deep conviction is that the activities and rhetoric of the Society were closely related to its location. With the acquisition of the new status of the Brotherhood, it transformed it into an all-Russian imperial institution and lost the autonomy. Essentially, after 1914 the organization obtained the official financing and influential patrons. Nevertheless, it shifted its focus from the propagation of sobriety as such to the life of the royal family and politics.

The next chapter will be devoted to another temperance association which at the turn of the 20th century functioned in the provincial city of Kazan. There, I will try to show the Society's development was dependent on the imperial context.

CHAPTER 3 - THE KAZAN TEMPERANCE SOCIETY: ALCOHOL AND POLITICS WITHIN THE CASE STUDY OF THE PROVINCIAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION

3.1 Temperance and Diversity

On February 1, 1908, Dimitri, the Archbishop of Kazan and Sviyazhsk, sent an appeal to Alexander Solovyov, the founder and chairman of the Kazan Temperance Society, asking him to assist the Church with the organization of village libraries and Christian choirs for *inorodtsy*⁸⁷ in two counties (*uezdy*) of the Kazan province.⁸⁸ He explained the necessity of these measures by the fact that “an intensive propaganda of Mohammedanism” was going on in these *uezds*. And, he concludes:

to counteract this propaganda, that is harmful not only for the Church but for very Russian citizenship, it is necessary for the Orthodox people of all departments to work together and energetically.⁸⁹

This passage indicates the importance of the Society and the role of its founder in the Kazan province, and sheds light on the nature of religious, social and ethnic processes in this region which can be seen as the melting pot of such diversities.

Kazan, due to its history and geographical location, played the role of a mental and geographical frontier between the Russian West and the East, or according to the apt expression of the historian Robert P. Geraci was a “window to the East” for Russian rulers. Kazan was

⁸⁷ Inorodtsy (allogeneous people, or literally “of different descent/ethnicity”) – the category of the population in the Russian Empire applied to certain indigenous ethnicities (predominantly ones of Siberia, Central Asia, and Russian Far East). Their legal status was determined by the ‘Charter on the control of inorodtsy’ issued in 1822.

⁸⁸ The money the Archbishop asked for should have been provided by the Provincial Committee of the Guardianship for People’s Temperance, which was the branch of governmental agencies for public health (in this case – alcohol issue) control. These times, Alexander Solovyov headed this organization too, but later he left the post.

⁸⁹ NART, f. 127, r. 17, u.4.

used by the imperial authorities to govern minority nationalities and conduct an enlightenment mission among the population of the East. Thus, from the point of view of imperial geography, the region was identified as the center and periphery at the same time.⁹⁰

The Kazan province (*guberniya*) belonged to the middle-Volga territories of European Russia and in its pre-revolutionary borders were formed during the administrative reforms of Peter the Great. Subsequently, the province was divided into 12 uezds. Kazan, the main and the largest city of the province, had a population of about 130,000 people at the turn of 20th century. According to the first general census of the Russian Empire held in 1897⁹¹, the majority of the Kazan population at the end of the 19th century were peasants (52%) and burghers (33%); the nobility was 7%, the clergy 2%, merchants 1.8%, and honorary citizens 1.5%. 71% of the city's population were Russians (around 92,000 people) who were mostly Orthodox, and 20% were Tatars (around 28,000 people) who were predominantly Muslims. Other ethnic groups were also sparsely present: 1.5% Poles, 1.3% Jews, and 1% Germans.⁹² This statistical information is crucial for understanding the landscape where the anti-alcohol crusade was initiated and developed. Following this demographic makeup, I argue that the ethnic and religious diversity of the region determined the rhetoric and the activities of this society, and in particular its anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim sentiments.

3.2 The composition and goals of the KTS

The history of the Kazan Temperance Society (KTS) represents a vivid example of the voluntary organization in late imperial Russia and demonstrates an interesting ideological

⁹⁰ Robert P. Geraci, *Window on the East. National and Imperial Identities in Late Tsarist Russia*. (Cornell University Press, 2001), 8

⁹¹ The data on the ethnical and religious belongness is provided in the Preface to the Volume of the census.

⁹² *Pervaya vseobshchaya perepis naseleniya Rossiyskoy imperii* [The first overall census of the Russian Empire]. Vol. 14 (Kazan, 1904), v-viii.

evolution from a circle of intellectuals united against drunkenness to a conservative right-monarchist organization with aggressive rhetoric and practices. The society was opened on June 30, 1892 “with ten members and ten rubles,” as its founders later recalled. Alexander Solovyov, the founder, ‘spiritual father’ of the society and the constant chairman of its Committee, also held the posts of the treasurer and head of the printing house in the Imperial Kazan University. He also had close ties with the educated elite of the city.⁹³

At the time of its opening, the Society positioned itself as an organization without social, religious or gender differences. In its charter, it declared that “people of both sexes, all faiths, ranks and estates” could be admitted to the organization. “Owners of distilleries, vodka and brewing plants and persons selling alcohol” as well as representatives of the lower military ranks, cadets and those who were subjected to restriction of the rights in court were not allowed to membership in the society.⁹⁴ Members were divided into three main categories: honorary, active, and so-called sympathizers. Anyone who annually contributed one ruble of a membership fee or paid a lump sum of 20 rubles to the cashier of the organization, could become a full member. ‘Sympathizers’ was a category for those who could not directly associate with the society but contributed to it with their works or significant financial assistance. These categories help to identify main activists of the Society and determine the ways it was financed. The organization was independent and received all the money from membership fees, donations and sales of popular literature. Due to its rapid growth, the society at its own expense supported shelters, a hospital, tea houses, and other establishments.

⁹³ *Materialyi k istorii Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti i drugih obschestv* [Materials to the history of Kazan sobriety society and other societies] (Kazan, 1911), 3.

⁹⁴ *Ustav Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti* [The Charter of Kazan Temperance Society] (Kazan, 1892), 4.

During the first two years of its existence, the society issued about 300 membership cards. 178 belonged to active members, 6 to honorary and 26 to sympathizers.⁹⁵ By the end of the 19th century, the Society consisted of 1281 members⁹⁶ and after the first decade it had risen to 1673.⁹⁷ By January 1, 1904, there were already 2,693 permanent members, not counting ones in the Society branches. Their growth can be seen on the Figure 4.⁹⁸ During the first decade of its activity, the Society actively opened new branches in the Kazan province and beyond. Nevertheless, it is quite difficult to determine the number of members outside the main office in Kazan because the branches' membership cards were issued separately. As it was noted in the annual report of the Society, "thanks to the special sympathy of His Excellency [Kazan Governor] Peter Poltoratsky to the idea of the society, its branches opened quickly one by one", and by 1896 there were 21 subordinate organizations.⁹⁹ In 1898, the Society had 47 branches,¹⁰⁰ and by 1901, more than 60 of them were opened in almost every *uezd* of the Kazan province. Expanding its activities, the Society issued a map with branches, Figure 5.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti i Bogorodskogo otdela po 30 avgusta 1894 goda* [Report of the Kazan Temperance Society and the Bogorodsky Department on August 30, 1894] (Kazan, 1894), 3.

⁹⁶ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti s 31 avgusta 1898 goda po 31 avgusta 1899 goda* [Report of Kazan Sobriety Society from August 31, 1898 to August 31, 1899] (Kazan, 1899), 3.

⁹⁷ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti s 1 yanvarya 1903 po 1 yanvarya 1904 goda* [Report of Kazan Sobriety Society from January 1, 1903 to January 1, 1904] (Kazan, 1904), 3.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹⁹ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti s 31 avgusta 1895 po 31 avgusta 1896* [Report of the Kazan Sobriety Society from August 31, 1895 to August 31, 1896] (Kazan, 1896), 3.

¹⁰⁰ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti s 31 avgusta 1897 po 31 avgusta 1898* [Report of the Kazan Sobriety Society from August 31, 1897 to August 31, 1898] (Kazan, 1898), 2-3.

¹⁰¹ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti s 1 sentyabrya 1899 goda po 1 yanvarya 1901* [Report of Kazan Sobriety Society from September 1, 1899 to January 1, 1901] (Kazan, 1901), 5.

Figure 4. The number of members of the KTS

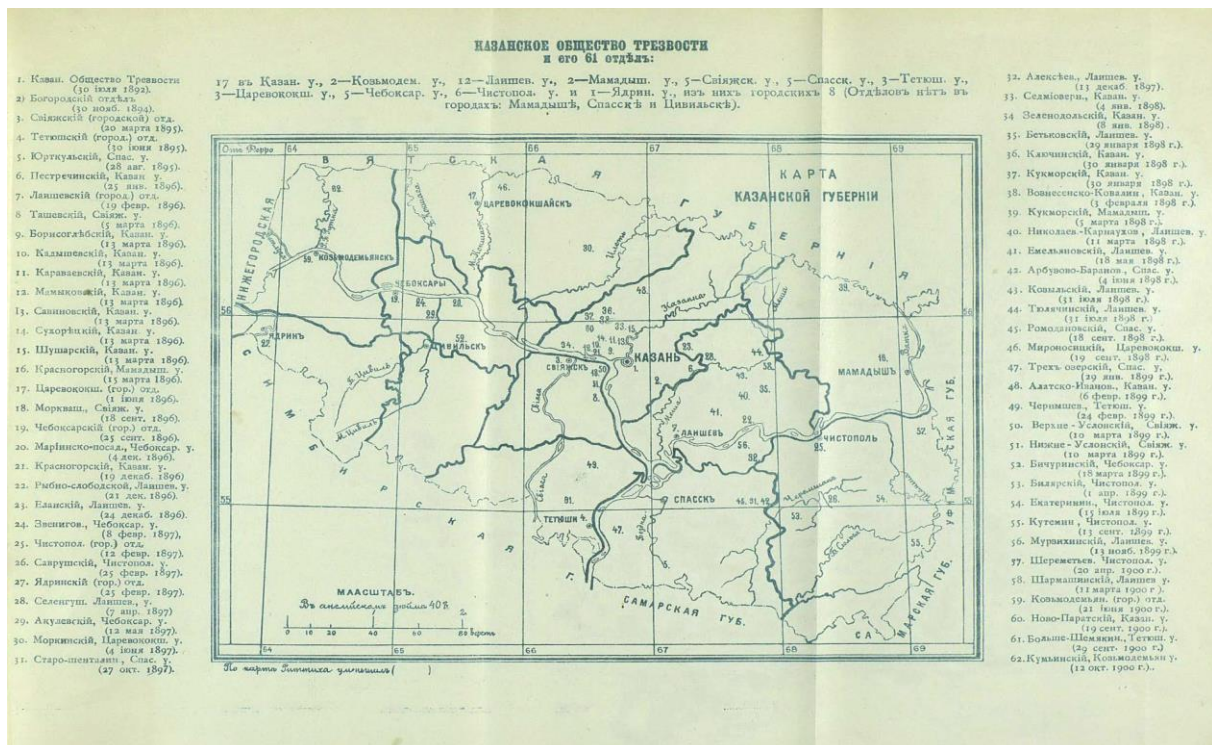
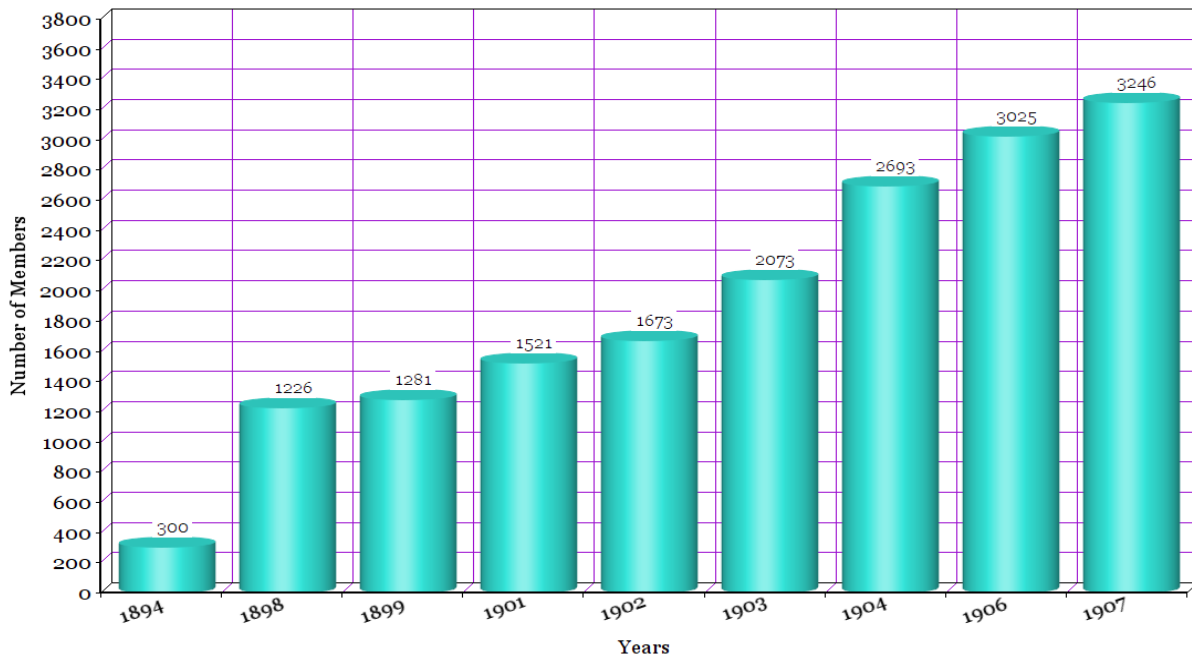


Figure 5. The map of the Kazan Temperance Society with 61 branches, 1901.¹⁰²

¹⁰² A scanned copy of the map from the NLR funds. Provided with the permission of the National Library of Russia.

This public organization had its own governing apparatus and hierarchy. The Committee, which consisted of six presiding members and four candidates, was responsible for managing the organization. Out of ten members of the Committee, the chairman, his deputy, the secretary, the treasurer and the collector of donations, were elected positions. According to the charter, the Committee meetings were held at least once a month. The duties of the Committee members were: “a) the distribution of tasks among members of the Society; b) its property audit; c) the collection of funds; d) supervision over the exact observance of the Charter, and d) presenting reports to the annual meetings.”¹⁰³ Members of the Temperance Society also appointed a special Audit Commission of six people to review the annual reports. Elections of the Committee and the Audit Commission were made with closed lists at the annual general meeting of members.¹⁰⁴ Throughout the period of the Society's work, Alexander Solovyov remained chairman of the Committee. Apparently, his influence on the policy of the organization and other honorary members was colossal. Being a deeply religious Orthodox Christian, Russian nationalist and a convinced monarchist, he also shared the views of the Black Hundreds¹⁰⁵ and sympathized with their activities. With a change of the social and political situation, his conservative views became a basis for the propagation of anti-Semitism.

3.3 Political activism, Anti-Semitism, and the 1905 Revolution

The Society's agenda shifted dramatically with the outbreak of the 1905 Revolution. Solovyov participated in the opening of the Kazan Provincial Branch of the Union of the Russian People (URP) which was the extreme right nationalist, and Black Hundred monarchist organization in

¹⁰³ *Ustav* [The Charter], 9-10.

¹⁰⁴ *Ustav* [The Charter], 7-8.

¹⁰⁵ The Black Hundreds was a radical nationalist movement in Russia in the early 20th century which was known for its anti-Semitism and organizing of pogroms.

the prerevolutionary Russia.¹⁰⁶ During this year the Kazan, Solovyov decided that all the members of Kazan Temperance Society should enroll into the URP.¹⁰⁷

The affiliates of the Kazan Temperance Society that refused to join the Union of the Russian People were gradually co-opted by the governmental Guardianships of the People's Temperance.¹⁰⁸ As the activists of the Society reported,

until 1905 there were more than 60 branches, but that year [1905] the vacillation of the minds, the year of a foreign vile movement forced the Society to open in Kazan agencies of the Russian Assembly¹⁰⁹ and then of the Union of the Russian People, and, as the vacillation was noticed among temperance society branches, it is decided to announce to its members that they must be either members of the Russian Assembly or members of the Union of the Russian people, and, above all, firmly stand for Orthodoxy, absolute autocracy and take care of the good of Russian people; but some branches did not want to obey this decree, and that is why they were closed, and their property was transferred to the Guardianship of the People's Temperance.¹¹⁰

Even by lacking background information on how these measures were going to be implemented, it remains remarkable that over one thousand members were required to join the URP. This initiative was rested on one person only – Solovyov. It did not realize at the end.

Evidently, during the period of social and political turbulence in Russia, the politicization of the KTS markedly strengthened with the revolutionary events. The rhetoric of the Society - that had previously positioned itself as an all-estates and interreligious organization - now had Black-Hundreds, anti-Semitic connotations.¹¹¹ The organization openly demonstrated its political and public position:

¹⁰⁶ There is a debate the URP can be called a 'party' or not. I consider it as a party because they participated in politics.

¹⁰⁷ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti s 1 yanvarya 1903 po 1 yanvarya 1904* [Report of Kazan Sobriety Society from January 1, 1903 to January 1, 1904] (Kazan, 1904), 2.

¹⁰⁸ Guardianships of People's Temperance were the governmental agencies of controlling the public established after 1894.

¹⁰⁹ Russian Assembly (Russkoe Sobranie in Russian) was another right-wing monarchist political organization in pre-revolutionary Russia. Functioning from 1900 until 1917, the party set against liberal values, and Westernization, and proposed the famous triad of 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality'.

¹¹⁰ *Otchet Kazanskogo obschestva trezvosti s 1 yanvarya 1912 goda po 1 yanvarya 1913 goda* [Report of Kazan Sobriety Society from January 1, 1912 to January 1, 1913] (Kazan, 1913), 2.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

back in 1904, seeing the preparation for the riots, in which Jews mainly participated, the Temperance Society decided to establish the Russian Assembly in Kazan and in 1905 to influence the Russian community, keen on the Jewish movement,¹¹² the Society increased the number of the journal¹¹³ circulation and began to publish the newspaper “Orthodox and Autocratic Rus.”¹¹⁴

The Society’s position, especially in articles from the newspaper *Orthodox and Autocratic Rus’* (*Rus’ Pravoslavnyaya i Samoderzhavnaya*) which was irregularly published since 1905, provoked heated discussions among local intellectuals. The liberal press often accused the Society of civil and political intolerance, and the “savage persecution of political and public opinion”.¹¹⁵ The rhetoric articulated by its leader and activists, the authors continued, inspired the violence in the city and resulted in attacks on students and Jews. The discussion unfolding in the provincial press was so strong that the teetotalers were called “modern inquisitors.”¹¹⁶

Alexander Solovyov responded to the criticism in one of the issues of the ‘Kazan Telegraph’:

It is in vain that the Jews of the newspaper ‘Volzhsky Listok’ try to slander me in their newspaper in all ways. I repeat: the Russian people of Kazan know me and my activities, the lies of the Jews from the ‘Volzhsky Listok’ will not be believed, and if in my publications I hold that the Russian people should be enlightened and in the spirit of the Orthodox Faith, that schools and enlighteners strengthen the people’s love for fatherland and give the knowledge that can raise the welfare of the people, then with this view all truly Russian people agree. I will not change all my views, just as the Russian people do not change them.¹¹⁷

In this case Solovyov’s anti-Semitism implied not only ethnic but also political connotations so far as the representatives of the liberal press and the intelligentsia were labeled as ‘Jews’.

¹¹² In Russian there is a division between the word *Evrey* (Jew), which is neutral and defines that ethnic and religious affiliation, and the word *Zhid* (hebe), which has a strong negative connotation. In the publications of the Temperance Society, the abusive name is more widely used.

¹¹³ The monthly journal “Deyatel” (“The Actor”) was published by the KTS from 1896 until 1917. Solovyov was its editor for 20 years, and eminent professors of the Imperial Kazan University contributed and wrote to the editions.

¹¹⁴ *Materialy*, 79

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 109.

Again, the documents demonstrate how the position of Solovyov and several radical activists influenced the Society's agenda, changed its rhetoric and shaped its image in the local public sphere. The role of organization was indeed significant and multifaceted. Thanks to a wide variety of activities and practical initiatives undertaken, the Temperance Society became an influential agent in the city and far beyond the province.

3.4 Anti-alcohol Propaganda and the KTS' Public Initiatives

From the very beginning of its work, the Society had aimed "to restrict [ban] the use of alcoholic beverages among the population of Kazan and for this purpose to help people in need with advice, money and job".¹¹⁸ The scale of the charitable and educational activities that the Society was developing, contributed to its position as a prominent public organization of the period. In the charter published in 1892, it is stated that in order to achieve the objectives set, the society

opens tea rooms, canteens, reading rooms and, as far as possible, hospitals for drunkards; disseminates to the people books and brochures of moral content instructing abstinence from wine; arranges meetings and various amusements without the sale of alcoholic beverages, and also organizes filiation societies and circles of persons refraining from using hard liquors.¹¹⁹

The program of sobriety promoted by the organization included the total refusal of alcoholic beverages, while moderation was not recognized as an effective measure to combat alcoholism. The society argued that:

moderate drinkers are the most harmful distributors of alcoholism: they recruit new people to alcohol, while heavy drunkards are already directly pushing people away from alcohol by their fall, appearance, and sad example.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Igor Alekseev, *Vo imya Khrista i vo slavu Gosudarevu. Istoriya Kazanskogo Obschestva Trezvosti i Russkogo Sobraniya v kratkih ocherkah, dokumentah i kommentariyah k nim* [In the name of Christ and to the Glory of the Sovereign. The history of the Kazan Society of Sobriety and the Russian Assembly in brief essays, documents and comments to them], Vol. 1 (Kazan, 2003), 28; *Ustav* [The Charter], 3.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

¹²⁰ *Deyatel'*, No. 2 (1899): 75.

Members of the organization actively lobbied for a legislative ban for alcoholic beverages.

As a step towards its realization:

the temperance society, conscious of the detrimental influence of restaurants and drinking establishments on the morality of the workers, decided to intercede with the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod on restricting the trade in liquors in drinking establishments during holidays”¹²¹

The latter petition was partially realized in 1914 on “Sobriety Day” in Kazan and the Kazan Diocese. Solovyov and some members of the Society compiled a program for this holiday and ordered the closure of all taverns of the city during the festive religious processions and services”.¹²²

Almost immediately after its opening, the Society launched active charitable, educational and missionary activities. In 1893 the City Council granted to the Temperance Society a dilapidated house on the right side of the Bulak River, where the city's tea-house previously was located. On June 2, 1893 the Society used this location to open a tea-canteen, where the poor could eat for free or for a small fee.¹²³ The organization supported laborers who ate in the tea-dining room on credit, and on receipt of wages they gave money back to the Society. According to the reports, from August 1898 and throughout the year, 5,471 meals were sold in the canteen for a small fee, and 38,455 servings were given for free. At the same time, in the canteen 120 people (of which 2 women) were fed for free, the majority of whom were peasants and petty bourgeois. Nevertheless, people could be excluded from the dining room for drunkenness, swindling, begging, and unwillingness to work. In total, more than 90 people were excluded from the canteen during that year.¹²⁴

¹²¹ *Materialy*, 4.

¹²² NART, f. 127, r. 23, u. 1, P. 4.

¹²³ *Otchet 1899 goda*, 8.

¹²⁴ NART, f. 127, r. 6, u. 12, Pp. 346-347.

On March 5, 1895 the Society opened its own library with a reading room.¹²⁵ Members of the Society believed that through free libraries and popular readings and lectures accessible to the public, peasants and the urban poor could be educated in matters of health and morality. The results of the work done by temperance activists in the Kazan *gubernia* are impressive: of the 177 free public libraries opened in the province between 1890 and 1906, 144 belonged to the Guardianships of Popular Temperance and the Kazan Temperance Society; 22 more belonged to zemstvos.¹²⁶

On March 27, 1896, the first hospital for alcoholics in Russia was solemnly opened by the Kazan Temperance Society and in the presence of the governor of the city Peter Poltoratsky, Kazan and Sviyazhsk Archbishop Vladimir, and the rector of the University Konstantin Voroshilov. Professor Liverii Darkshevich was appointed as the main doctor of the free hospital.¹²⁷ The Society's contribution to public health indicates that it actively used medical discourse in promoting sobriety and increasing its popularity in Kazan.

Among other publicly significant initiatives, the KTS opened an orphanage in 1898. In addition, in 1901, the society organized a women's shelter, and in 1906 a free flophouse appeared. Continuing charitable work, the first specialized clinic for lupus patients was opened in Russia under the auspices of the KTS. In 1912, the Society, at its own expense, opened the "Kazan Society for the Benefit of the All-Merciful Savior of the Childhood of the Insufficient and Demented". Finally, the organization financed the construction of a church in the name of the All-Merciful Savior.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ *Materialy*, 5.

¹²⁶ NART, f. 127, r. 15, u. 8, Pp. 14-36.

¹²⁷ NART, f. 127, r. 5, u. 7.

¹²⁸ Igor Alexeev, *Trezvaja Politika* [Temperance politics]

URL: http://ruskline.ru/analitika/2005/10/27/trezvaya_politika/ (Access date 03 October, 2017)

The intensification of the Kazan Temperance Society's activities and the growth of its influence were the result of support from secular and spiritual authorities and public figures. Before the opening of the Society, its founder, Solovyov was in correspondence with the writer Leo Tolstoy, who contributed to Solovyov's publication of anti-alcohol books and brochures. In addition to Tolstoy, other famous figures such as Archpriest John of Kronstadt and Minister of Finance Sergei Witte were honorary members of the Kazan Temperance Society. The Society was supported by the Kazan Governor Pyotr Poltoratskiy and the Samara Governor Alexander Bryanchaninov, Kazan and Sviyazhsk Archbishops Vladimir¹²⁹ and Arseniy,¹³⁰ State Councilor Nikolai Galkin-Vraskoy.¹³¹

I would argue here, this cooperation was mutually beneficial to both the Society and the authorities that supported it. The help of influential figures undoubtedly facilitated the whole course of the Society's activities and guaranteed patronage. Such support was caused, undoubtedly, by the rhetoric propagated by the Society and its leader. They unambiguously supported absolute monarchy, Orthodoxy, as well as condemned revolts and social disorder. Furthermore, this social organization which was financially independent, was at the same time popular among lower strata of the population, and useful to the authorities for increasing prestige.

Nonetheless, this popularity proved to be limited and did not endure. During and after WWI, the Kazan Temperance Society emphasized that its initial goal is:

¹²⁹ Worldly name Ivan Petrov.

¹³⁰ Wordly name Alexander Bryantsev.

¹³¹ Igor Alexeev, "*Imperiya trezvosti*": *Kazanskoe Obschestvo Trezvosti (1892 - 1917 gg.) kak sotsialno-istoricheskij fenomen* ["Empire of sobriety": Kazan Sobriety Society (1892 - 1917) as a socio-historical phenomenon] URL:

http://ruskline.ru/analitika/2010/09/16/imperiya_trezvosti_kazanskoe_obwestvo_trezvosti_1892_1917_gg_kak_sotsialnoistoricheskij_fenomen/ (Access date 03 October, 2017)

to serve the State by helping the poor; spreading “a sober word” in society; serving God, the Russian people and the Tsar; settling love of the homeland with the word of love and peace.¹³²

Yet, this goal became obsolete under the early Soviet regime when the Temperance Society was disbanded. The last known meeting was held on March 1917, the same month the last issue of the journal ‘*Deyatel*’ was published.

Within the case of the KTS, one can see that local public was actively involved in the medicalization of alcoholic practices and in political activities, while supporting the triad of ‘Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality’. The Society implemented medical measures to combat alcoholism by founding hospitals and shelters, supporting the activities of doctors and therapists, printing works of psychologists and scientists as well. The organization had clearly established religious agenda which was articulated within cooperating with the local clergy and using moral discourse for its own purposes. Thus, the case of the Kazan Temperance Society demonstrates that in order to achieve social prestige in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, religious and scientific arguments were intersected and used by social groups to increase influence and weight in the public sphere. The politicization of the activities of the Society in particular and the temperance movement in general also indicates how actors sought space to express their social and political aspirations. To sum up, the history, political and social activities of the Kazan Temperance Society is important in the context of studying the anti-alcohol movement of the Russian Empire. It sheds light on the functioning of public organizations and institutions in the pre-revolutionary period.

¹³² *Materialy*, 82.

CONCLUSION

The study of social activities and movements as well as voluntary associations opens an important perspective on prerevolutionary social and political processes in the Russian Empire. The realities of the post-reform period created favorable conditions for the formation of voluntary associations and communities dedicated to eradicating alcoholism. In this context, the temperance movement is an apt case to assess the role of public initiatives in the late tsarist era. As Susanna Barrows and Robin Room argue, “alcohol can indeed serve as a revealing stain on the slide in the historian’s microscope, highlighting the structures and relations of a society and the processes of stasis and change”.¹³³

The strong temperance activism arose in the Russian Empire in the second half of the 19th century and was a diverse and heterogeneous phenomenon. This movement embraced many strands and involved actors with different interests and reform agendas. Temperance organizations and individual activists developed various sobriety scenarios to attract larger number of followers. One of the main arguments I make in this work is that the temperance movement was highly politicized in the Russian Empire and served as a means to convey the ideas of its actors. To demonstrate this, in the first chapter I provided the historical perspective of the social movement and presented its main actors - the state, professional communities and the Russian Orthodox Church. The moral and medical discourses raised by adherents of sobriety can be understood as “one way through which a cultural group acts to preserve, defend, or enhance the dominance and prestige of its own style of living within the total society.”¹³⁴

Although temperance was perceived by participants as a “common cause”, each social group sought to monopolize the discourse about sobriety and to present itself as the vanguard

¹³³Susanna Barrows and Robert Room, eds., ‘Introduction’ in *Drinking Behavior and Belief in Modern History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 1.

¹³⁴ Gusfield, *Symbolic crusade*, 3.

of this crusade against socially recognized evil. The impetus to the conceptualization of alcoholism as a social problem was given in the middle of the 19th century, when physicians, psychiatrists, physical anthropologists, criminologists and other professionals began publishing numerous works on that issue. Finding a nationwide disease was a way to emphasize the participation and active role of intelligentsia in reforming the social and political order. In turn, the rise of sobriety was also a convenient tool in the aspirations of the Russian Orthodox Church and individual parish priests to restore their prestige and increase the role among the specific groups of population. Finally, the governmental alcohol and temperance policy influenced the social movement. The state was the primary beneficiary of the turnover of alcohol which earned a third of budget revenues during the 18th and 19th centuries.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, in the second half of the 19th century, public health issues gradually turned under the state concern. In an effort to suppress the flourished public initiative, the state developed its own scenario of sobriety. In 1895, the governmental agencies of public temperance were established with an attempt to monopolize the temperance movement as such.

The second and third chapters are devoted to the history of two temperance organizations that functioned in the imperial capital and the provincial city of Kazan. This comparative investigation shows some interesting findings. First, the initial goals and trajectories of societies differed significantly. The Alexander Nevsky Temperance Society (Brotherhood) was located in the working quarter on the outskirts of the capital and was intended to propagate Orthodox values among workers. By contrast, since its opening, the Kazan Temperance Society emphasized its supra-ethnic, -class and -gender composition. Being placed in the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional city, during the first years of its existence the temperance organization had become a significant institution in Kazan urban landscape.

¹³⁵ Christian, *Living Water*, 386-387.

In fact, each of these organizations was established by the charismatic leader who strived to maintain its autonomy and expand influence. Strengthening pro-state rhetoric and crystallization of the image of the inner enemy are noticeable in both societies after the outbreak of the First Russian Revolution. Those social groups, among which conservative teetotalers initially conducted their missionary work, were turned into the scapegoat. In St. Petersburg, the temperance crusade was directed against ‘faithless’, ‘greedy’ and ‘sabotage’ workers; in Kazan - against non-Orthodox groups such as Muslims and Jews.

The role of religion in both societies is also interesting. Since the ANTS was opened by a priest at the church, and the KTS was closely connected with the ROC leaders, I identify both societies as religious. Noteworthy, the moral discourse intertwined with the medical argumentation in the rhetoric of temperance activists. As it was demonstrated throughout the work, religion, politics, and medicine came together in the service of sobriety.

Another important aspect of this comparative analysis lies upon the difference between capital and provincial dynamics within the imperial space. Despite the substantial contribution of Kazan activists to the Russian temperance movement, their establishment remained only of local significance. Alternatively, the capital organization was subsequently turned into the most important imperial temperance institution.

To sum up, the case study of two temperance organizations represents the complex and multidimensional relationships of the state, church, and society in late imperial Russia. Throughout this thesis, I was trying to demonstrate how diverse public activists maneuvered and asserted their own interests within the permitted space of freedom under the tsarist regime. The aim of this work was also to illustrate the “public” not an amorphous group but the real actor which had and was trying to raise its own voice.

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