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Women Entrepreneurs in Imperial Russia: Law & Experience
(the Case of nineteenth-century Moscow)

1. Legal Regulations as a developing force of female entrepreneurship

The paradox of the legal status enjoyed by women in Russia in the 19th and the early 20th centuries consisted in the fact that, while playing the traditional social role of wife, mother and hostess, they could simultaneously have the independent status of a property-owner and business manager.

The right to conduct commercial activity was juridically envisaged for women in the legislation of the Russian Empire: in accordance with the laws concerning persons of the merchant profession, on the death of the owner, the management of his business was to pass to his widow. Very often, even when the sons were commercially very experienced and active, family businesses were formally and in fact headed by the widows. Another, slightly less frequent variant was to bequeath the management of the firm to the daughters if there were no male heirs; the law stipulated that those daughters were to be unmarried. Nevertheless, even after marriage, the female head of the firm continued to manage the business on her own¹.

According to Russian laws, woman enjoyed the same property rights as man. Each of the spouses could possess and obtain individual property (by purchases, gifts, inheritance or any other legal way). Moreover, the spouses could enter mutual relations concerning the transfer of property by settlement, purchase etc. as if they were total strangers². The principle of property separateness in marriage made it possible for a woman to be independent in the matters of property.

Thus, that key right of managing the property independently allowed female merchants to manage large assets and real estates according to their own will.

The key role in the emergence of a significant stratum of women entrepreneurs was played by Russian marriage legislation (the norms regulating the property and legal status of women were adopted in 1833 and were in force up to 1917 Revolution). It differed from the European legal norms in the issue of separateness of property belonging to the spouses.

Frequently, merchants, the heads of family, deliberately formally made over to their wives their real estates in order that, in the case of bankruptcy, the latter would not be confiscated.

2. Basic statistic data on Moscow female entrepreneurship

Regretfully, we have no opportunity of making complete comparison because there are no uniform data for the entire 19th century in the available sources. I have chosen 5 dates when the official statistics data for industrial development in Moscow had been published (1814, 1832,

¹ Svod zakonov (The Corpus of Laws). Vol.IX. St.- Petersburg, 1899. № 541.

² Svod zakonov (The Corpus of Laws). Vol.X. St.- Petersburg, 1914. № 109, 110, 978.

1853, 1871, 1890), and have tried to analyze these statistics in all possible detail³. However, the principles of gathering of statistics, as it turned, were different in 1814-1853 and 1871-1890, therefore our conclusions may have not been absolutely accurate.

For our paper we focus on female entrepreneurship in industry, which was a real indicator for this phenomenon.

In 1814, there were 11 factories in Moscow, which were owned by 10 female entrepreneurs. In 1813, there were 35 factories, which were owned by 35 female entrepreneurs. In 1853, the number of such factories increased up to 99; those factories were owned by 97 female entrepreneurs. In 1871, there were 79 factories in Moscow, which were owned by 76 female entrepreneurs, and in 1890 there were 56 factories, which were owned by 54 female entrepreneurs.

The important points are the questions of ethnic parameters, realty-ownership, factory classification and social status of female factory-owners in Moscow, which are represented in the tables 1-4.

Table 1. Ethnicity of female factory-owners in Moscow

Ethnicity /Year	1813	1832	1853	1871	1890
Russian	9	34	85	67	44
German		1	7	8	6
French			3	1	2
British			1		
Italian			1		
Jew					2
TOTAL	9	35	97	76	54

Table 2. Localization of factories according to immobile property's type

Localization of factory / Year	1853	1871	1890
In a house belonging to female owner	72 (73%)	59 (75%)	37 (66%)
In a rented premises	27 (27%)	19 (24%)	19 (34%)
In son's house		1 (1%)	
Total	99 (100%)	79 (100%)	56 (100%)

Table 3. Moscow factories belonging to women

Industry / Year	1814	1832	1853	1871	1890
Textile industry including:	7	26	55	37	20
Production and	4	17	27	13	6

³ The main sources are as follows: Vedomost o manufacturakh v Rossii za 1813 I 1814 gody. (Register of Factories in Russia for the Years of 1813 and 1814) St.- Petersburg, 1816; Spisok fabrikantam I zavodchikam Rossiiskoi Imperii 1832 goda (A List for Factory-Owners and Manufacturers of the Russian Empire for the year of 1832). St.- Petersburg, 1833; S. Tarasov. Statisticheskoe obozrenie promyshlennosti Moskovskoi gubernii (A Statistical Survey of District of Moscow's Industry). Moscow, 1856; Nikolai Matissen. Atlas manufacturnoi promyshlennosti Moskovskoi gubernii (A Map of the Industry of the District of Moscow). Moscow, 1872; Petr Orlov, Sergei Budagov. Ukazatel fabric I zavodov Evropeiskoi Rossii (The Index of the Factories of European Russia). St.- Petersburg, 1894.

processing of cotton					
Production and processing of wool	2	2	15	15	8
Production and processing of silk	1	7	11	7	6
Other (production and processing of flax, auxiliary industries etc.)			2	2	
Chemical industry including:		1	3	8	3
Production of chemicals (vitriol, sulfuric acid, etc.)		1		3	2
Production of varnish and sealing wax				5	1
Cosmetics			3		
Processing of fat and wax including:	3	3	7	3	2
Soap-boiling	1		1	1	2
Production of wax- and fat-candles	2	3	6	2	
Leather industry		1	4	3	2
Metal-working industry including:		3	6	10	12
Cast-iron and steel-casting				1	5
Machine construction industry					2
Production of bells		2	1	1	1
Gold-spinning		1	2	4	
Silver processing				1	4
Copper and bronze processing			1	3	
Pin, needle and button production			2		
Food production including:		1	3	6	6
Vodka, beer and malt production			3	6	3
Confectionary				1	2
Sugar industry				1	1
Vinegar production		1	2	1	
Paper production (mainly wall-paper)	1		3	4	3
Tobacco			6	2	2
Carriage production			4		2
Furniture and piano			2		2
Clothes			1		2
Earthenware and brick industry			1	2	

Other industries (clock, matches)			5	1	
TOTAL	11	35	99	79	56
Female-Owners	9	35	97	76	54

Table 4. Social status of the female-owners of factories

Social Status /Year	1814	1832	1853	1871	1890
Noble-women			1		1
Wives of militaries		1	1		
Female Honorable citizens		1	6		
Female merchants of the 1 st guild			1	8	4
Female merchants of the 2 nd guild			9	46	36
Female merchants of the 3d guild		1	50		
Female merchants of unknown guild	8	26 (merchant wives)	8		
Female petty bourgeois	1	4	17	9	8
Belonging to a craft corporation		2	3		
Peasants					1
Female foreigners			1		2
No data				13	2
TOTAL	9	35	97	76	54

3. Factories and Mills

“**Register of Factories in Russia for the years of 1813 and 1814**” contains information on 11 factories, including 7 textile ones. Those enterprises belonged to 9 women, 7 of whom continued their husbands’ business, 1 was a daughter inheriting her enterprise from her merchant father, 1 was a female petty bourgeois. Each of two female merchants inherited from their deceased husbands two factories. Anna Kumanina inherited cloth-mill, where worked 26 workers (the factory rated third for their production volume in Moscow, producing 52.600 meters of fine wool-cloth per year) and dye-works. Anna Fomina got a factory producing silk kerchiefs (18 workers, 600 kerchiefs per year) and a factory producing cotton cloth (no information about the number of working places, 4775 meters per year)⁴.

«**A List for Factory-Owners and Manufacturers of the Russian Empire for the year of 1832**» shows that the number of female factory-owners increased 3,5 times, rising up to 35 persons. Among them 27 women, after husband’s death, continued latter’s business, two women after father’s death inherited the business, 6 women got their business on unknown juridical grounds (4 female petty bourgeois и 2 belonging to a craft corporation, not belonging to merchant guild).

⁴ Register of Factories in Russia for the years of 1813 and 1814. P.14, 41, 237, 307.

The comparison between the data of 1814 and 1832 allows, in 7 cases, to establish continuity of factory's ownership according to the modal "from-husband-to-wife".

The largest enterprise in that group was the factory of Alexeevs producing gold and silver «galloon, flattening и purl goods». That factory had been established in 1785, in 1814 there were 29 workers. After Semen Alexeev's (1746–1823) the enterprise was headed by his widow Vera (her maiden name was Vishniakova) (1774–1849). Vera Alexeev's father was the owner of one more factory of silver flattening, located in Moscow. Formally Vera Alexeev had been factory's owner for 23 years, and only after her death the factory was headed by her sons Vladimir (1795–1862) and Petr (1794–1850). In 1835 they together with their mother were honored with the rank of hereditary honorable citizens⁵.

Let us adduce more examples that are typical.

For instance, Martha Chasovnikova in 1832 administered a cloth mill, in 1814 being in the name of her husband Chasovnikov (according to the data of 1814 there were 693 workers at the factory). Theodosia Bolshaia inherited a silk factory from her husband Vassili Bolshoi (in 1814 there were 34 workers at the factory) and changed the range of produced good from velvet, damask and brocade to silk shawls and kerchiefs. Theodora Kozmina inherited a leather mill from her husband Prokhor Kozmin (in 1814, there were 5 workers). Irina Shoshina inherited a cotton mill from her husband Ivan Shoshin (in 1814, there were 61 worker). Anna Pösche inherited a chemical factory from her husband Peter Pösche (in 1814, there were 4 workers). Ekaterina Bogdanova, after the death of her husband Michael Bogdanov, headed a bell factory (in 1814, there were 13 workers)⁶.

In the Pösche family a factory twice passed to widow's hands after its owner's death: first it was Anna Pösche in 1819, and later it was Julia Anna Pösche in 1862. From 1819, after Peter Pösche's death, his second wife, a Moscow noblewoman Anna Pösche became factory's owner. In 1819, she was 42. In Pösche's family there were two sons by his first wife – Alexander and Ivan, and three sons by Anna – Peter, Andrei and Pavel. According to the merchant as census record for 1815, the house in the Pokrovka district of Moscow, where Pösche's family lived, was inherited by Peter Pösche from «his deceased first wife Daria»⁷. After the death of Anna Pösche, in 1841, the chemical factory passed to family's elder son (Ivan became the elder son in 1825 after the death of Alexander). Thirty-seven-old Julia Pösche inherited a factory after the death of her husband Ivan (1862). A chemical factory, existing from 1801, was one of the pioneer industrial enterprises in Moscow. In 1872, in Pösche's factory there worked 16 workers, who produced sulphuric acid, sulphat of natrium, soda and other chemical products, which was worth more than 42 thousand rubles per year. Pösches were one of the oldest German families in Moscow. In 1801, Julia Pösche's father-in-law obtained from «the office of the State Medical Collegium» a license to open a small enterprise producing nitric and sulphuric acids⁸. He registered as a merchant later in 1807, as census record put it, "coming from among foreigners of German origin and taking oath to eternal allegiance to Russia". Julia Pösche had two sons - Alexander and Emil, and three daughters - Julia, Amalia und Sophia⁹. In an archive, one can find information that Emil graduated the Imperial Moscow Technical College with the degree of mechanical engineer in 1879¹⁰. Thus during the lifetime of the three generations the family of Pösche's educational level progressed adapting to the needs and demands of the time. However,

⁵ Hereditary honorable citizens was a particular legal class established by Emperor Nicholas I's Manifesto of April, 1832. It included the upper group of merchants and industrialists, whose family spent 10 years continuously in a 1st class guild or 20 years in a 2nd class guild.

⁶ Register for factories in Russia for the years of 1813 and 1814. P. 13, 42, 44, 97; A List for Factory-Owners and Manufacturers of the Russian Empire for the year of 1832. Vol.2. P.307.

⁷ Materialy dlia istorii moskovskogo kupechestva. Revizskie skazki. (Materials for a History of Moscow Merchantry. Census Records). Vol.VI (A 1815 Year Registration). Moscow, 1885. P.147-148.

⁸ Central Historical Archive of Moscow (CIAM). F. 16, op. 24, d. 3883, l.1.

⁹ Materialy dlia istorii moskovskogo kupechestva. Revizskie skazki. (Materials for a History of Moscow Merchantry. Census Records). Vol.IX (A 1858 Year Registration). Moscow, 1889. P.149.

¹⁰ Central Historical Archive of Moscow (CIAM). F. 3, op. 1, d. 1311, l. 1-2.

despite the presence of competent men in the family, the mother Julia Pösche was in the head of family business during almost two decades.

The statistics of the year of 1853 contains information on 97 female entrepreneurs, owning industrial enterprises. As before, most of those enterprises belonged to the textile industry, to be precise, 55 of overall number of 99. 27 of those 55 factories produced cotton fabrics, 15 produced wool textiles, 11 produced silk, and, finally, 2 factory were auxiliary.

Among those headed by women there were quite large factories. For instance, at Natalia Nosova's wool-weaving mill, which was established in 1829, 873 weavers worked on 397 mills, manufacturing woolen shawls and fabrics such as flannel, woolen cloth etc. In 1853, the total cost of the produced goods equaled 351.875 rubles, and the factory, by volume of production, was the fifth among 41 Moscow wool-weaving mills.

At honorable citizen Anisia Alexeeva's cotton mill, there were 485 workers, who produced spun cotton for 236.160 rubles. At Elizaveta Bogomazova's cotton mill, there were 390 workers, manufacturing textiles for clothes for 174.110 rubles. At Emilia Zindel's cotton mill there were 492 workers, who produced printed cotton for 320.800 rubles. At Natalia Bakhrushina's leather factory, there were 160 workers who produced leather for 211.300 rubles.

¹¹ Alexeeva, Zindel and Bakhrushina's factories employed steam-engines. The enlargement of industrial enterprises and the increase of production volume was entailed by the mechanization of the textile industry that took place in Russian industry in the end of the 1840s and 1850s (at that time the number of mechanical spindles in the textile industry increased 2,5 times)¹².

The largest leather factory – Bahrushin's mills, established in 1834 – after the death of its founder Alexey Bakhrushin (1792-1848), was headed by his widow Natalia (1793-1862) in 1848-1862¹³. According to the family tradition, after the funeral ceremony, Natalia Bakhrushina and her three adult sons gathered together in order to inspect their firm's affairs, and finally found out that the cash-registry was empty, and moreover, the factory was debt-ridden, because its owner invested all the saved money into new equipment. His three sons – 29-year-old Petr, 25-year-old Alexander and 16-year-old Vassili – along with their mother who formally and factually had become the head of the factory. Her great-grandson wrote in his memoirs that Natalia Bakhrushina «moved the entire venture as a hidden spring»¹⁴, having the reputation of a resolute woman and being literate what enabled her working with financial documentation. She managed to pay out the debts, avoid bankruptcy, and bringing the firm into stable condition. It is well attested by the fact that, in 1851, the members of Bakhrushin family were honoured with the title of hereditary honorable citizens.

Moscow's factory-and-works statistics, containing **the information for 1871**, demonstrates the decrease of the number of the factories belonged to female owners in comparison with the similar data for 1853. In 1853, there were 79 factories owned by 76 women. This decrease occurred in the context of the reduction of the overall number of enterprises at that period. Thus, in 1843, in Moscow and the Moscow Province there were 1283 factory with 106 000 workers, while, in 1871, there were 816 factories and 74 000 workers. Nonetheless, production volume increased for 42,2 million rubles up to 91,5 million rubles.¹⁵ The main reason for this consisted in wide-scale mechanization of the factories and their enlargement.

As in the former years, in 1871, textile factories dominated consisting 47% of the total number of factories.

¹¹ S. Tarasov. A Statistical Survey of District of Moscow's Industry. P.7, 25, 33, 45, 89.

¹² See: Aida Solovieva. *Promyshlennaia revoliutsia v Rossii v XIX veke* (Industrial Revolution in Russia in the Nineteenth Century). Moscow 1990. P.66-67.

¹³ S. Tarasov. A Statistical Survey of District of Moscow's Industry. P.301.

¹⁴ Yuri A. Bakhrushin. *Vospominaniia* (Yuri A. Bakhrushin. Memoirs). Moscow 1994. P.327.

¹⁵ Nikolai Matissen. *Atlas manufacturnoi promyshlennosti Moskovskoi gubernii*. (A Map of the Industry of the District of Moscow). Moscow 1872. P.VII.

I have found that among 76 female owners of enterprises, 48, by their marital status, were widows, 6 were merchants' daughters, 1 daughter-in-law getting the ownership over the factory from her father-in-law who survived her husband, and finally 3 were an independent female merchant and foreigner. The status of the remaining 18 cannot be ascertained.

Some interesting results have been obtained due to the comparison of the data of the factory-and-work statistics with that of the persons paying guild's fee in the city of Moscow (The lists of the merchants had been published by Moscow Merchant Corporation annually since 1869). 8 female owners of large factories mentioned by Matissen were были registered in the 1st guild: Anna Bakhrushina, Anisia Bolotnova, Akulina Zaitseva, Anna Kolokolnikova, Maria Poltavtseva, Maria Tiuliaeva, Irina Cherepakhina, Pelagea Chernyshova. All of them were widows becoming factories' heads after the death of their husbands.

The information about them, according to the data for 1871, are represented in the table 5¹⁶:

Table 5. First guild class female entrepreneurs (1871)

Name	Age in 1871	Children (sons) and their age	The date of husband's enrolling into merchantry	The date of widow's enrolling into merchantry	The date of factory's establishment	Number of workers	Annual production (in rubles)
Anna Bakhrushina	42	1 (21 years old)	1840	1867	Morocco factory, 1843	122	161.105
Anisia Bolotnova	59	3 (29, 27, 17 years old)	From ancient merchant family	1867	Copper foil, lead capsules, 1849	50	18.000
Akulina Zaitseva	61	1 (22 years old)	1843	1867	Vodka factory, 1867	3	13.000
Anna Kolokolnikova	41	Second marriage: 4 (21, 19, 16, 10 years old)	From ancient merchant family, 1723 peasant ancestry	Unavailable	Silk mills, 1796	52	90.400
Maria Poltavtseva	60	4 (37, 27, 25, 20 years old)	From ancient merchant family	Unavailable	Factory of silver and bronze church utensil, 1823	23	15.380
Maria Tiuliaeva	51	2 (32, 16 years old)	Honorable citizen	1863	Wool textile factory, 1856	146	110.820

¹⁶ The information is based on the following publications: Spravochnaia kniga o litsakh, poluchivshikh kupecheskie svidetelstva po g.Moskve na 1870 god. (The Reference Book of Moscow Merchants for a year 1870). Moscow 1870; Spravochnaia kniga o litsakh, poluchivshikh kupecheskie svidetelstva po g.Moskve na 1872 god. (The Reference Book of Moscow Merchants for a year 1872). Moscow 1872; Matissen. A Map of the Industry of the District of Moscow; Alexander Axenov. Genealogia Moskovskogo kupechestva XVIII veka (Alexander Axenov. A Genealogy of Moscow Merchants in the 18th Century). Moscow 1988.

Irina Cherepakhina	63	1 (44 years old)		1859	Wool textile factory, 1843	240	74.100
Pelagea Chernyshova	66	5 (41, 37, 34, 28 years old)	From ancient merchant family	Unavailable (2 silk mills, 1838, 1859	50, 115	45.060 81.000

Due to unknown reasons (very likely, because of the insufficiency of the methods of data acquisition), in the list of Matissen, three other women were omitted who, according to «The Reference Book of Moscow Merchants» for 1872 were registered in the 1st guild class: Alexandra Molodsova (woolen cloth factory), Theodosia Protopopova (candle and wax factory) and Alexandra Tiuliaeva (woolen cloth factory).

As to the statistics of women's belonging (both of traders and industrialists) to the Merchant Guilds classes, the statistics confirms that female entrepreneurship was rather widespread.

For example, in 1872 in Moscow, the merchant guilds (the 1st and the 2nd classes¹⁷) numbered 492 women: 437 Russian and 55 foreigners (including 35 Germans, 16 French, 1 English, 1 Dutch, 1 Austrian and 1 Italian). In the first class guild, there were 27 persons at the age 34 to 67: 26 of them Russians and 1 German (Karolina Zenker).

First guild merchant Karolina Zenker, née Wolf, was a representative of the 3rd generation of a merchant family, which arrived in Russia from Bohemia and became included in the Moscow merchantry in the early 19th century¹⁸. The field of their activity was trade in various goods such as food and clothing. In 1872 Karolina Zenker was head of the trade company "Zenker & Co" and their office was situated in the prestigious Old Court (a large hall housing numerous stores) near the Kremlin.

An interesting question concerns origins and citizenship of Moscow German female entrepreneurs. Two of 35 (registered in 1872) were born in Hamburg and were Hamburg citizens, 4 from Prussia, 2 from Württemberg. Among Russian citizens, many German women entrepreneurs had their origins in the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire: 2 were from Riga, 1 from Pernov, 1 from Revel (now Tallinn), 1 from Libau, 2 from Mitau, 2 from Fridriechsham. Other 17 (50%) were Muscovites of the 2nd and 3rd generations. A domination of Prussian citizens was obvious in 1890 Registration file: among 9 German women entrepreneurs 5 were from Prussia, 2 from Saxony, 1 from Hamburg and 1 from Braunschweig¹⁹.

«The Index of the Factories of European Russia», published in 1894, contains information for the year of 1890 about 56 enterprises, the owners of which were 54 women.

Let us survey histories of some factories.

The owner of a large wool factory, established in 1857, was Zinaida Fedotova. In 1862, at the age 29, after her husband's death, she entered the 2nd guild and became the owner of a wool-woven mill. In 1871, there were, in the factory, 150 workers, who produced goods for 140 000 Rubles. In 1890, there were 220 workers who produced goods for 184 000 Rubles. In 1895, Zinaida Fedotova belonged to the 1st guild. Zinaida Fedotova had 3 sons – Pavel, Konstantin and

¹⁷ By a decree of 1742 and the charter of the cities of April 21, 1785, the urban merchants were divided into three guilds according to their declared capital assets. There were only two merchant guilds from 1863 until the Revolution of 1917. See: Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917/ Compiled by Sergei Pushkarev. Edited by George Vernadsky & Ralph T. Fisher, Jr. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1970. P.19-20.

¹⁸ Materials for a History of Moscow Merchantry. Census Records. Vol.VIII (A 1850 Year Registration). Moscow 1888. P.58.

¹⁹ The Reference Book of Moscow Merchants for a year 1872.

Nikolai -, with whom she, in 1883, founded the trading company «Z.A. Fedotova & Co» for administering the factory and selling textiles²⁰.

The «Vassili Hehner & sons» sugar-refinery was constructed in 1860. After the death of its founder in 1872, the factory passed to the hands of his widow Anna-Katharina, a Prussian subject. At that time, 100 workers worked there, and its production was worth 148 thousand rubles per year²¹. The widow Hehner, seemingly, was a quite energetic woman. In 1874, she established a 1st merchant guild class trading company «W. Hehner & Co». She invested considerable funds in expansion of production including her own and her second husband Phillip Enners who was a Prussian subject as well. In a result, by 1881, the factory had increased the number of workers for almost three times and the volume of production increased for 13 times. The production of sugar was worth 1.920 thousand rubles, the factory occupied the third place in the Moscow sugar industry.

The Lenov confectionery company entered the period of fast expansion only in 1890s. It was one of the oldest Moscow enterprises. In 1826 an craftsman Sergei Lenov opened a small confectionery workshop in a quiet Moscow street. The workshop manufactured only hard-boiled candy and fondant and initially processed only 80 kg of sugar per day. The manufacturing process was quite primitive: drops of the boiled sugar syrup were cooled on a slab of marble slightly coated with olive or almond oil. The candy quality was determined primarily by the quality of the raw material. The workshop had a limited output because it served only the local neighborhood. The family income was too low and they could pay for the fee joining a merchant guild. Lenov social status remained low. In several decades of hard work they gradually expanded their production capacity, the range of their loyal customers kept in growing and they had to open a warehouse in central Moscow for dispatching their products to other towns. Ekaterina Lenova (1853-1912), a wife of a Sergei's grandson Georgy Lenov(1850-1916), was very active in the development of the family business. Apparently, she (née Baryshev) was a daughter of rich parents and it was her dowry that helped to expand the business. She had a good education and kept the company books. It was she who insisted an officially incorporating the company as her property. After Lenovs' marriage in the 1880s the company started growing at a very fast rate. The Lenov's workshop was given the factory status. Ekaterina purchased the neighboring land plots and expanded the production facilities. In 1890s the company acquired new machinery and the most advanced electrical equipment. Now the company manufactured fruit marmalade and fruit-flavored marshmallow, jelly and paste in addition to the popular brands of candy. In 1890 the company employed 68 workers and had earning of almost 38.000 rubles²². In the early 20th century the workforce grew to 170 and then to 215 employees and the earning increased considerably. In 1914 the Lenov company had 400 employees and the annual earnings of 1 million rubles. By 1916 the Lenov company was the fourth largest confectionery manufacturer in Moscow after the companies of Einem, Abrikosov and Sioux. The company had more than a thousand employees and was equipped with the most advanced electric-powered production machinery. The commercial acumen of Ekaterina Lenova prompted to her that the demand of the low-income consumer for cheap products of a sufficiently high quality should grow steadily and she adjusted accordingly the business strategy of her company. Until her death in 1912 Ekaterina Lenova remained the managing director of the company and her husband Georgy was the chairman of the board of directors while the son Nikolai (1885-1952) and his wife Nadezhda (1883-1963) were members of a board. Until the 1917 Revolution the Lenov company preserved the appearance of a family business²³.

²⁰ Orlov, Budagov. The Index of the Factories of European Russia). St.- Petersburg, 1894. P.26; The Reference Book of Moscow Merchants for a year 1895. Moscow 1895. P.47.

²¹ Matissen. A Map of the Industry of the District of Moscow. P.146; The Reference Book of Moscow Merchants for a year 1872. P.291.

²² Orlov, Budagov. The Index of the Factories of European Russia). St.- Petersburg, 1894. P.558.

²³ See: Galina Ulianova et al. Two Centuries of Confectionery Industry in Russia. Moscow 2003. P.20-26.

4. Conclusion

The panorama of activity of Moscow female entrepreneurs manifests a rather wide spectrum of their industrial interests – textile, dyeing, mechanical & metalwork, joinery, soap-boiling, confectionery, and other industries. The above-described cases also demonstrate their devotion to the up-to-date technical equipment at their enterprises and factories, as well as remarkable stability of their business: the duration of existence of most factories, by the turn of the twentieth century, was 20-40 years, while volume of production constantly increased.

Women felt themselves confident in all spheres of enterprise: in industry courageously introducing in their factories technical improvements and, especially, steam engines, as well as in trade and transactions with real estate.

Russian laws did not hamper the business initiative of female entrepreneurs, and women had taken advantage of that successfully.