

10/13/00

Problems
in
Pale of
Settlement

E. European peasant had reputation as large consumer of alcohol. By law had to purchase alcohol amounts from market. Middle-man - Jewish agent. Source of tension. Peasantry vs. Nobility (exploits peasants) Middle-man in exploitation - Jews.

Czarist govt caught in dilemma - wished to productivise countryside - make state more efficient & better organized → educate & train peasantry in new skills, wean them away from self-destructive habits that had marred their existence for many years. BUT - seem harmful to interests of nobles, who basically owned these people as slaves.

Tendency
Prohibitions of Jews in countryside where they have direct contact with peasantry. Make them conform w/ images of members of merchant estate. Same time - never actually carried out - pattern through 19th century → tensions between nobility interests and czarist regimes, nobles use Jews as buffer. Sumptuary laws passed all the time, never worked.

⊕ Jews depended on favor of the powerful - meant becoming vulnerable to the powerless many.

- Peasantry often depended on Jews, too.

Love/hate dependency/resentment relationship, often peasant protests when Jews removed. Despite reform effort by removing Jews from the countryside, it was never carried out.

No concept of rights - merely privileges that could be taken away/granted.

Two figures: Nicholas I 1825-55
Alexander II 1855-81