Our Riviera, Coast of Health: Environment, Medicine, and Resort Life in Fin-de-Siècle Crimea

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This is a dissertation about a particular place, small in size and population, which existed in fin-de-siècle Russia and was known as the Russian Riviera. Stretching along the south and west coasts of the Crimean peninsula, 1300 miles away from St. Petersburg, Russia’s Riviera was the premiere travel destination within the tsarist empire.

“What was the Russian Riviera?” is the broad question at hand here. How did Russians understand their Riviera? What cultural influences shaped the questions raised by locals and visitors concerning the Riviera’s identity and future development? How did Russians give meaning to the place?

Through a thorough analysis of travel literature (by which I mean guidebooks, pamphlets, advertisements, published diaries, and personal reflections), medical reports, local administrative records, and above all newspapers, this dissertation sets out to answer these big questions. The Russian Riviera’s identity and its meaning as a place came to be directly related to the ways that Russians appropriated spaces in Crimea in new ways—ways that were both distinct to the region but also reflective of broader social and cultural processes taking place in the late tsarist empire. Russian travelers used them as a conduit to education and enlightenment. Crimea’s natural world was also rendered as a space of health and modern medical treatments. I suggest that the exploration and understandings of those natural spaces also gave Crimea new meaning as an integrated part of the Russian imperial and national homeland. The growth of resorts for Russian
travelers also created new urban spaces in Crimea. The towns and small cities of the coastlines were built up as sanitary spaces by local planners, doctors and engineers; as spaces of leisure for the tourist public; and they were also spaces of social interaction that revolved heavily around contested notions of masculinity and femininity, fashion, and promiscuity. Ultimately, Crimea’s coastlines became the Russian Riviera, endowed with meaning for Russians, because of the ways that they transformed its physical environment into a place of leisure, enlightenment, imperialism, health, sanitation, and highly gendered social interactions.

The contests over the identity of the Russian Riviera and the meaning that local and traveling Russians gave to it speak to a whole host of anxieties and aspirations that they held at the fin-de-siècle. More than a history of a small part of peninsula thousands of miles from the imperial centers, this dissertation sheds light on real concerns of nineteenth and early twentieth century Russians, including the changing relationships between humans and the natural world, modern medical knowledge, practices, and civil society, rapid urbanization, and the politics and public discourse surrounding sex. Like no other place in the tsarist empire, the history of the Russian Riviera matters as a site that reveals the extensive, interwoven links connecting travel, imperialism, medicine, gendered social environments, and the natural world.
Dedication

To my parents, Bill and Janet Lywood
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# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii  
Dedication ............................................................................................................................ iv  
Acknowledgments ............................................................................................................... v  
Vita .......................................................................................................................................... vii  
List of Figures ....................................................................................................................... ix  
Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 1  
Crimea: A Brief Sketch of its History, Visiting Public, and Resort Geography ............... 19  
Chapter 2: Environmental Cures on the Coast of Health ................................................. 84  
Chapter 3: Resort-City Improvements in the All-Russian Sanatorium ......................... 126  
Chapter 4: Velvet Love: Resort Ladies and Tatar Guides in the Popular Press .......... 167  
Conclusion ........................................................................................................................... 205  
Bibliography ....................................................................................................................... 209
List of Figures

Figure 1: Geological Map of Crimea ................................................................. 20
Figure 2: City Map of Yalta ........................................................................ 29
Figure 3: Alupka ....................................................................................... 35
INTRODUCTION

Is this not paradise?
- Catherine the Great (1787)

“What is Yalta?”

A city, where one comes to live a little, or to die.
Where, within efflorescent and marvelous nature, nests every kind of
vulgarity and moral filth.
A city of Messalina and Tatar guides.
Yalta – it is the all-Russian hell-hole
Where there is no understanding whatsoever of spiritual life
Where people filled with rage and with nothing to do are causing a racket
It’s where one eats, drinks, and gossips.
Yalta – it is a beauty in worn out boots. It is the all-Russian, first-class
resort.¹

This is a dissertation about a particular place, small in size and population, which
existed at the fin-de-siècle of the tsarist empire and was known as the Russian Riviera.
Stretching along the south and west coasts of the Crimean peninsula, 1300 miles away
from St. Petersburg, Russia’s Riviera and its keystone resort, Yalta, came to be, between

¹ Dzhin, “Teny Zhizni” Russian Riviera, 12 July, 1913.
the 1860s and 1914, the premiere travel destination within the tsarist empire. It was a location in which the peculiarities of environment, health concerns, urban development, gender, sexuality, an active public sphere, and the politics of ethnicity and empire came together to forge a peculiarly vibrant and progressive corner of the tsarist state.

Crimea was the destination of some of Russia’s first travelers, including royalty and others who set out on grand tours in the early nineteenth century. It became connected with Russia through soldiers’ participation in the Crimean War, through the construction of railways, and through shipping routes across the Black Sea. Tsars Alexander II, Alexander III, and Nicholas II made annual visits to Crimea’s Black Sea coast. A cadre of wealthy aristocrats followed them, purchasing land and building magnificent villas across the mountainous landscape. Crimea was also the site of the birth of organized tourism in Russia, where bourgeois Russians joined aristocrats in pursuit of leisure, health, and status. Rail links to the peninsula were completed in the 1870s that brought members of Russia’s reform and industrialization era middle class to the Riviera, in numbers that would exceed 100,000 per year before temporarily plummeting in 1914, the end point of this study. The resort towns along the south coast which blossomed coincidently grew into some of the most modern cities in the tsarist empire, complete with many amenities of world class resorts. In the late nineteenth- and early-twentieth century, the towns of the Russian Riviera grew from a set of small fishing villages into burgeoning modern towns and cities, all part of the most fashionable tourist destination in
the tsarist empire. Russia’s Riviera, in the words of the foremost expert on the region’s history, became the place where Russians set out to “find their own lost paradise.”

Like Crimea’s journalists and satirists of the early twentieth century, “What is Yalta?” or more appropriately, “What was the Russian Riviera?” is the broad question at hand here. How did Russians understand their Riviera? What cultural influences shaped the questions raised by locals and visitors concerning the Riviera’s identity and future development? How did Russians give meaning to the place? Through a thorough analysis of travel literature (guidebooks, pamphlets, advertisements, published diaries, and personal reflections), medical reports, local administrative records, and above all newspapers, this dissertation sets out to answer these big questions.

The Russian Riviera’s identity and its meaning as a place came to be directly related to the ways that Russians appropriated spaces in Crimea in new ways—ways that were both distinct to the region but also reflective of broader social and cultural processes taking place in the late tsarist empire. I argue that natural spaces in Crimea were given new meaning in several respects. Russian travelers used them as a conduit to education and enlightenment. Crimea’s natural world was also rendered as a space of health and modern medical treatments. I suggest that the exploration and understandings of those natural spaces also gave Crimea new meaning as an integrated part of the Russian imperial and national homeland. The growth of resorts for Russian travelers also created new urban spaces in Crimea. The towns and small cities of the coastlines were built up as sanitary spaces by local planners, doctors and engineers; as spaces of leisure for the

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tourist public; and they were also spaces of social interaction that revolved heavily around contested notions of masculinity and femininity, fashion, and promiscuity. Ultimately, Crimea’s coastlines became the Russian Riviera, endowed with meaning for Russians, because of the ways that they transformed its physical environment into a place of leisure, enlightenment, imperialism, health, sanitation, and highly gendered social interactions.

Although each chapter is in many ways an isolated angle on the history of Russia’s Riviera and Russia itself, all are connected by the ways that I explore the relationships between physical spaces, the ways that specific groups of people utilized those spaces, and the representations of space and place in public discourse.³ Cultural geography has taught us that spaces are meaningful, and speak to the values, accomplishments, and aspirations of its inhabitants. I have attempted – where sources have allowed – to move between the realms of discourse, physical environments, and personal experiences of the Russian Riviera.⁴

The contests over the identity of the Russian Riviera and the meaning that local and traveling Russians gave to it also speak to a whole host of anxieties and aspirations that they held at the fin-de-siècle. More than a history of a small part of a peninsula thousands of miles from the imperial centers – which I think is nonetheless merited in its own right – this dissertation sheds light on real concerns of nineteenth and early-twentieth century Russians, including the changing relationships between humans and the

natural world, modern medical knowledge and practices, the relationship between the state and civil society, rapid urbanization, and the politics and public discourse surrounding sex. Like no other place in the tsarist empire, the history of the Russian Riviera matters as a site that reveals the extensive, interwoven links connecting travel, medicine, gendered social environments, the natural world, and even imperialism.

**Travel and Tourism**

When I began this study, Crimea’s visitors – tourists – were to be the principle actors, and the story was to be one of the origins of Russian tourism in Crimea. Although I have generally shifted my focus to the Riviera itself and its meaning as a place, travel and tourism remain a core focus of this dissertation. Travelers during the season (April to November) outnumbered local residents in Crimea’s resorts. Their demands for rest and relaxation, for cultural consumption, for medical treatments, and for the amenities of a modern livable city drove the development of the physical spaces and discursive representations of the Russian Riviera.

When taking tourists as a focus of study in Crimea it is important to determine exactly what is meant by the term “tourist.” Sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, literary critics and only more recently historians, have struggled with defining “tourism” itself, and especially the ways that it differs from “travel.” In the 1950s, the French geographer and social critic André Siegfried associated travel with high culture while saying tourism was the shallow amusements of the masses, unable to distinguish for
themselves between filth and beauty. Soon afterwards, Paul Fussell argued that, “the traveler was active; he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience. The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him.” John Urry’s influential book, *The Tourist Gaze*, further qualified the negative connotations associated with tourism, arguing that the Tourist’s gaze (he borrows from Foucault’s idea of the gaze) was something socially constructed, systematized, and the product of power relations. He particularly stressed the role of the tourist industry in defining and limiting the experiences of tourists, while he questioned the ability of tourists to actually be “active” in the sense that Fussell had suggested.

Dean MacCannell’s *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* gave the debate over the activity or passivity of tourists renewed sophistication. For him, in contrast to his predecessors, tourists are active seekers of experience and knowledge. Tourists were not passive observers, subject to the whims of the tourist industry. They participated in a conscious “search for authenticity,” where they projected their own meanings onto tourist sites, sought new experiences and real sites unseen in their everyday lives.

A search for authenticity through tourism was an absolutely fundamental feature of the phenomenon in Crimea. In Chapter One I argue that the roots of tourism were linked to the development of excursions (in fact many guidebooks refer only to those who

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6 Ibid., 3.
went on excursions as *turisty*, while other visitors were simply the incoming public [*priezhaia publika*]). I suggest that in Crimea, excursions – walks or tours carried out by scholars, students, teachers, and tourists to sites of natural or historical significance – ushered in new and important forms of interaction between Russians and their natural and historical environments. I analyze excursion pedagogy and locate the roots of the excursion in scholarship and education, rather than primarily leisure.⁹ I point to the ways that Russians came to view the natural world in Crimea as a classroom and as the best means to achieve enlightenment, thus tying the excursion and tourism itself to serious issues including citizenship, state service, science, and progress.

I also use travel literature extensively to understand the institutional structures and physical environments in Crimea, and the ways that the Russian Riviera could be imagined by readers. Rudy Koshar’s analysis of Western European guidebooks is particularly relevant. He compellingly argues how tourist guidebooks produced images and expectations for their readers, before they even traveled, or if they even travel at all. In the process of reading tourist guidebooks, readers themselves, to borrow Koshar’s word, “inhabited” these texts. They participated in (by imagining) a wide range of tourist activities from mountain climbing to relaxing aboard a cruise ship, perhaps without leaving their homes. Individuals inhabited the different worlds each in their own way, to be sure, each making them their own. At the same time, he argues, guidebook authors

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were responsible for inspiring (and limiting) these images and expectations within readers’ imaginations.\\(^{10}\)

In Russia, guidebooks carried on the tradition established by romantic writers in the 1820s and 1830s of taking the exotic landscapes of the Black Sea coast and turning them into something accessible for Russians.\\(^{11}\) Russians gave the coastline special significance in the empire, drawing upon European aesthetic principles, geographical knowledge and a growing concern about national identity in the late nineteenth century. Guidebooks were thus crucial in getting the public to imagine Crimea as a Riviera and as part of Russia, rather than an oriental southern periphery. However, because Crimea was a place of aesthetic beauty, the results were somewhat different than along the Volga River, for example. Instead of viewing Crimea as something that possessed “inward or metaphysical significance,” as Christopher Ely has argued regarding the Volga region, Russians found their own paradise, their Riviera—a national counterpart to those foreign paradises on the Mediterranean.\\(^{12}\)

Guidebook authors and their readers also extended Russian political authority over the Black Sea Coast, much as was the case in many other parts of the world. Robert Campbell has argued that nineteenth century travelers to Alaska carried out a distinctly political and U.S. imperial project. In a similar way, Russian travelers, by and large, were not agents of the state, nor were they carrying out this political project knowingly. They

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\\(^{10}\) Rudy Koshar, *German Travel Cultures* (Oxford: Berg, 2000).
were, however, critical for the expansion of imperial power in Crimea. They commanded, in Campbell’s words, “an imperial common property,” a sort of power over territory and capacity to mobilize its human and natural resources toward political, economic and military ends.” The tourists’ presence and their written passages exercised a form of state power while appearing to have no political effect whatsoever. Guides displayed the power of a dominant worldview, even if it was hidden as common sense.13

Interactions between Russians and their environment on Crimean excursions worked to nurture an emotional attachment to the native land, while excursions to sites of historical significance taught Russians about the ways that they and Crimea itself were products of historical interactions among different nationalities. Russian excursionists moved fluidly between Russian and non-Russian lands (in an ethnic sense), or between East and West, even over the course of a single trip. As such, they came to understand Russia and its natural environment in ways that brought Crimea into their imagined community of the Russian nation. Crimea played an essential role in popularizing the first excursions – an activity millions perform in Russia annually today – and it is important to understand not only the roots of the phenomenon, but the ways in which Russians could physically, mentally, and spiritually experience and view their environment, nation, and empire differently by participating.

Sexuality, Morality, and the Boulevard Press

If Crimea was a place where tourists could come and obtain education, enlightenment and spiritual fulfillment, the incoming public was equally able, in the minds of Crimean journalists, to find a culture of promiscuity and moral degeneracy along the Russian Riviera. Chapter Four is concerned with the ways that living the resort life led to explorations of femininity and masculinity, particularly on Yalta’s boulevards and in its boulevard press. Through an analysis of the satire written by Crimean journalists, I propose that Russian Riviera journalists imagined a culture of promiscuity, associated with satirical characters known as “Resort Ladies,” which became one of the most pervasive features of the region’s identity for visitors and locals alike.

Newspapers are valuable sources that I use to both determine the facts of Crimea’s history and the ways that it was presented discursively to literate audiences. When the state eased censorship laws following the 1905 Revolution, the role of the newspaper in the production, dissemination, and discussion of cultural values was fundamentally transformed. If leading up to 1905 public discourse in tsarist Russia was dominated by the intelligentsia, working in discrete circles and salons and within the strictures of the autocratic state, the post-1905 period saw a flood of popular commercial journalism and literature which challenged the elite’s domination of what readers consumed.\(^4\) The prominent new player after this shift, and Crimea was no exception, was boulevard literature and the boulevard press, described by traditionalists as cheap

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amusements, counterfeit, and geared towards those lacking the intelligence for real culture.

The perceived threat of this new alternative to the traditional intelligentsia was very real, for the boulevard press carried substantial weight in shaping attitudes, values, and behavior, in both public and private life.

As Laura Engelstein has shown, the boulevard press was powerful for a number of reasons. It was “by definition indiscriminate” in that it did not have a target audience; it simply targeted the largest commercial audience possible. The boulevard press mixed genres, confused their boundaries, and moved between high and low culture fluidly. It influenced gender boundaries as women entered into journalism and publishing. It muddled class boundaries and traditional ranks, affording pleasure to readers for whom simple pleasure or leisure was often a lofty aspiration. The press became, on multiple levels, a force for social and cultural upheaval that reached a vast if primarily urban audience.\(^\text{15}\)

Topics that dominated the boulevard press tended to be sensational, and it is no surprise therefore that the issues of crime and sex filled their pages, hence my extensive use of journalistic satire in Chapter Four. Simply calling to attention questions of pleasure and desire outside of the restricted domains of the intelligentsia was radical in of itself, but as the popular press became increasingly influential, the politics of sexual

\(^{15}\) Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness, Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 369.
representation, in many ways best seen in newspapers, became among the most important political debates in post-1905 Russia, rather than a frivolous diversion.\textsuperscript{16}

There were several newspapers in the Crimea that highlighted and in fact centered on resort culture. The first of these, \textit{Krymskii Kurortnyi Listok} (The Crimean Resort Sheet) ran from 1911 until, not coincidentally, July 1914. Initially it ran only as a four page insert in one of the Crimea’s largest and most influential papers, \textit{Iuzhnie Vedomosti} (The Southern Gazette), published in the political capital, transportation hub and largest city in the Crimea, Simferopol.

\textit{Krymskii Kurortnyi Listok} specifically devoted itself to the traveling public. In the very first issue, the editors wrote that, “this publication has set itself the goal to serve the needs of the Crimean resorts, to get the incoming public acquainted with Crimea’s resorts and to give them the necessary reference information and news.”\textsuperscript{17} Each edition was divided into two discrete sections, the first giving news about local issues and the development of resorts, articles about Russian and international resorts and feuilletons about local resort life, the second offering reference information that paralleled what was found in tourist guidebooks.

The second prominent resort newspaper was entitled \textit{Russkaia Riv’era} (The Russian Riviera). This paper ran from 1903-4, took a brief hiatus during the Revolution of 1905, returned in 1907 and ran until 1917, although the articles on resort life had all but disappeared by the outbreak of war in 1914. During this time it was the predominant


\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Krymskii Kurortnyi Listok}, 23 April, 1911.
newspaper in Yalta. The newspaper, in addition to relaying telegrams and political
discourse from the Russian capitals and around the world, brought to life local politics
and the minutiae of Yalta’s boulevards and parks with continual articles on the city
administration and the resort commission, local poetry and short stories, and satire about
everything in between.18

Identifying a newspaper’s tendencies can be difficult because they are by nature
group projects, with various contributors, sections, and readers. The differences between
Crimean newspapers were especially subtle. Although they may have been competitors,
each shared a similar vision, as it was in the interest of the papers to support the resorts
and the lifestyles associated with them. They criticized the local administration for
delaying, or at least not adequately supporting the growth of the Crimean resort
industries. They valued recreation, health and the overall experience of travel. The
intended audience for resort newspapers was the “incoming public,” a group that by the
early twentieth century was primarily middle class, broadly defined, but also included
everyone from students to the visiting nobility.

Much of their intended audience was also on vacation. Sensationalized stories
about the lighter side of life were a strong selling point, hence the recurrent satires on
resort life. Naturally seeking to expand their circulation as much as possible, stories in the
newspapers were shaped to sell. Therefore, the language that newspapers used and the
values that they contested in order to shape resort culture, reflected readers’ prior
experience. Biases in newspapers are useful because they simultaneously illuminate the

18 See Barbara T. Norton and Jehanne M. Gheith, eds, An Improper Profession: Women, Gender, and
Journalism in Late Imperial Russia (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).
values that journalists hoped to convey and the values of their readership. Despite the fact that different groups and different individuals would have differing opinions and interpretations of the content of newspapers, journalistic satire mattered because it gave people a recognizable common frame of reference for their experiences.

Journalists recognized that satire was a particularly useful tool when trying to sell meaningful messages and stories to a relaxing public. Similar to their counterparts in Odessa, lighter-minded journalists wrote sensational pieces, but also carried out the intelligentsia’s “civilizing mission” in their publications. There was a distinct moral agenda imbued in the satire of Crimean papers that reflected the liberal intelligentsia’s desire to create a clean, just, and respectable society. Journalists’ stark condemnation of certain new sexual attitudes and practices in Crimea pointed to how resort life in many ways revolved around sex and sexual discourse. Chapter Four proposes that sexual discourse and the surrounding politics led Crimea to become a place whose social environments were distinctly associated with “immoral” activity.

**Medicine, Doctors, and Urbanization**

Geographers such as Robin Kearns and Wilbert Gesler have emphasized the necessity of situating health in the simultaneously tangible, negotiated, and experienced realities of place. They convincingly argue that scholars need to move beyond studies of health that incorporate only disease ecology and health care provision, to look at cultural

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landscape, meaning-making, and identity in order to analyze the social ways that people experience disease. Chapters Two and Three uncover the relationship between people and their physical environment, the mental construction of places and landscapes, and the social and political contests which changed spaces within a health care regime along the Crimean peninsula.

By the turn of the century, Yalta, the centerpiece of the Russian Riviera along the south coast of Crimea, claimed the title of “All-Russian Sanatorium.” The city’s residents, administrators, and visitors considered the town itself to be a medical facility. Collectively, they strove to transform the region as a whole into a place of healing, characterized by local therapeutic methods, including hydrotherapy, balneotherapy, solar treatments, grape treatments, physiotherapy, and sea-bathing. To “sanitize” the environment, locals secured fresh water reserves, disinfected apartments, financed street sweeping and waste disposal facilities, cleaned the beaches and coastal waters of the Black Sea, and developed necessary infrastructure and conservation programs for patients to enjoy the scenery and healing potential of Crimea’s mountains. The initiatives encouraged pre-eminent health care workers to come and build state-of-the-art sanatoria and mud-baths, while the local administration passed strict laws to promote healthy living. Crimea quickly gained a reputation across the Russian empire as a place for healing, and with Yalta as its gateway, it became the model treatment “facility” for the world’s largest country.

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Chapter Two looks at how medical and travel literature appropriated the Crimean environment as a therapeutic and curative source. Doctors across Russia recommended patients with a wide variety of afflictions visit a place such as Crimea’s coastline, where they studied and developed region-specific treatments designed to improve the body’s immune systems. This chapter offers a detailed history of the treatments available in Crimea, pointing to the ways that Russians could experience disease along the Russian Riviera. I analyze the environment, medical knowledge, and treatment regimes, arguing that a predominantly environmentalist vision of pathology and medicine persisted in Crimea despite the onset of the bacteriological revolution. Given the persistence of environmentalist medical practices espoused by doctors who published widely in journals, newspapers, and tourist guidebooks I also suggest that they worked to build an image of the Russian Riviera as a “Coast of Health,” a site whose environment was conducive above all to healing.

As development intensified and the numbers of visitors to Crimea sky-rocketed in the late nineteenth century, the environmental qualities that prompted the moniker “Coast of Health” were being threatened by the processes of urbanization. Chapter Three is about the ways that urban planners, many of whom were doctors, set about to preserve the natural environment while at the same time creating livable and comfortable urban environments. I argue that resorts such as Yalta became “hygiene polities” in that questions of sanitation and city improvements dominated much of the political discourse in local administrations, resulting in programs that created some of the most sanitary places in all of the empire.
Chapter Three contributes to lines of history that, in addition to the central problems of sanitation and urbanization, explore the relationship between physicians, public associations, local governments, and state politics. I suggest that in the case of Yalta we see a great deal of cooperation between these groups, and minimal conflict between tsarist authorities and medical practitioners in the so called civil society. I argue that the dual role played by physicians in Crimea (as medical practitioners and state servants on local and regional administrations) demonstrated an emphasis on public service and commitment to “society” rather than to private practice or profit.

Throughout the dissertation, I aim to emphasize the multiplicity of images and experiences that gave the Russian Riviera its multi-faceted character, while at the same time speaking to broader empire-wide themes of pre-revolutionary Russian history. The many-sided identity and meaning that Russians gave to their Riviera reveals more than concrete information about resort life, as it grants insight into the multifarious concerns and beliefs shared by writers and the Russian public as they encountered modernity.

**A Note on Word Usage:** For simplicity’s sake I use the words/phrases “Crimea,” “Crimea’s Coast,” and “Russian Riviera” interchangeably throughout the dissertation, but I refer only to *the series of resorts situated between Alushta and Balaklava on the south coast of the peninsula, but also Evpatoria-Saky on the west coast*. This dissertation is not generally concerned with Crimea’s major urban centers of Simferopol, Sevastopol, Kerch, and Feodosia, nor is it concerned with the steppe region north of the coastal
mountains, which in fact is the largest part of Crimea, but hardly influenced by Russia’s traveling public.

I also use the word “Tatars” regularly, and refer only to Crimean Tatars, a group in many ways distinct from other Tatar communities in the tsarist empire.
CRIMEA: A BRIEF SKETCH OF ITS HISTORY, VISITING PUBLIC, AND RESORT

GEOGRAPHY

Although certainly not a comprehensive history of the origins of Russian travel to Crimea, some essential background information is necessary to appreciate the issues discussed in the dissertation’s subsequent chapters. Crimean history stretches back long before classical antiquity. Archaeologists in the 1980s discovered remnants of human activity in the Paleolithic era near the town of Gaspra. Settlements appeared in the 9th to 6th centuries BCE, particularly towards the coastline where it was possible both to hunt animals such as deer, along the mountain slopes, as well as fish and collect shells from the Black Sea. Known as Cimmerians, these peoples were soon defeated by Scythian armies in the 7th century BCE, driven off the core of the peninsula, and only settlements along the south coast remained. As evidenced by the discoveries of stone axes in dozens of locales along the coast and upon the mountain plateaus, as well as bones from domesticated animals, it seems that the population along the coastline, particularly near Yalta, rose dramatically in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE, and the local population came to
be known as the Tauri. At the same time, Greek settlements appeared alongside the Tauri, and according to Herodotus the two groups fought relentlessly, the Tauri depicted as marauding pirates, concerned only with warfare by the famous historian. The Greeks in particular settled at Chersonesus, now just east of Sevastopol, while the peninsula from this point forward would be known as Taurida [Tavrida].

Through to the middle ages, Crimea was subsequently controlled by Romans, Goths, Huns, Bulgars, Khazars, Kievan Rus’, Byzantines, Kipchaks, Venetians, and Mongols. By the 13th century CE, the Genoese wrested control of trade along the south coast for two hundred years until Crimean Tatars, who had inhabited the steppe north of the coastline, combined forces with the Ottomans and expelled the Genoese merchants from Caffa, their largest trading port (now Feodosia). Partly independent and partly subject to the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate existed from 1441-1783, until the arrival of Russian forces under Catherine II.

Substantial Russian interests in Crimea began under the reign of Tsarina Elizabeth (r. 1741-62) who realized the importance of establishing access to the Mediterranean Sea (through the Black Sea) for pursuing interests in Europe and stabilizing a frontier to aid campaigns against Poland. She also recognized the Tatars themselves as threats to southern Christian subjects who had been subject to regular raids and political domination. Beginning in the 1760s, under Catherine’s guidance, plans were laid for an invasion of the peninsula with the goal of subordinating the “barbarous and savage” Crimean Tatars. After a series of wars from 1768-74, which resulted in Russian victory and the expulsion of Ottoman influence, Catherine ordered that an independent Crimean state be created. She nonetheless imposed an unpopular Tatar ruler and the next ten years saw public opposition to him rise to the point where Catherine lost her patience, and in 1783, she simply announced the formal annexation of Crimea into her empire, and
General Potemkin was sent with posters to inform the new Crimean subjects of their situation. There was virtually no resistance.\(^{22}\)

Having annexed the peninsula, Russian imperial authorities proceeded to try to co-opt Crimean Tatar elites (beys and mirzas) into the imperial fold in an attempt to integrate entire communities into the empire, but the results were mixed, and the Tatars’ early experiences of the Russian empire, “ranged between willing participation and mild resistance but eventually settled into a pattern of studied disengagement.”\(^{23}\)

Authorities in Crimea, including Prince G. A. Potemkin (governed 1783-91), the Duke de Richelieu (g. 1805-14), and Count M. S. Vorontsov (g. 1823-54) each saw resettlement as a key feature of colonial rule, and brought in communities of Russians, Greeks, Armenians, Gypsies, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Dukhobors, Molokans, Old Believers, and Germans who formed settlements alongside the Crimean Tatars and other local groups, including the Karaites, a non-Rabbinical Jewish sect which had inhabited Tavrida since the eighth century.\(^{24}\)

At the same time, Crimean Tatars were emigrating en masse (up to two thirds of the population) to the Ottoman empire, and although they remained the dominant Crimean ethnic group until the late nineteenth century, by mid-century there was a substantial demographic shift towards an exceptionally mixed population.

Russians began traveling to Crimea shortly after conquest, though it would be many years before it became a popular destination. The most famous early traveler to Crimea was Catherine II, whose grand tour in 1787 to the southern lands her armies had


\(^{24}\) Ibid., 11-12.
annexed brought her to the peninsula where she met with local Crimean Tatar amirs and made ostentatious parades along roads specifically constructed for her visit. Preparations were extensive for the visit, and carried out under the direction of Potemkin, to the point where “Potemkin Villages,” facades set up to impress the Empress, became the stuff of legend (though it is likely that Potemkin Villages were actually just that: legends propagated as part of court intrigue). The most crucial feature of Catherine’s Crimean tour was how it symbolized the importance of Crimea to the empress and to Russia, particularly as the ancient site where according to the *Primary Chronicle* Prince Vladimir had been baptized, giving birth to the Russian Church. The tour also played up links between Russia and Crimea’s Greek and Byzantine heritage, in an attempt to place the peninsula, often seen at the time as the Orient, firmly within “Europe.”

Because of the difficulties in simply getting to Crimea in the early nineteenth century, few undertook the long and often dangerous journey, but by the 1830s, more and more of the nobility began embarking upon grand tours to the peninsula. Roads constructed under Vorontsov, particularly a coastal highway (which nonetheless remained in rotten condition for decades), enabled such tours. In the 1830s as well, the first steamship lines erratically began taking passengers on the ship “Peter the Great” from Odessa to Yalta, Feodosia, and Kerch. Another line ran from Odessa to Evpatoria, Sevastopol, and Yalta. Tickets prices were high, ranging up to forty rubles each way, limiting possibilities for those outside the aristocracy. Nonetheless, many in the nobility

began to travel to Crimea, drawn by its natural environment, its ancient history, and its “exotic” peoples. As such, Crimea became among the popular places where the nobility could acquire sophistication, education, and cultural capital through travel, just as their European counterparts had done on “grand tours” for two centuries.

Along the south coast where resorts would ultimately appear, populations were extremely sparse at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Evpatoria was a small trading village populated by a few hundred Turks, Crimean Tatars, and Greeks. Yalta did not even appear on maps until the 1830s, as it was only home to a handful of merchants who traded with the Ottomans, and a quarantine station. Even once development gained some steam in the 1830s, there were still but thirty-eight buildings in Yalta when Nicholas I visited in 1837.

Alexander I was the first of the Romanovs to purchase property in Crimea, that being the territory of Lower Oreanda just to the west of Yalta. The Vorontsov family owned all of the land which would become Alupka, as well as Massadra to the east of Yalta. General F. D. Reveliati owned chunks of land in Yalta and across the southern coast. The Dondukov-Korsakov, Smirnov, and Mordvinov families owned the bulk of the remaining land that surrounded Yalta, eventually limiting the extent to which the city could expand. Prominent noble families – and there were dozens I cannot list here – thus not only were the ones travelling to Crimea in the first half of the nineteenth century, they came to own nearly all of the land and controlled the region’s development for decades.

A shift in the ways that Crimea fit into the Russian imagination took place following the Crimean War. The peninsula gained new recognition as not simply an
exotic peripheral territory of the empire, but as a place that saw the sacrifice of thousands of soldiers in defense of the motherland. People now knew about Crimea through the soldiers that fought there, the press (and Leo Tolstoy) wrote extensively about it, and the peninsula became much closer and more familiar to Russia. In addition, Dr. S. B. Botkin, having worked alongside the troops, came to see Crimea’s fresh air and mild climate as suitable for treating breathing disorders. Empress Maria Alexandrovna suffered from such a lung disease and, to offer access to Crimea’s natural treatments, the royal family bought the territory of Livadia, previously owned and used by vintners, in 1861. After the original Livadia Palace was built there by 1866, the tsar’s family would spend its summers almost annually just to the west of Yalta. The presence of the tsar and his family acted as a sort of advertisement for Crimea’s south coast, the first step towards making it such a fashionable travel destination.27

The peninsula was connected with the rest of the empire by railroad for the first time in 1875 with the construction of the Lozovo-Sevastopol rail link, which connected the railroads from Moscow through Kursk and Kharkiv, to Melitopol, Simferopol and finally Sevastopol. Even still, it was grossly expensive to travel along the rail line until 1893 when a single tariff law was passed that decreased prices to the point where those outside of the land-owning classes could finally afford to visit Crimea.

In addition to the rail link, the Russian Society of Shipping and Trade (ROPiT) was founded in 1856 and became even a superior alternative for transportation to Crimea. Subsidized by the tsarist government it quickly became the largest shipping company in

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27 Malgin, Russkaia Riv’era, 78.
Russia and in fact one of the largest in the world. The company carried both freight and people around Russia (and the Black Sea in particular), as well as to the Mediterranean and beyond. One of the first lines set up was a regular route (routes in the past were sporadic) from Odessa to Kerch with stops at Evpatoria, Sevastopol, Yalta, and Feodosia. By the 1880s, the company was taking over 150,000 passengers along its Odessa-Crimea-Caucasus route (though not all were tourists). By 1910, the ships completed the route five times weekly. Given that the railroad went only to Sevastopol, visitors often preferred to come to Yalta or other south coast resorts by boat rather than travel by coach for the sake of safety and convenience, making sea travel the most popular form of transportation to Crimea resorts. ROPiT was essential for Russian tourism. It was the major institution that brought organized travel to the Crimea, paving the way for bourgeois tourists to visit, along with aristocrats.

**Who was the Incoming Public?**

Tourism did not become a mass phenomenon in Crimea during the tsarist years in the way it would later in the twentieth century under the Soviet tourist industry. The Russian Riviera was initially only visited by those of noble birth, but as the Russian middle class grew along with industrialization, especially in the 1890s, the incoming public became a mix of aristocrats and various members of the middle class. Although many residents spoke about making the Russian Riviera accessible to anyone suffering from breathing disorders, the cost of living remained prohibitively expensive to workers or peasants.
For nobles, visiting Crimea was a crucial sign of their aristocratic bona fides. As the decades progressed up to the First World War, dozens of magnificent palaces and “dachas” were constructed all along the coastline by the empire's wealthiest families (such as the Yusupovs, who had both a palace and a magnificent hunting chalet). Crimea also became the summer home to lesser members of the nobility as well, who came from across the empire, purchased property, and built dachas all along the coastline and in the resort towns. Yalta was seen by one visitor in 1889 as the place where the most fashionable, high-ranking, beautiful, and rich could be found.28

Nonetheless, following the Great Reforms of the 1860s and industrialization in the following decades, the newly established bourgeois in Russia would soon join the aristocracy in Crimea. They pressed for the right to be part of the highest rungs of society not only through wealth but also social activity and leisure. Russian cities grew rapidly in the final decades of tsarist rule, and the number of people working in the upper echelons of industry, in commercial enterprises, and in the professions grew as well. These people were active participants in voluntary associations, fostered a burgeoning print culture, played a prominent role in local governance through the zemstva, worked to expand higher education, became patrons for the arts, and served intermittently in the State Duma. The middle class lived not only in St. Petersburg and Moscow but also in provincial cities and cities in non-Russian regions of the empire such as Warsaw and Odessa.29 On a cultural level, the middle class developed its own (however contested)

28 S. Filippov, Po Krymu: Otrazheniia (Moscow, 1889).
sense of self, challenged ideas about how to interact in social relations, and raised questions about gender norms, class itself, consumption, and leisure. Crimea soon became a contested space as the bourgeois flocked to one of the empire’s most fashionable corners, challenging the aristocracy’s claims to material and cultural superiority. Historian and Crimean-specialist Andrei Malgin described Crimea as a mixer, of aristocracy and bourgeoisie, of the old and the new.

Each year of the Russian Riviera’s existence, however, it became more and more accessible to the middle class, though never really to the point where workers or peasants could afford to visit. Students (though generally from respectable gymnasiums) did appear in Yalta especially after the turn of the century, and especially during June and July when aristocrats preferred to avoid the heat (see Chapter One). Nonetheless, access to Crimea’s south coast was severely limited to those with the means, save for the local Tatars and other long-standing residents.

**Basics of Resort Geography in Crimea**

Yalta, the nexus of resort life in Crimea, had an urban layout that came to reflect the needs of its fashionable visitors, though the resort itself often did not live up to the standards of its discriminating public. Home to only one thousand residents in the 1860s, the population grew to 4,000 by the 1870s, 10,000 by the 1890s, and 30,000 by 1914. The

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31 Malgin, *Russkaia Riv’era*, 220.*
number of visitors during the summer would typically meet or slightly exceed the resident population, however, doubling the city’s population during the season. “The city of Yalta does not at all compare to the typical cities of our native land,” wrote one of Crimea’s leading publishers and patrons, Nina Lupandina, in 1897. “Although having urban consciousness for thirty years, Yalta has never sought to be the economic center of its *uezd*, but has been constructed to achieve one goal – to please the visiting and wealthy public during the summer time…”32


Yalta’s Embankment joined each of the city’s nerve centers, making it among the busiest places in the town. It began in the “old town,” the most eastward section of Yalta, the hub of trade and transportation, featuring the pier, harbor, the bazaar, and rows of street vendors. The old town, despite its meager size, had the busy feel of a much larger city, though the goods being traded were generally produced locally. The old town was also the point of entry for the majority of visitors to Yalta – those who arrived aboard the ships of the ROPiT. Although the old town was home to a large, second-class hotel, the Bristol, few travelers spent much time here. The offices of the shipping/tourism company were located where the old town reached the sea, directly adjacent to Yalta’s city administration and Duma, and not far from the headquarters of the Crimean Alpine Club. It was from this point that most travelers acquired the necessary information about the city and its features, hired transportation and moved straight to the west, along the Embankment that separated the “new town” from the bay.

The Embankment itself acted as the southern border of the “new town,” and stretched between the two small rivers which ran through Yalta, the Derekoi, marking the border with the old town to the east, and the Uchan-Su in the west. Despite its centrality to the city, the Embankment did not garner positive impressions from many visitors. They complained that it was too narrow, that you could only walk two-by-two down its sidewalk, that the dust from the street would rise up in the wind and dirty your clothes and your lungs. The Embankment was noisy, especially as the twentieth century wore on and the number of automobiles steadily grew, and it was busy – hardly the sort of retreat from city life that many visitors desired. Intermittently you could stop and purchase
souvenirs or get your photo taken. Yalta’s city beach, sandwiched between the Embankment and the Black Sea, was no less detestable for most. Visitors noticed that it was comprised primarily of large, often sharp rocks, which grew steadily larger and more dangerous if one ventured into the sea itself.

Behind the embankment in the “new town” lay Yalta’s city park, the hub of social activity in a place driven by social activity. It also had its detractors. Its first problem was that it was separated from the sea by the Embankment itself, and its second problem was simply that it was not big enough. Located on the easternmost portion of the new town, the park was hardly large enough for the most important of travel activities – taking a stroll [progulka]. On the east side of the park you could find the kurzal (resort hall) which all agreed was too small for Russia’s premiere resort. While the kurzal was neither grandiose nor fitting of a world class resort such as Yalta (especially in the minds of local businessmen), it did provide certain essentials. Inside the hall were a café, a library whose collection reached 13,500 volumes by the beginning of the First World War, billiard rooms and a casino – the only legal place to gamble in the town, but far from the only place where such activities took place. There was also a large ballroom, in which a variety of activities – from formal balls to private performances to masquerades – took place. Entrance to the kurzal required one wear a suit or military uniform, or, for non-Russian nationalities, admittance would only be permitted for those in their “national dress.” Dress codes of different sorts could be in place should a ball, masquerade, or other special event take place. Rowdy, loud, or screaming guests, along with anyone who upset the “proper order” could be given a warning, asked to leave, or have their names
written in the “special book” and permanently banned. A single complaint from another
guest could result in the latter.33

Alongside the kurzal and attached to it was one of Yalta’s more renowned spaces: the theatre. Built in 1883, the theatre, along with the kurzal, burned down in 1900 and only by 1903 was a stone structure completed in the city park. The theatre regularly featured performances by Russia’s top dramatic and musical entertainers. Performances by Shaliapin, Rakhmaninov, the Moscow Art Theatre, and many others delighted guests, many of whom were themselves quite well-known (writers Chekhov, Gorky, Kuprin, Staniukovich, Verasaev, and Bunin for example frequented the theatre, now named after Chekhov).

The park’s main attraction, at least for the majority of guests to Yalta was not the casino, the theatre, nor the green space, but the orchestra. Every visitor to Yalta was required to pay a fee [sezonnyi sbor] to the city administration. Virtually all of these funds were used to hire professional orchestras from throughout Russia, each competing for the contract at the beginning of the season, with the winner performing daily in the park for its duration. Those who paid were permitted into the park in order to enjoy the music, which could be heard throughout the resort, drawing in visitors seeking the crowd and clear tones. The sound of orchestral music – and the repertoires were diverse, with hundreds of pieces ranging from across Europe written since the 1600s – was as fundamental to the resort experience in Yalta as the mountains or the fresh maritime air.34

33 GAARK f. 522, op. 1, d. 1372, l. 35.
34 GAARK f. 522, op. 1, d. 1372, l. 31-34.
Between the park and the “old town,” and largely right on the Embankment, lay Yalta’s top hotels, restaurants, cafes, and shops. Foremost among these, dominating a small hill in the very center of “new town,” was the Hotel Rossiia. Indisputably possessing Yalta’s most luxurious accommodations, the Rossiia featured 150 first class rooms, exorbitant prices, and marvelous views. One of the great signs of status in Yalta was staying in the fine accommodations that the Rossiia had to offer. Ranging between the old town’s second class hotel Bristol and the Rossiia in quality and prestige, twelve more hotels could be found by 1914 along the Embankment and just off of it to the north, not including several pensions and dachas which could be rented by visitors. Apartments could be found anywhere in the city for those who preferred. Prices for accommodations matched or exceeded those anywhere in the empire, including in the center of Moscow or Petersburg.

To the north and west of the hotel lay the Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral, gymnasiums, the bank, the cemetery, and sanatoria. Surrounding Yalta were the estates of its aristocratic patrons. Immediately to the east of old town was land owned by the Mordvinov family, and to the west was Oreanda, a suburb neighborhood featuring palaces of some of Crimea’s wealthiest visitors. Just further west and up the hill along the coast was the tsar’s palace at Livadia.

West of Livadia there were several small resorts including Gaspra, Koreiz, Alupka, Simeiz, Foros, and just south of Sevastopol, Balaklava. Alupka was without a doubt the most prominent of these, and in fact during the first half of the nineteenth century, was center of Crimea’s south coast, and home to Governor Vorontsov and his
magnificent palace. After several decades of decline following the Crimean War, Alupka began to make its return, not as a resort city in the style of Yalta, but rather as a settlement of dachas. Many of these dachas were among the most prestigious of the entire coastline, as Alupka was much quieter and more peaceful than Yalta throughout the season. Two hotels were built in the village, as well as over twenty *pansiony* where visitors could receive not only rooms but also board. Especially towards the end of the tsarist era, Alupka’s popularity grew enormously. 7,000 visited in 1908, and by 1914, that number had more than doubled.

Beyond its dachas, Alupka was best known for Vorontsov Palace and park. The palace itself, designed by the same man, Edward Blore, who expanded Buckingham Palace in London, gave viewers a fascinating view of its Classical, British, and Moorish architectural elements (its castle towers resemble minarets). The park, however, was the real attraction for visitors, as it was open to the public, unlike the palace where the Vorontsov family resided. The upper section of the park had “a less cultured view” which in part arose from the “chaos,” an area filled with remnants of a landslide. Huge boulders lay where entire cliffs “smashed into each other,” while between the boulders were many small paths and grottos. In the uppermost section of the park were three small ponds surrounded by thick vegetation, while the picturesque eastern part was covered with large cedars, firs, walnut trees, and others. Smaller birches – a symbol of Russia – were cultivated there with painstaking care outside of their natural environment. The lower park, however, carried an even more exotic character. The pathways had cherry laurels planted around them, as well as *buxus*, and *oleander*. Near the palace (and closer to the
sea) there was an entire grove of magnolias and on the western part, a cypress grove. The park went down to the very edge of the sea, “where picturesque cliffs jut out,” each with folkloric names. The sea here, one guidebook described was, “deep, clear, and immensely beautiful.”35


Resorts also filled the valleys between the coastal mountains to the east of Yalta, including Gurzuf and its larger neighbor, Alushta. Alushta was in many ways the antithesis to Alupka. It was dirty, dusty, lacked shade, there were few recreational opportunities, and it was slow to develop many of the basic amenities provided in Yalta

including, for much of the tsarist era, clean drinking water. On the other hand, it was perhaps the most affordable resort in Crimea. Alushta also later became the only resort on the south coast where Jews were legally permitted to lodge (Jews were permitted to travel about the peninsula, but were watched closely by the authorities as they did). The resort was home to a synagogue, and by the First World War, the Jewish population came to dominate the resort’s beaches and social environment. One satirist referred to Alushta as the “resort ghetto.”

Finally, in addition to the resorts scattered along Crimea’s south coast, the resort of Evpatoria, situated on the west coast of the peninsula, was another key center of the Russian Riviera. Evpatoria’s popularity came from two key sources: its sand beaches (the south coast had only rocks), and its mud baths. Unlike resorts on the south coast which were dominated by immigrated Russians, Evpatoria had a distinctively multi-ethnic population of Greeks, Crimean Tatars, and Karaites. Its population rivaled that of Yalta, though its visiting public, which records approximated at around 15,000 visitors per year leading up to 1914, did not. Known for its sanatoria and treatment centers above its leisure opportunities, Evpatoria’s incoming public often suffered from serious and chronic illnesses, perhaps more so than that of the resorts along the south coast. Unlike its southern counterparts as well, Evpatoria saw record numbers of such visitors during the war, over 40,000 in 1916, as its mayor opened all of the city’s medical facilities to use for

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wounded soldiers. Similar to the rest of the Russian Riviera however, its fortunes crashed, if somewhat temporarily, with the onset of revolution in 1917.\(^37\)

CHAPTER 1: WALKS IN NATURE: EXCURSIONS, ENLIGHTENMENT, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In 1876, N. A. Golovkinskii, a geology professor at Novorossiisk University (located in Odessa), invited twenty-five of his students on a round-trip voyage to the peninsula. Paying for their tickets himself, Golovkinskii brought the group to Yalta. Dressed in uniforms, old hats, high boots, and carrying hammers, daggers, hand-bags and flasks for their excursions, the group initially put a scare into other wealthy Russian travelers. They caused a “panic” among the steamship’s upper class passengers and later, following Golovkinskii in a line along Yalta’s boardwalk, bystanders misidentified them as insurgents, a simultaneous uprising in Herzegovina on the public’s mind.

Golovkinskii, an expert on Crimea’s natural environment (he would later pen one of the region’s most influential guidebooks), designed the excursion to acquaint the students with Crimea’s natural wonders. The students studied the flora in Nikitskii Botanical
Gardens, and visited the coast of the Black Sea and the mountains, where they gathered a wide collection of geological specimens.¹

Over the next few decades, excursions gained serious momentum as education- or travel-related phenomena across the tsarist empire. By the onset of the First World War, hundreds of thousands of Russians could embark upon excursions, read from several journals strictly dedicated to excursion pedagogy, or become leaders [ekskursovody] for dozens of formal associations dedicated to offering and studying excursions.

Much of this momentum was generated in Crimea. The natural beauty, moderate temperatures, unique ecosystems, and sites of historical and religious significance that stretch along the peninsula’s southern coastline provided a natural draw for a visiting public. By 1914, tens of thousands of visitors to Crimea were taking excursions every year. Crimea was among the most popular sites for excursions for Russian students and teachers, a site of burgeoning scholarship in the field of local studies for Russian academics, and it was in Crimea that the first major organization in the empire dedicated to carrying out excursions of various forms, the Crimean Alpine Club, was founded in 1890.

My intentions in this chapter are to present an analysis of the discourse surrounding excursions in late tsarist Russia, to describe how excursions were devised and actually facilitated, and finally to view the excursion from the perspectives of scholars, teachers, students, and tourists.

To these ends, I will explore the excursion from multiple angles and the chapter moves thematically (from pedagogy, to research, to tourism) rather than chronologically, exploring different aspects of the excursion. I begin with a brief overview and definition of the “excursion,” and then analyze the published reports of a leading progressive pedagogue, Ivan Mikhailovich Grevs, who alongside a cohort of others contributed to excursion journals and other publications of the early twentieth century. As Grevs was fundamentally concerned with student excursions, I look at the experience of the First Kiev Gymnasium that organized a six week excursion for its students to the Caucasus and Crimea, as well as local short-term excursions by students to sites of natural and historical significance around Crimea. Next, I analyze ways that Russian scholars, particularly on the eve of the First World War, set out on excursions in order to determine how best to understand and preserve the sites that drew excursionists to Crimea in the first place. Finally, I tell the story of the Crimean Alpine Club, which provided the institutional structure for scholarly and student excursions, and ultimately was responsible for making the excursion into a tourist activity.

From various perspectives, the examples serve to show that excursions fundamentally changed the ways that Russians interacted with and thought about their environment. Russians came to understand their fatherland, got healthy, got training, appreciated nature, protected nature, and simply learned by interacting with the environment through the excursion. By transforming the natural environment into a classroom, excursions became a crucial vehicle for creating and spreading knowledge, as the Russian excursionist ultimately went off into the natural world in search of
enlightenment [prosveshchenie]. Since Golovkinskii’s first Crimean expedition, excursions into Crimea’s natural environment were endowed with implications not just tied to scholarship or education, but to citizenship, state service, science, and progress.²

Historical narratives, fiction, guidebooks, ethnography, art, and museums—all encountered before, during, or after excursions—were each also instruments used to identify and categorize ethnicities and nationalities, and thus became tools of empire building. The reports produced by excursionists became part of what can be called the “cultural technologies of rule,” ways of mapping and grouping the varied peoples of Crimea.³ Crimean peoples were sorted into nationalities and these technologies of rule could serve to reinforce differences between colonizer and colonized.⁴ However, because much of this work was done right on the eve of the First World War and the Revolution, it would be primarily Bolshevik authorities who took the knowledge and expertise of tsarist ethnographers and appropriated it for political purposes, according to a Marxist worldview that few of the ethnographers themselves shared.⁵

More significantly for the tsarist period under discussion, the interactions between Russians and their environment on excursions also worked to nurture an emotional

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² Writing about Soviet debates surrounding the excursion under Stalin, Diane Koenker has shown how Soviet authorities believed pleasure and learning were mutually exclusive activities during the imperial period. In the Soviet Union, suggested Bolshevik authorities, tourists would generate self-knowledge and be consumers of experience rather than simply commodities. I hope to show that their monolithic characterization of the imperial period ignores the origins and variety of excursions, and the ways they were used for higher purposes such as education and enlightenment. See Diane Koenker, “The Proletarian Tourist in the 1930s: Between Mass Excursion and Mass Escape” in Tourism: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).
attachment to the native land [rodina]. Alexei Miller described how certain regions were
d deemed, in the nineteenth century Russian consciousness, to be Russian lands, and thus
the home to the primordial Russian nation. These included much of Poland, Ukraine,
Belarus, the Volga region, and even parts of the Hapsburg Empire, in addition to central
Russia. He speaks about the Caucasus and Central Asia (amongst others) as being
distinctly non-Russian lands and simply part of the multi-ethnic empire.6

Because Crimea was a constant site of contact and conflict between West and
East – from the Greeks and Scyths, to the Mongols and the Italian city states, to the
Tatars, Russians, and Ukrainians – Russia’s relationship with Crimea was more
ambiguous. On the one hand, it had a long history in Crimea – Vladimir the Great
“baptized” Kievan Rus’ there – and could lay claims to the territory, especially as
Russians and Ukrainians vastly outnumbered Tatars and other ethnicities in the period
under study here. On the other hand, parts of Crimea inhabited by Muslim Tatars were
clearly the “East” in the minds of Russian travelers.

Russian excursionists moved fluidly between Russian and non-Russian lands, or
between East and West, even over the course of a single trip. As such, they came to
understand Russia and its natural environment in ways that brought Crimea into their
imagined community of the Russian nation. At the same time, excursions also worked to
bring Russians closer to the multi-ethnicity of the empire, fostering for excursionists a

6 Alexei Miller, The Romanov Empire and Nationalism: Essays in the Methodology of Historical Research
(Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008).
vision common amongst ethnographers and orientologists at the time that saw Russian culture as a product of historical interactions among different nationalities.  

**Excursions: Origins and Pedagogy**

The idea of excursions was not necessarily new in the late nineteenth century, having come to Russia several generations before Golovkinskii’s students explored Crimea. Eighteenth-century Russian pedagogues, borrowing the idea from Western Europe, began to recommend “walks in nature” as part of youth education, and proposed the idea in the Public School Charter in 1786. By 1804, during the next stage of education reform, this time initiated by Alexander I, pedagogues began recommending tours of manufactories and other such places in addition to the nature walks. Excursions gained further traction in Russian schools, above all because of the recommendations of one of the nineteenth century’s foremost pedagogues, K. D. Ushinskii. His espousal of excursions led to their more frequent appearance on the schedules of merchant schools in particular. Although most excursions were to this point for elementary school students, Ushinskii’s support also led some secondary and post-secondary institutions to incorporate excursions into their curricula. Throughout the nineteenth century, however, excursions almost exclusively remained a practice of urban, elite schools and

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gymnasiums, as most pre-revolutionary peasant schools struggled to achieve even the most basic educational goals.⁹

Beginning in the 1870s, the excursion first made its way outside the school system. Factories opened museums, presented exhibitions, and organized tours in order to publicize the heights of Russian industrialization. The Polytechnic Museum in Moscow was Russia’s leader in this regard, and for the first time, adults and the public in general could go on excursions that examined the latest developments in science and technology. Excursions also became a tool for associations such as the Society for the Restoration of Orthodoxy in Tbilisi, which developed excursions for students studying at its institutions. Also in Georgia’s capital, the Society of Naturalists, formed in 1877 and the oldest association of its kind in the Russian empire, carried out numerous excursions around the Caucasus in order to study, with conservation in mind, its geography, ethnography, flora, and fauna.¹⁰

Importantly, as the early sorts of excursions show, over the course of the tsarist period, “the excursion” could refer to a variety of activities carried out by very different sorts of people. Excursions could be taken on by students, at multiple levels, for educational purposes. They could be carried out by educators for the purpose of training as ekskursovody (excursion leaders). Members of the public – nobles, merchants, the middle classes including meshchanstvo (generally less wealthy townspeople, the petty bourgeoisie) – could take an excursion for educational purposes. Excursions could be

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¹⁰ N. A. Sedova, *Kulturno-prosvetitelnyi Turism.*
undertaken by scholars performing research or field work. Eventually, tourists would embark on excursions primarily as a form of leisure. Excursions could last for a single day, several weeks, or even months. They could take the excursionist around his local neighborhood, just outside the city, across the Russian empire, or to anywhere in the world abroad.

Rather than describe an archetypal excursion (such a thing did not exist), one aim of this chapter is to reveal the multi-faceted character of Russia’s initial excursions, and therefore, in lieu of a formal definition, I will say that prerevolutionary excursions shared the following broad characteristics: they were planned, they were purposeful (in the sense that they had a goal, which usually combined education and pleasure), they were done in groups, and they involved groups visiting sites deemed to be enlightening in some form or another. This sort of tourism has consistently, from prerevolutionary times, through the Soviet era, and right to the present day, been called kulturno-prosvetitel’nyi turizm (cultured-enlightened tourism).

Among the journals concerning themselves with excursions in the Russian empire, Ekskursionnyi Vestnik (The Excursion Herald) was the most scholarly, the most concerned with exposing the “theory and practice” of the excursion.11 Inaugurated in 1914, the journal did not have a long life, but did have long-term influence, as many of its contributors worked on excursion pedagogy into the Soviet period and were key contributors to the burgeoning field of kraevedenie (Local Studies). Regardless, by

gathering many of Russia’s leading pedagogues together to prepare reports on the state of
the excursion in Russian schools (and outside of them), the journal is an invaluable
source for understanding the prerevolutionary excursion. Authors contributed articles
discussing the excursion’s history, its increasing popularity, its future, and, most
significantly, its purpose alongside broader goals of education and enlightenment.

*Ekskursionnyi Vestnik* reflected upon the entire history of the tsarist-era excursion, its
pedagogy, and its role in Russian schools and Russian minds.

Contributors emphasized several broad educational goals that might be achieved
through excursions that could not be reached within the confines of the elementary
school, gymnasium, or university, and which matched the desire amongst the contributing
pedagogues to enlighten students in an engaging fashion. Russian pedagogues spoke
about how excursions had students working “actively” [*aktivno*], how they, “inspired
interest and love in students for their work, not only because they could use what they
learned but because … [students] worked creatively and self-sufficiently.”¹² Drawing on
ideas from German thought, excursions were also viewed as forms of *lehrjahre*
(apprenticeship) or *wanderjahre* (journeymanship).¹³ Excursions forced students to be
“analytical” [*analyticheskye*], rather than “passive” [*passivnye*].¹⁴ The excursion though
was more than a simple exercise in inspiring students. Pedagogues saw nature as the
means through which analytical and active learning could be best achieved.

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¹² A. Gartvig “Shkola i ekskursii” *Ekskursionnyi Vestnik* 1 (1914), 12-16.
¹³ “Ot Redaktsii” *Ekskursionnyi Vestnik* 1 (1914), 4-5.
¹⁴ A. Gartvig “Shkola i ekskursii” *Ekskursionnyi Vestnik* 1 (1914), 12-16.
Nature prompted analysis in part because the natural world was seen as foundational; it was espoused as the source of human life, of civilization, of knowledge, of industry, and of beauty. From roughly 1900 until even after the Revolution, the primary exponent of using nature as a classroom was well known historian and progressive Russian pedagogue, Ivan Mikhailovich Grevs.\textsuperscript{15} Providing one of the most succinct and convincing arguments in favor of excursions as an educational tool, he wrote that excursions were necessary to “feel the breath of past epochs inside you.” He argued that the great “accomplices” to the true monuments of the past are “nature and people, \textit{landschaft} and topography, the relief and clothing of the land, her gifts, the sun and the air, mountains and sea … [that] uncover the context of an unknown painting.”\textsuperscript{16} Understanding, sensing, and feeling the relationship between people and the environment gave context not just to history, but to any of the subjects taught in Russian schools. Establishing a bond between students and nature could only be done by taking students directly out into nature to experience it first-hand. “It is important and necessary for teachers of the sciences to take students to the famous hearths of human civilization,” Grevs concluded.\textsuperscript{17} Knowing, experiencing and feeling nature, which required actually visiting it, was a prerequisite to obtaining all other forms of knowledge. Only by transforming nature into a classroom, pedagogues insisted, could a student’s training as an enlightened citizen be solidified.

\textsuperscript{16} “Ot Redaktsii” \textit{Ekskursionnyi Vestnik} vol.1 (1914), 4-5.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 4-5.
Building on the idea that nature was foundational to human experience, pedagogues also argued that excursions into the Russian environment would “bring school and life together.” Scholars pointed out that excursions brought about, an increasing tendency to carry out the old Pirogov Society slogan “school and life.” School must become more like life, it must draw upon happenings all around, it must be based upon concrete perceptions, it must be wary of verbalism and scholasticism.18

Continuing, the pedagogue A. Gartvig, one of many who shared the opinion, argued that children begin to learn using fantastical problems. “Let them be visualized and practical,” he said, “Let students learn from the open book of great nature, made by the Creator. Let facts of life, not facts of books, be passed from one person to another.”19 Excursions “broadened horizons,” opened the mind to that “which cannot be found in books,” “fostered interest in scientific questions,” and “illustrated further career paths.”20

Studying technology and industry was commonplace on excursions. Often this was done by taking students to factories. Situated within a factory, the Moscow Museum of Applied Knowledge, known by most as the “Polytechnic,” was the largest draw for such excursions in the empire. Students, even in the earliest years of their education, would come to the Polytechnic and be taken on tours, visit exhibits, and learn about industry. Even within this factory setting, situated within the city, the focus was on nature. Exhibits on physics, for example, taught students about light, acoustics, gases, wind, optics, electricity, telegraphs, and magnets. Most exhibits, however, were concerned with exploiting nature’s gifts. Students learned the fundamentals of

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18 The Pirogov Society, named after nineteenth century Russia’s most influential physician, Nikolai Ilyanovich Pirogov, was the most prestigious medical society in the tsarist empire.
19 A. Gartvig “Shkola i ekskursii” Ekskursionnyi Vostnik 1 (1914), 12-16.
20 “Ot Redaktsii” Ekskursionnyi Vostnik 1 (1914), 4-5.
agriculture, and could even visit a small zoo housed in the museum containing farm animals. They learned about the production of sugar and starch, brewing, viticulture, oil and other cooking products. They studied natural resources such as peat, coal, gas (kerosene), as well as how glass was made. Excursions about forestry explored forest exploitation and the production of wood products. Concerned with zoology and production, exhibits were shown on biological groupings, commercial animals, commercial hunting, and fishing. Students were introduced to the ways that architects and builders worked with the environment by exploring construction materials, soils, coastlines, and shipbuilding. Even when the excursion did not take students directly into the natural world, there were connections between it and Russian civilization.21

On a more abstract level, excursions simply acted as a window into daily life outside of scholarly environments. Grevs believed that, “the present population is reviving many traditions in contemporary daily life,” and that the excursion was the key to understanding why this was happening. Gartvig suggested that the excursion gives “ability, through nature, to acquaint people, with their own eyes, with the daily life of the people, and to live through their impressions, which is so needed for the lively development of the spiritual strength of students…”22

Knowing nature was moreover not only the key to understanding daily life, it was also about getting to know Russia. Excursions would emphasize the unique ways that Russians and their environment had interacted over the ages, exposing the origins of

22 A. Gartvig “Shkola i ekskursii” Ekskursionnyi Vestnik 1 (1914), 12-16.
Russian traditions and culture, while promoting a sense of pride in Russian achievements.

“Let our students get closer acquainted, on the excursion route, with the nature of our native land,” the same expert contended. “It is so great, with its dense forests and peaceful slow flowing rivers; let them observe the daily life of the people, to which they must give their strength; let them study the monuments of the past, let students adore the great and real-life achievements of our history, to understand the people that provided us with a more intelligent and happy life.”

The excursion, necessary to nurture informed and enlightened citizens, could cultivate the sort of people that would guide Russia through the next eras of its history.

Such lofty goals were not enough for other pedagogues who lamented the fact that teaching aesthetics remained a marginalized goal for excursion leaders. One suggested that,

there is only one type of excursion: scientific/educational. It is interesting that the aesthetical side of such excursions almost has no place. Doubtless at the same time every excursion … has this aesthetical side. It is impossible, to be creative, an artist, a poet, or even a cultured person, without being able to comprehend the soul of nature imbued in poetry, without understanding nature, her simple, bright, and perceptible voice. Therefore, schools must bring out the ability to understand the beauty and poetry of nature…

For this pedagogue, the aesthetic was hardly a trivial issue, and wrote that,

“schools must cultivate in children a love for beauty and the beautiful. Happiness – happiness itself – is at stake. Undoubtedly the school and the children win by incorporating an aesthetical side into the school excursion.” He then raised the crucial question: “but how does one cultivate this love for nature?” Conceding that there were

23 A. Gartvig “Shkola i ekskursii” Ekskursionnyi Vestnik 1 (1914), 12-16.
many means and methods, he pointed out that the most basic way was simply to point out what was beautiful, to underline it, to encourage children to appreciate it. This would force students, through repetition, to stop and think for themselves about what was beautiful, to remember such moments, and to develop a sense for how certain parts of nature affect emotions.\textsuperscript{24}

Though such a method was hardly complex, its purpose would bring about not only happiness for students, but also perspective. The author argued that the excursion should strive not only to take students out to mix with the crowds, but also to view passers-by as specks from afar. “The latter is the training in the aesthetic,” he wrote. One needed to teach and understand both, “to see the forest and not only the trees.”\textsuperscript{25}

By 1914, the excursion had become entrenched, at least within the upper echelons of the Russian school system. “Excursions of all kinds have become a common occurrence in schools…” wrote one contributor. “You only need to raise your head off of a school desk to see the harmonious relationship between the children and great Mother Earth,” he continued, “… It is hard to imagine such a school which, over the duration of the school year, did not make some form or another of “small travels” outside the city, in the suburbs, to historical monuments, to a factory…”\textsuperscript{26} “The importance of the excursion in middle school no longer requires any proof. It exists without a doubt,” another writer forcefully declared, arguing not only that excursions were becoming popular, but that they had become an essential component of Russians’ education.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{24} V. Murzaev, “Estetika shkolnykh ekskursii” \textit{Ekskursionnyi Vestnik} vol.2 (1914), 3-9. Italics mine.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 3-9.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 3-9.

\textsuperscript{27} P. P. Nekrasov, “O postanovke gumanitarnyikh ekskursii” \textit{Ekskursionnyi Vestnik} 2 (1914), 15.
Nature had become the medium through which the world could be understood, controlled, and appreciated. It was the key to becoming enlightened. Nature, though, could not be appreciated through a classical education. Nature needed to be explored, experienced, and felt first-hand. The excursion, therefore, held deep significance in the minds of pedagogues.

*The First Kiev Gymnasium*

By the time that pedagogues came together to publish in *Ekskursionnyi Vestnik*, certain schools within the empire had already been carrying out excursions for decades. Some of these excursions were extraordinarily ambitious. They had students travelling across the empire, through Russian and non-Russian regions, and in and out of the natural world. They required lengthy and meticulous preparation, the gathering of scholars and experts in a remarkable range of fields, financial backing from students, schools, and government institutions.

One such excursion was carried out by the First Kiev Gymnasium (*1aia Kievskaiia Gimnaziia*) in 1901. The excursion lasted six weeks, as twenty-five students travelled across Ukraine, Kabardia, along the Georgian Military Highway to Tbilisi, across the Black Sea to Crimea, and onward home to Kiev.

Although this excursion was atypical, primarily due to its length and ambitious itinerary, the school itself was not unlike other urban schools which sent students on the first travel excursions. The activities, or excursions within the longer excursion, in which the students participated were also not unusual. More significantly, perhaps, is that
extraordinarily detailed records remain regarding the school and this excursion in 1901 that shed light on the range of experiences excursionists enjoyed while moving about the empire. Although the majority of this excursion took place outside of Crimea, the regional focus of this dissertation, the documentation left behind is fascinating for the ways in which it puts the Crimean experience in perspective, for the ways in which it shows how the Crimean excursion was in some respects paradigmatic, while in other respects evoked entirely different emotional and intellectual responses from students.

The First Kiev Gymansium was among the oldest gymnasiums in the empire, its origins dating back to 1789. By the 1890s, the school, which had eight grades, was under the administration of the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment [Ministerstvo Narodnago Prosveshcheniia]. Like other gymnasiums throughout the empire, it shared the same mission of education and enlightenment that Emperor Alexander I had laid out in the guidelines for national education in 1803. The curriculum of the school was also typical; classes in religion, Russian, Greek, Latin, history and mathematics dominated, as was the case in such classical educational institutions. Its student body was comprised primarily of Orthodox Christians (70%), but also Roman Catholics (17%), Lutherans (5%), and Jews (7%). In terms of social rank, the students came primarily from families of nobles and civil servicemen (65%), merchants of various rank (23%), clergy (4%), foreigners (4%) and lastly peasants (2%). The school was well connected with Russia’s leading pedagogues and their literature, ministers from the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment visited the school on a regular basis, and its director, I. V. Posadskii, was a well-
connected doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Mathematics at St. Petersburg University.²⁸

It was through the efforts and success at such schools that the excursion became a popular pedagogical instrument. Similar institutions in Odessa and in Simferopol led excursions to Crimea on a semi-regular basis as early as the 1880s. Girls’ gymnasiaums also participated in the early movement towards excursions. Few, however, travelled to such a diverse array of sites as the First Kiev Gymnasium in 1901.²⁹

Although the excursion would not take place until June, 1901, the first specific preparations were begun in November of the previous year. First, the route was established and approved by the school’s pedagogical council. Posadskii sought out educational institutions in each of the towns where the students would be staying, and found that these institutions responded “with unusual curiosity and attentiveness” to his requests for information, excursion leaders, and dorm rooms. Once the route was established and known to be feasible, students then had to get permission from their parents to participate, and come up with a substantial sum, 125 rubles, to defray the costs. Posadskii also got in contact with the gymnasium’s teachers, and sought out volunteers to give lectures that would help prepare students for their excursion. Beginning after the Christmas break, lectures were given regularly on Saturday nights by the teachers – a tactic espoused later by Grevs. Topics ranged from the history of the Caucasus to geography and the Georgian Military Highway to Pushkin and Lermontov’s experiences.

²⁹ For example, see: *Vtoraia Ekskursiia ustroennaia Gornym Klubom dlia vospitannits zhenskikh gimnazii goroda Odessy v iunie 1898 goda.*
in Crimea and the Caucasus to “Eastern Music.” One night, students were able to look over an assortment of over one hundred maps illustrating the places they were to visit.

Posadskii however was most proud of getting students to appreciate the natural world they were about to experience. He asked at the University of St. Vladimir for help with this task. An expert, V. K. Sovinskii, put together a collection of botanical and zoological specimen for students to look through at the university. Then, so interested was Sovinskii in the success of the excursion, he gave a theoretical lecture on how to build a proper botanical/zoo logical collection, and took the students on two separate day-excursions to the forest near Kiev to practice exactly what they learned before heading out on the real thing. Posadskii was proud to note that his lecture series was attended not only by the excursionists but by many others who might not be able to afford the trip, but could experience it in some way through the comprehensive preparatory information.³⁰

The group also had practical concerns to take care of before embarking. Posadskii arranged things so that the troupe got entirely free passage along the Dnieper to Ekaterinoslav (now Dnipropetrovsk), and then free passage along the railway all the way to Vladikavkaz. He had to arrange transportation down the Georgian Military Highway, for horses and for coaches in the Caucasus, and was given a discount. For the ride across the Black Sea, ROPiT gave the students a discounted rate as well. The school doctor arranged that each student would have a first aid kit, complete with over fifteen different types of medication that the students were supposed to consume. The students also equipped themselves with several pieces of meteorological equipment in order to take

³⁰I. V. Posadskii, ed. Ekskursiiia na Kavkaze i v Krym uchenikov Kievskoi 1’aiia Gimnaziiia v 1901 gody (Kiev: Tip Kushnerev, 1901), 1-6.
daily measurements. They had to bring a small library of books about geography, industry, and tourism. Students were expected to keep a diary. The group managed to acquire a camera to record their travels.

The students finally set off after the school year had concluded. One of the excursionists remarked, as they headed towards Vladikavkaz, that,

> the train is quickly racing, and with every turn of the wheels we are closer and closer to our cherished goal. To the mountains, to the country, which since childhood have captivated and beckoned us with their mysterious existence, legends, beliefs, and natural wonders. To that country, from which, as from an inexhaustible source, the poet, the publicist, and the student draws its material, discovering rare species of birds, animals, minerals, while the industrialist circulates the mass of nature’s riches. It is not surprising, upon nearing the goal, you feel some reverent passion in front of the unknown.\(^{31}\)

After several successful weeks in the Caucasus, the excursionists finally wound up in Yalta. There they began by exploring the city and found themselves souvenirs made of shells and marble. The next morning, they met at the Crimean Alpine Club and set off for Massandra, Gurzuf, and Nikitskii Botanical Garden. They particularly enjoyed a grotto along the coastline where guidebooks announced that Princess Vorontsov spent her time praying. The group then got into some small boats and headed over to Pushkin’s grotto a little further down the coastline near Gurzuf. They soon entered the small resort town where they paid particular interest to the Pushkin Cyprus, one of Crimea’s most legendary sites. Next, the group went to Nikitskii Botanical Garden, where, as Golovkinskii’s original excursionists did, they studied the wide assortment of plants and

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flowers housed there, most of which were endemic only within the Crimean coastal ecosystem.  

After getting in touch with Yalta’s neighboring resorts to the east, the group spent the next two days exploring the sights just to the east of the city. The Crimean Alpine Club took them on an excursion to Alupka, above all, to visit Vorontsov’s marvelous palace and the even more impressive park surrounding it, which was filled with exotic flora imported from around the world. The students seemed most thrilled about carving their names in the rocks there in order to “be remembered for eternity.” The next day, the KGK led the students by coach on an excursion to Ai-Petri, via the Uchan-Su waterfall, where “it [was] not possible to put to words the feeling that came over us upon seeing [it].” Upon reaching the top of Ai-Petri, the group began recording meteorological data, but an enormous storm came and enveloped the area in thunder and lightning. As storm passed quickly, one student praised it, saying that on the trip down, “the air was humid, aromatic, clear, without any kind of dust or imperfection.” Although the next day was intended to be for rest, the excursionists got together, went to the shore to see the waves crash into the embankment during a storm, then went on their own excursion to the local lumber mill. Others managed to put together a small but interesting collection of butterflies native only to Crimea’s south coast.

The remainder of the group’s stay in Crimea consisted of touring Sevastopol, where they visited the battlefields of the Crimean War, and Bakhchisarai, where they

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32 Posadskii, Ekskursii, 93-6.
33 Ibid., 94.
34 Ibid., 93-6.
visited the palace of the Crimean Tatars. Bakhchisarai is situated near a number of ancient Tatar monasteries, built into caves along the mountain range, where the students were able to identify architectural styles and historical artifacts from the medieval period.

The trip closed with a disaster. Some of the students were to go off to Odessa rather than back to Kiev, and they left aboard a ship bound there via Evpatoria. In Evpatoria, the ship caught fire. Fortunately everyone was saved, the ship luckily having been in port. It caused quite a crisis for Posadskii, however, as he desperately tried to get in touch with the students’ parents back home to let them know everyone was fine.\(^{35}\) The majority of the group arrived by train in Kiev without incident, acknowledging that they “had an experience of a lifetime.”

The voyage of the First Kiev Gymnasium demonstrates some of the particular ways that the pedagogical goals outlined years later in *Ekskursionnyi Vestnik* were enthusiastically met. Most directly, the students were able to see first-hand the relationship between the natural world and the subjects that they read about on a daily basis at school. Excursions had students out and actually doing the work of botanists, geologists, meteorologists, and others. These activities reinforced the students’ knowledge about their country’s natural world, much of which could only be gained by visiting places in person. The effectiveness of such pedagogy was obvious to school officials. But it was not just the natural sciences that students engaged with, for the excursions also untangled the connections between the environment and literature, and between the environment and history. Because the students had been given a lecture on

\(^{35}\) Posadskii, *Ekskursiiia*, 100-1.
Pushkin and Lermontov’s connections with nature in the Caucasus, and were forced to learn several passages of poetry describing the sights of the mountainous region, they saw the Caucasus through the eyes of their great national poets. When the students visited Bakhchisarai, they were directly exposed to a very different city with very different architecture, culture, and a people with a remarkable and ancient history.

The excursion also aspired to demonstrate the connections between the natural world, technology and industry. One of the lectures given in the buildup to this excursion was about the oilfields near Baku. Students learned about the composition of oil, and actually saw differences in the crude (which was just sitting on the ground’s surface in many places) during the excursion. The students also visited an oil factory [neftzavod] where products made from oil were produced. Although such heavy industry did not exist in Crimea, the students did visit the vineyards at Massandra, the lumber mill north of Yalta, and the port at Sevastopol, which they compared to those in Odessa and Novorossiisk. Students learned about how the exploitation of the environment could improve people’s lives in their country.

The narrative of exploitation was offset by an equally strong narrative promoting conservation. The preservation of scenic areas, even entire regions, was a goal new to both the students and to Russia in general. Preserving natural wonders in particular was not just done for the environment’s sake. The idea was to preserve another element of the excursion: aesthetic beauty. Excursions had a highly emotional component that pedagogues suggested could allow students to really appreciate the art and beauty of their
country.\textsuperscript{36} Student’s reflections upon their experiences in the Caucasus point to the excursion’s success in this regard. One wrote how, upon descending Mt. Kazbek, “At last, it is becoming warmer. The descent is over. There are no longer any bizarre rock formations, you can no longer hear the noise of rushing water, and in your soul is sadness from the realization that you, perhaps, have gone through so many emotions for the first and last time.”\textsuperscript{37} Another reflected that, “quite some time has passed since the trip ended, but even today I often picture in my imagination the poetic view \textit{[kartina]} of Crimea’s coastline with its marvelous palaces and gardens, alongside the deep sky, connecting on the horizon with the sea.”\textsuperscript{38} A major success of the excursion was its ability to impart meanings of beauty upon the students, which, as the excursionists repeatedly pointed out, are not able to be described with words.

\textit{Between East and West}

The First Kiev Gymnasium was hardly the only school to send its students on excursions to Crimea while using the expertise of the Crimean Alpine Club. One excursion in the late 1890s took a group of students from Odessa to the peninsula, the course of which was recorded by an excursionist known only as “M. V.” in his diary, and subsequently published in the annals of the Crimean Alpine Club. The excursion was headed by a researcher from Novorossiisk University, A. G. Genkel, and followed a course which appears to be entirely typical of student excursions around the turn of the

\textsuperscript{36} “Estetika Shkolnykh Ekskursii” in \textit{Ekskursionnyi Vestnik}, 2 (1914), 3-9.
\textsuperscript{37} Posnadskii, \textit{Ekxkursiiia}, 107.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 107-8.
century. The students began by traveling aboard a ROPiT steamship to Sevastopol, explored Inkerman and Balaklava, proceeded north to Bakhchisarai, southwest to Yalta, and returned to Sevastopol along the coastal highway. Along each section of the voyage, students carried out activities which allowed them to study history, ethnography, religion, botany, astronomy, and geology.

In Sevastopol students visited the museum of the siege, St. Vladimir’s Cathedral (the resting place of the great admirals who passed during the Crimean War), as well as the harbor. They travelled the next day to Inkerman, visited the battlegrounds, and returned to Sevastopol to view the Brotherhood Cemetery in Sevastopol, where the excursionists figured lay two hundred thousand victims of 1854-5.³⁹ Continuing the tour of Crimea’s history, the group then visited the ancient Greek colony of Chersonesus and the ruins which remained since its foundation in the 6th century BCE. Of particular interest to the students, especially as the famous Greek Basilica had not yet been excavated, was the magnificent cathedral of St. Vladimir, only recently built in 1892 on the site where Vladimir the Great was supposedly baptized in 988 CE. The tour of the southwest tip of Crimea concluded with an excursion to Georgievskii Monastery on the cliffs near Balaklava, where the students were particularly stuck by meeting a monk who had lived in a nearby cave with his brother for over four years, only exiting monthly to procure food from the monastery before returning. Returning to Balaklava from the monastery, the group walked along the boulevard where the resort public, seeing the troupe, ran up to some fencing and looked over the students both surprised and as if the

³⁹ This number is clearly an exaggeration, or perhaps a typo. Actual estimates of Russian soldiers buried in mass graves there during tsarist times are closer to twenty thousand.
students were monsters. The well-dressed ladies pulled out binoculars, scanned the dirty, sun-tanned excursionists wearing dust-covered boots and Tatar caps, and screamed out, “look, students from Odessa have arrived on foot. Look at that tall one, there, there, how funny he is! And that one with the umbrella in his hands … khakhakha!” Rumors then spread throughout town. The students felt as if they were a surprising fantasy to the residents of the resort, who clearly were unfamiliar with these sorts of early excursions just as Yalta’s were when Golovkinskii brought students there on the first Crimean excursion.40

The most striking episode of the excursion for the diary’s writer came at Bakhchisarai, where the group headed after Balaklava. Along the way to the Tatar capital they collected samples of the local flora and created collections and took rubbings of early Christian (Byzantine) artwork which had remained on the wall of another cave monastery. Bakhchisarai made the greatest impression. None of the excursionists had ever visited an “eastern city” before, and the crowded, “dirty,” narrow streets, filled with “screaming” merchants and the “stench” of cooked lamb, “acted strongly on the nerves of the visitor.” The Russian visitors agreed that the fountains were beautiful and the minarets atop so many rooftops fascinating.

However, the group prepared in the evening to visit a local mosque and bear witness to the local dervishes’ prayers. The students were told that the dervishes only numbered roughly fifty in the whole city; that they prayed at the smallest mosques (there were forty total in the city); but that they were a holy people in the eyes of the Tatars,

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especially as their prayers were said to cure illnesses. At the performance, the dervishes took an epileptic, covered him in their “dirty” cloaks, and formed a circle around. The service began with the “muttering” of the mulla, and the dervishes proceeded to go “berserk.” The dervishes began to scream, and according to the witness, they resembled, “first the barking of a large dog, then fighting wolves, then the roar of a lion, and then further to the point where no comparison can be made.” Some of the excursionists suffered from headaches. Nonetheless they watched the dervishes, who stood in a single place and threw their bodies rapidly in every direction, often bending nearly parallel to the floor, while their heads “seemed to spin like a weathervane in the wind.” This continued for about an hour, the student claimed, and the students stood there, “bodies trembling from terror,” for the entire ceremony. After saying how the spectacle would be impossible to ever forget, the student then learned that on Thursdays, the dervishes have a special ceremony, which continues until they fall to the floor, where “foam would flow from their mouths and up their foreheads,” others bleeding from wounds obtained by crashing into the uneven ground.41

The group finished the excursion along the south coast, making the challenging descent into Yalta, past the waterfall Uchan-Su, but found “nothing of interest whatsoever” in the resort capital, but heralded the coast near Alupka as the most aesthetically pleasing place on the peninsula.42

The same route, sites, and experiences were enjoyed by other students as well, including those studying at the Odessa Women’s Gymnasium. Excursions and using

41 M. V., Studencheskaia Ekskursiiia v Krym: Iz Dnevnik Ekskursanta, 7.
42 Ibid., 10-11.
nature as a classroom was never an exclusively male activity. The school carried out three identical, successive and successful excursions annually from 1897-9. The records of the excursions show how some of the students struggled more so with the rigorous physical demands of successive day-long hikes throughout Crimea’s mountains, but the women in the end completed the excursion just as the men did. The only major difference seems to have been that the female students, either out of shock or perhaps disgust, left the “spectacle” of the dervishes after mere minutes. Otherwise, the same historical, ethnographical, and scientific programs were carried out fully.\footnote{Vtoraia Ekskursiia ustroennaia Gornym Klubom dla vospitannits zhenskikh gimnazii goroda Odessy v iunie 1898 goda; Tretia Ekskursiia ustroennaia Gornym Klubom dla vospitannits zhenskikh gimnazii goroda Odessy v iunie 1899 goda.}

Young children also performed similar educational excursions, but typically these would last only for one or two days. Sevastopol’s Society for the Protection of Children took a group of forty to Georgievskii Monastery in Balaklava in 1911, a trip which stretched twelve versty (eight miles) each direction. Along the way an echo created by the cliffs seems to have fascinated them the most, but the supervisors also told tales about the history of the Tauri and the Byzantines, while the children became acquainted with the monastery only afterwards.\footnote{A. P-nyi, “Detskaia Ekskursiia v Georgievskii Monastery” \textit{KKL}, 3 June, 1911.} It seems that in total, the Society took hundreds of children annually on such excursions, which also visited Chersonesus and the sites of the Crimean War.
Scholarship and Preservation: The Excursions of the Crimean Society of Naturalists and Nature Lovers

Concerted efforts to study and preserve areas of natural and historical significance across the tsarist empire – the destinations for excursions – had a long history. However, it was only when the Crimean Society of Naturalists and Nature Lovers was founded in the early twentieth century that a formal association dedicated exclusively to the systematic study and preservation of the sites that students and other visitors could visit appeared in Crimea.

The Moscow Society of Naturalists, established in 1805 and based at Moscow University, was the first Russian organization that brought scholars together to discuss and publish works on regional environmental science. Only in the 1860s did comparable associations start to bloom however in other major cities, with the foundation of the St. Petersburg and Kiev Societies of Naturalists in 1867 and 1869 respectively. During the 1870s, Kazan, Kharkiv, and Odessa became homes to such associations, and by the end of the century the phenomenon took off, and over one hundred Societies of Naturalists existed in Russia by the end of the tsarist era. These societies worked to resolve the most important social and scientific problems that would shape political, economic, cultural, and historical decision making, not only in the specific regions of study, but across the entire empire.45

In Crimea, however, it wasn’t until 1909 that such an organization of local scholars originated in Simferopol. From the beginning, the Crimean Society of

Naturalists and Nature Lovers (Krymskoe Obshchestvo Estestvoispytatelei i Liubitelei Prirody – hereafter KOEiLP) took on a vast range of scholarly and social responsibilities. According to the charter, the Society had as its objective a comprehensive study of the region and, just as significantly, the dissemination of the scientific knowledge generated by local scholars. Organized into various sections (astronomical, botanical, photographic, Crimean studies [krymovedenie], and school excursions), and committees (protection of natural monuments and antiquities, lectures, excursions, nature conservation and a commission to study the natural and productive forces of the Crimea), the Society prepared itself for a comprehensive study of Crimea’s natural history.46

The Society immediately set out on a vigorous plan of excursions in order to collect data, study historical sites, and assess what needed to be done for their preservation. From 1910-15, thirty-three formal excursions were organized and the number of total excursionists exceeded 850. Over the same time, the society prepared fifty-nine formal reports regarding sites of natural and historical interest which were collected and sent to other Societies of Naturalists throughout the empire. The diverse set of reports concerned problems of chemistry, astronomy, geology, soil studies, physical geography, zoology, botany, forestry, climatology and meteorology, archaeology, ethnography, and history. Reports were typically published in the Society’s Notes, which were supplemented with two publications entitled Around Crimea [Po Krymu] and News

Izvestii]. These publications appeared regularly until 1917, and continued more sporadically until 1930.47

One exemplary excursion took members of KOEiLP to the ancient cave cities of Crimea. Six members of the Committee for the Protection of Natural and Historical Monuments made a two day excursion to the caves at Tepe-Kermen (meaning “forbidding castle” and which were inhabited most likely from the sixth to ninth century) situated not far from Bakhchisarai. They took measurements of the cave’s dimensions, windows, and entrance, and a thorough description of any signs of habitation were recorded and photographed. The head of the research team, N. A. Borovko (who passed away before his research was completed), provided theories for the cave’s emergence. The reports, drawings, and photos compiled by these researchers remain among the most valuable sources for the history of the mysterious cave civilizations. Initial success in Tepe-Kermen encouraged further research of Crimean cave cities, as well as other important sites. Collections of flint arrows, knives, scrapers, and other tools were compiled by excursionists, while others secured rubbings of valuable Byzantine frescos and monuments.48

The details of the excursions were published in the KOEiLP’s regular publications, but the Society also strove to perform a large number of public lectures based upon the reports prepared in order to share new knowledge with other scholars, visitors, and the local population. A cycle of lectures was organized in 1913 that featured

the Society’s top experts (and organizers) on anatomy, history, astronomy, and botany. Over 1500 people visited the twenty-three lectures given that year and over 10% of the audience was composed of teachers in Crimean schools. An expanded cycle of lectures was planned for 1914, but the First World War and the introduction of martial law across Crimea spoiled the scholars’ plans.49

The project that best represented the Society’s efforts to impart their newly acquired knowledge of Crimea to the public was, however, the publication of a tourist guidebook. Entitled simply Krym, and published in 1914, it was far and away the most comprehensive guide to Crimea, and remains a critical source to the region’s geology, flora and fauna, demographics, climate, and tourist activity to the present day.50 Krym, to a far greater extent than other tourist guidebooks, combined the wealth of scholarship (332 pages) about the points of natural and historical significance throughout Crimea with the essential travel information (an additional 350 pages) tourists would need in order to visit the sites and Crimea as a whole. The guide was prepared by leading historians, ethnographers and natural scientists in KOEiLP, who put together an extraordinary collection of essays over the course of more than two years. Historical, archaeological, and demographic reports covered nearly the entire scope of Crimea’s remarkably complex history from antiquity to Russian conquest. They included a wide assortment of photographs of locals in traditional dress along with facts about nearly all of the peoples who inhabited the peninsula, though much more attention was paid to the

Crimean Tatars (details of their homes, clothes, food, religion, major activities, and especially educational organizations), while the rest of the Crimean peoples: the Greeks, Bulgarians, Germans, Czechs, Estonians, Armenians, Gypsies, Karaites, Krymchaks, Turks and Moldovans, received significantly less treatment. The guide also described changes in population, ethnic composition, and occupations of the non-Russian locals.\textsuperscript{51}

The ethnographic information collected in the guidebook was entirely the result of scholarly excursions. M. I. Dubrovskii, an associate of the Russian Ethnographic Museum in Petersburg, set up a comprehensive excursion regimen throughout Crimea in 1912 and continued his travels until the Revolution. He published numerous articles about the Crimean Tatars, writing comprehensive reports on Tatar homes, including their structure, decoration, and organization in villages. He photographed ordinary men and women as well as mullas, and described the terrain and climatic conditions that in part determined the built environment of Tatar communities.\textsuperscript{52} He was also keenly interested in the ways that the Russian intrusion into Crimea had affected certain Tatar communities (particularly those along the coast), while leaving others essentially untouched. Certain villages along the roads connecting Russian resorts, he noted, had been transformed beyond recognition, in comparison to those in more isolated regions upon the mountain plateaus. The fact that Dubrovskii did not speak Crimean Tatar, was quickly noted as a

\textsuperscript{51} A. A. Nepomniashchii and A. V. Sinichkin, “Krymskoe Obshchstvo Estesvoispyatlei i Liubitelei Prirody”, 210-16.
\textsuperscript{52} See: M. Dubrovskii, “Zhilishcha krymskich gornykh tatar” Po Krymu 1 (1914).
shortcoming of his research, but this fact only spurred on further ethnographic studies by members of the KOEiLP.  

The KOEiLP continued its scholarly work through the War, Revolution, and the 1920s, though of course it lost touch with its scholarly connections around the empire. The difficulties of war-time communications forced scholars from across an even wider range of disciplines and backgrounds to try to unite, and although struggles ensued, the efforts resulted in a 1920 commission, headed by the KOEiLP and the pre-eminent Crimean scholar V. I. Vernadsky, to study all of the natural and productive forces of Crimea. Numerous congresses and committees worked throughout the 1920s, particularly in the field of Crimean Studies [krymovedenie], and in formulating ways in which the scholarship could be transmitted to the public through mass excursion programs to Bakhchisarai, as well as to Crimean war sites in Sevastopol and Balaklava. Along with the majority of Soviet “local studies” organizations, the KOEiLP was disbanded at the end of the decade, and many of its members were persecuted and found themselves in Siberian prison camps.

While the scholarly pursuits of the KOEiLP were highly acclaimed, their efforts to preserve the natural environment and historical sites around Crimea were met with more critical reviews. Journalists looked at the national parks movement in the United States and at contemporary conferences in Switzerland and Germany about the

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53 A. A. Nepomniashchii and A. V. Sinichkin, “Krymskoe Obschhestvo Estesvoispytatlei i Liubitelei Prirody”, 210-16.
55 A. A. Nepomniashchii and A. V. Sinichkin, “Krymskoe Obschhestvo Estesvoispytatlei i Liubitelei Prirody”, 210-16.
preservation of natural wonders and concluded that Russia lagged far behind. A series of articles appeared in *Krymskii Kurortnyi Listok* that spoke of how, across the tsarist empire, Russia was so rich in “natural monuments” [*pamiatniki prirody*], which could be compared aesthetically “with Raphael’s paintings,” and yet nothing was being done to maintain and preserve them. They pointed to old forests, the steppe, cliff-sides, as well as a variety of plants and animals, all of which could not be replaced if destroyed. That they were being destroyed made journalists accuse Russia of “cultural barbarism.”\(^{56}\)

In Crimea, there were several pressing problems, including the fact that in Alupka’s parks, along the road to Uchan-Su waterfall, at the Genoese and Venetian fortresses dotting the south coast, and at the caves at Chatyr-Dag, students and tourists had been incessantly writing or carving their names on the rocks, trees, and walls of the peninsula’s natural wonders.\(^{57}\) Many of the stalactites and stalagmites in Crimea’s caves were simply picked up as souvenirs by tourists. The increased amount of travel along Crimea’s coast required roads, facilities, and construction projects which left their mark on the landscape.

KOEiLP and the Crimean Alpine Club both discouraged the theft and desecration of tourist sites. Scientific work behind nature preservation had flourished in Russia under St. Petersburg academic and botanist I. P. Borodin, and plans for nature preservation had indeed been made.\(^{58}\) They had not, however, been fully implemented yet. Associations could encourage travelers to avoid damaging the environment in a number of ways, but

\(^{56}\) “Okhrana peizazha” *KKL*, 27 June, 1914.

\(^{57}\) Pechorin, “Kurortnye Kartinki” *RR*, 18 August, 1913.

during the tsarist era in Crimea, where they operated with insufficient organizational and legal backing, preventative measures of these associations were often toothless.

**The Crimean Alpine Club and the Scholarly Origins of Tourism**

The Crimean Alpine Club [Krymskii Gornyi Klub, hereafter – KGK], formally combined scholarship, education, leisure, and “walks into nature,” and became the model organization of excursion-leaders within the tsarist empire. The Alpine Club was critical to the development of excursions in Crimea and Russia as a whole for two key reasons: it provided the institutional and infrastructural framework necessary for visitors to actually carry out excursions, and it was responsible for making the excursion into a tourist phenomenon. For this, the club is generally recognized as one of the founding institutions for Russian tourism. Less well recognized by historians is that profit alone was not their motive for carrying out excursions. Even though it did cater to the tourist public in order to remain financially solvent, the KGK was first and foremost committed to the educational and scientific merits of the excursion – to the mission of enlightening students and the tourist public - until it dissolved after the Revolution.

Official, privately financed, non-profit, and well-organized, the KGK was registered as an official association in 1890 and immediately became the premiere vehicle for excursions throughout the peninsula. When the KGK was founded, it was a result of the confluence of several factors: a growing scientific and intellectual community in Odessa where the organization was headquartered, growing attention to the field of local

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59 See Dolzhenko, *Istorii Turizma*. 72
studies, the success of alpine clubs across Western Europe, and the very recent construction of railroads to Crimea and other mountainous travel destinations. Unlike the (British) Alpine Club, which emphasized mountain climbing more than mountain research, the Crimean Alpine Club began with predominantly scholarly goals.

The first issue of its annual journal outlined the club’s aims: a) scientific research about Crimea’s mountains and the dissemination of that collected research, b) the promotion of research by facilitating the outings of naturalists and artists headed to the mountains with scientific or artistic goals. (Within five years, this mission was amended to include tourists as well as scholars and artists),\(^60\) c) promotion of local agriculture and industrial growth, and d) the protection of rare scenic spots, views, plants and animals.\(^61\)

The founding and subsequent members of the KGK were of various professions, but most were scholars. Botanists, geologists, meteorologists, other scientists/professors, as well as representatives from the zemstvo, the local nobility, the Russian Society for Shipping and Trade and the head of Yalta’s city administration held membership. Technically open to anyone, the club nonetheless needed to vote on new members, and would only accept those that could add to the club’s academic pursuits in a meaningful way. This usually meant having advanced diplomas, years of expertise in a relevant field, and the capability to publish quality academic work. Other members provided some kind of services that the club required, such as access to botanical gardens. Associate members, mainly academics from Odessa, also paid annual dues to the club, but did not

\(^{60}\) K. V. Golotsvan, “Krymsko-Kavkazskii gornyi klub” in Istorischeskoe Nasledie Kryma, 18 (2007), 158. Golotsvan’s research on the Crimean Alpine Club, also published in his MGU dissertation in 2009, is an extraordinarily thorough reading of the contents of the club’s archived files, found at: GAARK Fond. 661

necessarily have active roles within it.\textsuperscript{62} There were fewer than four hundred members in the entire club at any time. Funding for the club came primarily from the investments of its limited members, meaning that the organization was always short of money.

The Yalta division [ialtinskoe otdelenie] of the KGK was among the very first institutions to carry out tourist excursions in the tsarist empire, and the first to provide them according to a regular, planned regime.\textsuperscript{63} Its members, who in the 1880s had formed an unofficial group of naturalists, doctors, and alpinists, made excursions a core component of the association’s cause, even if the total number of participants was rather modest.\textsuperscript{64} In 1891, for instance, the head of the Yalta division, Dr. V. N. Dmitriev, led nine excursions, with fifty-seven total participants.\textsuperscript{65}

However limited the first steps were, these and other early excursions that the KGK organized allowed scholars to prepare scientific reports, give lectures, and publish brochures, guidebooks, articles, Russo-Tatar dictionaries, and other literature. The club also continued to publish its own journal, which appeared annually, entitled the Bulletin of the Crimean Alpine Club [Zapiski Krymskago Gornago Kluba]. Particularly important to the rise in excursions (or at least their publicity) was the work of F. D. Veber, a highly respected guide who edited the Zapiski. While advertising excursions extensively through political connections, university heads, and school directors, who passed on the

\textsuperscript{62} Golotsvan, “Krymsko-Kavkazskii gornyi klub”, 158.
\textsuperscript{63} The Crimean Alpine Club was headquartered in Odessa, but nearly all of its work with excursions was carried out by the Yalta division. The club also had divisions in Sevastopol and Ekaterinoslav (Dnepropetrovsk).
\textsuperscript{64} F. D. Veber, Istoriiia razvitvia i deiatel’nosti ialtinskago otdelenie krymsk-kavkazskago gornago kluba (Odessa: Tip. Lemberga, 1916), 1.
\textsuperscript{65} Dmitriev also wrote the main works on the health benefits of the Black Sea, mud baths, and Crimean grapes that I discuss in Chapter 2.
information to students and other travelers, Veber also brokered a deal with Yalta newspapers to publish the accounts of excursions, the business of the KGK, and advertise the importance of the hikes into the mountains. In addition to his work as editor and excursion leader, Veber was far and away the most prolific contributor to the journal, to newspapers, and to the general record of the clubs activities and inner workings.

Scholars who wished to study Crimea’s natural environment were allowed to use the facilities and expertise of the KGK at no cost whatsoever. Many professors, mostly from Odessa, travelled frequently to take advantage of the club’s generous policy. The KGK coordinated with other associations in Odessa in particular, studying subjects such as the composition of the water of the Black Sea through a program of excursions. Concerned with disseminating their collected research, and reaching an empire- and worldwide audience, the KGK presented their scientific findings at several exhibitions: the Geography Exhibition in Moscow (1892), the Exhibition of the KGK in Odessa (1893), the All-Russian Nizhnii Novgorod Exhibition (1896), the World’s Fair in Paris (1900), the Exhibition on Alpinism in Moscow (1909), and the Odessa Exhibition (1910).66 The work of the KGK also featured prominently in Petersburg, in an exhibition attended by the Tsar, called the First Exhibition of the Black Sea Coast of the Caucasus under the name “Russian Riviera.”67 The club received further foreign exposure by leading excursions, albeit relatively infrequently, for European travelers, and by working

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in tandem with European alpine clubs such as the German/Scandinavian Sassnitz-Trellebord club.68

Although from the beginning the club’s meager budget forced members and excursionists to meet initially at Dmitriev’s dacha, in 1902 the Yalta city administration donated funds to construct a proper building for the club, and until 1908 provided other forms of financial support for the club’s efforts. The building was constructed in the very center of Yalta, next to the city administration building. It had its own museum, which the club used to promote its research, free of charge, to any of Yalta’s visitors, and had a park where excursionists and others could get acquainted. The new facility housed an impressive library, which housed thousands of volumes about alpinism, alpine environments, and alpinists representing every mountainous region of Europe as well as many in Asia and North America. The building also held a tourist information booth and a meteorological station. The club’s new headquarters was a physical manifestation of its long-standing commitment to science and education.

In order to carry out excursions, the KGK had to design them, build infrastructure, and make arrangements with various parties to provide transportation, use land, visit gardens, or arrange tours of resort and Tatar towns. Straightaway, the club made special arrangements with the ROPiT for the transportation of excursionists and negotiated the right for excursionists to go to royal gardens and orchards in Livadia and Massadra. Arrangements were also agreed upon with the land owners in Novyi Svet and in Bakhchisarai, so that travelers could experience Tatar cities, the palace within the ancient

68 Dolzhenko, Istoriia Turizma, 20.
Tatar capital, and the nearby caves. In 1894, the KGK built the first mountain shelter for excursionists in all of Russia on a path up the mountain Chatyr-dag. Veber remarked that this seemingly small development “opened up all of Crimea and all of Russia for excursion activity.” Spelunking in the caves of Chatyr-dag (north of Alushta) was one of the first activities routinely practiced on excursions.

The club’s many efforts to promote research soon proved to be too much of a strain on its finances, which ironically brought about a practical change in the club’s program moving forward. As many research trips, and even the club’s missions overall, were being undermined by its lack of funding, the board agreed in the late 1890s that the best solution to this problem would be to offer single-day excursions for tourists. The income generated from these excursions would then be funneled back into further research on Crimea’s natural environment.

The club also offered excursions carried out on foot. There were nineteen distinct routes for on-foot excursions.

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70 Ibid., 8.
leaving from Yalta, most of which led to waterfalls up in the mountains behind the city. Others visited the palace at Massandra, the nearby resorts of Simeiz, Suuk-Su, or Gurzuf, while some visited neighboring Tatar villages. Despite the numerous routes that the KGK offered for on-foot excursions, they also remained rather unpopular with the visiting public. Between 1904 and 1908 for example, the KGK led only between eighteen and thirty-seven on-foot excursions per year.71

The club’s success and popularity came, rather, through excursions by coach [ekipazhnye ekskursii]. Leading several daily during the season, the club typically led around three hundred total in most years. The trip up Mt. Ai-Petri by coach was, by a significant margin, the most popular excursion in Crimea. The one-day excursion had tourists leave the club, head out of Yalta to the west and very shortly afterwards turn up the mountain on their right. Following the path through the forest, the excursionists would soon reach perhaps the largest and most famous of Crimea’s waterfalls, called Uchan-Su. The groups would then proceed further up the cliff, enjoying the views especially at the Szyszko cliff, where lunch was taken, and further up at the summit of Mount Ai-Petri – arguably the most scenic spot on the peninsula – and its zubtsy (the rock formations at the peak). Excursionists would then descend to Yalta via Isar, the former location of a medieval fortress, and via Chekhov’s dacha situated closer to town. A second, two-day excursion to Ai-Petri was also instituted for those who sought out the sunset and then sunrise from the mountains most scenic viewpoints.72

72 Bumber et al., eds, Krym: Putevoditel, 341.
Other routes for coach excursions took visitors to neighboring Alupka. Others went to the east, stopping in Gurzuf to visit the casino, several impressive fountains, and Nikitskii Botanical Gardens on the route back to Yalta. Other, more involved excursions took visitors to Ai-Petri and continued on to Bakhchisarai, the ancient capital of the Crimean Tatars. Visiting the city, its palace and its ruins and then returning to Yalta took three days. A four-day excursion to the caves at Chatyr-Dag, north of Alushta, was the most popular multi-day excursion, as its caves featured the most fascinating natural wonders of any of the KGK’s routes.

The KGK also initiated in 1911 what was known as the “Pilgrimage to Ai-Petri,” seeking to mimic the idea of pilgrimage to the peak that had existed, “since Trojan times.” This once-a-year excursion differed from the typical weekly tourist excursions to Ai-Petri in both scale and content. At first, three hundred people would take part, but they would be joined by others from Alupka and surrounding villages, and once they arrived at the summit in the afternoon, the total number of people exceeded one thousand. Many others had already come in the evening and had watched the sunrise from the mountaintop as well. The public “built up in a storm” and essentially sacked Ai-Petri’s only restaurant and in a half an hour decisively destroyed all of its provisions. A mass of Tatars in national costume gathered outside on the square in front of the restaurant and they began to perform Tatar national dances. Observers were fascinated by the Tatars’ instruments in particular, especially the classical khaitarma73, and, “with pleasure and curiosity followed every movement of the dancers and awarded them with applause.”

73 Resembles a mandolin
Afterwards, there were a series of horse races, featuring the skill of the ceremonially
dressed Tatars, some of whom worked as guides in Yalta, and one of whom, the eventual
victor, was just a boy. The success of the excursion was mentioned repeatedly by the
public, for its educational value, for the lasting impression it would leave, or simply for
allowing the residents of Yalta to escape their boredom. So successful was the excursion
that the KGK immediately planned a similar “pilgrimage” to Bakhchisarai, which a
journalist felt assuredly would draw similar numbers and be equally successful.⁷⁴

The Alpine Club became responsible for defining the terms and possibilities for
Crimean excursions. It established the routes, promoted particular sites, built paths, roads
and shelters, performed research, composed maps, and simply popularized the idea of the
excursion amongst Crimea’s visitors. Because of the goals of the club, the educated
excursion leaders, the information provided in guidebooks, and the inevitable interaction
with nature that excursionists had, even tourists predominantly in search of leisure would
have derived certain educational benefits from the excursions. Just as school children
would have on their excursions, tourists would have at the very least, if only standing in
front of a waterfall, been out in nature, interacting with it, seeing their homeland and
appreciating its aesthetic beauty. Their guidebooks, filled with poetry and history,
ensured a connection between the natural world and Russian culture. Although tourists to
a greater extent than students may have been responsible for their own education on such
tours, and may have been misinformed or misguided by what they saw, because

⁷⁴ A. P-nyi, “Palomnichstvo v Ai-Petri” KKL, 3 June, 1911.
excursions themselves originated at the crossroads of education and travel, the two could never be wholly separated from each other.

In 1903 the club led 322 excursions, for nearly 10,000 participants. A combination of political unrest and terrible weather rendered the years between 1904 and 1908 much less successful for the club, but in the years following the number of excursionists typically exceeded 10,000 per year, peaking at over 15,000 in 1911. Archival evidence points to the vast majority of excursionists visiting from the empire’s two capitals, especially the wealthy from Petersburg, but also university students from the furthest reaches of the empire, teachers, doctors and medical personnel, bureaucrats, and soldiers.\footnote{Golotsvan, “Krymsko-Kavkazskii gornyi klub”, 184.} Unsurprisingly, 1914 marked the end of this success, as only 2,260 people would go on excursions, nearly all carried out before the outbreak of war in August, though it must be said that the club carried out excursions right through to the end of 1917, most of which were reformed and geared towards treating the injured and the ill. Although it would be an exaggeration to suggest that excursions became a mass movement in tsarist Russia, over 140,000 people participated in the excursions of the Yalta division of the KGK in total.\footnote{Ibid., 172.}

By the turn of the century, the excursion had caught on in Russia, and had spread to the point where Crimean excursions represented but a drop in the bucket, even if compared only with Russia’s largest tourist organization, the Russian Society of Tourists [\textit{Russkoe Obshchestvo Turistov} – hereafter ROT]. When the ROT sent its excursionists to Crimea, they employed the facilities and expertise of the KGK. One could take an

\footnote{Golotsvan, “Krymsko-Kavkazskii gornyi klub”, 184.} \footnote{Ibid., 172.}
excursion from Moscow, for example, and go with a group for 4-5 weeks, following a
variety of KGK routes around Crimea, and the ROT essentially worked in conjunction
with the local association while on the peninsula.

The partnership was a good one because each organization shared similar
scientific and educational goals, indicating that the work of the KGK was not unusual
throughout the empire. The Russian Society of Tourists’ commitment to the educational
aspects of tourism manifested itself in 1910 with the creation of the Commission of
Educational Excursions in Russia. Headquartered in Moscow, the commission gathered
together teachers, many of whom worked in underfunded rural schools, and sent them on
excursions abroad, throughout Russia (and often to Crimea), or simply within their
locality should funding be unavailable. The idea seems to have been to not only have
teachers learn and gain an appreciation for nature and history in Europe and in Russia,
but to teach teachers about excursions themselves. As such, they might be more inclined
to lead excursions on their own, which would meet a major goal of the ROT – the general
proliferation of educational tourism. For those travelling around Russia (better than half
of the program’s participants), Crimea and then the Caucasus were far and away the most
popular destinations.77

Although often strictly associated with leisure and idle pleasure by historians,
Russian excursions originated out of a changing pedagogical emphasis, drawn from
Western European practices, that encouraged students and eventually the wider public to

77 Obrazovatel’nye ekskursii po Rossii: Sbornik otchet za 1910g (Moskva: Moskovskoe Otdelenie
Russkoe Obshchestvo Turistov, 1911).
engage more actively with the natural world around them. In contrast to the classical or scholastic education given in gymnasiums and universities in the nineteenth century, the excursion was about experiencing the natural wonders that Russia had to offer. Before long, educators sought to bring history, culture, and even literature into the mix, giving excursions a multi-disciplinary character, and making the excursion into a multi-faceted tool for learning about Russia.

When Russian excursionists moved fluidly between Russian and non-Russian lands, they came to conceptualize Russia and its natural environment in ways that helped them define their own identity as Russians, place parts of Crimea within their national homeland, and uncover their ties the broader multi-ethnic empire. By transforming the natural environment into a classroom, Crimean excursions became a crucial vehicle for creating and spreading knowledge about the peninsula, and enlightening its many visitors. The Crimean environment, however, was not only a pedagogical force, it was also curative.
CHAPTER 2: ENVIRONMENTAL CURES ON THE COAST OF HEALTH

“What can treat consumption?” asked a leading tuberculosis researcher, Dr. Shtangeev, speaking to the Yalta division of the Society for the Protection of the People’s Health in 1898.1 “As neither a rational nor radical treatment exists yet, and no specific method for the extermination of the tuberculosis parasite has been found,” he continued, “what is left is only to heighten the immune systems of patients, to promote the counteractive strength found in tissues and blood.”2 To do so, Shtangeev recommended patients visit a place such as Crimea’s coastline, where a series of environmental factors allowed, or could be exploited, for region-specific treatments designed to improve the body’s immune systems. Crimea, he and others suggested, was home to a, “Coast of Health, [where] nature was somehow united in one focus: on the life-giving strength of

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1 The Society was founded in 1877 in St. Petersburg with the objective of safeguarding public health, and promoting the improvement of public health and sanitation. It was among the first Russian scientific societies with a hygienic orientation.

the sun, air, and sea.” Crimea, they claimed, actually gave “clear-cut miracles” to the Russian people.3

Why did journalists and doctors such as Shtangeev suppose Crimea to be such a suitable region for a range of health practices? What treatments grew out of medical scholarship in the region? How did Crimea come to possess what came to be widely known in the public imagination as a Coast of Health? Drawing upon medical literature and advice published in doctor’s reports, tourist guidebooks, and in the press, this chapter sets out to answer these questions through an analysis of the relationship between the environment and medical practices along the Russian Riviera.

Crimea’s south coast boasted a confluence of key environmental factors that contributed to the peninsula’s therapeutic potential, including fresh maritime air, moderate temperatures, and high annual rates of sunshine. Visitors could bathe in the Black Sea, seek treatment at altitude, and purchase fresh produce on a daily basis. Mineral deposits in lakes on the west coast of Crimea made the region ideal for the construction of mud baths.

Such natural characteristics offered relief and strength to victims of a wide range of illnesses and afflictions. The spectrum of visitors ranged from the terminally ill to those with minor and perhaps temporary maladies. Russians came to Crimea to treat tuberculosis4, syphilis, hemorrhoids, chronic rheumatism, neuralgia, hyste

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3 Dym, “Berega Zdorov’ia” KKL, 08 May, 1911.
4 Unlike cholera, tuberculosis has been understudied in English language literature on the tsarist era, despite some reports naming it the cause of 25% of Russian deaths at the time. See F. T. Shtangeev, O lecheniie i rezhime pri chakhotke (Yalta, 1898). On the history of tuberculosis in Western Europe and the United States, see: Sheila M. Rothman, Living in the Shadow of Death: Tuberculosis and the Social Experience of Illness in American History (New York: Harper Collins, 1994); F. B. Smith, The Retreat of Tuberculosis
emphysema, asthma, respiratory or pulmonary diseases, ailments of the liver, spleen, stomach, genitals, or skin, or simply if they experienced a recurring cough, got headaches, felt depressed, or felt tired. And this is far from an exhaustive list. Many Russians in fact came to Crimea for its therapeutic environment without ever having experienced any symptoms at all, seeking to revitalize and strengthen their bodies all the same.

Individuals took on treatment regimes that were nearly as diverse as the maladies which might be ameliorated or cured in Crimea. The spectrum here ranged from those who put themselves in intensive and indefinite care at sanatoria, to those who simply read a page from a guidebook and took medical advice and applied it, perhaps haphazardly or incorrectly, to their lifestyle while visiting. The most prominent local therapeutic methods were hydrotherapy, fangotherapy, physiotherapy, solar treatments, and various forms of balneotherapy, including grape treatments, kefir and kumis treatments, and sea-bathing.

As each sort of treatment could be carried out in the confines of a medical institution or entirely individually, the extent of physician supervision varied greatly as well. The degree to which individuals sought out care from doctors depended upon personal preference, the severity of symptoms, and the sort of affliction requiring treatment. Just as crucial, however, was the state of medical knowledge amongst Crimean doctors and the ways in which they presented that information to the public.

I argue in this chapter for the importance of environmentalist/localist thinking amongst doctors in Crimea. They were practitioners and proponents of medical geography (or medical topography) in the sense that they based their practices around an understanding of how humans could live in and exploit various environments for health purposes. From antiquity through to the nineteenth century, medical theorists have proposed two underlying theories of etiology. On the one hand, physicians have long recognized many diseases as contagious, having recognized transmission from person to person through touch, the air, objects, or animals. This represents the contagionist viewpoint. On the other hand, since Hippocrates and Galen wrote based on humoral theories, disease had also been understood as the product of local circumstances, individual predisposition, and particular environmental factors. This represents the localist/environmentalist stance. Though considerations grew increasingly sophisticated as the nineteenth century progressed (with most physicians falling somewhere between strict contagionists and strict localists), doctors continued to debate the origins of disease. While I am not concerned with etiology necessarily in this chapter, the debate is nonetheless crucial for understanding preventive, palliative, and curative strategies in Crimea. Although the Russian state, when developing policies to combat epidemics such as cholera leaned far towards contagionism, and therefore most often sought to battle

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5 For an extended introduction to medical geography, see: Converey Bolton Valencius, “Histories of Medical Geography” in Medical Geography in Historical Perspective, Nicholaas A Rupke, ed. (London: The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL, 2000), 19.
disease through cordons, disinfection, and quarantines, what we see in Crimea is an emphasis on environmental cures and the espousal of a more localist viewpoint amongst medical professionals.

Throughout the time period of this study, knowledge about the environment and health in Crimea were intimately linked. Until challenges from recent scholarship, many historians had seen the rise of germ theory at the end of the nineteenth century as the turning point away from environmentalist thinking and towards a more scientific understanding of “modern” medicine. Crimea, however, did not yet reflect the newfound evidence, developed by Pasteur, Koch, and others in the 1880s concerning the transmission of contagious illnesses. Linda Nash has compellingly argued on the other hand that the supposed “unscientific” environmental medicine of the nineteenth century persisted despite overbearing narratives of contagion and increased emphasis on laboratory work in the field of medicine. Well into the twentieth century, physicians in Crimea, similar to those Nash studied in the United States, continued to observe the

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8 As such, I have taken a regionalist approach to history here, which allows for the consideration of both the biological nature of disease and illness (they are caused by micro-organisms after all) as well as their social and cultural constructions, through a focus on place. See: Martha L. Hildreth and Bruce T. Moran, “Introduction” in *Disease and Medical Care in the Mountain West: Essays on Region, History, and Practice* (Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1998), xiv-xv. See also: Valencius, “Histories of Medical Geography”, 25; Steve Kroll-Smith and H. Hugh Floyd, *Bodies in Protest: Environmental Illness and the Struggle over Medical Knowledge* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Robin A. Kearns and Wilbert M. Gesler, “Introduction” in *Putting Health into Place: Landscape, Identity, and Well-being*, eds. Robin A. Kearns and Wilbert M. Gesler (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 1-16.


environment, write about it in their reports, discuss landscape, and point to the ways in which the environment as a whole, rather than just its micro-organisms, impacted health.

The influence of germ theory and new understandings of disease transmission did not replace environmentalist thinking, even as Crimean doctors sought emphasis on rigid, institutionalized sanatorium care. Until the turn of the century, no sanatoria existed in Crimea, but by the First World War, dozens had been constructed across the peninsula in and around resorts and in the mountains at altitude. Though complete with laboratories and strict regimes, sanatoria in Crimea represented a renewed effort by doctors (and, increasingly, philanthropists) to harness the environment for the purposes of health. The sanatorium became a new arm in the fight against chronic disease along the Russian Riviera, not as facilities that sought to directly eradicate the contagious micro-organisms that caused disease, but as an extension of the environmental cures regularly practiced by visitors to Crimea.

Nonetheless, the majority of visitors who sought health in Crimea before 1914 regulated and treated themselves. They pursued water and solar therapies with little or no direct supervision from trained professionals, basing their activities upon the recommendations of doctors in travel literature. Most Russians came to the south coast of Crimea to bathe in the sea, breathe its fresh air, and enjoy the benefits of the warm sunshine. They ate grapes or drank wine, kefir, and kumis. It was these sorts of treatments, undertaken outside the confines of medical institutions, drawing upon the region’s climatic and geographic features, and promoted in tourist and medical literature, which brought the ill to the peninsula. Medical practices and discourse therefore shaped
images of Crimea’s south coast as a whole, and the images of the “coast of health” were derived from the practices and literature of doctors who set out to heighten the immune systems of patients.\footnote{The infrastructure built to achieve health goals outside the sanatorium is the subject of the subsequent chapter. For the ways that the French sought to heighten the immune systems of patients, see: Douglas Peter Mackaman, \textit{Leisure Settings: Bourgeois Culture, Medicine and the Spa in Modern France} (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998).}

Unlike the water “cures” in Western Europe that had existed for hundreds if not thousands of years, the treatments employed in Crimea were highly medicalized from the start, meaning that methods were studied empirically first, their effects determined to varying extents, and only then recommended to patients through tourist literature. They were based upon imperfect but nonetheless bona fide science. Russian doctors avoided simply stating that the treatments worked based upon empirical evidence, but rather went to great lengths to make the exact chemical properties of waters and produce, the exact effects of climate and solar treatments, and the exact procedures required to achieve optimum results available to the public.\footnote{This was not necessarily the case in France. See George Weisz, “Water Cures and Science: The French Academy of Medicine and Mineral Waters in the Nineteenth Century,” \textit{Bulletin of Historical Medicine} 64 3 (1990), 393-416; Weisz, “Spas, Mineral Waters and Hydrological Science in Twentieth-Century France,” \textit{Isis} 92 3 (2001), 267-74.} Despite the somewhat imprecise knowledge about each type of treatment in Crimea, doctors and guidebooks spoke of the ways that they were scientifically proven to have worked in a high number of cases.

The publicity worked to shape images of Crimea in the popular imagination. The close links between medical advice, medical practice, and the environment in Crimea served as key advertisements for the region and strove to distinguish it from other parts of the empire and resorts abroad. More than simply a destination for leisure, Crimea drew in
both the seriously ill and offered possibilities for the generally healthy to take advantage of the temperature, humidity, mountains, seaside, and other environmental factors which served to strengthen immune systems and provide comfort and an escape from filthy industrializing cities. Physicians and the public discourse they helped to produce the myriad connections between health and the environment that would ultimately give Crimea its reputation as the coast of health.

**Fangotherapy in Evpatoria-Saky**

In 1826, mud baths were constructed at Saky Lake, located just fifteen miles to the southeast of Evpatoria, under the supervision of the facility’s future head doctor, S. N. Ozhe. The baths (known as the *sakskaia griazelechebnitsa*) were the first formal fangotherapy facility in the Russian empire, and the first place where the environment was exploited for health purposes in Crimea. The baths at Saky were the larger of two major mud bath facilities that could be found in Crimea in the early twentieth century. The second was built on the western outskirts Evpatoria much later, in 1886, on the small Mainaskii Lake, where the properties of the mud itself were advertised as nearly identical, as were the ways it was used with patients.  

Based upon empirical research and analysis of the mud’s chemical composition, Ozhe concluded that “radioactive elements” in the mud would be most effective for treating tuberculosis, infected bones, rheumatism, different sorts of trauma, gynecological

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diseases, infertility, and urogenital disorders.\textsuperscript{14} Although such claims universally derived from experimentation, and although there were several subsequent studies on the mud’s physical properties, the actual reason behind the mud’s healing properties was not fully understood during the tsarist years.\textsuperscript{15} Despite physicians’ uncertainty, medical professionals at Saky and Evpatoria intensively studied the contents of the mud baths, made clear what sorts of afflictions could be healed, and published the results in public reports that found their way across tsarist Russia.

The primary visitor’s guide to the mud baths listed bone infections and pain, scrofula (tuberculosis of the neck), syphilis, rheumatism, arthritis, peripheral nervous system disorders, and feminine diseases, especially diseases of the uterus as having been consistently successfully treated with the mud baths. Success rates were noted regularly in publications, and the range depended on the affliction, with “women’s diseases” reportedly being cured entirely sixty percent of the time, compared with rheumatism and bone disorders having been reportedly cured at least ninety percent of the time.\textsuperscript{16}

There were two sorts of baths that each facility advertised and offered: brine baths \textit{[rapnye vanny]} and mud baths \textit{[griazevye vanny]}. The mud baths could be taken indoors in a private room [known as \textit{razvodnye vanny}] or more commonly outside on a square, “naturally” [known as \textit{solnechnye vanny} or \textit{naturalnye vanny}]. Each had its own regimen, but for any sort of baths, patrons would be awoken by a bell at seven o’clock, in order to

\textsuperscript{14} Malgin, \textit{Russkaia Riv’era}, 285.
\textsuperscript{15} “O sostave I svoistve tselebnikh griaz i limanov” \textit{Evpatoriiskii Vestnik}, 11 July, 1909.
be able to have morning tea, rest a bit afterwards, and be ready for their baths by nine o’clock.

Multiple guidebooks to the facilities and to Crimea in general detailed meticulously the procedures that prospective patients may undertake. They described how the natural mud baths required patrons to undress inside, and to wear a special cloak outside to the square where the baths were. A doctor would then approach and the patron would undress completely, lie in a special area (there would be rows of people doing the same), place their head on a pillow made out of seaweed, and an umbrella would be set up to protect from sunburn. Then, in a process that reminded one visitor of mummification, an attendant would spread the mud, taken fresh from a pool at the edge of the lake, over the patient’s entire body, excluding the head and neck. 17 Patients would lie still afterwards for ten, fifteen, or perhaps twenty-five minutes, after which they would rise, return inside, and bathe in brine (heated to over 30°C) briefly, then wash and return to their rooms. There were separate squares and separate quarters for women and men.

The indoor baths were used by patients who were advised to take a much more “intense” approach. Here individuals would find up to fifteen pud (about 540 pounds) of mud, half hot, half cool, into a small room. Then, using heated brine, staff would raise the temperature of the room above 30°C. The particles that evaporated from the mixture of the brine and the mud gave the patient’s body a more intense shock than the natural baths. After a short time the patient would exit, but could return to the room, similar to a typical Russian bania, numerous times, depending on the advice of the doctor.

The brine baths were less complex. Essentially, patients would bathe in a tub of very hot brine collected from the lake, adding more hot or cold brine in order to maintain a stable temperature. The particularly ill might stay in such baths for up to an hour, while most patients would exit after about half that time. After the baths were completed patients were advised to stay indoors for at least one hour, so as not to catch cold in the cooler air outside. Many patients would be put on a sort of rotation, with days of rest included, which saw them take in two or all of the varieties of baths during their visit.\(^{18}\)

Guides pointed especially to the ways in which the actual treatment regime was not especially harsh or demanding in order to boost interest in the mud baths. After the treatments in the morning, patients had until two o’clock to spend as they pleased, whether it was in their private rooms or verandas, the reading room, or the main hall. At two o’clock, lunch began, and lasted until five. Then, as the day cooled, patients would go outdoors, walk in the park, or perhaps head into the town if the weather was suitable. The Saky baths had a large garden on the premises, where patrons could go for walks, socialize and play games after their treatments. Inside, a game room featured billiard tables, but card playing (gambling) was strictly forbidden, and offenders could be fined. Some evenings, the facilities had dancing, music, or games organized.\(^ {19}\)

The season for fangotherapy was relatively short at either facility, beginning on the first of June and ending by mid-August. Those who arrived even after the middle of June were unlikely to fulfill their treatment requirements, and often failed to get the desired results or found the baths fully booked. Guests would often stay on the premises,\(^{18}\) Yu. A. Morgulis, Sakske Griazy, 22-3.\(^ {19}\) Ibid., 21.
in rooms ranging from one to two rubles per night, depending on the privacy an individual desired. Bedding was also provided at a cost, and an on-site cafeteria served tea and sandwiches, as well as an assortment of wines and vodka.\textsuperscript{20}

The advertised success rates of the mud baths and the amenities at the facilities brought thousands to the facilities each year. In 1910, 2,065 patients visited the Saky baths during the summer, of which 1,052 were women, 1,013 men. Of these one third were visiting for at least the second time and two thirds for the first time. The patients were of all ages. Sixty patients were between 4-10 years old, 226 between 11-20 years old, 520 between 21-30 years old, 593 between 31-40 years old, 372 between 41-50 years old, and 294 were over 50 years old. They came from all parts of the tsarist empire: 1,586 from European Russia, 101 from the Caucasus, 36 from Siberia, 28 from Poland, seven from Central Asia, four from the Baltic Republics, one from Finland, and only four from abroad.\textsuperscript{21} The journalist who published the statistics from the annual reports of the mud baths themselves concluded that it was, “a Russian resort, not a local one.”

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the facility had expanded so that it was comprised of three separate buildings, each with men’s and women’s sections. The mud baths, however, were constantly in debt. Between 1880 and 1901, the local zemstvo determined that the baths were a top priority for the local economy and health facilities, and poured over 200,000 rubles into the baths, expanding them and upgrading their staff and amenities. This still was not enough, as the baths continued to lose money on almost

\textsuperscript{21} “Saksyke Griazy” \textit{KKL}, 25 May, 1911.
a yearly basis.\textsuperscript{22} The zemstvo therefore stopped with the funding until 1908, when it reversed its position completely, and by 1910 had invested an additional 200,000 in expanding the facility further, adding new wings, a restaurant, and quarters for zemstvo officials and for workers. The energy that the zemstvo put into the facility was not in vain, as the facility held seven times as many patients in 1910 as it did in 1880.\textsuperscript{23} Given the range of treatments and the facilities’ growing reputations, demand for further expansion never let up, and even accelerated during the first world war when they were put to use treating wounded soldiers returning from the front. The range of treatments and knowledge about how they cured various afflictions, however, remained essentially the same in spite of the facility’s growth and changing circumstances over time.

\textit{Climate and Climatotherapy}

Russians also visited Crimea’s south coast in order to undertake a more basic practice, climatotherapy \textit{[klimatoterapiia]}, which is simply the therapeutic “influence of fresh air.”\textsuperscript{24} In particular, the way that the mountains stretching along the south coast of Crimea protected south coast resorts from the cold winds of the north made them ideal spots for such therapy. N. Golovkinskii claimed in his 1898 guide that, “you have to come to the conclusion that [Crimea] is the best place in Russia in terms of its therapeutic properties.” He continued, stating that, “so incomparable are its merits, that for almost the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{22} “Saki, V proshlom I nastoyashchem” \textit{KKL}, 15 May, 1911.
\textsuperscript{23} “Saki, V proshlom I nastoyashchem, okonchanie” \textit{KKL}, 18 May, 1911.
\textsuperscript{24} N. P. Ivanov, \textit{Russkii Al’manakh po otechestvennym vodam, morskim kupon’iam, sanitarnym stantsiiam i dr. lechebnym mestam Rossii} (St. Petersburg: F. V. Shchepanskago, 1894), 4.
\end{flushleft}
entire year, almost every single day, the ill can be out, unharmed, in the fresh air.” Dr. K. A. Belilovskii claimed, as more than just part of a sales pitch in guidebooks, that Yalta could be imagined throughout Russia as “a miraculous city in the soft, warm south, flooded for eternity by the shining sun.”

The entire peninsula possessed essentially two climate zones that concerned the public. Most of Crimea was steppe, including all of its northern regions, Simferopol, and right down to the northern environs of Sevastopol in the west and Feodosia in the east. The Crimean mountains, which sloped right into the sea, protected coastal towns from the colder prevailing winds from the north, while opening them to the sun shining from the south, creating a second climate zone along the south coast. Often known as the iaily (Crimean Tatar for mountain plateaus), the highest peaks in ascending order were Ai-Petri, Kemal-Egerek, Zeityn-Kosh, Demir-Kapu, and Roman-Kosh, and all rose parallel to the sea in southern Crimea. Except for Ai-Petri, each rose over five thousand feet above sea level.

Those towns located at the base of the mountains, and right on the sea, therefore possessed the most favorable climates. V. I. Kosarev wrote in 1913 that, “Yalta, protected from northern winds by the high wall of the Crimean mountains, and cleansed by the warm waters of the Black Sea, was in possession of a climate so warm that it would be

impossible to find anything similar throughout European Russia.” Similarly, Alupka, situated in front of the height of the Iaily, the mountain “Ai-Petri,” protected from the east by the cape of Ai-Todor and from the west by the “Black Mountain,” is open only to the sea and the southern sun, making it the warmest point along the Russian Riviera.”  A guide to the town claimed that the mountain-seaside climate of Gurzuf acted “charitably” towards anyone suffering from breathing disorders.

The warmest parts of the Crimea extended from just east of Balaklava to the point at Ai-Todor and the town of Alupka. It was along this part of the coastline that the mountain cliffs were closest to the sea, completely sheltering the resorts on the coast from the cold northern air, while the cliffs, especially Ai-Petri, acted as “natural condensers” for vapors coming from the Black Sea, which increased precipitation and created a natural source of cycling fresh sea air (which, unfortunately, became rather cold in the winter). Yalta, however, was open to winds from the east, further increasing the amount of sea air received, but decreasing slightly its average daily temperature. Guides immediately pointed out the differences between the temperature along the Crimean coastline and other parts of Russia. Comparing Yalta (where the average yearly temperature – the first thing guidebooks typically mentioned – was 13.4°C Celsius) to other parts of the country was commonplace (Moscow, 3.9°C, Petersburg, 3.7°C, Kiev, 6.8°C). Even in January, Yalta’s average temperature was above freezing, while in the

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heart of the summer the average temperature was a reasonable 25°C and cooled only below room temperature by October.\(^{30}\)

The moderate maritime climate was key to *klimatoterapiia*, for, compared to mainland Russia, or even most of Crimea, medical and meteorological studies were able to show less fluctuation in temperature, significant humidity in the air, high barometric pressure, strong air currents, and that the air itself contained a significant composition of ozone, a general lack of dust, and small parts of salt, bromine and iodine. “Under the influence of maritime air,” wrote Ivanov, “[one] breathes more easily, the pulse slows, while sleep and well-being increases.” The maritime climate could further improve the blood flow and fortify the nervous system, he continued, and thus, “the overall effect of maritime climate is the saving of the breathing organs, blood-flow, digestion, and generally holds together the economic balance of the organism.”\(^{31}\) Simply spending time on Crimea’s coast was naturally therapeutic, and even enhanced the effects of mud bathing, sea-bathing, and all other forms of treatment on the peninsula.

Generally, the climate was stable, moderate, and comfortable, but once in a while for one to three days at the height of the summer, dry winds from the north west called *samiet*\(^{32}\) (from the Turkish word for a strong suffocating desert wind) could cause the temperature to rise up to anywhere 34-39 degrees (centigrade).\(^{33}\) This was the exception, however, and by and large the climate was humid and there were no such winds in Yalta.

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\(^{32}\) They were also known as *krymskii sprokko*.
\(^{33}\) Ivanov, *Russkii Al’manakh*, 103.
Temperatures gradually decreased further as one moved east towards Alushta, Sudak, Koktebel, and Feodosia.\textsuperscript{34}

Mild temperatures and opportunities for climatotherapy became the top selling point for Crimean resorts, and a key way in which doctors and guidebooks helped define the peninsula’s image in comparison with other regions in the tsarist empire. One guidebook author, G. Karant, wrote in 1900 that, “in all of Russia, Crimea’s environment is the softest and most pleasing.” Others pointed to even more localized climates and natural characteristics. M. P. Ogranovich wrote in an 1884 report that, “Yalta, by its geographic position on the south coast of Crimea, in a warm climate, belongs on the list of the very best climate stations on the whole of the European mainland.”\textsuperscript{35}

Boosters looked to draw to the Crimean shores all those wealthy Russians who went abroad (and especially to Europe) for extensive climate therapies. Indeed, Crimea’s climate was not just seen by travelers, doctors, and patients for its superiority over conditions in Central Russia or Siberia, but for its world class potential as a place for healing. A 1910 guidebook began by claiming that, “the Crimean peninsula is the richest region in our native land in terms of its beauty and its excellent climate conditions. It stands out not only from the rest of Russia, but from the whole range of world resorts.”\textsuperscript{36} Yalta’s uniquely mild climate, according to another guidebook, also distinguished it from other resorts in Europe, as well as those far off in Japan.\textsuperscript{37} More guides pointed to the superiority of the climate of Crimea’s south coast, lamenting the fact (particularly with

\textsuperscript{34} Bumber et al., eds, \textit{Krym: Putevoditel}, 327-32.
\textsuperscript{35} M. P. Ogranovich, \textit{Proekt ustroistvo sanitarnoi stantsii barachnoi systeme v Krymu} (Moscow: Tip. ObshchRasprPoleznKnig, 1884), 1.
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Prakticheskiy Spravochnik “V Kurortakh Kryma” izdatel`stvo Tavrida 1909-1910g}, 1.
\textsuperscript{37} V. I. Kosarev, \textit{Ialta: Gorno-primorskaia stantsia}, 3.
the onset of war in 1914) that the wealthiest Russians spent 225 million rubles at resorts with inferior natural characteristics in Germany and Austria.\(^{38}\) Many others simply pointed out that Russian resorts, because of climatic factors, could be on par with those in Europe if, they suggested, Russians would simply choose to spend more on travel and resort development in their own country.\(^{39}\)

**Bathing in the Black Sea**

Beyond supplying fresh air, the Black Sea itself was responsible for much of Crimea’s therapeutic capability. Surface waters along the coast hovered around 20°C during the summer months, and though the temperature dropped significantly in winter, the sea around Crimea very rarely froze (though parts of it did in 1911 creating anxiety amongst locals regarding the upcoming season). Though comfortable during summer months, the Black Sea therefore was nearly twice as cold as the Mediterranean and had half the salinity. In addition along the Crimean coast, the temperature of the water was known to rise or fall upwards of seven to eight degrees very rapidly on a sunny day, as the air warmed/cool ed and the winds turned the water over bringing up cool water from the depths and pushing the warm water out to sea. Locals took advantage of this cycling, following medical guidelines for sea-bathing found in guidebooks and the studies of doctors.

\(^{38}\) *Almanakh putevoditel po otechestvennym kurortam i lechebnym mestam* (V. M. Strunskago, 1915-16), xxiii. I suspect this figure to be a serious exaggeration

Guidebooks pointed to the ways in which bathing in the Black Sea was different from bathing in a lake or river in central Russia or elsewhere in the empire. The salt water, they claimed, which also contained a variety of other minerals not found in fresh water, was shown to have a more therapeutic effect on the body. Its moderate temperature, spread over a long bathing season (which lasted from mid-May to October or November even) could be even more convenient and allowed for extended treatment regimes. The beauty of the coastline increased the positive psychological effects of bathing. In short, the Black Sea was worth visiting if only just for its own healing potential.

Sea bathing (as well as the kumis, kefir, and grape treatments discussed below) fell under the broad category of medical treatments known as balneotherapy, defined by Dr. N. P. Ivanov, author of a comprehensive guide to all of Russia’s therapeutic places, as the “science of the therapeutic properties of mineral waters, or, more specifically, the science of the particular properties and types of action external and internal use of mineral waters for the treatment of chronic illnesses.” Balneotherapy placed an emphasis on chronic illnesses, which typically, Ivanov continued, “resulted from dietary issues, bad habits and customs, excess, effeminacy [iznezhennost’], overwork, neurasthenia, etc.” Each the result of lifestyle choices and the realities of city life, he wrote, chronic illnesses were those most treated in Crimea in general, and the various forms of balneotherapy were likely the most used by visitors to the Black Sea Coast. Essentially, he continued, urban lifestyles were causing a great deal of stress on the

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40 Ivanov, Russkii Al’manakh, 1.
human body, “causing it to become less able to defend itself from becoming sick, [often]
causing permanent damage to the organism, which is why we say ‘chronic’.”

Balneotherapy, however, according to medical knowledge in the nineteenth century,
could be extraordinary successful in helping to treat chronic illnesses, and Ivanov
emphatically stated, countering claims that bathing was but a leisure activity, that it was
not simply “an act of fashion.”  

The primary form of balneotherapy was to actually drink waters. Because such a
large portion of the human body is composed of water, ingesting waters with a variety of
minerals or chemicals would cause the healing agents to spread throughout the body
through the blood stream and to nerve centers and organs. Few if any came to Crimea to
drink waters however. Patients requiring these treatments were far more inclined to go to
the North Caucasus, where mineral waters were far more diverse and abundant, and
where treatment facilities had existed since the early nineteenth century. Sea bathing,
however, was naturally the most popular form of balneotherapy in Crimea, and Crimea
was the most popular site for sea bathing in the tsarist era. Although the sea’s minerals
were not directly ingested, doctors spoke publically about how bathing did have a number
of key therapeutic effects on the human body. Depending upon the temperature of the
water, its chemical elements, its movement, the climate along the coastline, and other
surrounding conditions, they claimed, bathing could have profound effects.

The leading authority on the methods and effects of bathing in the Black Sea was
Dr. V. N. Dmitriev (1839-1904). A practicing physician in Yalta for 35 years, he

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41 Ivanov, Russkii Al’manakh, 2.
published the standard reports that visitors were advised to read and that guidebooks summarized when considering any of these topics from 1869 onwards. His seminal work on bathing, *Healing through Bathing on the Coast of the Black Sea*, was published by his son, also a doctor, posthumously in 1913, but multiple editions of his treatise on bathing, *Sea Bathing in Yalta and in General on the South Coast of Crimea* represented the core of research on the therapy by the 1890s. Excerpts from his publications appeared in tourist guidebooks, pamphlets, and advertisements for resorts across the peninsula.

Bathing, according to its leading authority, was therapeutic for almost every part of the body, and for a wide variety of conditions. It worked to improve everything from the internal organs, to the brain, to the immune system, to the digestive system. It simply gave energy. Filling the needs of both the seriously afflicted and those with moderate or no symptoms at all, bathing, he argued, could have positive effects for both the ill and the healthy.

Much of the water’s therapeutic potential, Dmitriev wrote, derived from the fact that it gave the body a sort of shock. Although the shock was “the same for the cowardly or the fearless,” as the pulse increased by several beats per minute, one breathed with greater energy, and the nervous system would become “excited” upon entering the water. “It is exactly these effects which give bathing its healing potential,” he continued, “when the nervous system becomes more impressionable and excited, it prepares the body for a strong response.” By repeatedly training the body to respond with strength, he argued, it

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would heighten the immune systems of individuals suffering from a range of possibly otherwise untreatable health issues.

More particularly, he suggested that there were several effects that the water would have when an individual went into the sea: the skin became cooler, tightened and whitened, and the nervous system became generally excited, which affected the other parts of the body, especially the muscles. The heart slowed, the lungs increased the frequency and depth of breathing, the pumping of blood to the extremities was reduced and directed to the internal organs. When the skin is first submerged and contained less blood, he argued, it was at this point that the nerve ends became as if they have been subject to a light anesthetic, which in a sense meant that they have become more able to withstand the shock of outside phenomena.

Then, Dmitriev went on, as the skin warmed and the influx of blood returned to the nerve ends, as the body reacted to the shock of entering the water, nerves became even more responsive and strengthened against external phenomena. This strengthening effect did not just affect the skin, but all parts of the body. Internal organs were able to “feel” better. The liver, digestive system, and the intestines became more “alert” (why hunger arose after swimming), as did the heart and lungs. Vision became more acute, as did hearing and muscles. Bathing even affect the mind. It allowed ideas to develop more quickly, for clearer thinking, and for “all psychological abilities to be enhanced.” After bathing the “brain worked more easily,” its “impressions became more lively,” and bathers, “generally felt better.” Combined, “these effects are the greatest influence that bathing can have,” Dmitriev concluded.
Because bathing could range from a social and leisure activity to a methodical and therapeutic one, Dmitriev set out cautions and guidelines that were publicized in order to ensure that visitors, no matter their state of health, were not harmed through bathing in the Black Sea. In fact, the main advice he, and virtually every guide, gave, was that any therapeutic regime be approved by a doctor beforehand.\textsuperscript{44} He warned in particular that the shock that the body felt when entering the water – the primary source of bathing’s positive effects – could do more harm than good. “The general rule,” he advised the public, “must be to always be especially cautious [with bathing]. You need to choose the proper time of day, plan how many minutes you will spend in the water, what you are going to do before and after bathing. It’s necessary, for both the sick, who are planning to use the health benefits of the sea water, and the healthy, who are just bathing for pleasure, to be very attentive.”

Dmitiriev recommended moderation in bathing, suggesting that, although the difference between the air temperature and the water temperature was largely what generated the positive effects, bathing in water below 14°C was never advisable. It was when the water reached this temperature that the bathing season began, and when it dropped below, the season ended. He also suggested that bathing more than twice per day was dangerous, especially for the unaccustomed or recently arrived. In fact, he recommended that visitors get acclimatized to the region for several days before bathing in the sea, and also suggested taking regular baths in warmer water for several days, decreasing the temperature each time. Of course, bathing right after a meal was not

\textsuperscript{44} Dmitriev, \textit{Morskoe kupan’e vialte}. 106
advisable, and that generally it was better to bathe in the morning than the afternoon, and that it was never a good idea to lay in the sun right after exiting the water, as the excitement that the nerves received from the cool water would be totally mitigated by the heat, thus rendering the bath useless from a therapeutic standpoint.\textsuperscript{45}

Certain people were not advised to bathe at all. Individuals with tuberculosis that had reached more advance stages were not supposed to go into the sea. Bathing would harm those with tuberculosis that had spread to the bones – such people ought to go to the mud baths Dmitriev advised. Those infected with syphilis would not get any benefits from the sea water, but once treated and cured by a physician or at a sanatorium, he advised patients to bathe in order to strengthen the immune system and the body. In fact, bathing was highly recommended for those who had recently recovered from any affliction. More generally, Dmitriev warned that if a person did not lead a healthy lifestyle, or was not somewhat fit (he referred to women especially here), the effects would not improve a person’s health in the long run. He also said that those suffering from obesity refrain from bathing, unless under direct supervision from a doctor. However, he argued, if bathing was done properly, and daily, for 4-6 weeks in a row, it would have lasting, positive effects on the body’s ability to combat disease.

Bathing in the sea was done in particular places in Crimea. Certain sanatoria had their own beaches, where patients could bathe, generally under the strict supervision of doctors, who would ensure that the proper regime was followed on a daily basis. For the general public, however, there were also several beaches where doctors were often or

\textsuperscript{45} Dmitriev, \textit{Morskoe kupan’e v ialte}, 78-80.
always present to advise bathers. Evpatoria was home to a particularly popular one, known as Solarium Beach, which was located right in the center of the dacha region of the town, where most visitors would have resided. More than a simple beach, there was a facility for taking regular baths in sea water (at various temperatures), as well as exercise and medical equipment. The beach itself was divided into parts for men, women, children, and there was a special square for the more seriously ill. Use of Solarium’s facilities cost visitors up to 30 rubles per month, a lofty sum, and additional therapy would only add to that cost. There was a free public beach in Evpatoria as well, known as Sanitas Beach, where individuals could bathe on their own and enjoy the town’s sandy coastline.46

On the south coast of the peninsula the situation was similar, though the beaches were rocky (and the sea filled with boulders which could cause injury if the waves were at all powerful), and the temperatures slightly warmer. Many of the smaller resort towns on the coast which were not home to sanatoria did have beaches that were advertised as key reasons for visiting. Gurzuf, Simeiz, Novyi Miskhor, Suuk-Su, Sudak, and small coastal Tatar villages encouraged visitors to come to their quieter beaches for bathing, mentioning as well the cheaper accommodations. The quality of these beaches varied. In Gurzuf for example, one of the most picturesque spots on the coast, there were two beaches open to the public. Located on one was the town resort commission, which kept the beach in “fantastic condition”. The other was supposed to be maintained by the Gurzuf Agricultural Society, but in reality it was not maintained at all, and was covered

with large rocks, filled with garbage, and had a number of wrecked boats abandoned on the shore.47

The construction and maintenance of beaches from which to bathe was generally a top priority for each town’s administration, for associations of various kinds, and for sanatoria across the peninsula. In most cases their activities sought to make sure that the healing properties of the natural environment could be exploited to the fullest extent possible, fulfilling the promises of boosters.48 In Alushta there was a beach, also called Sanitas, which gave its bathers continual supervision by the local physician, Dr. Geiman. Alushta also housed the pansion of Dr. Steingoltz, which was located on the sea and offered supervised bathing for its patients. The area of Alushta’s dachas that was located on the coast, known as “Professor’s Corner,” also had a public beach that was considered one of the best places to swim anywhere on the south coast.49 Yalta had a public beach (Zheltyshevskii Beach) that ran all along the city’s embankment. Although many did bathe there, it was not considered to be an ideal place to do so therapeutically, as it was not especially clean, was very rocky, the waves were stronger than in many other places on the coast, and it lacked many of the treatment facilities that other beaches possessed. Yalta did have two excellent children’s beaches at its Children’s Colony (discussed below). Alupka had superior bathing conditions. At the end of Vorontsov Park there were two beaches, separated by large cliff – one for men, the other for women. These were the most popular places to bathe on the coast of Crimea. It also seems that men and women

47 Alim “Kurortnaia Zhinz: Gurzuf”” RR, 18 April, 1912.
48 “Kurortnaia Zhizn’” KKL, 11 May, 1912.
49 Almanakh-putevoditel’ po otechestvennym kurortam i lechebnym mestam, 78.
sometimes tried to swim around the cliff, which was nearly impossible for an expert swimmer, or tried (more successfully) to scale the cliff to see what was on the other side.50

Bathing was not the only therapeutic activity undertaken on the beach of course. Exploiting the effects of Crimea’s abundance of warm sunlight was also recommended by authorities. During the summer in Yalta there was an average of ten hours of direct sunlight (ie. no cloud cover, no shade from the mountains) per day. The sun in Evpatoria, guides advertised, would “revitalize the entire body,” especially along its “natural velvety sand beaches,” while its coastline was “untouched by any sort of filth.”51

Doctors noted that the sunlight could have very positive effects on the body, and particularly the skin. They recommended “sun bathing” for skin conditions such as eczema and lupus, saying that the sun could act as a disinfectant since it kills bacteria on the skin’s surface. The sun was also understood to be healthy for internal organs, as it was seen to liven the work of the nervous system, speed the digestive system, improve blood flow, improve metabolism, and generally improve the state of the entire body. Sun bathing came with its own rules, the most predominant being that a doctor’s supervision or at least advice was necessary, and that it should always be done for only 20-30 minutes, with the use of an umbrella, hat, or white sheet to block direct sunlight.52

Sun bathing could be carried out on any of the coast’s beaches, but was also a key form of treatment at the Children’s Beaches, specifically maintained for solar therapy by

50 “Nashi Damy” RR, 24 June, 1909.
51 Sputnik po Gorodu levpatoriia, 3.
52 Dmitriev, Morskoe kupan’e v ialte, 47.
Dr. V. G. Lapidus in Yalta. Even by 1909 journalists lamented the underdevelopment and underuse of solar therapy, suggesting that the results of the efforts of Lapidus had been excellent and warranted the creation of similar facilities for adults.53

**Grapes and Kumis**

One of the most unique sorts of treatment, and one that drew in visitors particularly to Crimea, was the consumption of grapes. Grape treatments were a distinctive and defining feature of resort life in Crimea.

Viticulture was one of Crimea’s most lucrative industries. The Massandra brand, produced on a vineyard on the outskirts of Yalta, was (and is to this day) one of the most well-known sorts of wine from the Russian empire (or Ukraine). Not all of the grapes grown were used for wine, however, and, as was the case with dozens of other vineyards in Crimea, many were sold at markets in resorts, to be consumed for their healing potential. Most of the grapes in Crimea – and there were over two hundred unique varieties – were in some way unique to the region.

Doctors recommended that patients carry out grape treatments continuously over the duration of four to six weeks. Patients were advised to begin by eating one pound per day, then increase each day by a half pound until they were eating eight pounds of grapes per day, and continue at that level for some time, after which they were to decrease their consumption at the same rate down to nothing.54 Other guides suggested that some

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54 Golovskinskii, Putevoditel’ po Krymu, 59.
treatments even recommended that up to ten to twelve pounds per day could be consumed, part on an empty stomach and the remainder over the course of the day.55

Perhaps even more so than with bathing, it was important to follow the correct procedure if visitors wanted to benefit from eating grapes. Not doing so was almost certain to harm the body. A doctor’s consultation was always recommended before embarking on such a treatment, especially since it was difficult for a non-specialist to determine exactly which sort of grapes to eat. The grape variety mattered a great deal since Crimean health professionals agreed that certain types could have a decidedly negative effect on certain types of illnesses.

In selecting the right sort of grape, patients were advised to pay particularly close attention to the amount of sugar contained within them. Twelve percent was typically ideal for the generally healthy individual. Doctors could also provide advice on where to buy grapes, as certain salesman might claim to be selling grapes with healing properties (and therefore at a higher price), when in fact they might have no benefits whatsoever.

Grapes in the center of Yalta could be bought on any number of street corners, and cost up to twelve kopecks per pound, but about half of that in the smaller resorts. The most commonly consumed grapes were from either the shasla family (chasselas in English – a common variety in Western Europe), or the chaush family. It was, as a general rule, considered inadvisable to consume dark/red grapes for treatment. Often, visitors preferred

55 Ivanov, Russkii Al’manakh, 130.
to drink pure grape juice in place of the regular fruit, and many sellers owned machines that produced fresh grape juice for consumers from grapes they selected themselves.\footnote{Iu. V. Vasil’chikov, Ialta i blizhaishia okresnosti: putevoditel’-spravochnik 1911-1912g (Yalta: tip. Lupandinnoi, 1911).}

Guidebooks were filled with rather unsurprising rules about eating grapes.\footnote{Medical reports on grape therapy were often were republished, word for word, in local newspapers. On grape treatments see: “Kurortnye Nuzhdy” RR, 22 August, 1909.} It was best to purchase properly ripe ones, not to eat more than one at a time (it would be difficult to spit the seeds and you might choke), and that patients should not eat the seeds (or the skin in some cases). Grapes needed to be kept away from dust and the hot sun, and it was important to stick to the variety that the doctor recommended and not the ones that taste the best. Last but not least, teeth were to be cleaned after eating them.\footnote{Pravdin, Alupka: Prakticheskii Putevoditel’-spravochnik i flora Vorontsovskago parka; Vasil’chikov, Ialta i blizhaishia okresnosti.} In addition to grapes, all sorts of other fruits were grown locally and also recommended for health reasons, including apricots, peaches, pears, plums, and apples.\footnote{See: V. K. Vinberg, Prakticheskoe rukovodstvo vinogradstva i vinodeliia (St. Petersburg: A. F. Debriena, 1896).}

Doctors and guidebooks suggested that eating grapes according to their regulations could reduce phlegm and improve breathing ability, reduce the effects of liver diseases, relieve the engorgement of the abdominal cavity, eradicate kidney stones, hemorrhoids (it acted as a laxative), and was considered useful for hysteric, hypochondriacs, heart problems, and generally for those whose diet has caused weakness or fatigue.\footnote{Golovkinskii, Putevoditel’ po Krymu, 59.}

Grapes were recommended due to their therapeutic potential but also simply because they were part of a healthy diet. Doctors also encouraged the consumption of
cow’s milk for the latter reason. Because milk was an emulsifier, and due to its composition (fat together in an aqueous solution with sugar, protein, casein, and salt), guidebooks praised it as a critical component of an individual’s diet. Visitors to Crimea were encouraged to drink milk, but to drink it slowly and with small portions at more or less regular intervals of time in order to give the stomach time to digest the contents. Consuming milk with something such as bread, toast, or kasha, which would allow the digestive system to process the milk more easily, doctors noted, as it needs time to digest in the stomach and otherwise will just cause hunger and could cause an upset stomach. Nonetheless, milk was known to improve ailments in the digestive system and other internal organs.

Kumis, however, had a far greater curative effect than simple milk. A beverage traditional to the Mongols and other peoples of the steppe, local varieties of kumis had been produced by Crimean Tatars for generations. Kumis was made from mare’s milk and fermented, giving it a “pleasant, slightly sour taste.” When under fermentation, the sugars in the milk produced alcohol, carbonic acid, and lactic acid, which were the ingredients that gave kumis its ability to heal. Kumis fluctuated according to the quality of the milk, the energy and length of fermentation, and the skill of the master and the cleanliness of his dishes. The amount of spirit could range from 9% to 33%, sugar from nothing to 39%, lactic acids from 2% to 12%, fat from 12% to 26%, proteins from 16% to 37% and salt from 3-5%. Generally, the longer the kumis was fermented, the more alcohol, carbonates, and lactic acids it would possess, while having less sugar and protein. For the varieties with the highest alcohol and carbonate content kumis would be
fermented for seven days. In other cases, fermentation may have lasted only for an hour, retaining high sugar and protein content.

Because of its properties kumis did not only have a dietary function, but also “therapeutic properties in that it increased blood flow, strengthened perspiration and the rate of urination, and stimulated the organism.”61 In comparison with regular milk, it offered many of the same curative properties, but guides argued that it worked much faster, improving the immune system on a daily basis, and could have between 50-100% more of an effect. Kumis was known in Crimea to be especially good for young adults (whose bodies could handle the intensity better) who had been weakened by a variety of afflictions, especially with ailments in the digestive system. However, guidebooks never recommended it for tuberculosis (and certain other) patients as it had a decidedly negative effect on them by actually accelerating the disease’s progress.62

Because kumis brought about decidedly positive or negative outcomes, guidebooks advised patients to stick especially closely to doctor’s recommendations and to proceed with caution at all times. Kumis treatments required some acclimatization, and for those not used to drinking it, stomach pain and diarrhea were often the result. Therefore doctors typically recommended that patients take just one glass per day to begin with. As with the grape treatments, patients would increase the dose daily, and eventually take on stronger varieties of the beverage. Some patients would go as far as to drink six bottles per day as their maximum during the regime. More typically, kumis

61 Ivanov, Russkii Al’manakh, 121-2.
62 Golovkinskii, Putevoditel’ po Krymu, 60-1.
treatments in Crimea were far less intense and the treatments were seen largely as supplemental [dobavochnye] to other medical advice.⁶³

Similar regimes were devised for the consumption of Kefir, another beverage local to the North Caucasus and Crimea, but made from cow’s milk. Doctors also recommended it for those with afflicted internal organs, anemia, or scrofula.⁶⁴ Kefir differed from kumis in that it had significantly less alcohol but significantly more carbonic acid. Prepared by placing kefir grains in warm water for up to three hours and then pouring it into hot fresh cow’s milk which fermented for several days – guides suggested it was best to leave for eight days – kefir was determined to be a very good dietary supplement. Unlike kumis, doctors did not claim any substantial therapeutic effects for kefir.⁶⁵

Sanatoria

By the turn of the century, alternative sites of treatment arose that would serve to supplement the environmental cures so popular amongst Crimean visitors. Formal sanatoria began cropping up across the peninsula beginning in the late 1890s, which in Crimea ranged widely in purpose and methods. Most, in fact nearly all, were places where patients would go voluntarily (and at great cost) as part of a way to discipline themselves, separate from the general public, and get increased supervision over their treatments.

⁶³ Ivanov, Russkii Al’manakh, 121-8.
⁶⁴ Golovkinskii, Putevoditel’ po Krymu, 60-1.
⁶⁵ Ivanov, Russkii Al’manakh, 129.
It should be noted that in the big picture, actual sanatoria played a rather small role (in terms of the volume of patients) in palliative and curative medicine in Crimea. While several sanatoria and *pansiony* were constructed in Yalta and along the coast between 1900 and the First World War, available beds would have generally numbered in the hundreds, perhaps eclipsing one thousand, and most sanatoria remained far too expensive for the majority of visitors to afford. Regardless, they were a significant feature of the Coast of Health because they offered care to the most seriously afflicted patients, because they were generally sites of medical research as well as medical treatment, and because many sanatoria were owned or operated as charitable institutions, demonstrating a commitment, however small, to extending therapeutic opportunities to individuals outside of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie.

Evpatoria was home to two sanatoria (in addition to its mud baths), the Primorskaia Sanatorium and the Thalassa Sanatorium (named after the Greek sea goddess). Both were located right in the center of the town, and right on the coast, taking advantage of one of Evpatoria’s most desirable features – Crimea’s only sand beaches. The Primorskaia Sanatorium was built in 1905 and treated its patients primarily through physiotherapy, according to methods derived from German doctors. Patients would come to the Primorskaia to receive treatment for paralysis, neuralgia, migraines, insomnia, neurasthenia, hysteria, amyotrophy, heart conditions, and a host of other similar issues. The sanatorium possessed the requisite facilities to provide hydrotherapy and air and sun treatments, was home to an exercise hall, foot baths, massage tables and other amenities. The sanatorium was rather expensive, costing 45 rubles per week, and 30 additional
rubles if one desired a private room.\textsuperscript{66} Each treatment facility, as a rule, required a previous medical record with the history of the illness, and required that new patients get a formal diagnosis from the sanatorium’s doctor. Payments were made entirely in advance, and of course results were not guaranteed.

The Thalassa Sanatorium opened just up the embankment street from the Primorskaia in 1912 in a building known as the White Palace. The enormous facility did not specialize in any particular sort of treatment, but instead sought to “fully study and make full use of all of the natural riches of Evpatoria.” The sanatorium did not serve only the sick, but anyone desiring rest or to “recover their strength.”\textsuperscript{67} Visitors could even stay elsewhere in town and use the sanatorium’s resources on a daily basis at a reduced rate. Thalassa was as expensive as Primorskaia, costing between five and ten rubles per day. For fears of contagion, tuberculosis victims were not allowed in either of these facilities.

The south coast possessed a few advantages compared to Evpatoria: it had a slightly longer, warmer season, its resorts were better developed with more amenities, and it was more beautiful, which was important because doctors stressed the psychological benefits of the region as crucial to effective treatment. The south coast was home to private sanatoria (like the two in Evpatoria), publically funded sanatoria, as well as sanatoria run by philanthropic individuals or organizations. Above all, the south coast was best suited for treating breathing disorders and lung diseases, although it was also true that if such diseases had reached advanced stages, there were few facilities (or known treatments) that existed for patients.

\textsuperscript{66} Kaganovich, \textit{Noveishii Putevodil’ po Krymu na 1913god}, 84.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., 86.
The earliest sanatoria here were built in the late 1890s. Perhaps the best known sanatorium in or around Yalta, and one which specifically dedicated itself to treating breathing disorders and tuberculosis, was initially opened in 1897, based upon the donations and direction of the princess M. V. Bariatinskaia, a wealthy landowner, philanthropist, and member of the Red Cross and the Sisters of Mercy. At that time it was located in a building rented to her, but quickly showing signs of success and housing only ten patients, she quickly sought to move and create a much larger facility. In 1898 the tsar himself donated a tract of land near Massandra. Partly financed by the Ministry of the Interior, and directed by a temporary sanatorium commission, construction began in 1899. The facility, costing 300,000 rubles, opened in 1901, and was named the Yalta Sanatorium in Memory of Emperor Alexander III.\textsuperscript{68} The sanatorium, from its inception, was charitable in nature, and categorized as such. Beds there were immediately in high demand, but it had an official policy of giving beds first to those who could not afford private facilities, naming specifically students, doctors’ assistants, and low level servicemen, making it one of the few places those outside of the nobility and bourgeoisie could receive treatment in Crimea. The construction of the facility, and its operation subsequently, was made possible by public funds, the philanthropy of princess Bariatinskaia, the cooperation of state and local governments, and, after 1907, the Red Cross, which built a new wing into the facility.\textsuperscript{69}

\textsuperscript{68} Yaltinskaia Sanatoria v pamiat Imperatora Aleksandr III: Kratkaia Istoria vozniknowenia i opisaniie sanatorii (St. Petersburg: tip Rossiia, 1909), 3-4.
\textsuperscript{69} Bariatinskaia’s sanatoria speaks to the ways in which charity operated in tsarist Russia as both the responsibility of local governments (particularly the zemstvo) and private individuals. Even if the sanatorium was perceived of as funded by a private individual, it is clear that public institutions on multiple
The Alexander III Sanatorium was one of the few in Crimea that admitted patients whose afflictions had reached advanced stages unlike most sanatoria that uniformly would not admit consumptive patients, as the risk of contagion was so high. Tuberculosis patients might be sent to the Shelter for the Chronically Ill instead, which was opened in 1898 by the Yalta Philanthropic Society. Although not technically devoted to tuberculosis patients, few others could be found there. The shelter “only accepted the poor,” but nonetheless cost 30 rubles per month, though it did reserve a meager fifteen places for patients who could not even afford that.70

The Red Cross soon constructed its own sanatorium, named after Empress Maria Fedorovna, which opened in 1910. Accepting only patients whose illnesses were in their initial stage, it was nonetheless often overbooked, in which case, uniquely, only Yalta residents would be admitted. A second branch was built shortly afterwards to meet the demands of even more patients. Although the cost of staying here was 75 rubles per month, a number of beds were reserved here as well for those who could not afford to pay.

The final predominantly charitable facility in Yalta was the Ai-Danil Climatic Colony for Weak and Sick Children. Opened in 1912, and operating year-round, the facility’s treatment regime involved bathing, exercises, special diets, treatment for some mild forms of TB and nerve disorders. The goal of the facility was explicitly stated: to harness Crimea’s therapeutic natural characteristics in order to strengthen children’s levels contributed as well. This was not an unusual situation. See: Adele Lyndenmeyr, Poverty is not a Vice: Charity, Society, and the State in Imperial Russia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

70 Putevoditel’-spravochnik: Yalta i blizhaishiiia okrestnosti, II izd. (Yalta: tip. N. P. Lupandinnoi, 1913), 84-5.
immune systems and physical strength. All therapy was done as a group, so any children requiring surgery or having serious disorders were not permitted.\textsuperscript{71}

Outside of Yalta, the only other charitable facilities were also dedicated to youths. Known as the Sanatorium Bobrova, and located in Alupka, one facility dedicated itself to diseases such as bone tuberculosis, rickets, and other bone disorders in children. Functioning year round, and with two doctors constantly on site, patients paid 60 rubles a month, or 30 rubles if the full rate was not affordable. The other, known as the Sanatorium of the Spiritual Authority (or Sanatorium Sara), provided low cost treatments for students.\textsuperscript{72}

In addition to the charitable sanatoria, Crimea’s south coast was also home to a series of private sanatoria that provided for-profit care, particularly for wealthy patients looking for more luxurious accommodations during treatment. In 1900, Dr. I. F. Lebedev founded the Sanatoria Gastria. Located part way up the mountains behind Yalta, at 450ft of altitude, the sanatoria was separated from the city and its patients were able to breathe the sea air scientifically shown to have the highest oxygen content. It was specifically dedicated to treating lung disorders, especially those not at advanced stages. The Sanatorium Slavati, founded near Yalta by Dr. Blokh, served a similar purpose, namely the treatment of breathing disorders at their initial stages. It provided more luxurious rooms for its patients, the most expensive costing up to 300 rubles per month, where Gastria’s best rooms were only half as expensive.

\textsuperscript{71} Almanakh-putevoditel’ po otechestvennym kurortam i lechebnym mestam (1915-16), 100-1.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., 68-72.
Slavati was not the only sanatorium to offer upscale treatment facilities. The sanatorium of I. I. Ivanov, situated in the center of Yalta could match any sanatorium in the region in terms of comfort, and provide a wider range of health services. Also dedicated to those in the initial stages of disorders (stomach, kidney, digestive system, and heart conditions, as well as bronchitis, hemorrhoids, and other afflictions were treated here), Ivanov’s sanatorium, like the other private institutions, forbade any tuberculosis patients. Ivanov’s sanatorium advertised “the latest technology,” fangotherapy and electrotherapy treatment facilities, as well as a lab and brand new x-ray machine.73 Outside of Yalta, the top sanatorium was run by Dr. Gokhbaum in the outskirts of Alupka, at altitude. The private sanatoria cost 150 rubles per month and offered “individual treatments with a hygienic-diet regime and full comfort.” This “beautiful” facility was, like the other sanatoria, dedicated to problems with internal organs that had not reached advanced stages. It also advertised that it specialized in treating exhaustion and would be able to strengthen the body and its immune systems, especially for those who had recently overcome a disease that left them in a weakened state.74

The Crimean Coast of Health in Comparative Perspective

In or outside the sanatorium, the situation for Russian doctors in Crimea was much different from that of British or French doctors, who practiced medical geography

73 Almanakh-putevoditel’ po otechestvennym kurortam i lechebnym mestam (1915-16), 103.
74 Ibid., 68-72.
in the tropical territories of their respective empires. There, where malaria and the hot climates in particular were understood as a threat to northern European bodies, Europeans feared not only the effects of disease, mental disorders, or “dangers to moral self-discipline,” but also that they might appear inferior to local peoples and relinquish colonial authority.\textsuperscript{75} Hydrotherapy and spa research therefore combined with medical geography in Western European empires and became critical to the well-being of colonizers. However, medical geography there took on a significant role as vital therapeutic, curative, and prophylactic bulwarks against tropical disease, and hence became critical tools of colonial authority.\textsuperscript{76}

In the Crimean case, the link between medicine and imperial power did not develop. A more analogous situation to that in Crimea may be examples from the American West. Mark Twain published his thoughts on the curative powers of the region around Lake Tahoe in the 1870s, and the result of his publications was consumptives and physicians alike pouring to the Rocky Mountains in search of cures.\textsuperscript{77} By 1900 one in four migrants to California came in search of health.\textsuperscript{78} In Colorado, where an estimated third of the population in 1880 consisted of health-seekers and their families, hospitals sprung up to meet the needs of the sick in such great number that the state was dubbed “The World’s Sanatarium.” In New Mexico tuberculosis treatments paralleled those in

\textsuperscript{75} Valencius, “Histories of Medical Geography”, 16.
\textsuperscript{77} Ronald L. Numbers, “The Significance of Regions in American Medical History” in \textit{Disease and Medical Care in the Mountain West: Essays on Region, history, and Practice}, eds. Martha L Hildreth and Bruce T. Moran (Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1998).
\textsuperscript{78} Rothman, \textit{Living in the Shadow of Death}, 132.
Colorado, while Nevada and Utah also saw an, albeit smaller, share of immigrants seeking medical treatment.  

Sheila Rothman has shown how widespread and deeply held fantasies about the American West, beginning well before Twain, in the 1840s and 1850s, fostered an image of a region that was pure, wholesome, and reinvigorating. Travel accounts advertised the West as an El Dorado, an earthly paradise, as a site of both wealth and health. Drawing upon a romantic image of the Indian, physicians and literature alike encouraged outdoor activity in the mountains and a lifestyle separated from urban communities. Legends grew where dead bodies were brought to the West and returned to life in dry climates at altitude. Doctors published scientific treatises in local pamphlets and articles in the Journal of the American Medical Association espousing the West’s benefits to consumptive easterners. They also initially pointed to the ways in which it was beneficial to live in what were known as open health resorts, places where a region and a routine, as opposed to a physician or more formal institution, could offer optimal results.

Rothman’s excellent work focuses solely on tuberculosis patients, while I am concerned with a broader spectrum (in smaller numbers) of afflicted travelers, but the story of the American West parallels that in Crimea by demonstrating the connections between the environment of a particular place, public perception, and medical literature. As in the American West, guidebook authors and doctors alike depicted Crimea as a sort of paradise. The medical literature points to the ways in which visitors to Crimea could exploit the natural environment in search of cures or relief for both serious and marginal

80 Rothman, Living in the Shadow of Death, 131-60.
ailments. Treatments in Crimea, in or outside the sanatorium, were studied scientifically, showing that Crimea’s healing potential was rigorously studied, and that the results of such studies were made public. Fangotherapy, climatotherapy, solar or light therapy, seabathing, physiotherapy, and grape, kefir, and kumis therapies were all based upon this growing body of knowledge that doctors publicized in reports and subsequently in guidebooks. Therapeutic institutions were built, where patients could receive highly regulated and supervised care. The result was a region in many ways characterized by its therapeutic methods generating a public image of a coast of health.

If Crimea’s climate and geography were the basis for its attractiveness and for its use as a healing place, it was essential for Crimea’s image, for its prosperity, and for its very existence that visitors would actually be able to carry out these sorts of treatments, while not being subject to harmful surroundings as they lived their lives within the city. As such, ensuring clean air, water, streets, buildings, and ultimately a sanitary urban environment, became a top priority for Yalta’s and other resorts’ city planners and administrators.
In a report given to the Moscow Medical Society and the Petersburg Society of Russian Doctors in 1884, Doctor M. P. Ogranovich described Yalta as, “a congested city, densely built-up, lacking necessary hygienic standards even for permanent residents, not to mention its temporary visitors, who not uncommonly find an evil illness there.” He wrote how, “there are neither gardens, nor strolls, for there is not enough space,” while, “the Mordvinov Garden, as they call it, other than the cement square opposite the hotel Rossiia, stands out only because of its remarkable dampness.” “Thanks to the perpetual passing of carriages [along the embankment],” he continued, “a mass of dust, which in Yalta is generally not fought with street cleaning, makes even this place unsuitable for the ill to walk.” Ogranovich then claimed that Yalta could not boast about its air purity because of, “the exceptional underdevelopment of sewage systems and treatment, the strength of which presents a real threat to the surrounding natural environment.” Even the housing, in its construction and especially construction materials, “is far from acceptable
quality.” Their walls were filled with moisture, mold, and, “the majority of buildings, especially on the lowest floors, are distinctly damp.” He concluded that, “in the home, clearly, it is just as it is outside – not especially healthy. In a word, anything considered a convenience for the ill is difficult to find in Yalta.”¹

Yet, less than a decade later, Yalta would go on to win the gold medal for its sanitary conditions, city improvements, and recreation opportunities at the First All-Russian Hygiene Exhibition in St. Petersburg (1893), an event attended by 200,000. Representatives from the city were given personal recognition from Alexander III. When the exhibition was held again twenty years later in 1913, Yalta received only the silver medal. Its neighbor, Suuk-Su, took home the gold. In a few short years, city improvements along the Russian Riviera made remarkable progress.

This chapter explores the collective attempt to create a sanitized region stretching all along the south coast of Crimea and in Evpatoriia-Saky on the west coast of the peninsula from the 1860s until 1914. An ideal climate, high levels of sunshine, fresh maritime air, accessible seaside mountains, mud baths, and fresh local produce all provided a therapeutic environment for citizens suffering from dozens of diseases and ailments prevalent in modern industrial societies. Based upon the publications of doctors, which found their way into guidebooks, journals, and newspapers, residents, medical experts, administrators, and visitors came to view the coast as the “Coast of Health.”

The problem I set out to resolve here is how Russians in Crimea simultaneously sought to preserve the pristine natural environment – the source of the region’s

¹ M. P. Ogranovich, Proekt ustroistvo sanitarnoi stantsii barachnoi systeme v Krymu (Moscow: Tip. ObshchRasprPolezKnig, 1884).
therapeutic potential – whilst constructing livable modern towns and cities. What was the role of civil society and the medical profession in city improvements [blagoustroistvo] across Crimea, and what was the role of private industry? How did sanitation measures reflect the values of city planners in late imperial Russia? How did sanitation measures in Yalta compare to other resorts on the Russian Riviera and cities across the tsarist empire?

It would not be an exaggeration to describe Yalta and the other resorts along Crimea’s coastline as “hygiene polities.” At any time, a substantial number of medical doctors were members of the Yalta city Duma. Beginning in 1880, Dr. Tobin was a member of the city council, Dr. Ovsianyi sat as city secretary, and Doctors Dmitriev, Shtangeev, and Bogoslovskii were on a short list with voting power in the local administration. The city Duma’s work was based upon the creation of two commissions shortly after its own inception in 1871, whose members were primarily doctors or engineers: the Resort Commission, responsible largely for maintaining the city’s image and aesthetic appeal as a resort, and the Sanitation Commission, responsible for keeping the city clean.² Because of the constant presence and local administrative divisions comprised of medical professionals, the question of city sanitation was always at the forefront of political discussion at the local level. Of the 450 reports produced by the city administration by 1886, going back to the time when Viceroy Vorontsov made Yalta into an uezdnyi city in 1843, the vast majority of them dealt with issues of sanitation and sewage, the projects of local doctors, the construction and maintenance of streets, gas

² “Kurortnye Nuzhdy” RR, 13 June, 1909.
lighting, fresh water supplies, funding disinfection crews for streets and buildings, and the building of city parks and swimming areas.\(^3\)

A broad contention of mine is that there was a definable agenda for development along Crimea’s coastlines. Although there was discussion and moderate disagreement on how the agenda would be carried out, health care professionals, philanthropists, local administrators, zemstvo officials, and eventually the tsarist government shared a common vision for development in Crimea. Essentially, they all worked towards building not just health care facilities on this imperial borderland, but an *entire region* devoted to health care. Based largely upon the actions of these groups and individuals, but also on public statements and reports in the press, I am suggesting that this shared agenda, although never explicitly espoused by every involved party, existed because members of Crimea’s civil society, particularly physicians, were the ones actually in the local administrations carrying out the business of governance.

Journalists in the early twentieth century referred to the unified and collective efforts of multiple levels of government to create a sanitized region across Crimea as the project of building an All-Russian Sanatorium.\(^4\) The All-Russian Sanatorium was not in fact a building or complex but rather a space which stretched all along the coast but reflected a sanatorium nonetheless. I employ this term frequently throughout this chapter, not because it was used frequently at the time, but because it is a helpful way of understanding the broad and shared goals of city-planners in Crimea. It may be useful to

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\(^3\) F. D. Veber, *Gorod Ialta c ego okrestnostami i lechebnymi sredstvami*, (St. Petersburg: Rikker, 1886), 18-19.

\(^4\) Often they simultaneously mocked the project, referring to the region as an All-Russian hell-hole. See: Dzhin, “Teny Zhizni” in *RR*, 12 July, 1913. Note: *Vserossiskaia Sanatoria* does not have ethnic connotations – “Russian” in this sense meant citizen of the Russian empire.
think of the All-Russian Sanatorium as a heterotopia, a space that served as a means of escape from authoritarianism and repression, which is inherently different from the sanatorium itself, but enacts utopian vision of a sanatorium. Utopian visions of the All-Russian Sanatorium – as a place where humanity could get well – parallel those ideas that Foucault described from the French Revolution, where there was a notion, “Medicine in Liberty,” that healing could escape the confines of the infirmary and take place within the broader community instead. The sanatorium would, Crimean physicians hoped, expand to become the wider world.

There were, nonetheless, contests over space along the Russian Riviera. Because funds were perpetually inadequate to meet the goals of everyone interested, how funds were in fact appropriated was a regular point of debate. Such debates highlight the vital role of the local self-government in particular and how it grappled with other groups – philanthropists, doctors, land-owners, and a variety of formal associations – and illuminates the workings of local politics and the experiences of local people. Because much of the work of city improvements was done by resort administrations and associations, and the tsarist government interfered with affairs along the Russian Riviera only sporadically while much of the work of city improvements was done by resort administrations and associations, we see how in Crimea modernization could be a local and liberal movement even within an autocratic state.

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5 Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” Diacritics 16 (Spring 1986), 22-27.
Resort cities such as Yalta provide unique insight into the issues of urbanization and modernization. Because Yalta grew from a small fishing village into the jewel in the crown of the Russian Riviera in mere decades, it is plain to see what sort of aspirations locals advanced because they were filling in an almost blank slate. Unlike Petersburg or Moscow or London or Paris or any other city which pursued a program of sanitation and cleanliness in the latter half of the nineteenth century, residents of the Russian Riviera did not need to reconstruct an old city, replete with history, symbolic meanings, and known daily routines. Rather, they were able to begin largely from scratch, faced little to no resistance, and very much had the opportunity to create the idyllic All-Russian Sanatorium. How they attempted to realize the project provides great insight into the values, behaviors, and ambitions of certain groups of Russians in the late tsarist period.

**Resort-City Improvements in Yalta**

Resident of Yalta Dr. Rozanov began a 1899 report on the sanitary state of Yalta by claiming, fundamentally, but perhaps to no one’s surprise, that “the questions and problems of improvements [blagoustroistvo], existing in every city and population, take on a new importance in resorts.” Dr. I. M. Sakharov, another of Yalta’s preeminent physicians, said that, “in Yalta, more than every other Russian city, not only every year, but every single day, the question of sanitation must be considered.” Vladimir Rybitskii (mayor of Yalta, 1872-9 and 1907-14) was among the first to relate such sentiments,

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8 P. P. Rozanov *O blagoustoistve kурортов na iuznom beregu Kryma* (1900), 4.
suggesting that, “the improvement of sanitation will play an extraordinary role in the long-term development of Yalta as a resort.”

Although not Crimea’s largest city by any means, Yalta was its largest resort, was the leader in terms of city improvements, and the model for smaller resorts along the coastline. Because Yalta’s reforms were also very progressive within the tsarist empire as a whole, and it drew upon the latest knowledge from across the empire and Europe in its city improvements, how Yalta set about building a clean and healthy city can also shed light on late tsarist urban practices more generally. As such, the city’s plans and progress, particularly the ways that it secured a clean water supply, built sanitations systems, cleaned streets and courtyards, and dealt with its garbage can offer a glimpse into Riviera-wide trends for dealing with the problems of health-focused urban environments.

The first effort made towards city improvement along the Russian Riviera was to construction of a small scale water supply system in 1847. It was built out of an underground source above Yalta on the estate of Massandra, which was owned then by Prince Vorontsov, who initiated construction. Running roughly one mile in distance, clay pipes brought water to a fountain in Yalta where the fresh water could be used by locals, by troops, and by Vorontsov himself, who watered the roads on the way to his estate in Alupka.

When the Tsar Alexander II acquired Livadia in 1861 for his summer estate, improvements continued after a lull around the Crimean War. As he intended for a series of fountains to be a key feature of the park around the palace at Livadia, the tsar initiated

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9 N. A. Belilovskii, Ialta: Sanitarnyi Ocherk (Simferopol: TavGubTip, 1912), 21.
immediately the search for a water source. A hydrologist, K. O. Ianushevskii, was hired by the royal family and constructed a set of underground pipes which would draw water from the cliff-side above Livadia and distribute it to the palace and throughout the park.

In Yalta, however, the city’s fountain was proving insufficient in meeting the growing population’s basic needs for fresh water. Plans were drawn up by a Tavrida Provincial Commission \[Tavricheskaia Gubernskaia Komissiia\] to renovate the Massandra water supply to increase its output and decrease maintenance on pipes which had fallen into disrepair. The project was postponed because the cost was too high for private interests and certainly for Yalta’s administrators, as the entire town budget amounted to only one fifth of the project’s estimate. In 1866, the newly established zemstvo got involved and proved to be the organ through which the project could be realized. Though they had to secure an imperial decree in order to force the Vorontsov family to allow construction on their property in Massandra, the zemstvo made securing fresh water in Yalta its first ever major point of business. Construction drew upon underground sources through a series of wells that carried the water through cemented ditches and ultimately cast-iron pipes directly from Massandra down into Yalta, ultimately providing 120-200 thousand veder (650,000 gallons) of fresh water each day.

With the establishment of Yalta’s city administration in 1871, among the first orders of business was the construction of a set of underground pipes which would distribute water throughout the town, replacing the need for centralized water fountains. The systems were a key step to realizing a new plan for city development in Yalta, authorized in 1874 by Alexander II, which saw the city limits grow substantially such
that the “new town” between the Derekoi and Uchan-Su rivers officially became part of the city. The mayor, Rybitskii, proposed that the new territories needed to be integrated into plans for water distribution to promote future development there. The city worked alongside a local Association for the Promotion of Urban Amenities in Yalta and completed the network that year, in 1874, and from this point forward Yalta had underground water distribution that virtually all residents could access and that was under the complete ownership of the city administration.

In 1884, eleven gauges were installed so that water could be measured by hotels, real-estate developers, and bathhouses. About the same time, however, it became increasingly clear to the administration that additional water would be needed during the summer months when rainfall was limited and the visiting public the largest. In order to prevent initial shortages, gauges were installed by the city in each home that had access to the system beginning in 1885, which allowed for the city to monitor and moderate water use in individual homes in order to ensure sufficient water supplies during the summer. In 1897, the city imposed a standard tariff of one ruble for every thousand veder (3,250 gallons) of water used by homes and businesses in Yalta. The fee was doubled in 1910, much to the chagrin of residents and business owners (who paid the lion’s share – the hotel Rossiia used far and away the most water of any local institution), but the city ensured throughout those decades that the hospital, the Red Cross, men’s and women’s gymnasiums, the orphanage, and other such institutions were not required to pay into the system.

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10 Journalists spoke frequently of the Water Question [Vodnyi Voprosh]
User fees on water consumption in the 1890s routinely generated an income for the city of about 20,000 rubles annually. The system not only paid for itself, but generated significant income that the city could employ for other city improvements. Rozanov was able to conclude that in 1898,

“Yalta used its public facilities and industries, working principally towards city improvement, and these very facilities and industries provided the main source of the city’s income, which was so ample, that it covered not only the credit obligations, but also the costs of operating a wide enough and diverse city economy.”

Unfortunately, disputes over the Massandra land between its owner, Count Mordvinov and the city administration, and the rapid growth of the city (the source provided enough water for 10,000 people, the population in 1900, but by 1910 the resident population alone was three times that) forced the city to look for other sources in the northern outskirts of Yalta. In 1898 a city-sponsored commission was created under the leadership of Dr. Rozanov, Engineer and Statskii Sovetnik A. L. Bert’e-Delagard, and other leading Yalta professionals (including V. N. Dmitriev), that set out to resolve the future of Yalta’s water supplies. It produced a report in 1899 that noted critical shortcomings in the amount and quality of the water in Yalta, and recommended a massive project (at a cost of nearly 500,000 rubles, which would be loaned to the city from the tsarist government) be undertaken by the city to resolve the critical issue. The plan involved building four large pools above the city near the water source. They ensured that one pool was always left empty so that it would be cleaned, while the others supplied clean fresh mountain spring water to the city. Thanks to these improvements and

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11 Rozanov O blagoustoistve kurortov na iuznom beregu Kryma, 1900.
the system design, Yalta’s water supply doubled, never got dirty (the mountain sources were very pure to begin with), and contained a minimal amount of bacteria.\textsuperscript{12}

As the city limits continued to expand in the first decades of the twentieth century, so did the water supply system. New sources were tapped in the Tatar village of Autka to the northwest and dacha settlements known as Zarech’e to the southwest along the coast. At the onset of the First World War, the city was again planning to tap into further water sources, showing clearly that, despite some of the problems with the water supply, it remained a top priority for city officials in Yalta. Without having quality fresh water, individuals (especially patients and doctors) could not maintain high standards of cleanliness. Streets, buildings, and the sewer system could also not have been kept clean and sanitary, totally compromising the goal of creating a pristine environment for locals and visitors, healthy or ill.\textsuperscript{13}

Though the water supply was essential and required perhaps the greatest attention of local authorities in Yalta, the administration attacked unsanitary conditions within its borders on a number of additional fronts. In order to allay the threat of infectious diseases, the city Duma decided in 1886 to build an extensive underground sewer system that would access all areas of the resort. Constructed in 1887-8, Yalta’s sewers were built as a “floating system” [\textit{splavnaia sistema}], whereby the city’s waste would travel down a series of underground pipes, regularly flooded by the city’s water supply, where it was gathered in a “collector” underneath the embankment, and eventually washed out into the Black Sea beyond the pier. Nearly 90\% of the buildings in Yalta had access to the

\textsuperscript{12} F. D. Veber, \textit{Gorod Ialta}, 19-21.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 2-3.
system, and despite its small size, Yalta was one of the first cities in the Russian empire to have a fully functioning sewers.

Before the 1890s, trash was burned essentially right in the Old Town, causing the entire city to be filled with foul odors. The resolution to this problem was enacted in the 1890s, whereby the city would remove garbage and deliver it into the sea without allowing it to pollute the air, create those fouls odors, damage the soil, or attract stray animals. Garbage was collected once and sometimes twice daily (although in the winter it happened far more sporadically), transported to the harbor, loaded onto a barge, and carried out at least three (later five) versly (about 2.5-3.5 miles) into the sea, where it was unloaded. Over 400 cubic sazhens (140,000 cubic feet) of waste was removed from the city each year in the 1890s, and the population would more than triple by 1910.

Concerned about the growth of bacteria in the groundwater and in places people frequented on a daily basis, the administration also passed measures to clean up the city’s courtyards [dvory]. Even in the central areas of the city – those which were best maintained – courtyards were often filled with, “trash, dirt, and filth.”14 In the worst parts of the city, doctors were almost certain that the soil in courtyards was infected with bacteria, complaining that many residents consider sanitation to be simply dumping waste into the dvor, which entirely defeated the purpose of the sewage systems. In other instances, the Uchan-Su and Derekoi rivers were used as waste disposal facilities, and they became contaminated and carried disease and odors through the center of town, spoiling the surrounding soil.

14 N. A. Belilovskii, Yalta: Sanitarnyi Ocherk, 28.
Street cleaning, the next major strain on the city’s budget and water resources, was also crucial to the city’s agenda. Although automobiles began to appear in the early twentieth century, horse drawn carriages remained the primary mode of transportation, and keeping carriage stations and the city’s generally unpaved roads clean proved to be an enormous task for the administration. They spent nearly eight thousand rubles per year (collected from the taxes from the cab drivers) in an attempt to keep these spaces sanitary, making street cleaning nonetheless one of the city’s single largest annual expenses. Only in 1910 were measures passed that required that carriage stations be paved in asphalt, and that they be washed every night with water or if possible with mazut (fuel oil).

The administration debated moving the stations away from the Embankment, but never implemented such a policy, and the dust, filth and manure built up everywhere, creating a strong odor throughout the city. One visitor spoke of how whenever a ship of the ROPiT arrived and dropped off a group of passengers, “within a minute rises a great cloud of dust on the street.”¹⁵ The city also received different complaints from travelers. In the center of the old town was the large, but modest, second-class hotel Bristol. Behind the Bristol however was where the cab drivers [izvozchiki], spent time off work. One woman complained to the city Duma that these men, especially at night, created a great deal of noise as they shared drinks, punches, and conversations littered with foul language, and that they spat and urinated on the street, despite public toilets in the proximity there that were so foul as to be unacceptable themselves in her mind. She also

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¹⁵ N. Lender, Po Chernomu Moriu: Ocherki i Kartinki (St. Petersburg: izd. Suvorina, 1900), 162.
pointed out that when the carriages brought meat to the nearby bazaar that the ground might be covered with blood or other liquids, which also gave off a strong stench.\textsuperscript{16} Duma policies proved never to be wholly successful, and the city conceded that it was impossible to eliminate the odor of horses from these places, as it got right into the road, the soil, and everything else.\textsuperscript{17}

The administration also took some responsibility for what went on inside the city’s private buildings. Because of the high cost of living in Yalta and because the majority of its residents stayed only temporarily during the season, there were never enough rooms for the city’s growing population. Two room apartments in Yalta on average housed five people, while one room apartments averaged four. Doctors advising the city Duma spoke of how such close living quarters were naturally conducive to the spread of disease. One strategy the city employed was having information available to the public encouraging sanitary activity within the home. They persuaded residents and visitors to, “strictly follow the well-known directions of social and private hygiene so that the healing power of the southern environment is saved in homes and gives them to the afflicted.”\textsuperscript{18} At times, the city would take a more direct approach. It organized periodic disinfection campaigns, ordering people to sterilize their homes or simply hired crews to disinfect entire buildings. It was not uncommon in Yalta for a tuberculosis patient to rent a room for several months in a \textit{pansion} or private apartment, leave, and have the next

\textsuperscript{16} GAARK f. 522, op. 1, d. 1903, l. 30.

\textsuperscript{17} N. A. Belilovskii, \textit{Ialta: Sanitarnyi Ocherk}, 39-40.

\textsuperscript{18} Rozanov \textit{O blagoustoistve kurortov na iuzhnom beregu Kryma}, 4.
tenant, perhaps largely healthy, move in without having the room sterilized. The city devoted significant energy to eliminating such situations.

Finally, the city’s interest in creating a healthy urban space included the ways that it set out to ensure that the urban environment was beneficial to visitors’ mental health. The city was constantly looking to expand its green space, purchasing land in the center for parks and gardens, in an attempt to give visitors a place to go on strolls and enjoy the fresh maritime air and take in the scenery of the coast line. During the season, the main city park was also home to a full size orchestra, which performed daily. A remarkable amount of attention was placed on the aural experience of the urban environment. More than once, Russia’s most famous opera singers, Leonid Sobinov, Dmitri Smirnov, Feodor Chaliapin and many others, performed in Yalta’s city park. Nearly all of the Resort Commission’s funding was put towards the orchestra, deemed an essential feature not just for entertainment but for the health and comfort of visitors, exemplifying the high priority the city placed on its visitors’ comfort, seeking to eliminate stress that might compromise treatments.

Some of Yalta’s leaders, including doctors, felt that not only would a city that provided entertainment be able to provide psychological benefits to visitors, it could also profit greatly, and ultimately reinvest funds into health-related projects. One local doctor, I. I. Ivanov, suggested that Western resorts such as Monte Carlo had managed to strike a reasonable balance between medicine and entertainment, and that Yalta should follow the Western model. While Western resorts did promote the positive effects of their waters

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19 “Okhrana priezhikh na kurortu” KKL, 8 May, 1913.
20 GAARK f. 522, op. 1, d. 1306.
and treatment centers for health reasons, he argued, they also had a whole range of entertainment possibilities including theatrical productions, concerts, balls, masquerades, horseracing, and all sorts of sports activities. In order to do this, he believed that the city needed to prioritize the construction of a resort hall, casinos, clubs, and other places of entertainment.

Ivanov also argued that the orchestra should play continuously throughout the year, as the people who needed its psychological and health benefits most remained in town after the season had concluded. Ivanov felt the same about the theatre, and he argued for a yacht club and a school to teach sailing and rowing, each of which could be beneficial to visitors’ health. Further, he believed that there should also be a place for children's games and gymnastics, for croquet, lawn tennis, polo, golf, horseback riding, and other activities that would allow visitors to live an active lifestyle along the coast. Ivanov was certainly not in opposition to the idea that the resorts be fully committed to the health of visitors. Rather, he considered these sorts of improvements – which may seem to be geared only towards a leisure oriented tourist public – as part of the responsibility of the city administration to improving the health of visiting patients as well.21

Physicians, Administrators, and City-Improvement Policy-Making

The organization, planning, and funding of resort improvements in Crimea was carried out by multiple levels of government in tandem with non-government institutions,

including formal and informal associations of intellectuals, physicians, engineers, and businessmen, local city administrations, regional zemstva, the Tavrida provincial government, and the tsarist government itself in St. Petersburg.

The ways that Russian and particularly Crimean associations of physicians and engineers acted in synchrony with the state raises the question of whether they represent a “civil society.” The Crimean case points to the ways that, yes, indeed, there was a civil society, but one that had a complex and generally cooperative relationship with state institutions. Joseph Bradley has asserted that the, “relationship between civil society and the state is ambiguous,” and that, “collaboration and cooperation are just as likely as confrontation to define the relationship, and that civil society is more likely to grow in scope when it avoids political activities that directly challenge absolutism.”

Cooperation between physicians and the state was not always the case. Nancy Frieden has eloquently argued that reform-minded physicians – people with expert knowledge – formed a corporate identity that reflected a belief in Western methods of medicine, an emphasis on medical science, and a desire to promote the public welfare that pitted physicians against a tsarist government that often resisted Western methods and especially physician involvement in urban planning. It was not that the tsarist state did not have a vested interest in the health of its people, however, as famines and cholera

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22 Emphasis mine. Describing civil society and the public sphere, Jurgen Habermas has pointed predominantly to the ways that it opposed and ultimately supplanted authoritarian rule. However, work on German and Russian civil society since Habermas’ important contributions has however also suggested a harmonious relationship between public associations and an autocratic state, while the same can be said about the Russian case. See Jurgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989); Joseph Bradley, “Subjects into Citizens: Societies, Civil Society, and Autocracy in Tsarist Russia” American Historical Review, 107 4 (2002), 1102.
outbreaks in the 1890s proved to be a considerable embarrassment to the regime.\textsuperscript{23}

Provincial towns even elicited lamentations from the tsarist state about the indifference of local administrations and city Dumas to problems of poverty and sanitation.\textsuperscript{24} However, the government in St. Petersburg – and the Ministry of Interior in particular – was reluctant to relinquish its control over matters of health to non-state actors such as physicians’ associations, fearing challenges to monarchical authority, the estate structure of society, and the conservative teachings of the Orthodox Church.\textsuperscript{25} Moscow’s city government in the early twentieth century, for example, was liberal in that it worked for improvements for the lower classes, emphasized \textit{blagoustroistvo}, and called for expanded civil rights, political liberty, and political participation. Yet there, particularly after 1907, the tsarist state continued to interfere in policing, administrating, and religious affairs in ways that often wholly contradicted the sanitation goals of members of the Moscow city Duma. Peter Stolypin in a 1907 speech spoke at length about ending the confrontations between the state and “society,” by which he meant members of an oppositional urban public, including physicians, which had grown in power and influence since the Great Reforms.\textsuperscript{26}

However, conflict between state and “society” was hardly universal. Frederick Skinner has written about how before the Crimean War, tsarist state planners of cities

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\textit{Many of those towns simply lacked the funds to pursue city improvements. See: Daniel Brower, The Russian City Between Tradition and Modernity, 1850-1900} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 93, 116.
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across the empire worked in accordance with the rationalistic town planning concepts associated with the Age of Enlightenment, where spatial organization and especially the city center and street design took precedence, a tradition which would run counter to the new ideas for city-planning proposed by physicians such as those advising the Moscow duma. By the era of the Great Reforms, though, the state clearly did take an increasing interest in city-improvements such as water supply, sanitation, street lighting, and transportation. In fact, Skinner points to the years between 1863 and 1892 as being the period when local and state interests lined up the best in Odessa. I suggest similar levels of cooperation in Yalta and across the Crimean coast.

Although individual projects for city improvements along the Russian Riviera involved multiple levels of government in combination, in general there was a shift in influence over time. Following the Crimean War, it was still largely state actors (including the tsar himself) that established the precedents for urban development in Crimea, but by the last third of the nineteenth century the responsibilities were increasingly turned over to local city governments and the physicians’ associations that advised and informed them. Zemstva remained involved in urban planning from their inception during the Great Reforms of the 1860s, as a funding agent and as a source of advice given its jurisdiction over many aspects of health care. By the eve of the First World War, however, the imperial government renewed its commitment to preserving healthy

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environments in Crimea and throughout the empire through a law project which formally protected Russia’s therapeutic localities.

One reason that local administrations and physicians took on the primary burden of city improvements and sanitation was because of the idealism imbued in the project of creating an All-Russian Sanatorium, which reflected physicians’ increasing concern over social issues and public welfare across the tsarist empire. Crimean doctors therefore fit in with a broader spectrum of Russian physicians who in general realized the effects of medicine on the general welfare of the Russian people and began in the 1860s, as Nancy Frieden has argued, to claim public service as the ethical imperative of their profession rather than simply their duties as bureaucratic officials. Elizabeth Hachten, in her analysis of Russian scientists and physicians, has also compelling argued that a striking characteristic of Russian civil society was, “its strong mandate to act in the service of society as a whole,” and that, “the moral imperative became central to many scientists’ conceptions of their identity and role in Russian society.”

The amount of medical expertise advising or directly within Crimean local governing bodies, in Yalta in particular, reflected the fact that most medical professionals saw government itself as the best means through which to build sanitary urban environments within resorts. The sense of duty to society led many physicians to actually work within the state and for the state, blurring the lines between state and society, which

30 Elizabeth A. Hachten, “In Service to Science and Society: Scientists and the Public in Late Nineteenth Century Russia” Osiris 17 (2002), 172.
calls into question the ideological divide that supposedly separated the two. \[^{31}\] Dr. Rozanov claimed that, because “the city administration combines social interests and social needs together,” only it could impose lasting measures that took the whole community’s interests into account. \[^{32}\] The place of physicians as both members of independent associations and government institutions was one of the key reasons for the emergence of a project that sought to transform, with an eye to public service, a whole region along the Crimean coast into a healthy space or medical facility. \[^{33}\]

In terms of building a space for healing, private investment in Crimea was rather limited, in contrast to resorts in Europe and other cities in the tsarist empire. “Given the progressive growth of visitors,” began a 1907 report of the Yalta City Duma, “private

\[^{31}\] On the close connections between members of the medical and legal professions, the state, and state service, see: Elisa M. Becker, *Medicine, Law, and the State in Imperial Russia* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2011).

\[^{32}\] Rozanov *O blagoustoiitve kurortov na iuznom beregu Kryma*, 1. Yalta, however, was the only Crimean resort which possessed such an administration as Rozanov wrote in 1899, and for this reason, he noted that many of the other resorts lagged far behind in terms of city modernization.

\[^{33}\] This chapter relies heavily on the reports of Dr. Pavel Petrovich Rozanov (d. 1910), a man whose career perfectly exemplifies the role of the physician as medical expert and state servant. Rozanov’s father was a clergyman and his family was not wealthy, and Rozanov himself had chronic rheumatism as a child, and continued to suffer from it when he entered Moscow University’s Faculty of Medicine. The rheumatism got so bad that he immediately went to Saky for treatment upon finishing his degree. The mud baths mostly cured his condition and he worked in the field of social medicine in Moscow, got arrested, was sent to Vladimir and then worked as a sanitation doctor for the city of Nizhny-Novgorod. There he contracted tuberculosis. He went to Yalta where he spent the next several years with a temperature and constant cough through to the end of the 1880s. However, “Yalta did its job” wrote S. Elpat’evskii in his obituary which was published in the well known journal *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, and his symptoms largely disappeared over time. For thirteen years he worked in Yalta as a doctor of sanitation, but Elpat’evskii thought the words “public actor” [*obshchestvenny deiatel’*] best described him, due to his opposition to private medicine and his concern for the whole community. “I do not know, in the past twelve years,” Elpat’evskii continued, “of any social projects in which he did not participate or did not give his entire soul.” He worked for a handful of city-improvement and sanitation societies, and was a voting member on the city Duma, later in the zemstvo, and later for the Tavrida provincial government. He worked for local newspapers and was a key figure in an intellectual circle in Yalta which included Elpat’evskii, A. Ia. Bezchinskii, and Anton Chekhov, amongst others. Perhaps more than anyone else in the peninsula, his name is associated with sanitation and city improvements along the south coast of the Black Sea. He worked in Simferopol on the provincial sanitation commission until he died himself of pulmonary disorders in 1910. See: S. Elpat’evskii, “Doktor Pavel Petrovich Rozanov” in *Russkoe Bogatstvo* 3 (1910), 165-9.
industry, because of the lack of local capitalists, has been limited to constructing only hotels, especially very well built and even luxuriously furnished ones like, for example, the hotel Rossiia.” The city administration, therefore, was, “required to chase after the primary goal of improving public services [blagoustroistvo].”\(^{34}\) In France, to take but one contrasting example, city administrations played a rather small role in the development of the spa industry. There, it was largely corporate institutions working closely with the state’s Academy of Medicine who built it up for bourgeois customers.\(^{35}\) French city administrations charged themselves with maintaining laws and protecting private property, but never set out to create an entire space devoted to healing themselves – a task they believed was best left to private interests.

Since the city administration in Yalta did take on the rather enormous task of creating a sanitary urban environment, it faced the problem of insufficient income from local taxation. The situation was not particularly bleak in the opinion of Rozanov, however. Even if the city did not possess the cash in hand, he argued, they could nevertheless undertake large-scale projects by carefully using credit. He went so far as to say that not only was this very possible, it was not even particularly risky because public improvements could indeed be highly profitable. In addition, he argued that it was best not to give concessions to local industrialists—who might themselves want to invest in city improvements—because the interests of the industrialists might not be in line with the interests of the city and its residents, or “society” as a whole. Finally, he pointed to

\(^{34}\) GAARK f. 522., op. 1, d. 1372, l. 9.
the fact that there had been no shortage of capital for investment since (or before) the
1860s and the regular appearance of the tsar and many nobles, yet virtually none of this
capital had been invested in the area of city improvements.

The influence of the city administration, conversely, was notable long before
1899. Rozanov concluded that,

The participation of the city administration can be seen all around – in the
construction and maintenance of streets, the construction of buildings, but the
greatest attention the local administration gives is to the sanitary parts, whose
importance is fully understood within a resort city. However, given the
doubtless success of the city administration, Yalta is situated still in the
beginning of its modernization. With the growth of the city also grow the city’s
needs, creating new problems, requiring new goals.36

The similarities between the conclusions of Yalta’s duma and Rozanov point to
the ways in which both doctors and administrators (who in many cases were the same
people) felt that public interests could be and were already best met through the local
state apparatus. Rather than a competition between the state and the public sphere of
professional organizations, each party relied heavily upon one another in order to achieve
the shared goals of public welfare.

The All-Russian Sanatorium, though, was never simply about Yalta, even if the
coast’s key resort took the lead in sanitation reform efforts. Situated within a very short
distance of Yalta were a number of resorts, including (from west to east) Simeiz, Alupka,
Gaspra, Oriandra, Livadia, Massandra, Gurzuf, and Alushta, which dotted the south coast
and drew, combined, similar numbers of visitors as Yalta. On one hand, in many respects,
these resorts struggled to maintain the sort of infrastructure that made Yalta among the

36 Rozanov O blagoustoistve kurortov na izhnom beregu Kryma, 3.

148
most sanitary urban spaces in the empire. On the other hand, most of these resorts were small enough that the environmental impact of increased human activity was comparatively minimal for the most part, so even if we do not see the sort of success story in these other resort areas as with Yalta, visitors could still come to these resorts and find the same clean air, sunshine, bathing opportunities, and medical institutions necessary to take full advantage of the treatments and curative potential in Crimea.

In 1899, when Rozanov prepared his reports, sanitation efforts in resorts outside of Yalta were struggling to achieve the same successes with sanitation efforts as Crimea’s premiere resort. The problem he saw was the underdevelopment of local administrative institutions. Because resorts such as Alupka, for the entirety of the tsarist era, were not considered cities and did not possess city Dumas (excepting Evpatoria), they lagged behind in terms of resort improvements and sanitation, caught up in questions over jurisdiction and responsibility. A number of administrative bodies (zemstvo and provincial), combined with residents and property developers, frequently discussed issues of sanitation with an aim to resolve them, but where very little was actually achieved, as “someone was always waiting for the higher authority … and discussions on the theme of improvements remained in the realm of dreams, great wishes, and good words.”37 In terms of sanitation measures, Rozanov wrote that “unfortunately not a single need of villages along the south coast, except in Yalta, has been met, and therefore at this point in time their status cannot be that of a resort, but rather nothing more than that of a dacha

37 Rozanov O blagoustoistve kurortov na iuzhnom beregu Kryma, 7-10
Regardless of whether they were deemed “resorts” or simple dacha settlements, Rozanov agreed that the basic necessities of clean water, air, waste disposal, and other city improvements ought to be of top priority.

The problem for Rozanov was that landowners and their private associations of land developers, rather than a union of city government and physicians, assumed responsibility for sanitation. Because the priorities of land developers were not necessarily in line with the idealistic, long-term goal of building a sanitary space along the coast, the measures that they took were often of expedience, with an eye to profit first and foremost. They often created environmental problems rather than solving them. Speaking about Alupka, he wrote a detailed description of how industrialists and landowners went about developing properties there. The most widespread plan to this point was to build dachas right at the foot of the cliffs that rose nearly straight up to the north of the village. Using the cliff as the foundation wall, developers would build another long wall parallel to the cliff-side using German style fachwerk timber framing, and attach a roof connecting the wall to the cliff. While this method cut costs for developers, it created a host of health issues for residents in these dachas. Most rooms would only have a window on one side, while if there were rooms in the back, no sunlight whatsoever would enter, and ventilation was practically non-existent. In addition, water often seeped into the rooms from the cliffs, especially after rainfall. In some cases this water had been seriously contaminated by residents living above the settlement on the mountain plateau (mostly Tatars), who tended to dump waste into

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38 Rozanov O blagoustoistve kurortov na iuznom beregu Kryma, 5.
creeks or simply onto the ground. Builders did little or nothing at all to contain sewage from the dacha developments, either having residents dispose of waste in creeks (this was known as the Tatar system), onto nearby streets, or into a deep well, in the hope that it would diffuse into the land. Such practices meant that sewage rose into yards, gardens, and even into homes in some cases. Rozanov saw the dachas as uncomfortable to live in during the summer, and uninhabitable in the winter, and a key example of the way that private developers did not take the social and health effects of their actions into account.39

While the union of physicians, engineers, and local administrators in Yalta proved highly effective in promoting sanitation measures and public welfare, it was not the only path taken along the Russian Riviera. Alupka proceeded in a different direction from Yalta, particularly after 1899, under the guidance of the freshly established Society for the Improvement of Alupka as a Resort. Composed predominantly of the dacha developers themselves as well as doctors, the society took on a broader social concern for hygiene in the village, suggesting that a comprehensive approach to sanitation would not only preserve a healthy environment in town, but would also ensure the value of their properties. In a few short years the organization gained the support of the community as a whole, and acted as a de facto city administration, responsible for a number of remarkable sanitation improvements given the very small size of the village, including

39 Rozanov O blagoustoistve kurortov na iuznom beregu Kryma, 6.
underground sewer systems built by 1904. The society paved many of the village’s roads and cleaned them regularly. It organized the collection of garbage from individual homes, and installed lighting on Vorontsov Street, the largest in town. By 1914, engineers had erected an electric power station in the small village. Alupka’s development was thus carried out at a remarkable rate at the beginning of the twentieth century, but unlike Yalta, largely outside of any central or local governing authority.

Beginning in 1909 the Interior Ministry began to develop a large law project [zakonoproekt] at the state level in St. Petersburg, which marked the return of the highest echelons of the tsarist government to the affairs of city improvements along the Russian Riviera. Over the next four years, the state worked with local administrations not only in Crimea but in the Caucasus, along the Baltic Sea, in Finland, and a variety of other areas with already developed resort infrastructure. Finally, only months before the outbreak of war in 1914, the Russian State Duma passed a series of laws protecting sanatoria and mountainous healing sites.

The laws, the first of their kind in Russia, were designed to ensure the long term vitality of the empire’s mineral water sources, coastal waters, salt-water lakes, mountains, and a host of other natural sources of healing that could be exploited to the benefit of Russia’s sick citizens. It created special zones around particular places which would be granted their own “resort governments” in small resort villages where local

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40 Alupka, with a population that exceeded 1,000 only in the 1890s, was among but 11 “urban” centers in Russia that could claim to have comprehensive sewer systems in 1904. In 1904, only of over 1,000 Russian towns with greater than 10,000 people (a group Alupka would be excluded from) only 38 had any sewer systems whatsoever, most of which would only access the central areas where the wealthy elite resided. See: Thurston, *Liberal City, Conservative State*, 3.
administrations previously did not exist, bringing them into the state hierarchy, and granting the state increased authority over the development of resorts. The purpose was not only to increase state power over resorts, but also to provide a means for funding resort improvements more expediently. This project focused on the protection of a variety of treatment centers including mineral water sources and other geologically important sites in the empire, places for bathing in the sea, climate stations, and other therapeutic places. In other words, the law reflected the modern therapeutic methods, beyond mineral waters, such as the treatments practiced across Crimea. Key parts of the law mandated: the protection of mineral water sources from contamination, and as such the maintenance of a necessary of sanitation at mineral water sites, the centralization of management of sanitation at resorts under the Interior Ministry, and officially proclaiming certain resorts as having “social meaning [obshchestvennoe znachenie].”41

The law had important implications for resorts across the Russian Riviera. Evpatoria and the nearby Mainakskii Lake and mud baths were granted the official title of “healing place” under the law. This designation required that numerous members of the local administration be responsible to the state government for preserving the region’s environment and ensured contact between locals in the Resort Commission and state representatives so that Evpatoria would be forced to meet state standards for the preservation of the area and its facilities.42

Along the south coast, the law granted power to resort dumas and zemstvos to protect the coastline from destruction and pollution, to the point where they could prevent

41 V. Linden “Ob okhrane kurortov” KKL, 04 May, 1914.
private developers from initiating projects deemed harmful. The law also enforced the local administration’s right to secure clean sources of drinking water, regulate the construction of wells, drainage pipes and channels, landfills, and prevent the harvesting of trees, or “any kind of work harmful to the resorts.” One journalist saw the law, which greatly decreased the influence of private sector associations over sanitation affairs and city improvements, as enabling resort development that would benefit the entire community and visitors from wider socio-economic backgrounds, ultimately promoting the democratization of the Russian Riviera. The onset of war in July and the Revolution however meant that the full intended effects of this legislation would never be known, but it did reflect and attempt the ongoing success of the cooperation between medical professionals, engineers, and state institutions that worked to promote public welfare, rather than private interests.

**Journalists’ Critiques of the All-Russian Sanatorium**

Although city improvements along the Russian Riviera proceeded at a fervent pace before the First World War, not every problem was solved and criticisms of the local and regional governments were not uncommon. The press held the city administration primarily responsible for creating an environment in the image of an All-Russian Sanatorium, a vision that journalists shared with physicians and administrators. One wrote that the town’s leaders “must take the most energetic measures for city improvement, for bringing respectable sanitary conditions, for the creation of all possible

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43 V. Linden “Ob okhrane kurortov” *KKL*, 04 May, 1914.
44 “Chernomorskoe poberzhie: Kurortnoe samoupravlenie” *KKL*, 17 August, 1911.
comforts for visitors, and for overcoming the exploitation of its commissioners, hotel-
owners, cab drivers, and all other people working to service a diverse as possible
public.\footnote{Tiaga v Krym” KKL, 5 May, 1913.}

In the end, the press gave progress towards building an All-Russian Sanatorium in
Yalta mixed reviews; the city moved towards its idealistic goal, but not quickly enough in
the minds of many observers. The press surely was far more likely to point out the
shortcomings of the city’s policies than men like Rozanov, who actually worked for and
with local and regional administrations. One author typified the press’s sentiments,
saying that, “in the minds of the public, Yalta has been built up as a beautiful fairy tale, a
dream, as the ideal point on the Crimean coastline. When visitors come and see the
“delights” of the Black Sea Beauty, total disappointment is the result.”\footnote{Kurortnye Nuzhdy” RR, 19 August, 1909.}

In particular, journalists worried about whether the garbage dumped out into the
sea would threaten the very livelihood of the city. Arguing that while this method was not
such a problem in the past, population growth and the increasing number of visitors by
1909 had made it obsolete, and a proposal to simply dump the trash further from the city
was a poor solution to the new problems. “The view of the coastline in Old Yalta,” wrote
one journalist “is that of a coast covered with papers and metals.”\footnote{“K Voprosu o zagryaznenii morskoi vody u beregov lalty” RR, 16 July, 1909.}

The sewer systems represented an even greater threat. The water along the coast
was clearly being contaminated by the collector near Yalta’s pier which held the city’s
waste before it was pumped out into the sea. One article claimed that despite the Duma,
“having discussed it a thousand times, nothing better has been thought up … who in Yalta hasn’t gone swimming and seen watermelon rinds, every sort of filth, parts of boats, etc.” If Yalta wants to compete with world resorts, the author claimed, it “has to make swimming an actual priority.” Other journalists maintained that if the sewers and garbage collection weren’t available to every home in Yalta, their success was compromised. The parts of the city without sanitation were upriver, the article explained, and people in Yalta’s northern suburbs – Tatars with fewer means than the visiting public – simply dumped their trash and waste into the Uchan-Su or Derekoi rivers which framed the center of the town, causing the center of Yalta to be consumed with miasma and filth.

The concerns from medical professionals regarding the sewer and garbage disposal systems, not wholly uncritical of Yalta’s sanitary state to be sure, echoed those of journalists’, and revolved around a central concern for maintaining the cleanliness of the sea water along Yalta’s coastline. Because bathing was central to the healing regimes in the city, if the water was being contaminated then of course bathers could endanger their own health by going into the Black Sea, rather than benefitting from it. Dr. Rozanov reported simply that there are three main ways that the coastline was being contaminated. First, the drainage from the city’s sewer system was being sent out into the sea and returning to the coastline without being absorbed by the water. This issue was exacerbated by the fact that the sewer’s pipes had become corroded in certain places and the result was leakage, which went directly into the coastal waters and soils nearby. Second, the city’s trash was similarly being shipped out into the sea, but, as the

48 “Kurortnye Nuzhdy” RR, 21 May, 1909.
journalists also noted, was finding its way back to the coast. Studying the content of this waste, Rozanov concluded that only slightly better than half of the trash would actually sink in the Black sea, while the remainder, which included food and papers and all sorts of other materials, would remain on the surface for an extended period of time, and reappear along the coastline with regularity. Some of the trash, such as cork, routinely found its way back to the town, never sinking at all. Finally, he also noted that construction along the embankment and the pier, combined with the parking stations set up to take visitors arriving by the sea throughout the town by horseback, created a situation where dirt and trash and manure would blow directly onto the coastline or sink into the surrounding soils.49

It wasn’t only within city limits that complaints were raised about cleanliness. Another journalist spoke of how, “in order to go to or from Yalta, or to or from the other resorts … most healthy people and certainly all sick people must go by boat because there is so much dust on the highway [shosse].” The press framed the issue as the Struggle Against Dust [bor’ba s pyl’iu], and the city was not prevailing. Although the Embankment was regularly cited as the worst place for dust in Yalta, it was the roads and trails surrounding the city that provided the real threat. There was so much dust on the highway (running all along Crimea’s south coast) that travelers would arrive in town, completely covered with dirt, which got into their mouths, noses, eyes, ears, and hair. Colloquially, men and women were seen as “wearing the suit of a stonemason or a

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The dust from the road habitually blew into the city as well, causing visitors to seek cover. The city had relatively little recourse in this fight. Spraying water onto the road regularly was not only expensive, but eroded the soil and damaged the boulevards.

The subject of street cleaning was ripe for satire by local journalists as well. One author wrote of a man who had travelled throughout the cities, countryside and mountains of the tsarist empire, where he developed an, “exceptionally experienced and sensitive nose.” The fictional character claimed that the odor was especially bad on Livadia Bridge, which crossed the Uchan-Su in the center of town near the Hotel Orianda. So foul was the smell, he said, “that you must run to save yourself.” Such chronicles appeared regularly in the local press. So often that the author of this particular piece claimed that, because the heads of the city administration did not resolve the issue despite its wide press, that they must actually admire this sort of smell, and actually believe it to be fresh air.

Even the voluntary societies that advised city administrators and carried out many city improvement projects did not escape scrutiny. A 1909 article appeared in the newspaper Russkaia Riv’era that lamented the continued situation where, although the Society of Resort Improvements in Alupka continued to claim that it was working towards creating a sanitary environment, the lack of any sort of central resort/city administration continued to derail concerted efforts towards improving the situation. The article claimed that the whole time since the 1890s, in contrast to accounts which praised the remarkable sanitary state and sewers of the small village, that over time, “the work of

50 “Kurortnye Nuzhdy” RR, 15 May, 1911.
51 Markiz iz Suuk-Su, “Kurortnye Motivy” RR, 23 Aug, 1907.
the society became sadder and sadder.” When a similar society was established in Yalta, known as the Society of Land Developers, Owners, Merchants, and Industrialists of Yalta and its Surroundings, the organization set up the ambitious program of raising the significance of Yalta as a resort by providing the means to give visitors the most calm and comfortable experience possible. This specifically entailed providing lease and trade options for apartments and dachas, raising capital and establishing credit, building medical institutions, giving lectures, readings, and excursions, providing entertainment, and publishing newspapers and books. It seems however, as much as these goals fit right in line with those of the All-Russian Sanatorium, some journalists claimed that the Society was indifferent to the “needs of the resorts,” and in particular to providing medical assistance to the general public. “Do what you are supposed to do!” the newspaper article pleaded.52

In addition to the problems of public and private responsibility for city improvements, many of the smaller resorts remained, unlike Yalta for the most part, populated by significant if not majority populations of native Crimeans (which could include Crimean Tatars, Greeks, Armenians, and many others). These groups had entrenched lifestyles that for the most part did not conflict with the goals of resorts, but in certain cases there was no doubt amongst journalists that they did. One practice that particularly horrified resort administrators and visitors alike was dolphin hunting. Dolphin oil (much like whale oil) had a wide variety of uses and was a valuable commodity for generations in Crimea. Typically dolphins were hunted during the winter.

months, especially December and January, all along the south coast. The Crimean Society of Naturalists and Nature Lovers estimated that over those two months in 1912-3, 100-200 dolphins were killed on average every day. The major issue for resort improvements was perhaps not simply that dolphins were killed, but that their carcasses washed up or were left along the coast’s beaches. Balaklava had to shut down its coastline entirely in the summer of 1911 because dolphin hunters killed a large number of dolphins, skinned them and melted their flesh for its fat, and left their skeletons on the bank. “It was not a pretty picture,” on journalist wrote, and worse, it gave off, “a horrible smell that could be felt from far away.”

Comparisons

Despite the persistent criticism in the popular press, when compared to other cities in the tsarist empire, Yalta and its neighbouring towns rated very well in terms of sanitation efforts and the cleanliness of the urban environment. They never created the utopia of the All-Russian Sanatorium, hence the persistent demands of journalists, but Russia’s Riviera was no doubt among the most sanitary places to be found in the whole country.

Sometime after 1910, the Russian Society of Doctors (in memory of N. I. Pirogov), formerly known as the Pirogov Society and the foremost society of medical experts in tsarist Russia, commissioned an ambitious study of the state of medical and sanitation efforts in nearly every city of the tsarist empire. Known as the Collection of

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54 “Balaklava” *KKL*, 18 May, 1911.
Urban Medical and Sanitary Activity in Russia, the study drew upon the expertise of dozens of doctors, who, working over the course of several years, prepared reports about the state of affairs in roughly two hundred Russian cities and towns. The collection was standardized to a great extent as the society decided on several dozen principle questions around which every report was organized. Each began with an overview of basic medical facilities – clinics, hospitals, the number of doctors, and emergency response teams – and then moved on to the sorts of organizations each town or city possessed in order to manage and improve these necessities in the future. The reports then looked at the local organizations concerned with issues of sanitation (Yalta’s Sanitation Commission discussed above was a typical example). Following a discussion of the efforts of various Sanitation Commissions, the reports concluded with a section entitled Sanitation Measures, in which water procurement, lighting, waste disposal, sewers, street cleaning, housing for the poor, prostitution, veterinary services and certain additional topics could be explored. The purpose of the report was to be able to make comparisons across the empire, and to give a general assessment of health measures and hazards in Russian (and non-Russian) cities. For my purposes here, it is an excellent source for examining Yalta’s sanitation measures in comparison with the capital cities, provincial cities and other cities in Crimea and along the Black Sea coast. It is very clear that, while Yalta was no better than most when it came to basic medical services, it ranked among the most sanitary urban spaces in tsarist Russia.

In some respects, despite the standard form of the reports, it is nonetheless difficult to rate Yalta, given that it was among the most unique cities in Russia. It possessed a relatively small population (25,000), but as was also noted in the report’s preparation, during the summer months the number of visitors regularly exceeded residents (35,000 visitors the author estimated). Sanitation issues could be more easily resolved there than in Moscow or Petersburg, simply because of the size. Additionally, because Yalta was a relatively new city, improvements were not liable to require the destruction of existing property, and the city could be designed in order to promote sanitation as it grew. Yalta also was without any industry, manufactories, working class neighborhoods, or the resulting pollution that most urban centers possessed. Nor did Yalta have to worry about waste disposal in the winter months, when frozen rivers, lakes, and coastlines would no longer absorb northern cities’ waste. Yalta’s proximity to clean mountainous water sources, and the downward slope of the land towards the Black Sea were further crucial natural advantages. On the other hand, Yalta was a resort, and sanitation measures were crucial to its economy and identity, which only meant more incentive for providing comprehensive solutions to the problems of urban development.

Moscow, Petersburg and many other large cities in the empire had much more substantial medical and sanitation bureaucracies that Yalta, and given the size of the cities and the wider range of issues to deal with, this is no surprise. Unlike Yalta, in both of Russia’s largest cities, medical and sanitary commissions originated in the wake of serious epidemics that ravaged urban populations, most notably the typhus and cholera outbreaks, which hit the capitals hard in 1878 and 1884 respectively. Between these
outbreaks two major commissions were created in Petersburg, the Hospital Commission and the Sanitation Commission, each of which soon developed several arms including an executive bureau, epidemic commission, vaccination commission (after the turn of the century), sanitary building commission, and several others. Moscow bureaucracies were comparable, and appeared from 1884, though the city had been heavily involved in sanitation and health measures since the period of the Great Reforms. These commissions seem to be the earliest in the empire, and the formation of Yalta’s own sanitation bureaucracy between 1886 and 1891, which was similarly responsible to the city Duma, was not far behind at all.

What separated institutions in Moscow and Petersburg from the Sanitation Commission in Yalta was the range of responsibilities that they had. When epidemics hit the cities multiple times over the next few decades, these organizations were at the forefront of the fight against disease, and although Yalta was not totally spared from epidemics, certainly it was not nearly under the same duress. Major city Sanitation Commissions also had to deal with measures regarding the construction of buildings, of maintaining clean food and beverage standards, snow removal, inspection of food and beverage manufacturers, as well as various standards of industry and manufacturing. While each commission in the capitals was overseen and run by medical professionals, just as they were in Yalta, they also seemed to have different priorities. In the capitals the vast majority of the commissions’ energy was devoted to the provision of essential medical services, the organization of medical professionals, organizing emergency services, and building medical facilities. In Moscow, the report itself said that, “the
participation of sanitation organizations in sanitation infrastructure of the city does not have a sufficiently planned character and does not always follow along strict regulations … Closer participation of doctors exists in questions of providing beds for overnight stay, construction of cafeterias and free baths, and the work of doctors in children’s summer colonies.” It concluded that participation of doctors in other measures is, “more or less accidental.” In Yalta, the commissions were primarily concerned with sanitation measures and always had doctors as members.

As such, sanitation measures in Yalta were among the most, if not the most effective in Russia. Yalta’s water systems were built before the major purification systems in either Moscow or Petersburg, and provided water that was far more pure, despite that they did not require filtration given the quality of the sources in the Crimean mountains. Doctors noted that in Yalta’s water there was absolutely no trace of nitric acid (a corrosive toxic acid that entered the water through industrial pollution), bacteria were kept to a minimum, and other impurities were exceedingly rare. The water procured from the Neva and Moscow rivers was not nearly of the same quality, and had to be filtered numerous times using technology borrowed from England, in order to be safe for regular consumption. Petersburg and Moscow were able to procure between twenty-five and thirty-five gallons of water per resident each year, while Yalta produced about twenty. Cities around the Black Sea of a comparable size to Yalta, such as Kerch and Batumi, would be fortunate to produce even a third of the fresh water per capita as Yalta.

Moscow’s sewers were opened in 1898, and Odessa had sewers since 1868, but in both cases they were marginal in size at the beginning. Tsarist Petersburg had no formal
sewers, but certain residences had pipes that ran underground to an outlet either on the Neva or any of the city’s canals in order to carry away human waste. By the time of the report, nearly all of Moscow’s inner ring had access to sewer systems, and plans were in place to extend the system to surrounding areas, while in Odessa the system had expanded to cover 46% of the southern port’s buildings. Yalta’s sewers were completed in 1888 and accessed about 92% of the city’s residences, making it the clear leader in this regard, with central Moscow the only place close, in all of Russia.

Yalta’s building disinfection campaigns were also more comprehensive than those in other Russian cities. While Petersburg and Moscow had numerous disinfection sites, they did not embark upon campaigns into individual residences. In Yalta, disinfection was a key responsibility of the city administration and they did, as mentioned, work to sterilize buildings across the city on a regular basis, and would only accept payment if the occupant was deemed to be able to afford a contribution.

Yalta’s record was ultimately not exceptional if we consider basic medical care and facilities as key points, as most Russian cities, including those in the Urals, Ukraine, Siberia, and across the empire, had comparable basic medical care, hospitals, and ambulance services. On the other hand, we see a remarkable exception with Yalta in the energy and expense devoted to city sanitation. Only Moscow spent a comparable amount per capita on sanitation measures, and it had to deal with a far wider range of problems than Yalta did. Yalta’s city administration spent more in total on sanitation measures than many much larger cities including Vilnius, Kazan, Kishinev, Omsk, Minsk, and Ufa. When it came to street cleaning and waste disposal, Yalta’s city administration spent
nearly five times as much per capita as the capitals, themselves well ahead of most Russian cities. The measures taken by Yalta’s city government, its Sanitation Commission, and local associations were clearly exceptional within the tsarist empire.\(^{56}\)

The records of local governance across Crimea reflect a conscious effort by local doctors and administrators to ensure sanitary conditions for all residents and visitors to Crimea. The reports of Yalta’s city Duma were filled with deliberations over how to create a space in Yalta, and in neighboring resorts, where a wide variety of visitors, especially those requiring medical care, could enjoy the treatments and environment along the south coast without sacrificing many conveniences of the modern city. The 1907 Yalta city Duma report on resort life and construction reflected on the important new place that the city was to hold as part of the Russian empire, claiming, that Yalta, “has clearly became the natural place of healing for all the sufferers of our diverse homeland.”\(^{57}\)

Leaders within Yalta’s city administration charged themselves with the perhaps impossible task of building a modern and rapidly expanding city, rectifying its existing unsanitary conditions, all without jeopardizing the pristine natural characteristics of the Black Sea coast that drew in visitors. What distinguished Crimean resorts such as Yalta from other cities in Russia was that sanitation measures were never designed simply to meet basic needs. They needed to be flawless. The city’s identity and existence as a health resort depended upon it.

\(^{56}\) Zhbankov, ed., *Sbornik po Gorodskomu Vrachebno-Sanitarnomu Delu v Rossii*.
\(^{57}\) GAARK, f. 522., op. 1, d. 1372, l. 9.
CHAPTER 4: VELVET LOVE: RESORT LADIES AND TATAR GUIDES IN THE
POPULAR PRESS

Resort life – it is what it is – urban, philistine life. The public at the resort resolves the problems of gender. Through zealous flirtation. Through drinking wine as they were advised to do. And, nonetheless, they injure their jaws from yawning so much from boredom. Yalta’s visitors make do with their “domestic,” private affairs. Then they meet on the street and complain about the city administration. It’s light political talk however, though it is of course very important who you support, even if you don’t know why.¹

When Daniil Vasil’evich Kolomiitsev wrote a lengthy and biting satirical feuilleton in 1905 that ran over five consecutive issues of the Crimean newspaper Tavrichanin, he correlated bourgeois leisure, medicine, and ethnicity with sex (and its politics). “All of Russia knows,” he began, “that the majority of women go to Crimea solely for the sake of adultery with Crimean Tatar-guides.” “It would be better,” he claimed, if these ladies, “having received treatment for their moral “consumption,” and gotten well with the help of the “Akhmets” and “Ibragims,” disappeared without a trace from the horizon of Crimean life.”²

¹ Dzhin, “Teny Zhizni” RR, 28 August, 1913.
² D. Kolomiitsev, “Krymskie Tatary – provodniki i damy” Tavrichanin, 14 December, 1905.
His stark condemnation of certain new sexual attitudes and practices in Crimea, and his situating them in the medical and leisure orientated spaces of the Russian Riviera, points to how resort life in many ways revolved around sex and sexual discourse.

Kolomiitsev’s claim to knowing the motives of Russian women appears to be somewhat misleading in reality, however. Although it is likely that some women did come to Crimea to strike up affairs with Crimean Tatars, most traveled there because it was fashionable, to escape the boredom of domestic life in the city or country estate, to receive treatment for a variety of very real afflictions, or to simply go on vacation and see one of the most picturesque spots the Russian empire could offer.

The press, nonetheless, often characterized Crimea a place where wealthy Russian women came to commit crimes (adultery was both illegal and a moral crime) with non-Russian subjects of the empire, or to engage in legal but profligate activity with men from a variety of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. Satire in newspapers poked fun at the realities of a female-dominated consumerist culture, shaped by a circulating public who interacted in many ways with non-Russians on the periphery. Three “holiday motifs” in particular formed the core of sensationalist satire on resort life. Through the “Resort Lady” [kurortnaia dama], journalists approached debates on femininity; through the Crimean Tatar guides [krymskie provodniki], race and sexuality; and through the “velvet season” [barkhatnyi sezon], the ways that temporality and the circulation of travelers in and out of Crimea acted as a catalyst for licentious behavior.

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3 Many feuilletons were actually published in a series that was entitled “resort motifs” [kurortnye motive] in the newspaper The Russian Riviera.
The Velvet Season

The velvet season was the defining time of year for Yalta and its visitors. Initially the velvet season was analogous to the spring season, or alternatively, the Easter season. After the long Russian winter (or rather, towards the end of it), the tsar and the royal family, beginning in the 1860s, would travel to Livadia for the summer. A large number of nobles would follow in the Tsar’s footsteps and spend at the very least a few weeks in Crimea, building extravagant dachas. Right up to 1917, Easter was a period where the Russian Riviera was dominated by the Russian nobility. Because so many of these families were listed in the so-called “velvet books” – registers of the noble families back to the Rurik dynasty compiled in 1682-1687 and again in 1787 – the season of the nobility was known colloquially as the velvet season.4

In general, the yearly resort season – April to October (like Russians at the time, I refer to this whole period as “the season”) – was actually divided in three along the Russian Riviera, in a way that was wholly unique to that part of the world. Many visitors only came for one of the short, individual seasons that comprised the larger resort season. Each of these “sub-seasons” had its own public, its own characteristics, its own activities, its own language, and its own meaning. Cultural norms, sexual practices, and related discourse in Yalta fluctuated distinctly according to the changing of these sub-seasons.

4 There appear to be a number of alternative, although less plausible, origins for the term. Many Russians today believe that the term has to do with the climate during that season, or the water temperature while swimming, which made it feel as though you were wearing velvet. Others suggest that it has to do with the clothes the velvet public wore, but this is problematic because velvet and silk were both worn by nobles and other wealthy Russians, often as part of the same garment. At any rate, the term appears in many travel advertisements today when referencing the fall season at any resort, from Sochi to Crimea to Turkey, Greece, Italy, Egypt and others. The velvet season has once again become fashionable it seems.
The summer season was known as the cotton or calico \textit{[sittsevyi]} season. Lasting from mid-May to the beginning of August, the calico season saw fewer visitors to Yalta than spring or fall. But because prices were reduced during these months, it was often the only season that petty bourgeois \textit{[meshchanstvo]} Russians could visit Crimea (the public during any season was never homogenous – the connection between the names and social class of the public during any season should not be taken too literally). It was from the garments of this group that the name calico season appeared. However, as I have argued in chapter one, this season was also popular for excursionists, whether professional climbers, foreign tourists, or relatively poor students.\textsuperscript{5}

Well-known Russian author and resident of Balaklava, Alexander Kuprin, described the seasons in his short story, \textit{Vinnaia Bochka} (The Wine Barrel). The cotton season, he wrote, was “the longest, the least interesting, and the quietest.” This summer season, he wrote in concurrence with guidebooks, was dominated by students (boys and girls), mediocre bureaucrats, and most of all, by the sick. These people tended to spend very little money, never hiring horses or guides, usually residing outside of the city itself, where they could spend time in a Tatar village, learn about the flora and fauna of the Crimea, and send postcards home to their relatives.\textsuperscript{6} Journalists described Yalta during the summer season as sluggish and boring.\textsuperscript{7}

Yalta’s aristocratic public feared that the summer season might expand and overcome the entire travel season, as less wealthy visitors (to be clear, I do not mean

\textsuperscript{5} Bumber, \textit{Putevoditel po Krymu}, 488-92.
\textsuperscript{7} Dzhin, “Teny Zhizni” \textit{RR}, 21 May, 1913.
workers or peasants, but rather middle and lower middle class, usually urban Russians) appeared in greater frequency, especially right before the First World War. The aristocratic public perceived such a “democratization” of the Russian Riviera as a threat to land and dacha owners, to restaurateurs, to cab drivers and others whose businesses could not be sustained by so-called “hoards of beggars.” Tatar guides who served aristocratic travelers also tended to despise these sorts of people and the calico season. Journalists took an alternative view praising the visitors of the calico season for their attention to nature and its study, while arguing that democratization was inevitable and that if businesses did not adapt, they would fail in the long term.8

The calico season was sandwiched between two busier seasons with a far different sort of public. The “silk season,” according to Kuprin, was entirely different from the calico. During the silk season, which began in late August and lasted nearly till October, the wealthiest merchants, high-ranking officials, and the provincial nobility dominated the resort scene. One journalist referred to this season as being dominated by the “wool public” [sherstianaia publika] because of the prevalence of the merchantry.9 Prices doubled or tripled during this season, concerts and plays were performed nightly, and the hotels tended to be at capacity. The silk season was also, from the beginning, very popular amongst wealthier women. Often adorned in highly fashionable silks, it was from them that the season received its name.10

8 “Demokratizatsiia Kurortov” KKL, 1 August, 1912.
9 Markiz iz Suuk-Su, “Kurortnye Motivy” RR, 10 August, 1907.
10 Malgin, Russkaia Riv’era, 221.
Although its origins relate to its noble public, the velvet season came to mean something much more, and can be better defined by the public’s tastes, behaviors, and morals than any connection to socio-economic status. By the 1900s, the public of the velvet season came primarily because it was the most fashionable time to come and because everyone was hoping to make acquaintances. Kuprin wrote that, “a person would never bargain during the velvet season, nor would he even ask about prices. Reserving a luxurious room – preferably at the hotel Rossiia – would have been done long in advance.”\(^{11}\) Whether local Russians or Tatars were extorting these visitors was of little consequence. Few paid attention to nature, and fewer took educational excursions. When journalists pointed to Yalta as the place for frivolous and immoral activity, they singled out the velvet season was the time to engage in such activity.

Crucially, although it has proven impossible to determine the exact point in time, the velvet season “moved” from the spring to the fall, overlapping with the wool/silk seasons in August and September.\(^{12}\) Although nobles continued to visit Yalta around Easter, the velvet season lost its connection to this noble public, its identity now tied to fashion more so than rank. For many – from avant-garde artists and intellectuals, to resort ladies, to the affluent businessmen of the capital cities – the fall was a far more appealing time to visit Yalta. The climate was more predictable and more appealing, as April was not always warm enough for swimming and other outdoor activities. I would also suggest the velvet season may have moved because the fall season had another name and

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\(^{11}\) Kuprin, *Vinnaia Bochka*.

\(^{12}\) I can say that after the only source published after 1907 that I have found that refers to a spring velvet season is Kuprin’s story, which could have been set in a much earlier year. The velvet season’s “move” could have come earlier than 1907 however. Neither newspapers or guidebooks before 1905 seemed to pay any attention to colloquial expressions.
reputation as the “grape season,” the time when the best grapes were available for corresponding medical treatments.

One feuilleton depicted the shift in the seasons. “It is sluggish and boring now to spend the spring season in Yalta,” wrote the author under the pseudonym Dzhin, who described the month of May as being “on the seams” [shvakh – which also implies weak, ignorant]. May was “in between,” but September was something much different. There were years when May was busier, spicier, more cheerful, happier, and did not appear so “flabby” as it did in 1913, he continued. Indeed, May had been among the most popular months to visit Yalta initially. However, it was now in September when Yalta felt it was “in its final period” and “reaped the fruits of its love,” as the velvet public invaded Crimea’s south coast.13

There typically were a higher proportion of women in the velvet public. By late-August and early September many nobles, servicemen, professors, and Petersburg bureaucrats, many of whom had resided in the Crimea for the entire season, decided or were obliged to return to their homes and their work. Their wives often stayed on till the season’s end, enticed by the medicinal treatments carried out only in autumn and the freedom they would enjoy from their often strict and stiff professional husbands. These ladies would be joined by widowed or divorced women, younger women from wealthier families throughout the empire, and surely others. Women, another journalist joked, who had failed to attract any men through the cotton season decided to stay through the velvet,

where they might have another chance. These ladies, who more greatly outnumbered men in the fall, were what really came to define the velvet season, more so than the connections to the nobility.

The Resort Lady

The velvet season over time lost its rank-based identity, and became associated with the Resort Lady. “How well it is known,” a journalist wrote, “that the resort public can be divided into three categories: the velvet, the wool, and the cotton. To translate into normal language, it should depict the gentry, the merchant, and the petty-bourgeois … but the ladies are simply resort ladies under any circumstances – it just doesn’t work out any other way.” Fall became high season for the frivolous capricious behavior of the Resort Lady that writers mocked, condemned, and hoped to reform.

Most Crimean journalism that explored femininity did so by discussing and critiquing women’s public performance – the everyday rituals, appearance, and public displays of the female visiting public. Writers pointed to the ways in which external, visible features were inevitably linked with morality and character, and denounced those who did not meet their codes of respectability. They were fascinated by the idea of authenticity, where an authentic person was one with a social conscience, a moral compass, and a record of social activity that demonstrated superior character. Inevitably, they drew up markers based on appearance that (often too) easily sorted people into social categories denoting “spiritual” adequacy or inadequacy. As such, the boulevard

14 “Mimokhodom” RR, 6 August, 1913.
15 Markiz iz Suuk-Su, “Kurortnye Motivy” RR, 10 August, 1907.
press turned often to stereotypes or stock characters in order to express respectability with regards to male and female behavior.\textsuperscript{16}

Perhaps the leading satirist for the newspaper \textit{Russian Riviera} was a man writing under the pseudonym Pechorin, and it is from him that some of the richest and most humorous reflections on the day to day life along Crimea’s southern coast became public. Interested in a variety of local issues, including the connections between the local administrations and medicine, Pechorin, along with a cadre of other satirists, created a stock character out of the women who visited during the summer. The Resort Lady became the centerpiece of discussions over femininity, sex, promiscuity, fashion, and the intellect of the visiting female public in general. “Her” existence as a public character also reveals, particularly to the historian, the concerns of the male public and the ways that definitions of masculinity informed their positions.

Resort Ladies came from all regions of the Russian empire, from cities and country estates, and from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, mirroring the actual visiting female public. The Resort Lady could be single, widowed, or married. She was well-off, possessing substantial disposable income, in many cases procured from her husband on the pretense of medical treatment. She typically visited only Yalta or Alupka, and often only left when her funds ran out. Resort Ladies were not necessarily from a noble family, and perhaps more likely part of Russia’s bureaucratic and middle classes. Whatever the case, it was not important. Journalists facetiously and at the same time...

endearingly claimed that she was, “above earthly norms and the foolish tradition of *soslovie*.“  

The Resort Lady was intellectually deficient, yet obsessed with understanding and manipulating local fashions and social hierarchies. She was haughty, yet often kept her socio-economic background private. She was aggressive, assertive, and manipulative in seduction, yet saw submission and naivety as central aspects of femininity. For journalists of varied political backgrounds, the Resort Lady was a dangerous (or for the more cynical or light-hearted, humorous) character, precisely because her life was entirely trivial, meaningless, and perhaps immoral.

Given the prerequisites for obtaining Resort Lady “status,” satirists argued that the hierarchy amongst Resort Ladies was perhaps the crucial feature of resort culture. While wealth was one feature that separated the “best” Resort Lady from the pretenders, the Resort Lady’s goal, to which she dedicated herself day and night, was impressing other Resort Ladies, and “shining” while in their midst. Therefore, the Resort Lady was always out of the home, on the streets, and putting on a display. The performative aspect of resort culture only heightened satirists’ appetite for social commentary on the loose morals and insincerity of resort life.

The key to putting on a great performance and shining in the crowd was simply to be fashionable in dress and behavior. Being fashionable was easier said than done, however. Trends were constantly in flux, and required relentless attention to the finest

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17 Markiz iz Suuk-Su, “Kurortnye Motivy” *RR*, 10 August, 1907. The *soslovie* system was a traditional series of legal categories denoting the social ranks or estates of the realm that was increasingly becoming inadequate in describing the social realities as Russia modernized and industrialized in the late nineteenth century.
details, all of which would, satirists noted, forever remain outside of any man’s understanding. The specific fashion trends on the Russian Riviera were thus only rarely alluded to in the newspapers. One recurring trend seems to have been for women to dress entirely in white, from head to toe. Women always wore hats and gloves, and in this case those would be white as well, while a white umbrella to provide shade from the sun could complete the ensemble. But the trends seem to have varied quite widely. Bright (and therefore immodest) colors were often en vogue. It was also fashionable at times to look to the Far East and wear a silk kimono or to simply carry a Chinese fan, and resort ladies were often just called “Chinese fans” by satirists deriding their lack of real character. In another instance, one journalist claimed that women seeking to stand out in the crowd would ride horses astride (rather than side saddle as a modest woman would) wearing Caucasian, Circassian, or Tatar dress, “including boots, hats, the whole thing.” They rode “po-dzhigetskii” he claimed, implying that the fashions and behaviors of resort ladies lacked the femininity associated with a respectable woman.

One lengthy 1913 feuilleton, written under the pseudonym Tamara, and presumably from the Resort Lady’s perspective, asked,

Why do women take so much care of their appearance? Dear sirs, your ‘deep’ male intellect will never be able to understand the psychology of women. And further – I am sure – the psychology of the Resort Lady. Your deep male intellect will never be able to fully comprehend a women’s absolute passion for her attire [tualet]. Men, for example, are certain that women care for their appearance in order to captivate them. Can you, men, even understand how naïve you are? You can’t? No? Poor, pitiful, unlucky people!

18 “Kurortnaia Zhizn’: Novyi Promysel” RR, 13 May, 1912. A dzhigit is a talented Caucasian or Tatar horseman.
The author then explained, rather matter-of-factly, that women did not need an enormous and fashionable wardrobe in order to attract men, and that a far, far smaller collection of clothing would more than suffice. “Tamara” said simply that,

if you happen to step onto Zheltyshevskii Beach, when the women are bathing there (there are quite a lot without bathing suits), then you, maybe, will understand … not one lady in Eve’s attire will ever defy another Eve in a bathing suit. Every Eve in expensive and elegant attire will invariably be the envy of the Eve in the lesser rags. For ladies, this is clear – as clear as Chinese fans are necessary with lightly-woven resort attire. But for you, men, my goodness, this is in the shadows, like the dark versions of those very fans. The conclusion is simple and clear – women take care of their appearance in order to earn the envy of the other ladies, in order to ‘shine’ in the crowd. You know, it is so nice “to be in everyone’s view”. To shine in your attire means… to stand out in the crowd, to have everyone pay attention to you, to be envied by the other ladies around you, and along with all of this, to satisfy your own bit of vanity.

For the Resort Lady, vanity was a virtue, or at least a necessity for navigating social life in Yalta. Journalists derided resort ladies for their supposed vanity, pointing to that fact that it had overcome all other aspects of resort life. Tamara’s story continued:

If you go to the concert in the city park, sit next to the ladies and listen to what they are saying, then you will understand that for us our attire is three quarters of our life. You will understand that none of the other women have any taste whatsoever. Someone’s clothes have some kind of defect, and another’s have another kind of defect. The reputation of every lady in the park is absolutely visible to everyone else there. Especially the women who dress exactly like the crowds. The meaning of women’s attire is always progressing! … These days, style governs us, which progresses, you could say, over time and distance. … This luxury – women’s attire – is being grasped, little by little, by a larger and larger group of women, forcing them to find extraordinary resources to purchase clothing. Yalta has become the oblast’ of style!19

Yalta was the most fashionable of all of Russia’s resorts. Virtually every Russian guidebook and foreign travelogue described how fashion was a way of life in Yalta.

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19 Tamara, “Zhenskie Stranichki” RR, 14 August, 1913.
“How well it is known,” a visiting journalist noted, “that for Yalta, style is everything.”

Pechorin claimed that it was only when one lady, known as Maria Gavrilova, came to the park in a dress with every color in the rainbow, “as she did every year,” with the latest fashion in hats, that the women would know that the season was open. If it became fashionable to walk ribbon-wearing goats around town, another satirist claimed, people would walk goats instead of fox terriers. If it became fashionable to have the Isar Fever, the journalist continued, that (imaginary) disease would be particularly contagious that season.

Certain properties actually rose and fell in value practically overnight according to fashion trends. Satirists also noted how Resort Ladies would spend the summer with altered passports to make them appear younger. Pechorin once wrote (suggesting that a forty year old woman should not change her age to eighteen) that he “still [did] not know why, but never have there been so many young ladies in Yalta as there were this season. It seems that every woman has taken off three years, for every five years that they age.”

Yalta’s trendiness transcended the fickle vanity of its public though. The resort’s very existence depended on the maintenance of a certain public image, one which would draw as many wealthy customers as possible out of their city or country homes, and away from France, Italy, Switzerland, or Germany. When Crimean journalists approached the topic through the character of the Resort Lady, they managed to warn readers about the pitfalls of obsession with fashion – vanity, gossip, pride – but at the same time to build up the image of Yalta as Russia’s destination of choice for the discriminating public.

20 Il. Sevivanov, “Motivy Dnia” RR, 27 April, 1911.
21 Ibid.
22 Pechorin, “Kurortnye Kartinki” RR, 23 August, 1913.
Despite the potential benefits to the resort as a whole, a backlash to the prominence of style and the Resort Lady was part of the satire, at times playful and at other times severe. Pechorin, wondering why Resort Ladies pursued the lifestyles they did, wrote that,

To you, women, who live more sensually and with imagination, such notes are almost necessary just the same as a new hat or blouse of the very latest fashion. I said “almost” because I know very well the role that attire plays in your lives. … Resort Ladies – your femininity, your grace at every step is counteracted. You wear transparent, light ensembles – and are laughed at. You ride horses as men would in trousers – and are pointed at. In the end you spend summer cleaning up your passport, and are kindly invited to the police station.\(^{23}\)

Some satirists attempted to criticize not only the obsession with fashion, but the (lack of) clothing itself on moral grounds. One wrote how Resort Ladies,

appear in public places in these transparent dresses (which have very risky sizes) so that x-rays are not needed, for normal sunlight is enough. Maybe this is fashionable, but it is impossible to say that it is aesthetical. The displays of these ‘Chinese fans’ at times makes you doubt whether women are authentically a beautiful creation. Or are the majority nothing else but a caricature of a real woman? Light clothes, under light glances, and under light… this is an exceedingly heavy impression!\(^{24}\)

Satirists pointed to the ways that Resort Ladies behaved that contradicted the norms of “respectable society.” Pechorin claimed in one instance that they were Fausts, having sold their souls for the pleasures and secrets of resort culture. In another instance he condemned Yalta for failing to measure up to world resorts. “Now look at the Resort Lady…” he wrote, “… In the majority of cases – she is a typical provincial woman, at least in terms of appearance.” The Resort Lady’s claimed or actual socio-economic status

\(^{23}\) Pechorin, “Kurortnye Kartinki” RR, 23 August, 1913.
\(^{24}\) Binokl, “Grimasy Kurortnoi Zhizni” KKL, 25 May, 1914. Note: the term “light” (legkyi) can mean in Russian light-weight, insubstantial, and it also carries a sexual connotation implying easy, casual, or carefree relations.
suggested that she ought to behave according to the codes of respectable society. Etiquette guides of the time suggested that simplicity and modesty were admirable characteristics. Ladies ought to remain inconspicuous as a demonstration of their strong character, avoiding the public gaze. Excess in make-up or perfume was contemptible. The Resort Lady broke all of these rules.

Her behavior in feuilletons however reflected the most contemptible traits of the meshchanstvo (petty bourgeoisie or lower middle class). Russian intellectuals – Marxists and those on the more moderate left in particular – after 1905 increasingly pointed to the ways that the petty bourgeoisie were sustaining a revolt against traditional sexual values. They suggested that the revolt, however, was completely lacking in moral fiber, and the activities of the meshchantstvo were deemed pornographic. Speaking of love that “reeks unbearably of the stables and the cheap brothel,” of “sexual excess,” and of how the revolt did not “rise above the level of sensations,” critics came to loathe the idea of living in what they called the “petty-bourgeois swamp.” Newspapers in Odessa also derided the petty bourgeoisie, partly for their sexual values, and also because of their supposed

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25 Sylvester, Tales of Old Odessa, 108.
26 Although licentiousness was associated with a particular class, time, and place in Crimea, the discourse surrounding sex fit into a broader concern for pornographic behavior that seemed to have in many ways derived from literature that was deemed pornographic. Sanin, a novel by Mikhail Artsybashev, was published in 1907 and created a phenomenon known as Saninism that became ubiquitous across Russia. The book featured a main character, Sanin, who was narcissistic and concerned only with the pursuit of sensual pleasure, which he found to be life-affirming and legitimate. Scores of young Russians participated in Saninism by acting like the book’s hero, causing moral outrage from members of older generations, including Leo Tolstoy. The lack of concern for social issues and society and politics in general amongst the saninists mirrors the outlook of the Resort Lady, though interestingly enough, it was the Tatar guides who were called Sanins by Resort Ladies in journalistic satire. See: Kara-Kurt, “Malen’kii Feleton: Zhalobnaya Kniga (ne Chekhova)” RR, 23 June, 1913; on Saninism, see: Otto Boele, Erotic Nihilism in Late Imperial Russia: The Case of Mikhail Artsybashev’s Sanin (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).
vulgar materialism and spiritual vacancy. The Resort Lady possessed these characteristics in spades. She was vain, capricious, ignorant, gossipy, and obsessed with consumer society. Journalists seemed to suggest that she contributed little to nothing to society, and certainly not in a moral or spiritual sense. She was the sort of person that modernizing Russia needed to be careful not to produce.

Moral and respectable citizens who appeared in Yalta, journalists claimed, could become corrupted by the social environment built by Resort Ladies. One columnist claimed to have met a man of humbler origins who did not enjoy Yalta, where he maintained that everyone talked incessantly, but only about money and the high prices. His wife, who complained non-stop about how they were not traveling first class, irritated him most of all. The journalist warned the man that he should pay close attention to his wife. Then, sometime later, the author met this man again, and they started conversing once more. “Don’t you remember?” said the visitor, “You gave me that advice to pay attention to my wife … Well… It brought about wonderful results … My “half” left me without a half.” “What was the problem?” the columnist responded. “What problem? My wife decided to stay in Yalta permanently. You see, she, really liked the strolls in the mountains … She, it turns out, was not born for travel in third class, for lunches at the cafeteria … In a word – Yalta made her discover the noble lineage in her blood, for which she needs the corresponding environment.”

The moral crisis that journalists highlighted in their portrayal of Resort Ladies worked in and around class structures. The author coldly remarked that from now on he

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29 “Mimokhdom” *RR*, 31 July, 1913.
thinks of his friend every time Yalta is mentioned as a first class resort. It seemed to him that a third class resort, but one where people would not be tempted to turn away from meaningful spiritual and cultural development or participation in real public debates, would be far more ideal.

The Resort Lady also took what journalists saw as the most contemptible trait of the petty bourgeoisie: sexual promiscuity. Adorning the latest fashions, expressing knowledge about them, all the while embracing vanity and public displays was still not enough to express one’s femininity, shine in the crowd, and generally embrace the culture of the Resort Lady. The Resort Lady needed to break a key code of feminine etiquette of the time and seduce an interesting man, or at least raise an interesting conversation with one. She needed to demonstrate her ability to flirt.

For the Resort Lady, “the flirt” (flirt was the Russian word used as well) required meticulous preparation and a methodical approach. Another feuilleton told the story of two women conversing in Yalta. One of them spoke of how she rode on the steamship from Sevastopol, saying to the other,

you know, I smoke myself, and ten times I smoked a cigarette near interesting men, and fifteen times I asked, “do you have the time,” and I can’t even count the number of times I delighted at the natural beauty of the Crimea and not only did I not get engaged, but I didn’t even get acquainted with anyone!

The other then reminisced about, “how ten years ago you could find a bachelor on every bench and you didn't even need to smoke with them.” They decided that they needed to learn more about the factory that produced the papers that the men use when
they smoke, and that this was absolutely essential. Then they saw a man and, “as representatives of the perfect sex, they prepared for attack.”

“The attack” was a favorite metaphor for Crimean journalists when describing the resort ladies’ flagrant and public pursuit of a new relationship. Another story centered solely on the attack, describing how, “the season for “collecting” fiancés in Yalta, as they say, is the last stage. If an experienced mamasha (mama) is already in Yalta, and is not able to catch and arrange a network of these fiancés she will lose all hope forever.” In the meantime, mobilizing all of her female cunning, she arranges “light raids,” choosing the most poetic spots for her “victim.” She then “aims” her documents about her credit rating and social position, and most importantly, that she has no marital ties. From that point begins the attack,

according to all the regulations of that particular art. Her daughter acts as the advance guard [avangarde]. The mamasha, like heavy artillery, sits in the rear, at the perfect range, and only occasionally undertakes a little reconnaissance … She meets someone! … They begin to speak… about what? They speak about everything, about how enchanting and charming the sea is, how the dust is so bad in Yalta, how they might be able to breathe more easily… and so on.

The attack metaphor was in some cases replaced with a fishing metaphor. The Resort Lady would seek out a particularly good spot, often on one of the town’s many bridges, where she would “cast” out glances, in a practice satirists referred to as “bobbing,” in an attempt to “lure in” a suitor. In either case, satirists used derogatory terms when speaking about the flirt that suggested that not only was the Resort Lady

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30 “Mimokhodom” RR, 6 August, 1913.
31 “Mimokhodom” RR, 27 June, 1913.
32 Markiz iz Suuk-Su, “Kurortnye Motivy” RR, 14 Sept, 1907.
carrying out masculine duties during social interactions, that she was systematically doing them in view of everyone and towards apparently superficial ends.

The flirt irked journalists not only because it broke traditional feminine codes of conduct, but also because the depicted Resort Ladies were either inherently unintelligent or making conscious efforts to appear naïve and foolish. An example of the former was described as one journalist told a tale – essentially a tsarist era blonde joke – about a young poet who met a woman in Yalta and decided to take a trip in the moonlight to a nearby cliff to enjoy the view from a more romantic spot. The poet began to think about the charming view, noticing the effects of the moonlight on the waves, which would eventually crash upon the gorgeous Cliffside, and told his companion of how it all appeared to him as a symphony. The blonde responded by asking if the symphony in Simeiz would play that evening. The man explained to her how he saw a symphony of light and dark in the waves, and that it seemed like a fairy tale, and asked if she would “fly away” with him. She claimed to have never been in an airplane. He told her the ancient legends associated with the cliffs, and she claimed to have seen something better, “with great cinematography” at the cinema. He begins to talk about pleasure, and she responded by saying she knew what he wanted – food – as the fresh air and waves cause the appetite to grow. They went back to town and the poet decided firmly to ignore blondes and try to find happiness with brunettes.33

The satirical Resort Lady, although always present in public places, knew nothing and did not care for history, art, poetry, or especially politics. A Resort Lady would not

33 Tire, “Grimasy” RR, 4 August, 1913.
understand the nuances of official or unofficial Russian social structures, and cared only about a man’s profession or socio-economic background if it might help her stand out in some way. A stereotypical Resort Lady could often be spotted with a newspaper in her hand, satirists noted, but she paid little attention to its content, carrying it simply because it was stylish to read the newspaper. She might read a little, if only to be prepared to make small talk about political issues or world news, where she would develop naïve but strong opinions about matters in the Balkans, Iran, the Ottoman Empire, or especially the Yalta city administration.34

Typical acquaintances always began in the satire with small talk about the region’s beauty, the dust in the city, and the minor nuisances associated with resort life such as the fee to enter the city park or losing lotto tickets, pointing to a broader theme recurrent in journalistic commentary. To satirists, gossip was endemic to the resort social scene. Collectively, women (Pechorin claimed), even if they did not enliven the resort, could always turn to mindless chatter.35 Yalta thus possessed a culture of rumors, its residents and visitors completely subject to this fact at all times, which in the eyes of one journalist made the city totally “unique.” The superficiality of the conversations between new acquaintances became recurring themes of satire. What made things worse, satirists suggested, were the conversations between women themselves about flirtation. The flirt even came with their own slang language. A satirist wrote how it had long been known that the divorced woman upon her arrival in Yalta especially loved “to misbehave a little”

34 Although Chekhov’s lady with a dog was not the same character as the satirists’ Resort Lady, even she did not know for which branch of the government her husband worked.
35 Pechorin, “Kurortnye Kartinki - Listki iz Alupki” RR, 9 May, 1913

186
[poshalit’], “to indulge in ridiculous/foolish acts” [podurit’], and “to frolic a little” [porezvit’sia].

A 1914 satire summed up the resort lady wonderfully:

The beauty that is Yalta has already dozed off under the hot rays of bright sunlight … the luxurious sea quietly splashes on her legs and tells her a tale. The shore is a mix of color due to the flowers of the incoming Resort Ladies, who have just a few fewer than all “77 afflictions.” A mother and daughter have already appeared to search for a fiancé. The anatomy of the stylish resort is beginning to take on “the look of the season.” … Somebody is trying to shoot someone else…. With her eyes. But the shots turn out to be blanks, for those who are already married [kholostymi dlia ne kholostyk]. And we [in Yalta] don’t even have those who go to the sea on their “last kopeck” to find some hunchback husband.

The Resort Lady represented, for satirists and journalists, the perverted morality endemic to resort life and its bourgeois features. The triviality of visitors’ existence appeared nowhere more clearly than when watching Resort Ladies on the parks and boulevards of Yalta, where citizens with a social conscience appeared few and far between. Instead, Yalta was infected with “poisonous people.”

The Resort Lady proved to be an immensely powerful force in Yalta’s social scene and surrounding discourse on femininity. Pechorin claimed that, “the female element, as is always the case in Alupka, dominates.” Perhaps because of the women’s prominence, journalists questioned proper morals, behavioral norms, and what it meant to be a respectable woman in tsarist Russia. By exploring the ways that he and other journalists shaped the discourse on femininity, journalists revealed the ways that women

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36 Dzhin, “Teny Zhizni” RR, 30 May, 1913.
38 Ibid.
set out to overturn notions of femininity and sought to engage in public and private practices that defied the domestic lifestyle in which many women felt (or were) confined.

Along with a number of recent studies in women’s history in tsarist Russia, the story of women in Crimea also underscores that the power that men held over women was by no means absolute or unqualified. In fact, the Russian Riviera became a key site in which women could challenge traditional notions of femininity and feminine roles. What is peculiar about the case of the Russian Riviera – considering the historiography of the Russian and other world empires – is that writers suggested it was women who created and drove the cultural reality on this edge of empire. Women consistently outnumbered men in the Crimea and tended to stay longer. Their activities and their role in Crimea provoked debates in the papers about resort culture, which more often than not created scandals over women appearing in public spaces, women engaging in masculine activities, women publically and actively pursuing relationships with men, and how women were in many ways responsible for establishing a culture of sexual promiscuity in the region. Because of the prominence of women, opinions about femininity abounded in the press and female respectability and morality in Crimea was meticulously critiqued.

Not all journalists were pessimistic about the future, however. One saw Yalta’s opportunity to impress positive change, and engage with new ideas about femininity and respectability.

in this little corner of social life, at resorts, we must establish progress for morals. We can in some way or another recognize the right to complain about the promiscuity met at resorts, but only when the level or measure of the

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morality of *modern* life is taken in other cities, and not the past of human morality, not the past life at resorts.\(^41\)

One concern in particular stood in the way of this approving few of female social and sexual emancipation.

*Tatar Guides*

The most troubling and critical satire described the relationships between wealthy Russian women and hired Crimean Tatar guides [*provodniki*].

In the late nineteenth century, Tatars were routinely hired by travelers to take them on tours into the Crimean mountain plateaus [*iaily*, Crimean Tatar for alpine meadow], as the dearth of quality maps and established trails necessitated local expertise. The Tatar guides would provide horses and would organize group tours [*progulki*] at reasonable prices, and became integrated into the resort scene as a result. Typically tall, stately men, they wore dark blue coats elaborately embroidered with gold thread down the front and traditional round sheepskin hats, observers claimed that the uniforms showed off the contours of the guides’ bodies especially well. The Tatars were also excellent horsemen, and often performed for Yalta’s crowds, coming down to the front of the hotels to demonstrate their equestrian prowess.\(^42\)

Journalists commented that, “when people around the country ask about Yalta, they all say that it is the resort where the *provodniki* stand out,” and that their presence

\(^{41}\) “Iz istorii nравов на курортах” *KKL*, 11 May, 1912.

\(^{42}\) These are the comments of a historian, not Crimean journalists. See Andrei Malgin, *Russkaia Riv’era*, 262-3.
“thunders” around all of Russia.\textsuperscript{43} This was, in part, because more and more, and especially into the twentieth century, they began to take women on individual tours. After one if not several trips into the mountains, satirists spoke of how they got to know their clients quite well, often engaging in sexual liaisons, and in many cases profiting significantly from them.

Pechorin approached one such encounter with his typical mix of criticism and an air of humor:

Zhenichka, a good young lady [\textit{baryshnia}], having recently arrived in Yalta from Petersburg with her mother and sister Liolia, opened her eyes, stretched, glanced at her sister sleeping alongside and suddenly popped up as if she had been stung. She listens: from the street came the sound of horses. She was now convinced that it was brought by horses to be ridden into the mountains. “It is already nine o’clock! Liolia!” She woke up her sister. “You won’t go? No? Well in that case I’ll go alone…” Liolia had barely opened her eyes. She was not at all used to getting up so early. In addition, she was decidedly not beckoned by an early trip to the mountains.

It was different for Zhenichka. She was a great lover of various risky adventures. She talked in the previous evening with one guide about going in the morning on horseback to Iazlar, in secret from her mother. Now she asked her sister not to “spill the beans.” Her eyes were cold and calm, but in her head only ran different thoughts about the upcoming “secret” trip…

While on the street [having made her rendezvous], and noticing a few passers-by, she made a serious expression on her face and with the help of her guide she mounted the horse. Walking further, they saw a number of salesmen selling their “goods” on the street.

The mountain trail was forested, yet was only beginning to blossom. One ever-green filled the air with a delightful fragrance. Zhenichka asked the guide about local customs, and about his adventures. He asked about her about her family, and to Zhenichka’s surprise he knew her mother, but said she had not been in Crimea for twenty years. The guide then reached into his pocket and pulled out a small photo. “Yes that’s her!” Zhenichka exclaimed, astonished. “And this is your father!” said the guide pointing to himself.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43} “Mimokhodom” \textit{RR}, 21 June, 1913.
\textsuperscript{44} Pechorin, “Kuortnye Kartinki” \textit{RR}, 9 April, 1913.
Other satirists presented similar stories, describing in detail how to actually make a rendezvous with one of the local men:

It was evening in Alupka Park … Quiet, Warm.
It was noisy on the main pathway near the coast of the sea.
Two young ladies with nice little faces are having their shoes cleaned and giggle, half-joking and half-serious - to ask the shoe-cleaner to introduce them to some “interesting” guides.
The shoe-cleaner’s face changes.
“Okay, young lady! I’ll find one in five minutes.”
As he said, in five or ten minutes he returned…
“Go … he is over there in the bushes. He won’t come over here.”
The brave and charming girls withdraw to the depths of the park to find the “interesting guide” …
Thinking they were unnoticed, I observed them
“Hello … you are very nice … tomorrow come here again, only alone…”
“No, we’ll come together”
“No, one is better…”
Then, with a playful giggle, the girls ran away.
I asked the shoe cleaner:
“To whom did you introduce them?”
“To whom? Of course with their own sin! He is a “cavalier” at night … by day, a shoe cleaner … one of you Russians would only earn a piece of bread. Tatars earn quite a lot this way! …
Happy, simple girls … it’s not always safe to be brave!”

Kolomiitsev, introduced at the beginning of the chapter, clearly did not have a sense of humor about the activities like the more liberal Crimean journalists. He claimed to have visited one guide named Mustafa at the Tatar’s home. During the supposed visit, Mustafa showed the journalist his “entire gallery” of photographs and letters, procured over the years from women he had taken into the mountains. One of the (presumably fake) letters, written by a woman, who had included a picture of not only herself but her husband and entire family, went as follows, “without any alterations”:

P. N. “Kartinki s Natury” RR, 4 August, 1913.
Deplorable brother! If you have the time and the desire, then come to my place, let’s go out. Only let me make it clear, if we are going to ride, it must be on a good horse. I’ve decided we go on Tuesday, or any day after that. What a trip we had to Gurzuf! Ah, you’re a scoundrel! Nobody is going to hire you! I wait for your reply, and it’s better if you come in person. Yours, NN.

The letter indicated to Kolomiitsev that it was “not the woman who commands the man, but the man who commands the woman.” Every time the woman tried to make arrangements or to make certain demands regarding them, she was at the mercy of the guide. If the guide chose not to respond, then she would not get a tour. If he decided other arrangements were best, then the woman would submit and agree.

The situations Kolomiitsev and others depicted in their feuilletons are peculiar in comparison to other colonial situations because they showed white European women going purposefully to the colonies to strike up relationships with dark-skinned Muslim Tatar men. Scholars have explored how Europeans – particularly the British – who did not obey rigid class race or gender norms in the colonies were perceived to have threatened imperial domination by upsetting the hierarchy of power between colonizer and the colonized.\footnote{See: Ann Stoler, \textit{Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Joch McCulloch, \textit{Black Peril, White Virtue: Sexual Crime in Southern Rhodesia, 1902-1935} (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Phillipa Levine, “Venereal Disease, Prostitution, and the Politics of Empire: The Case of British India” \textit{Journal of the History of Sexuality}, 4 (1994): 579-602.} Particularly threatening in the eyes of British colonial administrators were sexual relations and marriage, especially so when mixed-race children were born as a result. In nearly every case however it was European men who formed such
relationships with colonial women.\(^{47}\) This was generally true in the Russian empire as well.\(^{48}\)

The exploits of Russian women and Tatar men provide a fascinating case study on the nature of colonial power and the ways in which gender and sexuality were infused into colonial relationships. When Russian women moved beyond the boundaries of acceptable feminine behavior, and then further beyond the bounds of Russian dominance over colonial subjects, they faced a strong reaction from a number of political fronts. Ann Stoler has written some wonderful work on the ways that intimate relations were construed and regulated in imperial contexts, arguing that attempts to regulate sexual practice were key to drawing separation, typically on racial lines, between colonizer and colonized, so that dominance could be asserted over the latter.\(^{49}\) The colonial contexts she discusses (Dutch East Indies, Indochina, and others) do however differ from Crimea, where by the twentieth century Crimean Tatars were a minority compared to the Russian majority. It also seems that in the case of Resort Ladies that the Tatar men held most of the power in their relationships. Therefore, reaction against the intimate behavior of Russian women was to actually prevent the domination of Russians (the majority of the population) by their Crimean Tatar subjects.\(^{50}\)

\(^{47}\) Exceptions described in Laura Tabili, “Empire is the Enemy of Love: Edith Noor’s Progress and Other Stories” Gender and History, 1 (2005): 5-28.

\(^{48}\) See: Susan Layton, Russian Literature and Empire: The Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).


\(^{50}\) The inversion of power relations and gender roles marks an important distinction between Russian relationships between white women and colonial subjects and similar relationships in the British Empire or in the American South. See: Jock McCulloch, Black Peril, White Virtue; For examples in the American
Another of Kolomiitsev’s transcribed letters drew connections between the capriciousness of Resort Ladies and their purported relations with the guides:

Sweet and dear Mustafa! Permit me to hug you and kiss you in absentia an odd number of times. When I saw you, I nearly lost my mind. We went out, but I didn’t think that I would see you, such a handsome man, again. You are surely a heavenly angel. Apologies for my openness, it’s just that there is no way for me to see you, so I wanted to open up in writing. It was such a dear thing for me to look into your eyes; they sparkle, like diamonds, and your soft lips… I would eat up those kisses and throw them back onto your neck, but it is impossible where I am right now. I hope to see you Sunday evening, when we can again go out to celebrate seeing each other. Truly, do you not recognize me? In Evpatoria, I fell head over heels in love with you, but it was impossible for me to make that clear. In my life I’ve already fallen in love once, with my husband, but after I leave him I’ll love only you. If you only knew how much I will love you. You, my darling! With your one glance, everything escapes my mind. What a luxurious feeling that you give me. After you read this note, tear it into pieces and throw it away. I’m writing with all my soul. I live… [address shown]. As I write these words – you need to see, my heart is beating like a drum(!)… Well, will I see you? Let me know. Our horses are ravens. So, until we meet, my unforgettable(!) dear! A kiss through the air! I hope that I will see you on Sunday, my dushka. I kiss you on your lips, eyes, and somewhere else…

Kolomiitsev referred to this letter and the woman as “superfluous,” and mocked her “poetic” comparisons (adding an exclamation mark after “beating like a drum”) suggesting that this Resort Lady lacked the mental capacity to understand the profound nature of true love. “There is no way that it is love,” he claimed, “for the “unforgettable handsome man,” but simply the desire for divorce in the lady.”52 To the journalist, her desire and even love for the guide is not only reprehensible for its adulterous implications, but also because the words appear to him as mere tools of seduction. He

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South, see: Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth Century South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
51 D. Kolomiitsev, “Krymskie Tatary – provodniki i damy” *Tavrichanin*, 14 December, 1905. (italics are in original)
52 Ibid.
lamented her “audacious cynicism.” The sexual innuendo in the final phrase is however unmistakable.

If these letters weren’t enough, Kolomiitsev provided another set of letters reportedly written by a different NN that portray husbands as the real victims of these sorts of relations. The letters described her desire to meet with Mustafa, and her uncertainty if such a meeting could ever come to pass.

I barely know you and I fear that the words I write below will surprise you. My terrible longing, of course, is not without its reasons — the hardness of your character does not make me embarrassed — in this way, for example, you jokingly refer to your word, but you never keep it. Truly, jokes aside, be serious, speak openly … If you are interested in a meeting, if such a thing were to take place again in some form, you wouldn’t give me a full answer. “I don’t know… I’ll think about it. You can only make such an answer to one of your comrades. My self-esteem may even be false, but, regardless, it will suffer. It seems to me, if a meeting would bring you pleasures, which raises your mood in a special way, while in my company, and would be especially glad. Therefore, if you want me to respond to you with full belief — something necessary — then do not try to manipulate me, or otherwise I will try to dispel (sic) my delirium, which has destroyed my spiritual peace, in some way or another. I wanted to say this, so that you must be there, everywhere, that I am, if of course there is the possibility for that. Until we meet, treasure. It would be improper to write more, and anyway I would say so many silly things. But this is enough — all of this is my cursed feelings.\footnote{D. Kolomiitsev, “Krymskie Tatary – provodniki i damy” \textit{Tavrichanin}, 14 December, 1905. 195}

Kolomiitsev commented that the “lamentations” of this mischievous lady, of course brought about the exact result you would expect in such a case. The “treasure” responded, and NN’s correspondence continued:

Come here at four o’clock to the monument to Catherine, on the boulevard, and stay there. I will come with my girlfriend NN. She asked that we go together, and that you spend fifteen minutes with her alone, as I promised her. After that, she will leave us at five or five thirty and head home. Otherwise it is impossible
for me to leave and go for a walk/go out. Come then, and remember your promise. Yours, NN.54

The desire to meet was so strong in the woman that she did not stop sending such letters, and she continued to write further,

My treasure – she wrote a second time – come to the boulevard at four, I want to see you and tell you something. I am so sad that you are leaving. I hope that you will write me at this address (writes address), although I think, you horribly circled in a whirlwind of satisfaction. But, to the point, this will be proven with your words. Then, please, I will pay you. I wait for your response. Will you be on the boulevard?55

Soon after, to her surprise, Mustafa reportedly appeared at her dacha, while her husband was there, and pretended to be a handyman [drug doma (literally a friend of the home – pun intended)]. With Mustafa present, the “mischievous” woman dictated, to her own husband, a series of childish love poems, which he assumed were meant for him but were actually for the other man in the room. One read:

Meeting with you,  
You my angel,  
I could forget the entire world.  
You are, for me,  
My joy,  
Earthly happiness, my idol  
Come, come, come, quicker,  
Press to my chest my strength,  
Give your kisses to me,  
Kiss, embrace me strongly,  
Without you my life is not sweet,  
Charm me, love me.56

The “poor” husband, Kolomiitsev remarked, was totally unaware of the glances she was sending to Mustafa as she was reading. In too many instances for Kolomiitsev,

54 D. Kolomiitsev, “Krymskie Tatary – provodniki i damy” Tavrichanin, 14 December, 1905.  
55 Ibid.  
56 Ibid.
“a good husband and father,” “faint from exertion at work,” “giving everything necessary to his family,” would give money to his wife under the pretense of medical treatment only to see her take trips into the mountains with the “Akhmets” and commit adultery. How boldly and openly women seemed to be breaking down the traditional family unit particularly seemed to have disgusted him.

There was always an element of danger behind these tours for Russian women as well. Sometimes the guides would not honor their agreements, taking the “dowry” from a woman and never meeting with them for a tour. Tatars in Yalta also worked a variety of other jobs, as fruit-sellers, flower salesmen, boot cleaners, cab drivers, or door-to-door salesmen. It was through these men that Russian women were often referred to guides, and they would sometimes swindle reckless women as well. The very act of approaching a Tatar also elicited fear. Often women would do so as in pairs at first, unable to generate the courage to go alone. In addition, the tours themselves left women completely reliant on the guides, who were essentially complete strangers. Once in the mountains, women were entirely dependent upon the guides, not only for an enjoyable experience, but for their safety and even their lives. Journalists spoke seriously of how the guides would introduce women to the concept of bashkeesh, a form of tip or bribe common in Islamic cultures. They also joked about how the women would give the guides a “dowry” and then be introduced to swindling [moshchenichestvo]. Although individual tours were commonplace, and although it was the women who were paying for them, they left women in a particularly vulnerable position.
As the guides became associated with promiscuous and adulterous activity, they became the subjects of public scrutiny, in the papers, in the halls of the city administration, and amongst the police. Local administrators debated whether to formally forbid Tatars from loitering in Alexander Square (in the center of Yalta) or to completely forbid them from conducting any kind of business in the area. Such a prohibition never came to pass, due to protests from resort ladies and the Tatars themselves, who claimed that they provided essential travel-related services without which Yalta would suffer economically.\(^{57}\) Guides known to only engage in “individual tours,” however, were closely monitored by police forces, and had to proceed into public places with great caution by 1913, risking forceful expulsion from the town. Why were guides necessary, the police would ask, if they were just walking with Russian ladies along Yalta’s boardwalk?\(^{58}\)

In spite of the danger, or perhaps because of it, Russian women seem to have gone to great lengths to embark on these tours, regardless of whether they sought intimate relations or an actual tour in the mountains. Some women perhaps learned a little Tatar to help facilitate conversations and perhaps avoid being deceived.\(^{59}\) Tatar phrasebooks appeared in guidebooks, teaching basic words to make acquaintance, numbers, past, present and future tenses of common verbs, and a vocabulary and declension list for words such as horse, cave, and waterfall.\(^{60}\) Women also learned to ride as the guides did, some wearing Tatar style coats or hats.

\(^{57}\) Dzhin, “Teny Zhizni” RR, 21 September, 1913.
\(^{58}\) “Mimokhodom” RR, 21 June, 1913.
\(^{59}\) Dzhin, “Teny Zhizni” RR, 21 September, 1913.
\(^{60}\) Grigoriy Moskvich, Putevoditel po Krymu, 1915.
Relationships (real or simply fictional) with Tatar guides point to what Antoinette Burton speaks of as the “pourousness” of colonialism, or “the inherent incompleteness of it.”61 Rather than viewing Crimean history in this period as one in which Russians and the state moved towards absolute authority over the social and cultural circumstances on its periphery, we see instead how Russians and non-Russians interacted with and shaped colonial institutions and discourse. Locals and visitors alike created new social and cultural realities in Crimea that were dictated neither by military force, violence, nor by any significant state intervention.

The news (not the satire) in Crimean papers did include “warnings” about the increased potential for not just promiscuous activity but more serious offenses like adultery and divorce during the velvet season. One columnist, at the onset of the velvet season in 1913, told how, in the dacha sector of Alupka (a resort neighboring Yalta), a husband and wife, “gave into a sinful temptation.” Finding herself, “inebriated in the charming environment of Alupka’s luxurious park,” the visiting lady was “having some fun with a Tatar guide.” When her husband arrived and came to know about the adventures of his “better half,” he flew into a rage and “severely punished” her for her “enthusiasm.” After this the husband no longer wanted to stay in Alupka and left, “the horizon and his punished wife disappearing behind him.”62 The incident resulted in “a great sensation” for the public.

Journalists concerned themselves greatly with not just moral concerns, but the very real consequences of sexual promiscuity in Crimea, particularly when the family unit was broken down as a result of the trivial lifestyles along the Russian Riviera. In certain cases, such adulterous relations came with violent consequences. There was a highly publicized case where two Tatars came to blows over a married woman, and one of them was killed. It all took place in front of dozens of public witnesses and the killer was arrested and apprehended, but it put quite a scare into the passers-by, especially the women. Often satirists would build their stories based upon real news stories such as this. After a separate violent outbreak, which took place in Kislovodsk (a health resort in the North Caucasus), Riviera journalists “reported” the story through a short satirical piece at the onset of the velvet season in 1907. The story told of a man who arrived with his wife, who was (not coincidently) named Kliopatra, and who the public determined was a very beautiful and highly “interesting” Resort Lady. The husband caught her fraternizing with a student in the park, flew into rage, and shot her six times in the chest with his revolver. A police officer arrived on the scene and shot the man twice, killing him. Women in the neighborhood believed that bombs had been set off. Amazingly, as the legend went, Kliopatra survived after being taken to hospital. 

63 “Bryzgi kurortnoi zhizni” KKL, 12 July, 1913. See also: Kristin Collins-Breyfogle, “Negotiating Imperial Spaces: Gender, Sexuality & Violence in the Nineteenth-century Caucasus” (PhD diss: Ohio State University, 2011).
64 Markiz iz Suuk-Su, “Kurortnye Motivy” RR, 4 August, 1907.
At no point were issues of morality and sexuality more relevant than during the velvet season. Lewd behavior had a place and a time in satirists’ minds. Nowhere was it more poignant than in a feuilleton penned in 1913 by Pechorin. On the fourth of August, 1907, the beginning of the velvet season, he wrote how, in the air you can already smell the velvet season. The restaurants sparkle more and more with champagne and wine glasses. Outside the city, more and more automobiles can be heard honking at night. In their cabins people have already begun kissing for the whole night, straight to the sunrise. The men have begun to fire their pistols “velvetly” [“barkhatno” pistolirovat’ – quotes in the original]. The ladies… their breath has been taken away. My dear, Sir… it’s velvet love! Trite, dirty, stinking. Automobile love. For sale.

To Pechorin, “velvet love” was not just meaningless promiscuity, it was debauchery. In “calico love,” he wrote, “it is not uncommon to see warm affection, sincerity, poetry, and beauty,” directly connecting meaningful relationships and true love with the less wealthy but spiritually superior summer public. Continuing, he claimed that, in “velvet” love you see nothing like this, and instead filth, vulgarity, the worst kind of depravity. “Calico” love almost always exists in Yalta in chaste, if it is possible to express it this way, because it is almost always hidden in the darkness of privacy … “Velvet” love cannot exist in Yalta if it is kept hidden. “The demonstration” – flaunting: exactly this is the key element, without which “velvet” love makes no sense.

The feuilletonist then gives us a specific example of velvet love. He writes how, The velvet cavalier arrives beforehand at a restaurant with a certain Resort Lady, a woman with whom he can do some “light reading”. Then he spends “in the view of everyone” a few dozen rubles. Then he gives a few dozen more for an automobile. Then, a sort of resort-specific entrechat is initiated. And, finally, gathering themselves in the room, she whispers, “Tutto perduto … Mikhalich! Wake me up at tomorrow at 12 in the afternoon dear. I’m completely dazed…
Velvet lovers were performers. They followed a particular script. The man must spend his money in view of everyone, tossing away as if it were meaningless, while demonstrating his worth in purely economic (not cultural or moral) terms. The hiring of automobiles suggests a similar purpose, while the image grants the author the opportunity to tie his moral concern for velvet lovers with modernity, or at least the technology that has taken over Crimea in very recent years. The image of the resort-specific entrechat, where the beauty of the action, or performance, is replaced by baseness and vulgarity is particularly striking. Velvet lovers would sleep through the day, waking only to continue with their sordid activities the next evening. They would make a point of incorporating simple French or Italian phrases in their language in order to appear cultured as they openly flirted with each other. Pechorin claimed that velvet lovers are like *meshchan’e* – they are vain, idle, unsubstantial, and coquettish.

The expression “velvet love” itself ties together the public depravity and debauchery that the author witnessed with the particular time and place – Yalta during the fall season. It is as if velvet love could not possibly exist in any other circumstances, or certainly not in a place any less consumed with fashion. He finished the diatribe by enunciating velvet love’s localized and abominable nature:

Velvet love has every kind of vulgarity – this is its defining element. Every kind of vulgarity, and a first class hotel room. Something chic. And Yalta has its own rules for defining chic. Sparkling champagne. Honking car horns at night. The velvet spinning of tires is beginning. Velvet love is going on. My dear, Sir, the all-Russian vulgarity of Yalta’s velvet season!\(^{65}\)

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\(^{65}\) Pechorin, “Kurortnye Kartinki” *RR*, 4 August, 1913.
Conclusions

The social activities of Crimea’s visitors motivated local journalists to explore questions of sexuality, masculinity, femininity, and colonial subjectivity with a moralizing agenda. They did so through the figures of the Resort Lady and the Tatar guide, while demonstrating how time and class played into these issues through the velvet season. In addition to showing the ways that journalistic discourse on population movement, time, and gender norms coalesced in a particular imperial setting, I suggest that issues of class were constant, underlying features of the story. Journalists shared an anti-capitalist vision for social change espoused to varying extents but by most wings of the intelligentsia. As a result, an individual’s level of respectability in Crimea could (but not necessarily) have an inverse relationship with their means. Certainly, the stories depicting moral degeneracy and sexual promiscuity on the Russian Riviera were not tales where the peasantry, working class, or anyone generally poor needed to be taught lessons in cultured behavior, or raised somehow into the civilized world. The poorest of Yalta’s visitors were rarely a threat in the minds of Crimean journalists. On the contrary, they could be the heroes. The problem journalists saw was that Russia’s wealthiest and supposedly most respectable citizens took on some of the most deplorable characteristics of the meshchanstvo while in Crimea: vanity, idleness, and coquetry. Their agenda tended to denigrate the wealthy as meshchanstvo (in the pejorative sense) while lauding any visitors who contradicted the image of immorality that so pervaded discourse on the Russian Riviera.
For journalists, the velvet season, bourgeois in nature by the 1910s, was when moral degeneracy reached its peak. They saw the rise in sexual activity associated with Yalta’s rise to the top of Russian fashion as breeding unwanted and damaging behavior, and most of all amongst women. Although the satirical stories journalists wrote were sensationalized, designed to sell, and even promulgated Yalta’s reputation as the bastion of high fashion, they ultimately warned readers about falling into Yalta’s trap, where substance, art, and true love were being overwhelmed by a vain, flirtatious, idle, and indifferent resort public.
CONCLUSION

On 20 April 1912, “in every corner of Yalta,” people were wearing white flowers, proudly showing their support for the All-Russian League for the Fight against Tuberculosis. Eyewitnesses described how “touching” it was to see “communal sympathy for such a great cause.” They spotlighted the resort ladies, visitors young and old, from Yalta’s most fashionable and intelligent society, who could be seen, “bravely taking to the public streets, stopping into stores, restaurants, and coffee houses,” to raise money for tuberculosis treatments and research. Nobody ever refused the resort ladies, noted journalists, who tabulated the thousands of rubles raised and proclaimed that the ladies’ actions uplifted the spirit of the community. This was no exaggeration. Per capita, Yalta’s women raised far more money than in any other of the empire’s cities. It was, as one journalist described it, a truly grand “stroll” – an activity performed and loved by all
resort ladies – for the benefit of the nation, some 5% of which suffered from tuberculosis.¹

The scenes on the Day of White Flowers, like the chapters of this dissertation, exemplified the extensive, interwoven links connecting medicine, tourism, gendered social environments, and the natural world in Crimea. They point to the ways that Yalta took advantage of its natural therapeutic environment, medical associations and infrastructure, and outgoing female public in order to fulfill a goal of the All-Russian Sanatorium: the eradication of the most persistent disease of tsarist Russia.

Visiting women took crucial roles in public life and in building the Russian Riviera, something highly unusual given that Russia was so patriarchal. Women worked as doctors, nurses, journalists, and in the hospitality industry. Perhaps most importantly, they consistently outnumbered men within the annual visiting public, and their public behaviors (from “strolls,” to the excursions of “resort ladies” with local Muslim Tatar guides) characterized the entire tourist culture, saturating it with sexual and gendered meanings. Many of these women came to the Russian Riviera to escape the strict regulation of their bodies and activities in Central Russia, and Crimea’s popular press became a source of some of the tsarist empire’s most open and moralistic discussion of sex, masculinity, and femininity.

Nestled in the Black Sea, Crimea’s south coast became a paradise, a “country of warmth and sun,” “a miraculous city in the soft, warm south, flooded for eternity by the

¹“Kurortnaia Zhizn” RR, 21 April, 1912; See also, for 1911: A. Vladimirov, Pervyi Tuberkuleznyi Den’ v Rossii 1911 goda (St. Petersburg: S.-Peterburgskoe Obshchestvo borby s burgorchatkoi, Prosvietitelnyi otdiel, 1911).
shining sun,” and “the oblast’ [province] of style!” Crimea came to possess the “coast of health,” “the richest region in our native land,” and “the best space in Russia in terms of its therapeutic properties.”² It was the place to visit to escape the drudgery, darkness, and disease endemic to city life in industrializing tsarist Russia and pursue a new healthy life in paradise.

The communal undertaking on the Day of White Flowers also points to the ways in which health care professionals, philanthropists, local administrators, and patients shared a common and idealized vision for development in Crimea, one that hinged upon the building of a sanitized region, where citizens of the empire could come and receive therapy for serious afflictions. Residents of Yalta, the centerpiece resort of the Russian Riviera, thus began to refer to the entire coastline as the “All-Russian Sanatorium.” Collectively, they strove to transform the region itself into a medical facility, characterized by local therapeutic methods, including hydrotherapy, balneotherapy, solar treatments, grape treatments, physiotherapy, and sea-bathing. To “sanitize” the environment, locals secured fresh water reserves, disinfected apartments, financed street sweeping and waste disposal facilities, cleaned the beaches and coastal waters of the Black Sea, and developed necessary infrastructure and conservation programs for patients to enjoy the scenery and healing potential of Crimea’s mountains.

It was in Crimea that many Russians first embarked upon “excursions” to sites of natural beauty and cultural importance, which to this day remain the quintessential activity of the Russian tourist. Tourist agencies, alpine clubs, and tourists themselves also

² N. A. Beliovskii, Ialta: Sanitarnyi Ocherk, 3; N. Golovkinskii, Putevoditel’ po Krymu, 46; “Zhenskie Stranichki” RR, 14 August, 1913.
worked to build a pristine natural environment for excursions and pushed an agenda of preservation and pedagogy through immersion in the natural world. As I have shown, it was precisely on such excursions when Russians from all walks of life forged a new relationship between themselves and their natural world, a relationship which combined consumerism, health, and leisure with education and enlightenment.

On 23 July, 1914, the newspaper *Krymskii Kurortnyi Listok* published its final article, marking the end of the era. “The resting, peaceful, and flirtatious bathers have completely disappeared. They exist no longer. Everyone is now busy, waiting for the next newspaper to come out, and everyone has become a “political.” People are only talking about the war, whether they will fight or have been drafted. The ships have all stopped.”³

They did not stop for long though, and even if Russia’s Riviera became associated with the regions around Sochi following the Revolution, Crimea remains to this day a hub of health, fashion, and travel.

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