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POPULAR PIETY, LOCAL INITIATIVE, AND THE FOUNDING OF WOMEN'S RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN RUSSIA, 1764-1907

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In 1764 things looked bleak for the Orthodox Church in Russia. In that year the government confiscated monastic properties, cutting the number of monasteries in Russia by more than half.

The first effort at actual secularization of ecclesiastical estates had been made by Peter III in 1762.[1] When Catherine II succeeded him, she initially repudiated his program, as she did most of his policies, to justify the coup against him that brought her to power. But by 1763 she was moving in a similar direction of asserting state authority over church privilege, and finalized this move with the church reform of February 28, 1764.[2] The manifesto accompanying this reform, which confiscated church lands, put them under state control, and gave the church a compensatory budget, was more tactful and self-serving than that of Peter III. In it, Catherine explained that she was acutely conscious of her accountability to God for the "good order" of the church and desirous of freeing the clergy from the burden of property and the cares of the material world; and therefore, she was taking upon herself and upon the state the burden of administering church properties. Henceforth, all church estates and the serfs attached to them were to become the property of the state. Feudal dues would be rendered to the College of the Economy, and part of the income generated by ecclesiastical properties would be returned to the church in the form of clerical salaries. A table of organization and a budget were issued for the church and reflected the state's driving impulse toward rationalization, centralization, and a fiscal economy.

Now that the state had to pay clerical salaries and fund ecclesiastical institutions, the government vigorously eliminated "superfluous" clergy, churches, and monasteries. In 1762, 881 monasteries existed in Russia, including 678 men's monasteries and 203 women's monasteries. The reform of

1764 reduced the number by more than half, collapsing the total to 385, comprising 318 men's monasteries and 67 women's monasteries.[3] Smaller monasteries were closed, and monks and nuns, many old and ailing and many of whom had lived and worshipped for decades in monasteries that were now closed, were arbitrarily transferred to larger monasteries in their diocese in order to rationalize resources. In the process, considerable social dislocation occurred because not only was there the problem of relocation to new and strange environments, but in addition, many former residents of dissolved monasteries found themselves without an assigned, stipendiary slot in the new budget. Homeless monks and nuns began appearing in provincial towns and in the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg begging for food and shelter. Embarrassed by their appearance in the capital cities, Catherine II issued a strong edict, ordering vagabond clergy to return to the diocese from which they had come.[4] In addition, vigorous measures were taken to conscript "superfluous" clergy into the army.[5] It was a bleak moment indeed, and many would have forcast the decline of monasticism in Russia.

Instead Russia experienced a flowering of monasticism that began in the late 18th century, grew steadily throughout the 19th century, and continued right up until the revolution of 1917. By 1907 there were almost 1100 monastic communities in Russia, and the number was growing daily.[6] Throughout the 19th century, several suppressed monasteries had been reopened, and, more significantly, new ones had been formed. Between 1764 and 1890, 292 new monastic communities were established, including 95 men's monasteries and 197 women's monasteries.[7] Between 1890 and 1907, another 86 women's religious communities were formed.[8]

Intellectually, the monastic revival began in the second half of the 18th

century and is associated with the work of Paisii Velichkovskii (1722-1794), whose life of austere asceticism on Mount Athos attracted many Russian and Rumanian disciples. Eventually this revival led to the formation of a monastery in Moldavia based on the cenobitic rule of St. Basil. Paisii and his followers undertook the translation into Russian of the writings of the early desert fathers.[9] His most influential work was the translation in 1793 of the *Philokalia*, a collection of spiritual and hesychastic writings that formed a type of inward piety guided by spiritual devotion. This widely read book "provided the spiritual food" for monks and laity in Russia for the next two centuries.[10] Through his writings and formation of disciples of both men and women, who became spiritual guides and monastic superiors, Paisii initiated a contemplative revival that continued until the Russian Revolution and found its greatest expression among spiritual elders of the Optina Pustyn'.[11] Other important figures who stimulated the contemplative revival through lives that combined spiritual intensity and asceticism and through publication of significant theological and spiritual writings, included St. Tikhon of Zadonsk (1724-1783); Platon, Metropolitan of Moscow (1737-1812); and Filaret, Metropolitan of Moscow (1782-1867).

But the contemplative revival was more than a matter of men and books. It was part of a larger religious awakening that touched the hearts and souls of countless Russians--religious and lay people alike. Its roots were as diverse as the tides of romanticism, idealism, and nationalism that swept across Europe in the wake of the Napoleonic wars that stimulated in Russia a specific Slavophile rejection of Western rationalism and materialism and an embracing of Russian spirituality and Orthodoxy.[12] At the popular level, it was stimulated by an increase in literacy and an expanding system of

colportage that made lives of the saints and devotional literature widely available.[13] And it was fed by modernity itself, by that longing for deeper meaning that the shallowness and rootlessness of modern life often engender, and by a specific anti-urban, anti-noise-and-bustle impulse that made the "sweet silence" of monasticism appealing.[14] But this is the broad picture, the sweeping strokes on the vast canvas of Russian intellectual life. The picture drawn here is composed of minute detail, of local color and rich texture that come only from studying the lives of ordinary men and women as they wrestled with both the routine of life and large, often overwhelming forces.

A study of the plight of the dislocated clergy, the homeless monks and nuns displaced or resettled by the harsh church reform of 1764, reveals a grassroots movement in their support, an anger at the closing of the local monasteries, and a series of petitions from local laymen to the religious authorities expressing particular concern about the fate of elderly and ailing nuns. Several petitions from local laymen offered to support a local convent out of their own resources, or urged that one not be closed until after the death of the elderly nuns living there. In 1765, 28 merchants and gentry living near the Bolkhovskii Rozhdestvenskii convent sent a petition to the metropolitian of Moscow and the Holy Synod urging that the convent not be closed because it had been built by local gentry and merchants, because the women who lived there were mothers and sisters of the local gentry and merchants, and because these women had contributed to their own support by giving the convent property which they had inherited, "wives from husbands, daughters from fathers, and mothers from their allotment."[15] The tone of the petition clearly indicates a belief on the part of the petitioners that the

church property that the government had confiscated was family property that had been turned over to the church for the support and sustenance of female relatives. In the end, the petition was granted in that these women were allowed to live out their days in the local convent, but no new nuns were permitted to be taken in.[16]

In 1766, 37 gentry and merchants from the town of Rylsk offered to support through their own resources nuns living in the local convent in order to prevent the closing of the convent. The government responded by allowing the petitioners to take on the support of the nuns presently in residence in the convent, but forbade the acceptance of any new nuns.[17] These and similar petitions indicate local ties and family connections with the local convents, which served among other things as dignified retirement homes for female relatives. The centralizing rationalizing government made occasional, temporary concessions to these local bonds but continued its long-range policy of consolidating monasteries and limiting the number of stipendiary clergy.

Although the government's restrictions on the number and location of monasteries and clergy applied to both men and women, women responded in a special way by almost immediately forming unofficial religious communities called *zhenskie obshchiny* (women's communities). These communities were self-supporting and presumably met the need for a religious, disciplined, communal way of life and means of support for women who were closed out of official religious "slots" by the restrictive church budget of 1764. The first such community was formed in the town of Arzamas in 1764 on the site of a closed convent.

At the time of the secularization, there were in Arzamas five men's monasteries and two women's monasteries, the Alekseevskii and the

Nikolaevskii.[18] By decree, in a provincial town there could be only one third-class women's monastery, which would be chosen according to the condition of the buildings. Because the Alekseevski monastery was in poor repair, the Nikolaevski monastery was chosen. The Alekseevskii church was converted into a parish church, and the cloister was suppressed; the nuns were to be transferred to the Nikolaevskii convent. But there proved to be insufficient room for the displaced nuns at the Nikolaevskii convent, and as a result, displaced nuns and would-be nuns gathered on the site of the suppressed convent living unofficially in the closed cells.[19] The number of women grew to 270, and in 1777 the local bishop gave his blessing to the community and allowed it to be considered a subsidiary of the official Nikolaevskii convent. In 1842, at a time of increasing supervision of the church by Nicholas I and his appointees, the community was brought under the "protection and supervision" of the central church and state authorities. In 1881 the sisters of the community received permission to wear official garb, and in 1897 the community was transformed into an official convent. During all this time, the community was self-supporting; although it was increasingly supervised by the crown, it received no support from the crown. It did, however, receive donations of money and land from local supporters. By 1908 the community owned 1,128 *desiatiny** of land, ran two hospitals for nuns, a guest house for pilgrims and a renowned embroidery workshop, and supported 63 nuns and 617 lay sisters.[20]

The evolution of the Arzamas community is typical of the majority of succeeding *zhenskie obshchiny*. It began on the initiative of local women to meet the need for a religiously oriented life and mutual security--a need that

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*One *desiatina* is 2.7 acres.

could not be legislated away by government decree. Gradually it came under the control, though not the financial support, of church and government authorities, eventually being transformed into an official monastery. It was supported both financially and emotionally by local donors, and it in turn provided services to the local community.

Between 1764 and 1907, 217 *zhenskie obshchiny* were formed.[21] They began as unofficial, autonomous communities, but with time more and more eventually were transformed into official women's monasteries. Of the 156 *zhenskie obshchiny* formed between 1764 and 1894, 67 percent eventually became official convents, and the process accelerated in the second half of the 19th century.[22] Future study could examine the differences in internal organization, social composition, economic resources, and charitable work among convents--monasteries--formed before 1764, those formed as monasteries after 1764, and *zhenskie obshchiny*, many of which eventually became monasteries.

Many of the old monasteries were not organized along communal, cenobitic, lines and part of the monastic reform of the nineteenth century was to introduce communal living, work, eating (the *trapeza*), and garb into monastic life. By contrast, all of the monasteries and *zhenskie obshchiny* formed after 1764 were formed along communal lines, and all of them were obligated to be self-supporting. Communal work and self-support went hand in hand. But unlike the women in monasteries, women in *zhenskie obshchiny* did not take monastic vows. Although they were expected to be celibate while in the community, they were not permanently bound to the community, and one source states that soldiers' wives in particular were likely to live only temporarily in the community.[23]

In contrast with the relatively fewer women's religious institutions that began as monasteries after 1764, *zhenskie obshchiny* seem to have had more humble origins, formed overwhelmingly at local lay iniative in towns and villages. While all men's monasteries formed in the 19th century began as monasteries, women's religious institutions typically followed a transitional or semi-official path from *zhenskie obshchiny* to monasteries.[24] One can only speculate whether this indicated greater autonomy on the part of the women's communities, or less willingness on the part of ecclesiastical and government authorities to grant official recognition to women's religious institutions.

The present study focuses on the 217 *zhenskie obshchiny* formed between 1764 and 1907 and examines where and how these communities were formed. The first picture that emerges is that these 217 religious communities are overwhelmingly a rural phenomenon. Of these communities, 113 originated in villages, 102 in provincial towns, and only 2 in cities. A possible explanation is that cities such as Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kiev, already offered sufficient opportunity for entry into religious life through their existing monasteries, and sufficient social services to the population through a myriad of private and public charitable and poor-relief agencies.[25] The story of how these communities emerged is a rich record of local initiative and popular piety, a tale best told by looking at the actual founders of the communities. Among the founders of the communities we find recognizable clusters, such as nuns of suppressed monasteries, women of intense religious experience, widows, local clergy and hierarchs, and people of local communities. The Arzamas Alekseevskaia community, the first *zhenskaia obshchina*, formed by nuns and lay sisters living in the cells of a suppressed monastery, has already been discussed. Another such community was the

Arkadievskaia Viazemskaia community in Smolensk, founded in 1780 by tenacious nuns of the suppressed Il'inskii monastery.[26]

But the forming of women's religious communities was sparked by more than tenacity or a desire to hold onto a way of life threatened by government decrees. It was fueled by the religious revival, by a call to spiritual intensity, to the purity and austerity of the early desert fathers, and to the radiance of mystical experience. St. Serafim of Sarov (1759-1833) was a glowing example of the long Eastern tradition of monasticism and asceticism newly made fresh. And he was a model for many women who formed religious communities and a founder of an important women's community.

St. Serafim was a monk, a hermit, and a *podvizhnik* (ascetic), in the Russian term. The *podvizhnik* was a spiritual athlete of sorts, an accomplisher of astonishing ascetic feats. The tradition of asceticism went back to the early desert fathers of Egypt and Syria and was more than an act of renunciation. In its deepest form, it was the act of literalizing symbols, an act of extreme faith in the redemption of the world through Christ and a return to the wholeness of the Garden of Eden. Sebastian Brock and Susan Harvey, authorities on early Syrian Christianity, have said that:

> In its extreme form, this literalizing of symbols led to striking behavior on the part of the Syrian believer. The redeeming work of Christ, the second Adam, had made salvation possible for humanity and brought the promise of a return to Paradise, to the perfect life as it was lived by Adam and Eve before their Fall. In anticipation of that return, and indeed to hasten its coming, some believers adopted a life of stunning physical symbolism: living naked in the wilderness, living on wild fruits and water, living among the wild beasts, living exposed to the elements, living an uninterrupted life of prayer and devotion to the divine as Adam and Eve had done. They acted out with their bodies the spiritual truth of their faith.[27]

Thus the *podvizhnik* lived at one with God and nature, breaking through the pain of alienation that the Fall represents. Although the *podvizhnik* lived

alone, often in silence, there was a "jarring translucence," a radiance and magnetism that drew people to him.[28]

And so it was with St. Serafim. The wonder of his ascetic practice and his long years of silence--over twenty years--drew people to him, seeking his wisdom, his understanding of the divine, his counsel, and his healing. In response to the stream of visitors, and some say in response to a vision of the Virgin Mary, he ended his vow of silence in his late fifties or early sixties, and assumed the role of *starets*, or spiritual elder, another Eastern tradition.[29] He became spiritual counsellor to hundreds, including many women living in the vicinity of the Sarov hermitage and many who had settled in the area to be near this revered holy man. Serafim took an active interest in the spiritual development of these women and founded a special community of virgins at Diveevo, based on a strict ascetic rule, alongside an already existing community of widows and virgins that had been founded there in the late 18th century by Agafeia Melgunova, the wife of a colonel.[30] Diveevo became a famous women's religious community renowned for its spiritual intensity and discipline; many of the women who served there became influential religious figures in their own right.[30]

One such figure was Blessed Natal'ia, a renowned *podvizhnitsa* and *staritsa* who had lived in the Serafimo-Diveevo cloister from 1848 and helped to form the Meliavskaia Teplovskaia women's community in the late 19th century.[31] Natal'ia had been a pilgrim before entering Diveevo, and initially found it hard adjusting to monastic rule. She lived a solitary life, prayed constantly, read the Psalter all night, ate sparingly, and was indifferent to all kinds of weather, dressing lightly whether in rain or frost. The intensity of her ascetic practice and the simplicity of her manner drew the

local people to her. They sought her blessings and her advice, and she soon developed a reputation as a wise *staritsa.* A contemporary reminisced, "Natasha possessed the gift of counsel. Her speech was direct, clear, not allegorical. Her wisdom and erudition were great, and she never lost her perspicacity."[32] Although in her youth she had been considered a holy fool, in maturity she was honored as a spiritual elder. The number of visitors seeking her counsel and women wishing to serve as postulants under her, grew to such an extent that it became a problem for the monastery. As a result, toward the end of her life, Natal'ia planned the creation of a separate women's community at Meliavskaia that opened in 1900.

The life of the hermit Anastasia Semenovna Logacheva (1809-1875) is a similar story of growth from *podvizhnitsa* to *staritsa* and to the inspiration for a women's religious community in her honor.[33] Anastasia was born to peasants living on crown property. When she was eight, her father was drafted, and her mother and younger sister joined him, leaving Anastasia feeling like an orphan in her uncle's large family. She became a loner at an early age, going off into the woods for long periods of time, finding comfort in the quiet and in her devotion to the Mother of God. She stayed in the woods for longer and longer periods of time and began ascetic tests. When she was 17 years old, she went to see Serafim of Sarov, having heard that he would not refuse anyone guidance on salvation and the life of a hermit. At that time, St. Serafim advised her to continue to pray ardently to the Mother of God. A few years later she journeyed to see him again, and he advised her to go on a pilgrimage to Kiev. Finally, shortly before the death of Serafim, she visited a third time, seeking his blessing on undertaking the life of a hermit and a *podvizhnitsa.* She received his blessing, but evidently she was advised

first to take care of supporting her elderly and incapacitated parents. During this time, she provided a livelihood for her parents and herself by occupying herself with the reading of the Psalter for the deceased, with spinning and odd jobs. After her parents' death, she gave away everything she had and began the austere life of a religious hermit. But she too, in her withdrawal from the world, became a radiant light, attracting the troubled and the searching. A contemporary of hers reflecting on this paradox, commented, "The world doesn't love pious and good people, but sometimes it seeks out, marvels at the ascetic feats of, and seeks counsel from those very people when they withdraw from the world. And so it was with Nastas'iushka; people from the local settlements began to come to her, to seek her holy prayers, to seek her counsel in the difficulties of life, and for several, to seek instruction in how to be saved and how to pray."[34]

Because of the number of people who came seeking her advice and wanting to live near her to take up a similar life, including three women who already lived in huts near her and a peasant man who wanted to live the same way, she decided that it was necessary to build a house, but to do this required the permission of the local crown authority because the woods she had retired to were crown property. This led to an investigation of her request. Not only was it refused, but she was told that she would have to leave her hermitage. After her eviction, she wandered for a while, went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and eventually settled in the new Nikolaevskii women's monastery in Tomsk province, where she was tonsured, became the Mother Superior, and died in 1875. After her death, at the initiative of local peasants and with the permission of the tsar, who ceded five *desiatiny* of land, an almshouse was opened in her honor on the spot where she had lived as a hermit. In 1899, the

almshouse was transformed into the Znamenskaia Kurikhinskaia women's community.[35] Other women's communities that began as clusters of women drawn to a locally renowned holy man or woman were the Troitskaia Odigitrievskaia Zosimova, formed around the *starets* Zosima in 1826; Ivanovskaia Kazanovskaia Sezenovskaia, formed around the hermit Ioann Ivanovich in 1840; Toplovskaia Paraskevskaia, formed around the Bulgarian hermit maiden Konstantina in 1858; and Shamordinskaia Kazanskaia, formed in 1884 by Amvrosii, the famous *starets* of Optina Pustyn'.[36] (Amvrosii was a model for the character Father Zosima in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Both Dostoevsky and Tolstoy visited Optina, and Tolstoy's sister, Maria, was a nun at the Shamordino community founded by Amvrosii.)[37]

Women's communities also grew out of a religious intensity based on personal experience, such as a miraculous healing or delivery from a catastrophic event. The Troitskaia Tikhonovskaia Zadonskaia women's community was formed from a Wayfarer's Home built in the 1830s by the artisanal maiden, Matrona Naumovna Popova, who had been miraculously cured of a serious illness at the grave of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk. In thanksgiving she formed a society, the Tikhonovskoe Sisters of Mercy, in order to minister to the pilgrims at Zadonsk.[38]

Widows comprised another noticeable cluster among the founders of *zhenskie obshchiny*, having formed over 20 communities. They included women of all classes, although sources are best for aristocratic women and the resources available to them were greatest. The first and most prominent of such communities was Spaso-Borodinskaia, formed by Margarita Mikhailovna Tuchkova, née Naryshkina, the widow of General Tuchkov, who was killed in the famous Battle of Borodino in 1812.[39] Grief stricken by her loss, Tuchkova

vowed to build a church in honor of her husband on the spot where he and so many other brave Russians had fallen. Determined, indefatigable, and well connected, she eventually received permission for the construction of the church and even a donation of 10,000 rubles from the tsar. But it was tough going in the beginning, and Tuchkova had to sell property and jewelry to realize her project. During the long years of construction, she travelled back and forth between the construction site and her house in Moscow, where she was supervising the education of her son.

While in Borodino, she lived in a small house described as a "hermit's hut," and her reputation for piety and almsgiving drew people to the spot. One day, when travelling through a neighboring village, she came upon a beaten, trembling woman lying in a cart. Upon inquiry, she found out that the woman's husband was a notorious drunkard who regularly beat and terrorized his wife and two daughters. Tuchkova was determined to provide protection and shelter for these women and insisted on getting the permission of the local *ispravnik* to remove the women from the village. Out of the shelter she built for them at Borodino gradually grew the Spaso-Borodinskaia *zhenskaia obshchina*. After the tragic death of her son in 1826, Tuchkova settled there permanently, and the community of poor and homeless women began to grow. In 1833 it was officially recognized as a *zhenskaia obshchina* by the church and government authorities; in 1838 the community was elevated to a monastery, and Tuchkova, having been tonsured and given the monastic name Mariia, was appointed abbess. In 1877, the monastery had over 200 sisters. By 1907, there was an abbess, 50 nuns and 195 lay sisters (*poslushnitsy*), a parish school for 30 girls, a small hospital, and an almshouse for elderly women.[40]

The founder of the Anosino-Boriso-Glebskaia community was Princess

Evdokiia Meshcherskaia, born Tiutcheva, aunt of the famous Russian poet, F. I. Tiutchev.[41] Born in 1774, in 1796 she married Prince Boris Ivanovich Meshcherskii, who died three months after their wedding and left her pregnant with a daughter. Meshcherskaia retired to her estate of Anosino to raise her daughter and lead a pious life. During her daughter's youth, she built a stone church at Anosino, and in 1821 in honor of her deceased husband, she built an almshouse, which formed the basis for a women's religious community. In 1823 the community was raised to a women's communal monastery, and Meshcherskaia, having fulfilled her responsibilities to her daughter, was tonsured and received the monastic name of Evgeniia. According to an 1877 source, there was at the monastery an almshouse, a hospital for nuns, and a "clean and comfortable" inn for pilgrims.[42] In 1907 there were an abbess, and 118 nuns and lay sisters.[43]

Such communities inspired other women to think of forming religious communities on their estates. For example, after the death of her husband, Anna Gavrilovna Golovina, née Princess Gagarina, dreamed of building on the ancient Golovin estate of Novospasskoe a women's community modeled after that of Spaso-Borodinskaia.[44] Her son supported her in this plan, and together they donated 108 *desiatiny* of land, a mill that earned up to 500 rubles a year, and a stone house in Moscow that grossed 1500 rubles a year income. In 1852 the community, known as Spaso-Vlakhernskaia, was officially recognized by state and ecclesiastical authorities, and in 1856, shortly before her death, Golovina was tonsured, having earned a wide reputation as a philanthropist and a good spiritual elder. In 1907, the community, which had been raised to a monastery in 1861, consisted of an abbess, 38 nuns and 200 lay sisters, and ran a hospital for sisters of the cloister and an inn for pilgrims.[45]

Aleksandra Filippovna Shmakova, founder of the Troitskaia Tvorozhkovskaia women's community, was born into a noble family in St. Petersburg, educated at the Smol'nyi Institute, and married in 1824 to Karl Andreevich Fon Roze, a wealthy Lutheran nobleman.[46] Her father and mother were unusually pious, and she developed an early distaste for the vanities of aristocratic social life, preferring the quiet of a chapel to the whirl of a ballroom. After the death of her only daughter, she and her husband became increasingly devout. After his conversion to Orthodoxy, they bought the secluded, deserted estate, Tvorozhkovo, realizing that because of its woods, lake, and distance from other estates it would make an ideal spot for a monastery some day. They promised each other that if she died first, he would build a men's monastery and retire to it, and if he died first, she would build a women's religious community and retire to it.

When Karl Andreevich died in 1858, Aleksandra Filippovna sought to establish a women's religious community at Tvorozhkovo at her own expense, but was refused permission by the metropolitan because there was a parish church nearby. In the meantime she lived quietly and ascetically at Tvorozhkovo, earning a reputation for charity among the local poor. With the appointment of a new metropolitan in 1861, permission was given and plans began in earnest for a women's community, which necessitated the building of a wooden house and chapel for the sisters. Aleksandra Fillipovna pledged the money from the sale of her town house in St. Petersburg and prayed that pious women would begin to gather. By the time of the official establishment of the community in 1865, there were about 15 women at Tvorozhkovo; by 1872, there were 26 women, including Aleksandra Filippovna, who had been tonsured and taken the name Angelina; 2 widows of government officials; a woman from the merchantry; a

woman from the clerical estate; 8 women from the lower townspeople (*meshchanki*); and 13 women from the peasantry.[47] By 1873 the widows had opened an orphanage for girls of the clerical estate and an almshouse for 60 elderly women.[48] A final example of a women's community founded by an aristocratic widow is the Razritovskaia Troitskaia Pokrovskaia, which was formed in 1900 by Princess Aleksandra Vasil'evna Golitsyna, widow of a vice admiral, on her estate in Chernigov province.[49]

But widows of all social classes participated in this phenomenon, indicating a long Russian tradition of entering monastic life at mid-life, after one had fulfilled one's obligation to spouse and children.[50] Women of all social classes wished to retire in their widowhood to a contemplative life, and founding religious communities made this possible. Among this divergent group of founders there are widows of officers, such as the widow of Major-General Gauzen, who founded the community of Rozhdestvo-Bogoroditskaia on her estate in 1865, and the widow of Captain Egorov, who founded the community of Vvedenskaia Kievskaia in Kiev in 1878; widows of government officials, such as Olga Aleksandrovna Vinogradova, widow of a collegiate secretary, who founded the community of Iletskaia Nikolaevskaia in 1892, and Sofiia Muromtseva, widow of an actual state councillor, who gave land and money for the creation of the community of Sofiiskaia in 1903; widows of merchants, such as Pelagaia Popova, who donated land for the Panovskaia Troitskaia community in Saratov province in 1882; widows of artisans and tradesmen, such as Paraskeva Razguliaeva, widow of a *meshchanin* from Samara, who founded the community of Pokrovskaia on her property in 1898; and widows of peasants, such as Marfa Dmitrieva, who formed the hostel that developed into the women's community of Malaia Pitsa in Nizhegorod.[51]

The story of the founding of the women's community of Krestovozdvizhenskaia Ierusalimskaia attests to the pivotal role of the widow of the merchant Savatiugin, and to the intriguing ties between city and village formed through a shared faith. In the village of Pakhro, about 30 versts from Moscow, there was a pious, pilgrim-loving priest who had living in his parish a certain Ivan Stepanovich, who was considered by some to be a holy fool and by others a sage. This Ivan Stepanovich was known to Filaret, the Metropolitan of Moscow, who regarded him kindly, and to many families in Moscow, including a pious merchant family by the name of Savatiugin. Shortly after the death of Mr. Savatiugin, Ivan Stepanovich came to the widow and asked her for 30 rubles. He explained that there was in the village of Pakhro a small group of women who gathered at the home of the parish priest and perpetually read the Psalter, and with this donation they would remember Savatiugina's deceased husband eternally in their prayers. When Tsar Nicholas I died in 1855 and people were urged to remember him through the perpetual reading of the Psalter, the group of women at Pakhro grew. Savatiugina decided to retire there, and in 1856 donated a house that was used as an almshouse and for the reading of the Psalter. In 1865 this almshouse was changed to a *zhenskaia obshchina*. Savatiugina supported the community, and by 1870 it had grown so large--over 70 sisters--that it was decided to move the community to the village of Lukino. In 1873, the widow Savatiugina was tonsured, taking the monastic name Pavla. By 1877 there were over 100 sisters, and a school for 30 girls.[52]

Local clergy and hierarchs formed a fourth cluster of founders of women's religious communities, although usually if a community began at the initiative of a bishop, it began as an official monastery rather than following the

semi-official route from *zhenskaia obshchina* to monastery.[53] The two examples of *obshchiny* founded by bishops were both in "border" areas, that is areas where the church was interested in the spread of Orthodoxy. These communities included the Ioanno-Marinskaia community in Stavropol' founded in 1847 by Ieremei, first bishop of the Caucasus; and the Bogoroditskaia community in Lesna founded in 1885 by Leontii, bishop of Kholmsko-Warsaw, in order to fight the dominant Catholic-Uniate influence in the area.[54] To that end, Leontii planned a school for girls as an integral part of the community at Lesna and appointed as its first mother superior Countess Evgeniia Borisovna Efimovskaia (1890-1925), in religious life Ekaterina, who was "the ablest Russian woman theologian of her time" and an advocate of the restoration of the deaconate for women.[55]

At the parish level, local priests occasionally encouraged the creation of *zhenskie obshchiny* as a way of organizing a local school, almshouse or orphanage. In 1866 the parish priest Zosimov, along with the tradesman Chebanenko, donated land for the creation of the Tikhvinskaia Ekaterinoslavskaia women's community, which opened a school for girls and an almshouse.[56] In 1881 Vasilii A. Golubev, parish priest in the village of Tavolzhanka, Voronezh province, donated 600 *desiatiny* of land for the creation of the Kazanskaia women's community, which ran a parish school, an almshouse for old women, an orphanage for girls of the clerical estate, and a wayfarer's hostel.[57]

In some cases, *zhenskie obshchiny* developed as spin-offs of existing monasteries either at the initiative or with the permission of monastic superiors. This was the case with the Vladychne-Pokrovskaia community, established in the city of Moscow in 1869 by Mitrofaniia (1825-1898), abbess

of the Vladychnyi monastery in Serpukhov.[58] Born Baronessa Rozen', Mitrofaniia was a woman of startling energy who vigorously fostered at Serpukhov four strands of contemporary Russian monasticism; they were the contemplative and cenobitic, economic self-sufficiency, the restoration of buildings and icons, and social service and charitable work. Spiritually, Mitrofaniia introduced into the monastery ascetic and monastic reforms initiated by Paisii Velichkovskii and encouraged by her patron, Metropolitan Filaret. In addition she encouraged publication of the works of the desert fathers and wrote an article on St. Pachomius, considered the founder of Eastern cenobitic monasticism.[59] Economically, Mitrofaniia expanded the resources of the monastery, disdaining begging and collections, and encouraging the development of an apiary, fishery, kiln, and embroidery and textile workshops. She even went so far as to enter some of the monastery's products in the St. Petersburg Manufacturing Exhibition of 1870.[60] A skilled icon painter, Mitrofaniia opened a workshop for icon painting and restoration, and she devoted considerable energy to the restoration of monastic buildings.[61] Philanthropically, Mitrofaniia was best known for her medical work. A trained *fel'dsher* (paramedic), she established a large hospital and apothecary at Serpukhov, and intended the women's religious community that she established in Moscow to provide similar medical care.[62] This community was transformed in 1870 to a community of sisters of mercy, under the direct patronage of the empress. Reflecting the stamp of its founder and the needs of society, the Moscow Vladychne-Pokrovskaia community by 1907 was running an orphanage for girls, a school, a training course for paramedics, a clinic and pharmacy, an embroidery workshop, and a home for elderly nuns and sisters.[63]

The needs of society, particularly of rural Russia, become apparent in

analyzing the final cluster of founders and donors of women's religious communities--the cluster of ordinary men and women of local villages and towns. Before examining the profile of these founders and donors, it is important to look at the functional role of the *zhenskie obshchiny* and the institutional base from which these societies were most likely to spring. Functionally, *zhenskie obshchiny* were almost universally associated with shelters for women, with taking care of homeless, elderly and widowed women--"family-less" women, as the records of the Holy Synod say again and again.[64] These shelters for women were often combined with shelters, orphanages and schools, particularly for poor and orphaned girls. Again, the records are a barometer of special needs, sometimes indicating a particular concern for poor and orphaned girls of the clerical estate, and sometimes showing a direct response to tragedies created by war, such as the shelters formed for orphans of "fallen soldiers" of the Turkish War, or again in 1904, 1905, and 1906, for orphans of the Russo-Japanese War.[65] They also frequently provided infirmaries, hospitals, and wayfarers' hostels--an important function in a country increasingly given to mobility, migration, and pilgrimage.

Religiously, the presence of a *zhenskaia obshchina* in a local town or village meant the presence of a church and the possibility for prayers and services, particularly prayers for the dead. Often the constuction of a church was the point at which an unofficial gathering of women became officially recognized by ecclesiastical and civil authorities as a *zhenskaia obshchina*. Thus there is an evolutionary path, particularly in the second half of the 19th century from the creation of an almshouse to the establishment of a *zhenskaia obshchina* that occurred with the building of a church and securing of sufficient funds or land to support the community. At

least 36 of the *zhenskie obshchiny* in this study began as almshouses. Conversely, women's religious communities often sprang up around existing parish churches, particularly graveyard (*kladbishche*) churches. Here women gathered for the preparation of communion bread and for the reading of the Psalter--a crucial way of remembering the dead and an important function provided by pious women for the local community.

Given the range of services--both social and spiritual--that local women's religious communities provided, it is understandable that they were supported by men and women of all social classes, from nobles (*pomeshchiki*) to peasants. This study is based on information on the founding donors for 67 of the 113 village *zhenskie obshchiny* formed between 1764 and 1907, and for 65 of the 102 town *zhenskie obshchiny*. As Table 1 indicates, the social origins of the founding donors of *zhenskie obshchiny* in villages were: 19 nobles, 13 merchants, 13 peasants, 12 local citizens, 11 military personnel, 9 civil officials, 5 clergy and 3 tradespeople (*meshchane*). They included 31 men and 49 women. Women were classified according to the social status of their husbands or, if single, according to their fathers. Noble women, the local *pomeshchitsy*, formed the largest group of donors, but active support in the form of money and land came from women of all social groups.

Table 1

Founding Donors of *Zhenskie Obshchiny* in Villages

Social Class	Men	Women
Nobles	5	14
Military Officers	1	10
Civil Officials	2	7
Local Citizens	5	5
Clergy	3	0
Merchants	7	6
Tradespeople	1	2
Peasants	7	5
Total	31	49

The Troitskaia Novaia community was established in 1874 with the resources of Varentsova, a local gentry woman who donated for the support of the *obshchina* and the almshouse for elderly women built at the *obshchina* a wooden house, 5 outbuildings, 430 *desiatiny* of land, and 4000 rubles, while a more humble, soldier's wife, Irina Lazareva, founded the Spasskaia Zelenogorskaia community in the first quarter of the 19th century as a shelter for orphans.[66] Other examples of piety and charity at the village level include the merchant Afanasii Torpov, who donated 470 *desiatiny* of land, a water mill, and 10,000 rubles, and pledged to build at his own expense a church and all the neccessary buildings for the construction of an almshouse and an *obshchina* in the village of Pososhka.[67] Count V. Kapnist and his wife, who in 1885 helped to establish at the local church of Bogoroditse-Rozhdestvenskaia an *obshchina* with a hospital, a school and an almshouse, and whose donations to the *obshchina* included a revered icon of the Mother of God that attracted a large number of pilgrims.[68] And the peasant woman Ol'neva, who together with several anonymous philanthropists, donated 22,000 rubles and 138 *desiatiny* of land for the establishment of an *obshchina* in 1877 in the village of Median.[69]

The view from the towns shows a similar dynamic of local initiative, piety and charity, and shared cultural values that cut across class lines. As Table 2 indicates, the founding donors for *zhenskie obshchiny* in the towns numbered 22 from the merchantry, 16 from the local citizens, 12 from the tradespeople, 11 from the clergy, 9 from the peasantry, 6 from the civil officialdom, 4 from the military, and 4 from the nobility; they comprised 34 men and 38 women.

Table 2

Founding Donors of *Zhenskie Obshchiny* in Towns

Social Class	Men	Women
Nobles	0	4
Military Officers	0	4
Civil Officials	0	6
Local Citizens	8	4
Clergy	3	3
Merchants	16	5
Tradespeople	3	9
Peasants	4	3
Total	34	38

The community of Pokrovskaia was founded around 1800 in the town of Ardatov by *meshchanka* Vasilisa Dimitrievna Poliukhova, who with three single women settled around the local church and occupied themselves with the baking of communion bread.[70] The Orskaia community was established in 1888 with a school for girls by *meshchankie* Anna Arzamastseva and Efimiia Shuvalova, and 12 other women "zealous of a pious life."[71] The Kazanskaia Bogoroditskaia community was founded in the town of Bugul'mo in 1879 by the peasant woman Matiushkina, who gave a house with a garden in the town and 300 *desiatiny* of land, and the merchant Stakhev, who donated 31,000 rubles.[72]

In the towns more than in the villages multiple donors contributed to the establishment of a women's religious community. In 1835 the Tikhvinskaia Bogoroditskaia community in Buzuluka was founded by a peasant woman, Ovsiannikova, and in 1847 it was "brought under the protection" of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities upon the deeding to it of 111 *desiatiny* of land donated by Ovsiannikova and a local gentry woman, Putilova, and of 4 *desiatiny* of land donated by citizens of the town.[73] In 1866, the Volskaia Vladimirskaia community with an attached almshouse, was established in the town of Volgsko through the ceding to it of land by the town society

(*gorodskoe obshchestvo*), through capital amounting to 24,032 rubles donated by *meshchanka* Leont'eva, and also through acquiring parcels of land.[74] In 1868 in the town of Bezhetska a women's religious community was established with a school and an orphanage; for the use of the community the brothers Kruikov donated 50 *desiatiny* of land, tradesman Arkhipov gave a two-story wooden house with land near the town, and the merchant Nevrotin donated 15 *desiatiny* of land and indicated his willingness to build a brick house.[75] In 1872 in the town of Vyshnyi-Volochek Prince Putiatin built a two-story stone structure with a church and three wooden buildings on stone foundations, and gave land totalling 276 *desiatiny* for the founding of a women's religious community with a hospital. In addition, Rykachev, a member of the local gentry, gave 109 *desiatiny* of land, and in 1885 Hereditary Honorary Citizen Sivokhin donated the ancient Greek icon of the Mother of God, named Andronikova, which was transferred from St. Petersburg to the community.[76] In 1877 in the interests of establishing a women's religious community with a school for Cheremiss girls, the town society of Kozmodem'iansk in Kazan province ceded a parcel of land, the merchant Zubov gave 2 houses and 3000 rubles, and Cheremiss peasants gave 7700 rubles.[77]

A close examination of the origins of women's religious communities in the towns and villages yields a clear picture of repeated examples of local initiative, popular piety and charitable work. In the Russian context, it is worth drawing attention to this local initiative. The common cultural and historiographical image of Russia is of a society long ruled from the center through a chain of imperial and bureaucratic edicts falling on a phlegmatic population. One sees instead energetic individuals, local initiative, and grassroots organization. What motivated these people? What impelled the

founding of so many women's religious communities in Russia in the 19th and early 20th century?

It is presumptuous to speak for the voiceless dead. One can only speculate and point to large issues, the dynamic intermingling of high and low culture, exalting spiritual ideas and raw social dislocation. Russia in the 19th century experienced both a spiritual revival and a social and economic upheaval; both fed the growth of women's religious communities.

The social upheaval caused by modernization, urbanization and industrialization meant for rural Russia an intense period of outmigration, a massive exodus of peasants into the cities. In Russia this outmigration assumed a particular pattern in that men formed the overwhelming bulk of those leaving the villages and moved into the new industrial labor force. It was typical for men to marry before setting out for the cities, leaving a wife behind to maintain a share in the household land allotment. But the long-range effect of male outmigration was to increase the number of "family-less" women and widows in the rural areas. Male migrant laborers suffered higher mortality rates than did males in the villages because of poverty, disease and harsh labor conditions in the cities. For this reason, the number of widows was abnormally high in areas with high outmigration rates. For example, in Kostroma province, where the majority of men had left to work in St. Petersburg, of 61 peasant households in 4 villages studied in 1891, there were 26 widows ranging in age from 22 to 100, and only 2 widowers; and in 1906 a participant at the Ninth Annual Congress of Kostroma Physicians reported that while one would normally expect 120 old women for every 100 old men, in certain areas of Kostroma, there were 212 or even 286 old women for every 100 old men.[78]

It is possible that women's religious communities, composed of women that ministered overwhelmingly to elderly and to "family-less" women, were a particular, though by no means sufficient, response to the social dislocation in rural areas caused by migration and modernization. Spiritually, the formation of women's religious communities testifies to popular piety, to a deep expression of religious faith by those who founded them, those who entered them, and those who supported them. Those who entered women's religious communities found the possibility for an increased intensity in their experience of God in an environment supportive of retreat from the world in order to turn to the divine. Theologically, this was a returning to the core of Christianity, the contemplative tradition, and yet it was combined with a deep compassion for the world and ministering to the poor, the homeless, the sick, the elderly, and the young. Those who supported a community gained the opportunity for piety and charity. Everyone of a local community found the opportunity for liturgy and prayer, especially prayer for the dead. The more searching, spiritual and physical pilgrims of the world could find spiritual direction and guidance in the religious community. All these initiatives were spontaneous, genuine and local. They laughed in the face of government regulations and turned a bleak century of bureaucratization and centralization into an era of surprising religious vitality.

Notes

1. *Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii i rasporiazhenii po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniia* (hereafter PSPR), *Tsarstvovanie gosudaria imperatora Petra Fedorovicha*, no. 1755, February 16, 1762.

2. PSPR, *Tsarstvovanie imperatritsy Ekateriny Alekseevny*, no. 167, February 28, 1764.

3. V. V. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia o pravoslavnykh monastyriakh v rossiiskoi imperii*, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1890), p. xi.

4. PSPR, *Tsarstvovanie imperatritsy Ekateriny Alekseevny*, no. 212, November 12, 1764.

5. Gregory L. Freeze, *The Russian Levites: Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 40.

6. L. I. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii. Polnyi spisok vsekh 1105 nyne sushchestvuiushikh v 75 guberniiakh i oblastiakh Rossii (i 2 inostrannykh gosudarstvakh) muzhskikh i zhenskikh monastyrei, arkhiereiskikh domov i zhenskikh obshchin* (Moscow, 1908), p. ix.

7. This is the author's compilation of data in Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. xviii.

8. This is the author's compilation of data from L.I. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii.*

9. Sergii Chetverikov, *Starets Paisii Velichkovskii: His Life, Teaching, and Influence on Orthodox Monasticism*, trans. V. Lickwar (Belmont, 1980).

10. "Paissy Velitchkovsky," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 14 (New York, 1967), p. 593.

11. "Paissy Velitchkovsky," p. 593; Chetverikov, *Starets Paisii Velichkovskii*, pp. 285-322.

12. James H. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1966), pp. 269-328; and Nicholas Riasanovsky, *Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles* (Gloucester, 1965).

13. On the expansion of literacy see Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861-1917* (Princeton, 1985). On colportage see Stephen Batalden, "Colportage and the Russian Bible Controversy" (unpublished manuscript, 1985); Nicholas Astaf'ev, *Obshchestvo dlia rasprostraneniia: pisaniia v Rossii 1863-1893: Ocherk ego proiskhozhdeniia i deiatel'nosti* (St. Petersburg, 1895); and the annual reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

14. The expression "sweet silence" of Platon, Metropolitan of Moscow (1737-1812) was quoted in Robert Nichols, "Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow and the Awakening of Orthodoxy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1972), p. 29.

15. PSPR, *Tsarstvovanie imperatritsy Ekateriny Alekseevny*, no. 250, July 22, 1765.

16. PSPR, *Tsarstvovanie imperatritsy Ekateriny Alekseevny*, no. 250, July 22, 1765.

17. PSPR, *Tsarstvovanie imperatritsy Ekateriny Alekseevny*, no. 370, August 22, 1766.

18. N. Shchegol'kov, *Arzamasskii Nikolaevskii obshchezhitel'nyi zhenskii monastyr': Istoriia ego i opisanie* (Arzamas, 1903), p. 15.

19. N. Shchegol'kov, *Arzamasskii Nikolaevskii obshchezhitel'nyi zhenskii monastyr'*, pp. 15-16; I. N. Chetyrkin, *Istoriko-statisticheskoe opisania arzamasskoi Alekseevskoi zhenskoi obshchiny* (Nizhnii-Novgorod, 1887), p. 23.

20. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 551-553.

21. This is the author's compilation based on data from Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia;* and Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii.*

22. "Monashestvo," *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* vol. 38 (St. Petersburg, 1898), p. 730.

23. "Zhenskie obshchiny v nizhegorodskoi gubernii," *Zhurnal ministerstva vnutrennikh del,"* no. 19 (1847), p. 275.

24. See Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia,* p. xviii and pp. 5-8 for a list of the 95 men's monasteries; see p. xviii and pp. 4-17 for a list of the 28 men's monasteries that became women's monasteries, list of 38 new women's monasteries, and list of 131 *zhenskie obshchiny*, of which 79 eventually became monasteries, formed between 1772 and 1890. The author's observation of the differences in their origins is based on an analysis of the data in Zverinskii's 294 pages.

25. For an excellent discussion of charitable services in Russia see Adele Lindenmeyr, "Public Poor Relief and Private Charity in Late Imperial Russia" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1980).

26. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia,* p. 78; and Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 780.

27. Sebastian P. Brock and Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient* (forthcoming, University of California Press), p. xiv.

28. For mention of the phrase "jarring translucence" in relation to

ascetic practice see Sebastian P. Brock and Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women*, p. xviii.

29. "Zhenskie obshchiny v nizhegorodskoi gubernii," pp. 279-281; Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 135; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 544-547; "Sarafim of Sarov," *The Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, no. 34 (Gulf Breeze, 1983), pp. 23-24.

30. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 544-545; for a hagiographic life of Mel'gunova, or in religious life Aleksandra, see "Abbess Alexandra, Foundress of the Diveevo Convent," *Orthodox Life* 3 (1983), pp. 21-32.

31. V. Tenishchev, *Novoustroiaemaia Meliavskaia (Teplovskaia) zhenskaia obitel' v ardatovskom uezde nizhegorodskoi gubernii* (Ardatov, 1902).

32. V. Tenishchev, *Novoustroiaemaia Meliavskaia (Teplovskaia) zhenskaia obitel'* (Ardatov, 1902), p. 16.

33. A. Priklonskii, *Zhizn' pustynnitsy Anastasii (Semenovny Logachevoi), vposledstvii monakhini Afanasii, i vonikovenie na meste eia podvigov zhenskoi obshchiny* (Moscow, 1902), p. 11.

34. A. Priklonskii, *Zhizn' pustynnitsy Anastasii (Semenovny Logachevoi)*, p. 11.

35. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 550.

36. On Troitskaia Odigitrievskaia Zosimova, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 265, Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 514, Pimen, "Vospominaniia arkhimandrita Pimena, nastoiatelia Nikolaevskogo monastyria, chto na Ugreshe," *Chteniia v Imperatorskom Obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri moskovskom universitete*, no. 1 (1877), p. 295; on Ivanovskaia Kazanovskaia Sezenovskaia, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 151, and Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 814; on Toplovskaia Paraskevskaia, see Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 798, and E. S. Gorchakova, *Opisanie toplovskogo obshchezhitel'nogo monastyria sv. prepodobnomuchenitsy Paraskevy v Krymu* (Moscow, 1885), pp. 5-7; on Shamordinskaia Kazanskaia, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 159, Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 286, and John B. Dunlop, *Starets Amvrosy, Model for Dostoevsky's Starets Zosima*, (Belmont, 1972), pp. 98-99.

37. Dunlop, *Starets Amvrosy*, pp. 60-61.

38. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 259; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 184-185; *Tserkovnye vedomosti*, no. 42 (1888), pp. 63-65.

39. E.V. Novosil'tseva (psued. T. Tolycheva), *Spaso-Borodinskii monastyr'*

i ego osnovatel'nitsa. (Posviashchaetsia vsem pochitaiushchim pamiat' Margarity Mikhailovny Tuchkovoi) 3rd ed, (Moscow, 1889), pp. 16-28.

40. Pimen, "Vospominaniia arkhimandrita Pimena," p. 295; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 520-522.

41. "Igumen'ia Evkokiia, osnovatel'nitsa Boriso-Glebo-Anosina obshchezhitel'nogo devichi'ia monastyria," *Chteniia v Imperatorskom Obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri moskovskom universitete, no. 2 (1876), pp. i-iii; Pimen, "Vospominaniia arkhimandrita Pimena,"* pp. 288-292.

42. Pimen, "Vospominaniia arkhimandrita Pimena," p. 292.

43. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 519.

44. Pimen, "Vospominaniia arkhimandrita Pimena," pp. 300-303.

45. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 518.

46. *Monakhinia Angelina (v mire Aleksandra Filippovna Fon-Roze) osnovatel'nitsa i stroitel'nitsa sviato-troitskoi tvorozhkovskoi zhenskoi obshchiny vozvedennoi v monastyr' s naimenovaniem ego Sviato-Troitskim obshchezhitel'nym zhenskim monastyrem* (St. Petersburg, 1888).

47. *Monakhinia Angelina*, pp. 151-152.

48. *Monakhinia Angelina*, pp. 101-102.

49. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 911-912.

50. The Russian Orthodox tradition of entry into monastic life in mid-life was reinforced by the Spiritual Regulation of 1721, a pivotal Petrine reform, which made clear the state's regulation of church affairs and skepticism concerning the contemplative, monastic life. So that subjects should not flee the obligations of this world, entrance for men was strictly limited, and women were not permitted to take the veil until the age of fifty. It was assumed that nuns would be widows, who had already fulfilled their obligations as wives and mothers. In the event that a young girl should "desire to remain a young virgin with the intention of taking monastic orders" she was scrupulously supervised and made to "remain without orders until she is sixty, or at least fifty, years old." (Alexander V. Muller, trans. and ed., *The Spiritual Regulation of Peter the Great*, Seattle, 1972, pp. 79-80. For the Russian text, see *Polnoe sobranie zakonov rossiiskoi imperii s 1649 goda*, 1st series, no. 6, p. 3718.) These regulations were somewhat modified in the nineteenth century; a man could be tonsured at the age of 30, or 25 if he had theological schooling, but a woman had to wait until she was 40. (PSPR, *Tsarstvovanie gosudaria imperatora Nikolaia I*, no. 430, June 17, 1832.)

51. On the Rozhdestvo-Bogoroditskaia see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 219, and Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 779 ; On the Vvedenskaia see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 111; On the

Iletskaia Nikolaevskaia see Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 626; On the Sofiiskaia see Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 726, and Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 1999; On Panovskaia Troitskaia see Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 758-759; On Pokrovskaia see Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 626; On Malaia Pitsa Skorbiashchenskaia see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 232, and Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 541.

52. Pimen, "Vospominaniia arkhimandrita Pimena," pp. 303-307.

53. For the 38 women's monasteries that were formed as official monasteries between 1772 and 1890, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia.*

54. On Ioanno Marinskaia, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 157; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 782. On Bogoroditskaia, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 91; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 785.

55. Nicholas Zernov, *The Russians and Their Church* (London, 1945), p. 151.

56. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 254.

57. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 187.

58. V.N. Andreev, *Zhizn' i deiatel'nost' Baronessy Rozen' v monashestve Igumeni Mitrofanii* (St. Petersburg, 1876).

59. V.N. Andreev, *Zhizn' i deiatel'nost' Baronessy Rozen'*, pp. 89-105.

60. V.N. Andreev, *Zhizn' i deiatel'nost' Baronessy Rozen'*, p. 125.

61. V.N. Andreev, *Zhizn' i deiatel'nost' Baronessy Rozen'*, p. 52.

62. V.N. Andreev, *Zhizn' i deiatel'nost' Baronessy Rozen'*, pp. 50-51.

63. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 511.

64. See, for example, *Tserkovnye vedomosti*, no. 42, (1888), p. 207.

65. Examples of *zhenskie obshchiny* with shelters and schools for poor and orphaned girls of the clerical estate include: Arkadievskaia Viazemskaia (Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 78), Dmitrievskaia Milostova Bogoroditskaia (Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 135), and Tikhvinskaia Bogoroditskaia (Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 650). Examples of *zhenskie obshchiny* with shelters for orphans of the Russo-Turkish War include:

Nikonovskaia Sushkinskaia (Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 196), Pokrovskaia Balashovskaia (Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 207), and Troitskaia Dmitrievskaia (Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 262). An example of a *zhenskie obshchiny* with a shelter for orphans of the Russo-Japanese War is Sv. Ravnoapostol'naia Nina, founded in 1906 (Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 949).

66. On the Troitskaia Novaia, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 262, Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 949; on the Spasskaia Zelengorskaia, see Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 249, Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 542.

67. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 210; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 642.

68. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 90.

69. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 205; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 767.

70. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 206; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 543.

71. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 199.

72. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 199.

73. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 258; Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii*, p. 736.

74. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 119.

75. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 84.

76. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 159.

77. Zverinskii, *Material dlia istoriko topograficheskogo issledovaniia*, p. 271.

78. Barbara Engel, "The Woman's Side: Male Outmigration and the Family Economy in Kostroma Province" (unpublished manuscript, 1985), pp. 18-19.