

**Women Journalists in the Russian Revolutions and Civil
Wars: Case Studies of Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams and Larisa
Reisner, 1917–1926**

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Statement of Originality

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This research was funded through an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Collaborative Doctoral Partnership between Queen Mary University of London and the British Library. My research has generated two publications, one current and one forthcoming. The first, entitled 'Women Reporting the Russian Revolution and Civil War: The Frontline Journalism of Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams and Larisa Reisner', was

published by the peer-reviewed journal *Revolutionary Russia* in late 2017.¹ The second, on women and the early Soviet press, will form a chapter in the edited and peer-reviewed volume *Women and Gender in Russia's Great War and Revolution*.²

¹ Katherine McElvanney, 'Women Reporting the Russian Revolution and Civil War: The Frontline Journalism of Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams and Larisa Reisner', *Revolutionary Russia*, 30:2 (2017), pp. 228–246.

² The volume, which is due for publication in 2020, is part of the series *Russia's Great War and Revolution* (published by Slavica).

Abstract

This thesis examines the work and experience of women journalists in the Russian Revolutions and Civil Wars, 1917–1926. Adopting a comparative approach, it focuses on case studies of the Russian writer, journalist and liberal politician Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams (1869–1962) and the young Bolshevik writer Larisa Mikhailovna Reisner (1895–1926) in order to examine and compare how women from opposing sides of the revolutions and civil wars used the press to shape the outcome of these conflicts. While women in Russia had contributed to the press in a range of roles, including as editors and publishers, since at least the eighteenth century and had long used journalism as a tool for social and political change, the revolutions and civil wars presented new opportunities for women to use journalism as a form of activism and, in some cases, to combine it with military and/or policy-making roles. At a time when the task of describing and participating in war, or indeed journalism in general, was predominantly viewed as a male pursuit in the West, the work of these women was particularly ground-breaking and unique in the context of journalism and women's history. However, despite their seemingly emancipated position and the vital roles they played during this period, many Russian women working in the press (as well as in other historically male wartime roles) were nevertheless viewed by their contemporaries along traditional gender lines. By examining how and why women became, or continued to be, involved in journalism during the revolutions and civil wars, the opportunities and challenges they experienced, and how they were perceived by their contemporaries, this study provides a fresh perspective on the relationship between gender, activism and journalism during this period of conflict.

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not least, I would like to thank my family, Barbara and my partner, Jürg, for their unwavering support and encouragement.

Preface

In addition to contributing to preparations for the British Library's 2017 Russian Revolution exhibition, the requirements of the project were to research a topic connected to media in the Russian revolutions and civil wars while making use of the British Library's extensive Russian collections. The British Library holds the H. W. Williams Papers, a rich yet not fully catalogued and thus understudied archive of correspondence, official documents and telegrams relating to the White movement during the Russian civil wars. The papers, along with a large amount of printed material, were collected and personally donated to the British Library's predecessor, the British Museum Library, in 1937 by Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams.¹ This archive provided the initial basis for the present study of women and journalism during this period.

¹ The H. W. Williams Papers are named after Tyrkova-Williams's husband, Harold Williams, who died in 1928, and were transferred to the Department of Manuscripts from the Department of Printed Books in 1968. The complete collection, including the printed materials, is referred to as the Tyrkova-Williams Collection.

Abbreviations and Notes

Archival sources

Russian archival citations in this thesis include the following abbreviations:

- f. *fond* (an archival collection).
- o. *opis* (a list of materials in a *fond*).
- d. *delo* (a packet of materials in a *fond*).
- l. *list* (a page; or ll. for pages).

Dates

The Julian calendar (Old Style; O.S.) was used in Russia until midnight on 31 January 1918, when it was replaced by the Western Gregorian calendar (New Style; N.S.). Dates in the Julian calendar were 12 days behind the Gregorian calendar in the nineteenth century, and 13 in the twentieth century. Thus, the day following the calendar change was declared 14 February 1918.

When referring to events in Russia before the calendar change in 1918, I have given both dates in the form of N.S. (O.S.). When referring to events in Britain or after the calendar change, I have used the ‘new style’ date. Where only one date appears, it can be assumed that it is the date according to the Gregorian calendar unless otherwise stated. With a small number of sources, for example some of Tyrkova-Williams’s letters and diaries from the civil-war period, it has been difficult to establish whether she is using O.S. or N.S. style dates.

I have provided dates of birth and death (where available) for the Russian women journalists included in this thesis. Given that many of them are neglected figures, I hope this will be of use to other scholars.

Names and transliteration

This thesis uses the Library of Congress system of transliteration, with the exception of more widely known proper names, for example, Trotsky. With the exception of Moscow and St Petersburg, it uses direct transliterations of contemporary place names (e.g. Tsaritsyn, not Stalingrad or Volgograd).

Given the main focus of this thesis is the period after Tyrkova-Williams took her second husband’s name, I use her married name (Tyrkova-Williams) throughout.

With the exception of well-known figures (e.g. Kollontai, Trotsky and Babel), I have provided patronymics for those with Russian names. Like the inclusion of dates for women journalists, I hope this will facilitate further research into some of the lesser-known figures featured in this research.

Terminology

In the context of this thesis, the term ‘revolutions’ refers to both the February and October revolutions of 1917. When referring to a specific revolution, I use the full name (e.g. October Revolution).

This thesis uses the term ‘civil wars’ as set out by Jonathan D. Smele.¹ This definition covers a much broader timeframe (1916–1926) and acknowledges the existence of a series of civil wars across the former Russian Empire as opposed to a unitary civil war.

Translation

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

¹ See Jonathan D. Smele, *Historical Dictionary of the “Russian” Civil Wars, 1916–1926*. 2 Vols. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015); and Jonathan D. Smele, *The “Russian” Civil Wars, 1916–1926: Ten Years that Shook the World* (London: Hurst & Company, 2015).

Introduction

In an article published in February 1926, just days after Larisa Reisner's death, the Russian and Soviet writer, literary critic and theorist Viktor Shklovskii recorded his views on her style and development as a journalist during the Russian Civil Wars: '[t]here on the campaigns Larisa Reisner found her literary style. It was not a woman's style of writing. It was not the journalist's habitual irony.'¹ Shklovskii's remarks reveal much about attitudes towards journalism and, more specifically, women journalists in Russia during this period. Firstly, his suggestion that the conflicts had an important and direct impact on Reisner's maturation and success as a writer and journalist presents the revolutions and civil wars as turning points for Russian journalism and journalists. Secondly, his comments highlight the interconnectivity of literature and journalism at this time. Thirdly, by referring to a specific women's style of writing and distancing Reisner from it, Shklovskii simultaneously praised her work and implied that there was a standard or 'male' style of journalism and a more inferior women's style.

The revolutions and subsequent civil wars certainly presented opportunities for women on different sides of the conflicts to use journalism as a form of political activism and, in some cases, to combine it with active military and/or policy-making roles. Women were instrumental to the functioning of the press during this period. Although men still predominantly held the more celebrated editorship positions, women frequently served as editorial secretaries, a role arguably more intrinsic to the running of publications during the initial years of the revolution. At a time when the task of describing and participating in war, or indeed journalism in general, was viewed as a male pursuit in the West, the work and experience of these women was particularly ground-breaking and unique in the context of journalism and women's history. In Russia, women had worked in the press in a range of roles, including as editors, translators, writers and publishers, since at least the eighteenth century and had long used journalism as a form of social and political activism. Yet, as Shklovskii's statement demonstrates, despite their seemingly emancipated position and the vital roles

¹ Viktor Shklovskii, 'Bessmyslennishaia smert', *Zhurnal'st*, February 1926, No. 2, pp. 14–15. The translation is taken from *Hamburg at the Barricades, and Other Writings on Weimar Germany*, ed. and trans. by Richard Chappell (London: Pluto Press, 1977), pp. 199–201. The article was first re-published in V. Shklovskii, *Gamburgskii schet* (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo pisatelei v Leningrade, 1928).

they played during the revolutions and civil wars, many Russian women working in the press (as well as in other historically male wartime roles) were nevertheless viewed by their contemporaries along traditional gender lines.

Applying a comparative approach, this thesis seeks to bring together the fields of gender studies, journalism history and the history of the Russian revolutionary period in order to address how women from different political backgrounds used the press to document and attempt to shape the conflicts. It focuses on the case studies of Reisner and Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, which are in turn presented within the wider context of women's activism, journalism and shifting gender roles during a time of fundamental change and upheaval. At the time of the October Revolution, Tyrkova-Williams was an experienced journalist and public figure, having served as a member of the central committee of the liberal Kadet Party since 1906 and been a vocal advocate of the women's liberation movement in Russia. Following the Bolshevik crackdown on the opposition press and political parties in late 1917 and 1918, she used journalism as a means of voicing her dissent, initially in Russia and, after her position became increasingly precarious, in emigration in Great Britain with her husband, the London-based New Zealand journalist Harold Williams. There she wrote and published articles in international publications and played a key role in establishing and running émigré organisations, which aimed, among other goals, at turning foreign public opinion against the Bolsheviks and lobbying for Allied intervention on behalf of the anti-Bolshevik Whites in the civil wars.² The most significant of these was the Russian Liberation Committee (hereafter referred to as the RLC). Tyrkova-Williams returned to Russia in 1919 for approximately four months, where she was involved in political work and wrote articles for local, émigré and foreign publications while based in General Anton Denikin's territory in southern Russia. She was subsequently evacuated from the region in early 1920 and returned to Great Britain, where she continued publishing in émigré periodicals and contributing to political and humanitarian organisations.

In contrast to Tyrkova-Williams, Reisner was just 22 at the time of the October Revolution and belonged to the new generation of journalists who participated in

² The so-called 'White movement' was a loose confederation of anti-Bolshevik forces comprised of those holding a range of political viewpoints. During the initial years of the Russian Civil Wars, the Whites fought the Bolshevik Red Army on four main fronts in southern Russia, western Siberia, northern Russia and the Baltic. See Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000), p. 279.

Bolshevik and early Soviet press activities at this time. She was the daughter of Mikhail Andreevich Reisner, a member of the Bolshevik party who helped to draft the first constitution of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) in 1918.³ After joining the party and marrying Fedor Fedorovich Raskol'nikov, a Bolshevik revolutionary and later commander of the Baltic Fleet, in 1918, Reisner travelled to the Eastern Front and documented her experiences for the Soviet government newspaper *Izvestiia* ('News').⁴ Until her death in 1926, she continued to publish articles in some of the largest and most influential Soviet newspapers and journals. While she began writing for Bolshevik publications as a form of party work during the civil wars, she later became a permanent correspondent for *Izvestiia*, *Pravda* ('Truth') and *Petrogradskaia Pravda* ('Petrograd Truth') and her articles were published as edited volumes both during and after her short life.

Through the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner, this study presents the experience and work of a much wider network of women journalists and press workers, including those who have been forgotten or overlooked. Examining how and why women became, or continued to be, involved in journalism during the revolution and civil wars, as well as some of the opportunities and challenges they experienced, contributes to our understanding of women's, and indeed men's, everyday experiences of revolution and war. This in turn promises to provide a more integrated history of the press during this period, which is lacking in existing scholarship.

³ See Chapter Four for a discussion of Mikhail Reisner's activities and how they influenced Larisa Reisner. The constitution was adopted by the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets on 10 July 1918.

⁴ Raskol'nikov joined the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) in 1910 and quickly became involved in the party press, including as secretary to the editors of *Pravda* in 1912. In 1913 he was arrested and exiled abroad, but soon returned to Russia under an amnesty and joined the navy. During the First World War he was engaged in naval studies in St Petersburg and did not see active service. Shortly after the February Revolution he was sent by the party to Kronstadt, where he took charge of the local party press organ *Golos pravdy* ('The Voice of Truth') and was later elected vice-chairman of the Kronstadt Soviet. Following the October Revolution, he was appointed a commissar with the Naval General Staff, and, in 1918, deputy people's commissar for naval affairs. For more on Raskol'nikov's early life and party work, see: 'Fyodor Fyodorovich Raskol'nikov (autobiography)', in *Makers of the Russian Revolution: Biographies*, ed. by Georges Haupt and Jean-Jacques Marie (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974), pp. 202–208; and Smele, 'Raskol'nikov (Il'in), Fedor Fedorovich (28 January 1892–12 September 1939)' in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 917–919 (p. 918).

Historiographical Overview

As Katy Turton has observed, since the 1970s, which saw the ‘discovery’ of Alexandra Kollontai by Western scholars in the wake of the emergence of women’s history a decade before, there has been a wealth of scholarship examining women’s roles in, and experiences of, the Russian revolutions and civil wars.⁵ This has included biographical studies, as well as works examining women’s political, cultural, social, economic and military roles and experiences during the revolutionary period.⁶ The centenary of the February and October revolutions in 2017 brought a small but significant new wave of scholarship on women and gender in this field.⁷ With the exception of individual women, however, scholarship has focused overwhelmingly on the experience and participation of Bolshevik and working class women as opposed to those affiliated with opposition groups.

⁵ See Katy Turton, ‘Men, Women and an Integrated History of the Russian Revolutionary Movement’, *History Compass*, 9:2 (2011), pp. 119–133.

⁶ Key works include: Barbara Evans Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist: The life of Alexandra Kollontai* (Bloomington, IN; London: Indiana University Press, 1979); Richard Stites, *The Women’s Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism, 1860-1930* (Princeton, NJ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1991); Elizabeth A. Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade: Gender and Politics in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997); Barbara Evans Clements, *Bolshevik Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Jane McDermid and Anna Hillyar, *Midwives of the Revolution: Female Bolsheviks and Women Workers in 1917* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1999); *In the Shadow of Revolution: Life Stories of Russian Women from 1917 to the Second World War*, ed. by Sheila Fitzpatrick and Yuri Slezkine (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Laurie Stoff, *They Fought for the Motherland: Russia’s Women Soldiers in World War I and the Revolution* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2006); Katy Turton, *Forgotten Lives: the role of Lenin’s Sisters in the Russian Revolution, 1864–1937* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Katy Turton, *Family Networks and the Russian Revolutionary Movement, 1870–1940* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2018).

⁷ See for example Adele Lindenmeyr, ‘“The First Woman in Russia”: Countess Sofia Panina and Women’s Political Participation in the Revolutions of 1917’, *Journal of Modern Russian History and Historiography*, 9:1 (2016), pp. 158–181; Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild, ‘Women and Gender in 1917’, *Slavic Review*, 76:3 (2017), pp. 694–702; and Barbara Alpern Engel, ‘A Gendered Revolution?’, *Revolutionary Russia*, 30:2 (2017), pp. 196–207. The forthcoming volume, *Women and Gender in Russia’s Great War and Revolution*, to which I am a contributor, is the first edited volume on this subject.

Despite the growing body of research demonstrating the multitude ways in which women experienced and participated in the conflicts, to this day, more general histories of the revolutions routinely fail to integrate women into the wider narrative.⁸ Turton has stressed the importance of an integrated history of the revolution, and particularly the Russian revolutionary movement, in which women are not relegated to a single chapter, or indeed overlooked entirely.⁹ She argues, for example, that ‘studying the family life of revolutionaries allows a bridge to be built between histories of the revolutionary movement and studies of women’s involvement in it’.¹⁰

The topic of the press in the period immediately before and after the October Revolution, as well as the history of the press worldwide, is one such area that lacks integration and a specific understanding of women’s involvement in it. This gap in part stems from the difficulties in defining journalism and the ‘press’ during this period, issues which are made even more complex when discussing women’s participation in this sphere. Although writing in a different context on the subject of English literary culture, the British writer, critic and anthologist John Gross argued in 1969 that ‘the main reason why a satisfactory history of journalism will never be written is that journalism itself is such an elastic term’.¹¹ While Gross ignored the issue of gender in his work, his observation is important when considering the topic of women journalists in the Russian revolutions and civil wars. By examining this topic in the context of the history of the press more broadly, this project goes some way to challenging and re-configuring existing male-centric narratives of the period.

The history of the press in Russia in the decades prior to the October Revolution, as well as its treatment in scholarship, is key to understanding the difficulties of defining journalism and the way women’s roles have been presented, or, in most cases, omitted. The political climate in Russia had a direct impact on the unique development of its press, and women’s participation in it. Comparing pre-revolutionary journalism in England and Russia, Jehanne M. Gheith has observed that ‘in Russia, ruled by an autocracy (somewhat mitigated after 1905), journalism’s role in changing society was

⁸ See Turton, ‘Men, Women and an Integrated History of the Russian Revolutionary Movement’, pp. 119–133.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 119–133.

¹⁰ Turton, *Family Networks and the Russian Revolutionary Movement*, p. xix.

¹¹ John Gross, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters: Aspects of English Literary Life since 1800* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 48.

primary; in England, ruled by constitutional monarchy, journalism had different functions.¹² In the absence of political parties in Russia, the intelligentsia initially established so-called ‘thick’ journals, which acted as a form of political opposition. As Louise McReynolds has illustrated, the emergence of a mass circulation press in Russia in the nineteenth century led to competition between newspapers and ‘thick’ journals for political influence:

Newspapers challenged the politicized journals of intellectual aristocracies and established themselves as the dominant medium for political discourse. The contest for influence was especially significant in Russia, where, in the absence of political parties to mediate differences, the intelligentsia had established a realm of political opposition for themselves in their so-called ‘thick’ journals.¹³

Thus, the lack of political freedom and strict censorship in Russia shaped the way that journalism both functioned and was understood during this period. Liberal and socialist publications critical of the status quo were forced to operate underground, often publishing outside of Russia and smuggling copies back into the country.

As highlighted by historians including Peter Kenez, Dmitrii Strovskii and Gregory Simons, the repressive political conditions in Russia had a particularly keen impact on the press organs of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) in the two decades leading to the October Revolution.¹⁴ In 1901, Lenin asserted in an article published by the RSDLP’s official press organ *Iskra* (‘The Spark’), that ‘the newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser.’¹⁵ These oft-cited words illustrate Lenin’s belief in the intrinsic importance of the press to the functioning and success of the party, and, by association, the lack of a

¹² Jehanne M. Gheith, ‘Introduction’ in *An Improper Profession: Women, Gender, and Journalism in Late Imperial Russia*, ed. by Barbara T. Norton and Jehanne M. Gheith (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 7.

¹³ Louise McReynolds, *The News under Russia’s Old Regime: The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press* (Princeton, NJ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 7.

¹⁴ Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Dmitry Strovsky and Gregory Simons, ‘The Bolshevik Policy Towards the Press in Russia: 1917–1920’, Department of Eurasian Studies, Uppsala University, Working Paper No. 109, 2007.

¹⁵ ‘S chego nachat’?, *Iskra*, No. 4, May 1901.

professional culture and ethic in the party's early press.¹⁶ In contrast to the 'profit-making, commercialised bourgeois press', the party press was perceived as a subset of activism, which was devoid of objectivity and financial gain. In line with Lenin's views, many party members became, in essence, *publitsisty* (political journalists), whose purpose was to promote and persuade others to join their cause.

Lenin set out his views on the press as an organisational tool again in November 1905, just a few weeks after the announcement of the October Manifesto and more than two years after the formation of the Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP. In an article published in the Bolshevik newspaper *Novaia zhizn'* ('New Life') he presented his vision for the role of the press in the organisation of the party, first noting that although the distinction between the illegal and legal press was beginning to disappear, *Izvestiia* was still forced to exist underground. Thus, the illegal press was still, by definition, a party press. Lenin's central thesis was that 'literature', which he understood here as party propaganda, must become an integral element of Social-Democratic work, 'inseparable from the other elements of the party's work.' In order to achieve this, he argued that 'newspapers must become organs of the various party organisations, and their writers must certainly become members of these organisations.'¹⁷ In addition, he stressed that 'literature cannot be a means of enriching individuals or groups: it cannot, in fact, be an individual undertaking, independent of the common cause of the proletariat [...].'¹⁸

Thus, while the Bolshevik press remained underground following the October Manifesto, the concessions introduced by Tsar Nicholas II's government, including the Press Law of November 1905, which relaxed censorship (albeit temporarily), and the legalization of political groups, opened up the possibility for some newly-formed parties to combine their political journalism with the burgeoning commercial press. The Kadets, as McReynolds has demonstrated, took full advantage of this opportunity shortly after the party was established in late 1905.¹⁹ In February 1906, after attempting

¹⁶ It is also important to note the personal motivations that likely shaped Lenin's views on the press; *Iskra* was very much Lenin's power centre in the party.

¹⁷ 'Partiinaia organizatsiia i partiinaia literatura', *Novaia zhizn'*, No 12, 13 November 1905.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ See McReynolds, 'Russian Newspapers in Revolution, 1905–1907', in *The News under Russia's Old Regime* for a more detailed examination of the November 1905 press law and the establishment of the first legal Kadet newspaper, *Rech'*, pp. 198–222.

to purchase one of the mass-circulation dailies already in existence, Kadet Party leaders and journalists Pavel N. Miliukov and Iosif V. Gessen, founded *Rech'* ('Speech'). Intended as a mouthpiece for the Kadets, *Rech'*, in direct contrast to Bolshevik publications, 'combined news and party politics in the format of a mass-circulation daily and held a modest circulation through 1917'.²⁰ Indeed, the relationship between the commercial press in Russia and political liberalism is one of the central themes explored by McReynolds in her work on the mass-circulation press before the October Revolution.

With regards to the specific involvement of women in pre-revolutionary Russian journalism, the most important work on this topic is the 2001 edited volume by Gheith and Barbara T. Norton, *An Improper Profession: Women, Gender, and Journalism in Late Imperial Russia*.²¹ Discussing the aims of the collection, Gheith observes that it not only 'provides a genealogy and history for Russian women journalists working today' but it also 'rewrites some of the common ways journalism in Russia has been conceptualised', including the way the public and the private are understood in Russian journalism. She further notes that while the constructs of women, gender and journalism have been 'acknowledged as central in the development of Russian history and literature [...] the relationships between them have rarely been examined'.²² Essays featured in the volume cover the topics of women journalists and the women's liberation movement in Russia, as well as the individual careers of journalists including Evgeniia Vasil'evna Tur (1815–1892) and Ekaterina Dmitrievna Kuskova (1869–1958).²³ While an appendix providing brief biographical information for women

²⁰ McReynolds, *The News Under Russia's Old Regime*, p. 211.

²¹ As noted by Gheith, there is a small amount of additional scholarship on the topic of Russian women journalists in the pre-revolutionary press (see for example Louise McReynolds, 'Female Journalists in Prerevolutionary Russia', *Journalism History*, 14:4 (1987), pp. 104–110). However, while important, Gheith observes that none of these works provide an overall study of women, gender and journalism during this period.

²² Gheith, 'Introduction' in *An Improper Profession*, p. 1.

²³ See Ruthchild, 'Writing for their Rights: Four Feminist Journalists: Mariia Chekhova, Liubov' Gurevich, Mariia Pokrovskaia and Ariadna Tyrkova', pp. 167–187; Gheith, 'Redefining the Perceptible: The Journalism(s) of Evgeniia Tur and Avdot'ia Panaeva', pp. 53–73; and Norton, 'Journalism as a Means of Empowerment: The Early Career of Ekaterina Kuskova', pp. 222–248, in *An Improper Profession*.

journalists in some cases touches on the period after the October Revolution, the volume itself does not extend beyond this point.

The different ways journalism and the role of the journalist are understood, particularly in relation to women, during the pre-revolutionary period are discussed throughout the volume. Gheith observes that ‘the ambiguous – and in this period shifting – position of journalism (occupation, profession, calling, vocation) makes it both particularly difficult to incorporate journalism into a discussion of Russian professions and particularly important to do so [...]’.²⁴ Furthermore, there was a strong crossover between literature and journalism for women in the pre-revolutionary period. Many women entered journalism from literary backgrounds and wrote pieces that blurred fact and fiction.²⁵

Journalism was also important for women in Russia as a means of effecting social and political change.²⁶ As Elizabeth Wood, Richard Stites, Barbara Evans Clements and others have illustrated, like other areas of party work, women participated in the RSDLP party press from its beginning, playing key roles in its organisation and development. As well as producing articles, editing and contributing to the running of underground publications such as *Iskra*, they also undertook the often gendered task of illegally transporting party literature and newspapers from Europe, where many were published, into Russia. A core group of Bolshevik women activists additionally organised the publication of a magazine aimed specifically at working-class women in 1914. Published as *Rabotnitsa* (‘The Woman Worker’), the journal initially ran for seven issues before ceasing publication due to police interference. It was resurrected in May 1917.²⁷

Non-socialist Russian women, including Tyrkova-Williams, also contributed to the illegal press prior to the introduction of the October Manifesto in 1905 and carried out many of the same tasks. Although the Manifesto granted (limited) political rights to some men and allowed for the creation of a State Duma, women did not gain the right to

²⁴ Gheith, ‘Introduction’ in *An Improper Profession*, p. 5.

²⁵ See Gheith, ‘Introduction’, p. 8 and Miranda Beaven Remnek, “‘A Larger Portion of the Public’: Female Readers, Fiction, and the Periodical Press in the reign of Nicholas I’, in *An Improper Profession*, pp. 26–52.

²⁶ Gheith, ‘Introduction’ in *An Improper Profession*, p. 7.

²⁷ See Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, pp. 33–35 for detailed information on the origins and organisation of *Rabotnitsa*.

vote or hold political office until after the February Revolution of 1917.²⁸ Liberal women journalists played an important role in the campaign for women's suffrage, as well as the abolition of the trafficking of women. Thus, women's journalism during this period is particularly difficult to isolate from political and social activism on the one hand and literature on the other. This thesis applies Gheith's inclusive definition of a Russian woman journalist as 'any woman who was involved in any aspect of Russian journalism', while also extending it to include those who also published in non-Russian (namely British and American) publications during the civil-war period.²⁹ This includes women from a variety of backgrounds (political, social and literary) who worked as editors, typists, reporters, writers, print workers and editorial secretaries.

This study will build on scholarship by Gheith and others on women and the pre-revolutionary press when examining women journalists after 1917. In particular, it will develop and compare a number of the key themes identified in their work in order to understand the extent to which pre-revolutionary trends and events informed the journalism and experience of women journalists operating in this later period.

Scholarship on Russian journalism during the October Revolution and civil wars

Turning to this thesis' main period of focus, it is clear that the scholarly treatment of Russian journalism during the years of revolution and civil war has been strongly influenced by historiographical trends and events. As Leonid Molchanov notes in his comparative work on Russian journalism during the revolution and civil war, while scholarship on the Bolshevik party press began straight after the civil war, work on the non-Bolshevik press during this period did not begin to emerge until the 1970s.³⁰ Even then, studies were still tightly restricted by Soviet censorship and tended to focus on the triumph of the Bolshevik press over the 'bourgeois' press.³¹ This has inevitably led to a greater body of work on the Bolshevik or early Soviet press than on the press activities

²⁸ Ruthchild, 'Writing for Their Rights' in *An Improper Profession*, p. 185.

²⁹ Gheith, 'Introduction' in *An Improper Profession*, pp. 3–4.

³⁰ Leonid Alekseevich Molchanov, *Gazetnaia pressa Rossii v gody revoliutsii i grazhdanskoi voiny, okt 1917-1920 gg.* (Moscow: Izdatprofpress, 2002).

³¹ See for example, Andrei Zakharovich Okorokov, *Oktyabr i krakh russkoi burzhuaznoi pressy* (Moscow: Mysl', 1970); and Nikolai Fedorovich Katkov, *Agitatsionno-propaganditskaia rabota Bol'shevikov v voiskakh i tylu Belogvardeitsev v period 1918—1920 gg.* (Leningrad: Izd. Leningrad. Universiteta, 1977).

of other political groups operating in the civil wars. Stefano Garzonio and Maria Zalambani have specifically linked the difficulties of obtaining a reliable picture of the history of journalism and literature during this period with the chaotic conditions of the revolutions and civil wars:

[...] the conditions of wartime, the shifting fronts, uprisings, revolts, and chaos that reigned throughout the country had a profound effect on the functioning of the institutions of literature, journalism, and criticism themselves, limiting access to printed material, curtailing the possibilities for free and open dialogue between different currents and critics, which up to the present day has strongly impeded an attempt at presenting a complete and reliable picture of the literary and critical scene during these years.³²

Many other scholars have historically viewed the press as equal to propaganda. Works on Soviet propaganda by Historians Peter Kenez, David L. Hoffmann and Mark W. Hopkins, provide a valuable, if broad, overview of the ways in which the new regime sought to legitimise and consolidate its power through the press.³³ Jeffrey Brooks examines some of these techniques through a case study of *Pravda*, the main organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, while a more recent working paper published by Strovskii and Simons specifically addresses the Bolsheviks' policy towards the press in Russia between 1917 and 1920, including the party's attitude towards opposition publications and advertising.³⁴

In addition to potential biases, opposition journalism after the October Revolution has received far less attention than the early Soviet press, in part due to its complex,

³² Stefano Garzonio and Maria Zalambani, 'Literary Criticism during the Revolution and the Civil War, 1917–1921', in *A History of Russian Literary Theory and Criticism. The Soviet Age and Beyond*, ed. by Evgeny Dobrenko and Galin Tihanov (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), p. 2.

³³ Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State*; David L. Hoffmann, *Cultivating the Masses: Modern State Practices and Soviet Socialism, 1914–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press; Bristol, 2011); and Mark W. Hopkins, *Mass Media in the Soviet Union* (New York: Pegasus, 1970).

³⁴ Jeffrey Brooks, 'Pravda and the language of power in Soviet Russia, 1917–28', in *Media and Revolution. Comparative Perspectives*, ed. by Jeremy Popkin (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1994), pp. 156–173; Strovsky and Simons, 'The Bolshevik Policy Towards the Press in Russia: 1917–1920'.

fragmented nature and access to sources during the Soviet period.³⁵ The greatest focus is on press activities connected to the broad White movement, including Russian émigré publications established shortly after the October Revolution. In the case of the White movement, by the autumn of 1918 the key areas of press activity included Omsk in Siberia and the Don region in southern Russia. As the civil wars progressed, many White newspapers moved location or closed as territory was lost and armies defeated. The Omsk-based newspaper and press organ of the Kadet Party in Siberia, *Sibirskaiia rech'* ('Siberian Speech'), for example, ran from June (May O.S.) 1917 until November 1919. In November 1918, the Provisional All-Russian Government led by the former Tsarist naval commander and 'Supreme Ruler of Russia', Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak, was established in Omsk. However, by November 1919, Omsk had surrendered to the Bolsheviks and Kolchak was subsequently captured and executed.³⁶

With regards to the situation in southern Russia, Christopher Lazarski's article, 'White Propaganda Efforts in the South during the Russian Civil War, 1918–19 (The Alekseev–Denikin Period)' provides a useful overview of some of the propaganda methods and structures, including their use of print media, employed by the Whites in the region but does not focus on specific newspapers.³⁷ While not specifically dealing with the opposition press, William Rosenberg's *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, Charlotte Alston's book on Tyrkova-Williams's journalist husband, Harold Williams, and Melissa Stockdale's monograph on Miliukov additionally provide important insights into the journalistic activities of those affiliated with the Kadet Party and its publications, including in southern Russia.³⁸ Notable scholarship on aspects of the

³⁵ Although for the purpose of this thesis I use the term 'opposition press', it is important to note that this is an umbrella term used to describe all non-Bolshevik Russian newspapers and journals operating after the October Revolution.

³⁶ Kolchak was captured by the anti-Bolshevik Czechoslovak Legion (which had been active in Siberia since 1918) and handed over to the SR-Menshevik Political Centre, which was soon removed and replaced by the Bolsheviks. He was executed in early February 1920.

³⁷ Christopher Lazarski, 'White Propaganda Efforts in the South during the Russian Civil War, 1918–19 (The Alekseev–Denikin Period)', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 70:4 (1992), pp. 688–707.

³⁸ William Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution. The Constitutional Democratic Party, 1917–1921*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974); Charlotte Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy? Harold Williams and the Russian Revolutions* (London: IB Tauris, 2007); Melissa Kirschke Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia, 1880–1918* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1996).

Russian émigré press includes Ol'ga Kaznina's work on Russian emigration through the lens of Anglo-Russian literary connections in the first half of the twentieth century, and Alston's article on the RLC.³⁹ Through the case study of Tyrkova-Williams, this thesis will particularly focus on the Russian émigré press in London and Kadet publishing activities in southern Russia.

A handful of comparative works, notably those by Molchanov and Gennadii Zhirkov, examine both Bolshevik and opposition press activities after the October Revolution.⁴⁰ However, although these studies provide valuable information on the structure and organisation of print media, they focus primarily on key institutions and publications (such as *Izvestiia*) and prominent male figures, notably editors and military leaders, and neglect minority groups, including women and non-Russians operating in this sphere. While some contain references to individual women actors, for example Zhirkov includes a small section on Reisner in *Zhurnalistika dvukh Rossii: 1917–1920*, they do not contextualise them in the history of women and the press, nor do they provide information on the numbers, roles and experience of women journalists.⁴¹ The international context and comparison with the Western press at the time are also absent from such studies. This research project aims to address these gaps by comparing the experience of Russian women in the press within an international context. In doing so, it also seeks to contribute to a more integrated history of women journalists at this time.

There has been considerably more interest in the early Soviet period (after 1921) than the years immediately following the revolution, however. This interest could be explained by the emergence of clearer policies and movements within the press after the initial civil-war years. Recent topics have included the worker correspondent movement, policies driving recruitment to the press, censorship, the relationship between literature and journalism, and public and private values in the Soviet press.⁴²

³⁹ Ol'ga Kaznina, *Russkie v Anglii* (Nasledie: Moscow, 1997); Charlotte Alston, 'The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee in London, 1919–1924', *Slavonica*, 14:1 (2008) pp. 6–17.

⁴⁰ Molchanov, *Gazetnaia pressa Rossii v gody revoliutsii i grazhdanskoi voiny*; Gennadii V. Zhirkov, *Zhurnalistika dvukh Rossii: 1917–1920* (St Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo S.-Petersburgskogo universiteta, 1999).

⁴¹ Zhirkov, *Zhurnalistika dvukh Rossii*, pp. 172–174.

⁴² See for example, Jeremy Hicks, 'Worker Correspondents: Between Journalism and Literature', *The Russian Review*, 66:4 (2007), pp. 568–585; Julie Kay Mueller, 'Staffing Newspapers and Training Journalists in Early Soviet Russia', *Journal of Social History*, 31:4 (1998), pp. 851–873; Jeffrey Brooks, 'Public and Private Values in the Soviet Press, 1921–1925', *Slavic Review*, 48:1 (1989), pp. 16–35;

Yet, while many of these works address the first years of the revolution as a means of providing context, their focus on the post-civil-war years means they do not examine these early years in detail. One clear exception is Part I of Matthew Lenoe's work on Stalinist culture and Soviet newspapers, 'Soviet newspapers in the 1920s'. Although Lenoe focuses on the NEP period in this section, he effectively contextualises it within the history of the Bolshevik party press and early years of the revolution.⁴³ By focusing on the under-studied period 1917–1921 through the lens of women in this sphere, this thesis further helps to explain these changes and some of the later characteristics of the Soviet press.

The nature and extent of existing scholarship on women's participation in the press during this period reflects the difficulties of separating women's journalism from activism and/or literature. Individual women active in the press during the revolutions and civil wars feature in more general, but separate, studies on female revolutionaries, women's writing, and the women's liberation movement, and as the subjects of various biographies.⁴⁴ In line with the aforementioned historiographical trends, considerably more has been written about women involved in Bolshevik or early Soviet press activities. Monographs on Bolshevik party members, including Kollontai and the Ul'ianova sisters, address the press activities of these more prominent figures but less

Herman Ermolaev, *Censorship in Soviet Literature, 1917–1991* (Lanham, MD; London: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997).

⁴³ Matthew Lenoe, 'Soviet Newspapers in the 1920s', in Matthew Lenoe, *Closer to the Masses: Stalinist Culture, Social Revolution, and Soviet Newspapers* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 9–100.

⁴⁴ See for example, *A Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements and Feminisms, Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. by Francisca De Haan, Krasimira Daskalova and Anna Loutfi (Budapest: CEU Press/Central European University Press, 2006); Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia; In the Shadow of Revolution; Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, ed. by Marina Ledkovsky, Charlotte Rosenthal, and Mary Fleming Zirin (Westport, Conn; London: Greenwood Press, 1994); *Encyclopedia of Russian Women's Movements*, ed. by Norma C. Noonan and Carol Nechemias (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001); and *A History of Women's Writing in Russia*, ed. by Adele Marie Barker and Jehanne M. Gheith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See below for a detailed discussion of scholarship on Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner.

well-known women who carried out journalistic work have not received the same attention.⁴⁵

There is also substantial research on women's publications and pages in the Bolshevik periodical press during this period, including that by Wood, Stites and Natalia Tolstikova.⁴⁶ While these works discuss the role of women party members in establishing and running women's pages and publications, and the networks that linked them, they do not include a detailed study of women's involvement in the wider press or examine those who were not party members.⁴⁷ Diane Koenker's article on gender and class in the printing industry provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by women in the more technical aspects of journalism, while a study by Luiza Svitich includes a brief overview of women's changing participation in Russian and Soviet journalism from the pre-revolutionary period up to the present day.⁴⁸ However, although the statistics detailed by Svitich are useful, her argument that men have an advantage when it comes to the profession of journalism due to its physical and psychological demands is too simplistic and does not convey the complexity of the history of women in this field.

With regards to women and opposition journalism after October 1917, very little research has been carried out. This is in part due to the difficulties of separating journalism from political and social activism during this period. Ol'ga Shnyrova's chapter on the fate of the women's suffrage movement in Russia after the October Revolution provides an overview of the activities of opposition figures including Tyrkova-Williams, Ekaterina Kuskova and Sof'ia Panina but, aside from mentioning that they were involved in press activities, does not examine their articles or press work.⁴⁹ Through its comparative case study approach, this thesis brings together women

⁴⁵ See for example Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist*; Turton, *Forgotten Lives*.

⁴⁶ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*; Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia*; and Natalia Tolstikova, 'Rabotnitsa: The Paradoxical Success of a Soviet Women's Magazine', *Journalism History*, 30:3 (2004), pp. 131–140.

⁴⁷ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*; Clements, *Bolshevik Women*.

⁴⁸ Diane P. Koenker, 'Men against Women on the Shop Floor in Early Soviet Russia: Gender and Class in the Socialist Workplace', *The American Historical Review*, 100:5 (1995), pp. 1438–1464; Luiza G. Svitich, *Professia: zhurnalist. Uchebnoe posobie* (Moscow: Aspekt Press, 2003), pp. 81–84.

⁴⁹ See Ol'ga Shnyrova, 'After the Vote Was Won. The Fate of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Russia After the October Revolution: Individuals, Ideas and Deeds' in *Aftermaths of War: Women's*

journalists from both Bolshevik and opposition backgrounds. This in turn allows for a more balanced understanding of the specific and common trends affecting women journalists during this period.

The absence of women in scholarship on the history of the press is not unique to Russia. As Doreen Massey, and later Levi Obijiofor and Folker Hanusch, have observed, gender ‘has not featured prominently in the general literature on international journalism’.⁵⁰ Where the topic of women and gender and the press has been considered in general histories, like the Russian Revolution it is often restricted to a single chapter or paragraph and not integrated into the narrative as a whole. In addition, Obijiofor and Hanusch rightly note that it has ‘mostly been approached from a Western standpoint, with comparatively few studies examining the situation elsewhere across the globe’.⁵¹ Barbara Onslow attributes the lack of visibility of women in scholarship on journalism to the fact that ‘early studies of the press concentrated primarily upon influential journals, publishers and editors’.⁵² As Debora Chambers, Linda Steiner and Carole Fleming observe, in the US and Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, men dominated newsrooms in terms of ‘numbers, status and managerial control’ and women were often ‘confined to marginal areas of news’, such as society reporting, fashion and domestic affairs.⁵³

While in recent years there has been an increase in research into the history of women and the press, this topic has been predominantly addressed in separate studies, which are conducted overwhelmingly by women scholars.⁵⁴ In addition, as with the general literature on the history of journalism, the majority of this scholarship has focused on the specific experience of Western women, particularly in the US and

Movements and Female Activists, 1918–1923, ed. by Ingrid Sharp and Matthew Stibbe (Leiden: Brill; Biggleswade: Extenza Turpin, 2011), pp. 159–178.

⁵⁰ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (London: Polity Press, 1998), discussed in Levi Obijiofor and Folker Hanusch, *Journalism across Cultures: An Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 88.

⁵¹ Obijiofor and Hanusch, *Journalism across Cultures*, p. 104.

⁵² Barbara Onslow, *Women of the Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 1.

⁵³ Deborah Chambers, Linda Steiner and Carole Fleming, *Women and Journalism* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 16–15.

⁵⁴ Onslow, *Women of the Press*, p. 1.

Britain. Within this body of research, minority groups and smaller, alternative publications (including women of colour and feminist journals) have been side-lined. The experience of African-American women journalists, for example, receives little if any attention in general works.⁵⁵ There are, nevertheless, some notable studies that examine the history of women and the press outside of the Western context. Yuxi Ma, for example, writes on the subject of women journalists and feminism in China between 1898 and 1937.⁵⁶

War and gender in Russia

The relationship between war and gender in Russia is also important for understanding the experience of women journalists in the civil wars. As across much of the world, in Russia women have historically been portrayed as victims of male violence and expected to support men both at home and on the frontlines. While there is a history of women warriors in Russia that dates back to at least the tenth century, these women have often taken on a mythical status. The figure of Ol'ga of Kiev (also known as Saint Ol'ga), the leader of tenth-century Kievan Rus' who, as the tales go, ordered the gruesome deaths of scores of Drevlian tribe members in revenge for her husband's death, has, for example, been appropriated as a religious and mythical symbol.⁵⁷ Catherine the Great's military role has similarly been mythicised.⁵⁸ This

⁵⁵ Patricia Bradley briefly refers to the double barrier African-American women experienced in entering journalism (both men and women of colour were barred from state journalism schools until the 1950s) and notes some of the women who succeeded in the press despite such prejudice. See Patricia Bradley, *Women and the Press: The Struggle for Equality* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2006), p. 207. Rodger Streitmatter's monograph on African-American women and the press, *Raising Her Voice: African-American Women Journalists Who Changed History* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1994) provides the most detailed study in this area.

⁵⁶ Yuxi Ma, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China, 1898–1937* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010).

⁵⁷ Mike Dixon-Kennedy, *Encyclopedia of Russian & Slavic Myth and Legend* (Santa-Barbara, CA; Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 1998), pp. 210–211; Jonathan D. Smele, 'Female Soldiers', in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume One, pp. 390–391 (p. 390).

⁵⁸ Jessica Amanda Salmonson, *The Encyclopedia of Amazons: Women Warriors from Antiquity to the Modern Era* (New York; London: Doubleday, 1991), p. 52.

mythologisation of women warriors is also reflected in the hagiography of women revolutionaries that began with the wives of Decembrists in the early 1800s.⁵⁹

As demonstrated by historians including, most notably, Laurie Stoff and Melissa Stockdale, during the First World War, Russian women had the opportunity, and were even encouraged by the Provisional Government, to participate in combat roles.⁶⁰ The engagement of women in combat continued on both sides during the Russian Civil Wars; while the number of women soldiers in the White armies was small, up to 80,000 women are estimated to have fought in the Red Army.⁶¹ Yet the entry of women into combat positions was often exploited for propaganda purposes and their experience was carefully shaped to fit a particular narrative; one in which the experience of war was still an overtly masculine phenomenon and where women's involvement, even in combat, adhered to traditional gender concepts.⁶²

Throughout the civil-war period, both the Red and White armies used and manipulated concepts of gender in their propaganda. Anna Eremeeva notes, for example, that 'different political forces used images of women symbolising freedom and revolution', particularly allegorical images.⁶³ The Bolsheviks drew on French Revolutionary imagery such as Delacroix's 1830 painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple* (Liberty Leading the People). However, such imagery was not a Bolshevik phenomenon in Russia. Victoria E. Bonnell observes that in pre-revolutionary Russia, allegorical images 'played a major part in the pageantry and symbolic system of both the autocracy and the church.'⁶⁴ Some of this imagery was later incorporated into Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik propaganda.⁶⁵ Yet while some of these allegorical images depicted women as heroic and emancipated, they still retained the aesthetic qualities associated with traditional ideas of femininity.

⁵⁹ See Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, p. 19, for more on the tradition of revolutionary women as political saints.

⁶⁰ Stoff, *They Fought For the Motherland*, p.1.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 203 and p. 172.

⁶² See Stoff, *They Fought For the Motherland*, p. 3, for a discussion on how the Provisional Government sanctioned the participation of women soldiers for propaganda purposes.

⁶³ Anna N. Eremeeva 'Woman and Violence in Artistic Discourse of the Russian Revolution and Civil War (1917—1922)', trans. by Dan Healey, *Gender & History*, 16:3 (2004), pp. 726–743 (p. 732).

⁶⁴ Victoria E. Bonnell, 'The Representation of Women in Early Soviet Political Art', *The Russian Review*, 50:3 (1991), pp. 267–288 (p. 273).

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 274.

The task of describing war has also traditionally been seen as a pursuit reserved for men, both in Russia and the West.⁶⁶ As Oliver Boyd-Barrett highlights, ‘reporting war, especially combat, has always been typically dangerous, demanding great resourcefulness in gathering and transmitting information’.⁶⁷ Such traits and roles were traditionally associated with men, a view illustrated by the fact that it was not until September 1918 that the first American woman journalist (Peggy Hull) received accreditation as a war correspondent.⁶⁸ On the genre of war reporting, Boyd-Barrett argues that the unique nature of conflicts can lead to the creation of hybrid forms of journalism:

Problems of genre contour or boundary as the nature of conflict undergoes change are to be expected. Genres routinely exhibit transformations and yield hybrid forms in response to changing circumstance, artists' search for new expression, or changes in audience preferences and decoding skills.⁶⁹

The role of the eyewitness and issues of objectivity are central to understanding the development of war reporting as a genre. Discussing the differences between the so-called ‘journalism of activism’ and ‘journalism of accountability’, Nell Ruigrok argues:

In politics they can become partisan, in a social context they can become advocates for a special cause, in a conflict situation they can take sides, becoming attached. Whatever the situation, when journalists lose their professional distance to the matter they report on, their journalistic practice can be labelled as a journalism of activism.⁷⁰

Thus, in the context of the Russian civil wars, articles written from the frontlines by Russian journalists can be deemed ‘journalism of activism’.

⁶⁶ Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), p. 164.

⁶⁷ Oliver Boyd-Barrett, ‘Understanding the Second Casualty’ in *Reporting War: Journalism in Wartime*, ed. by Stuart Allan, and Barbie Zelizer (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 25.

⁶⁸ See Mitchel P. Roth, ‘Hull, Peggy’ in *Historical Dictionary of War Journalism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1997), pp. 149–150 (p. 150).

⁶⁹ Boyd-Barrett, ‘Understanding the Second Casualty’, p. 26.

⁷⁰ Nell Ruigrok, ‘From Journalism of Activism Towards Journalism of Accountability’, *International Communication Gazette*, 72:1 (2010), pp. 85–90 (p. 86).

With regards to women war correspondents, despite significant barriers, women worldwide have reported on war since at least the nineteenth century. Early pioneers such as Margaret Fuller and Cora Stewart Taylor, who covered the 1848 revolution in Rome and the 1897 Greco-Turkish War, respectively, paved the way for later women correspondents to enter this historically masculine profession.⁷¹ The First World War opened up more opportunities for more women in this field, despite the fact many were still barred from the frontlines and unable to receive official accreditation as war correspondents.⁷² The few women who managed to write about war were also expected to focus on the human cost, producing articles about hospitals and the toll of war on women and children.⁷³ Some of them, including Fuller, worked as nurses while also describing the foreign conflicts they were experiencing. Yet, as with their journalism, their work was gendered and they were limited to carrying out support roles behind the lines.

Literature on early women war correspondents has also tended to focus on the handful of Western women who overcame significant barriers and prejudice to report on wars. Scholarship on women who reported the events of the Russian Revolution and civil wars illustrates this tendency. While the conflicts were covered by Western and Russian women, English-language studies focus on the experience of the few American women who documented this period of Russian history, notably Peggy Hull, Bessie Beatty, Louise Bryant (who travelled to Russia together with her journalist husband John Reed), and Rheta Childe Dorr.⁷⁴ While Hull reported from Siberia on the day-to-day life of the American Expeditionary Forces, who were sent to the region from August 1918 to support anti-Bolshevik armies, the latter three journalists documented

⁷¹ See John Matteson, *The Lives of Margaret Fuller: A Biography* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012).

⁷² Chambers et al., *Women and Journalism*, pp. 7–8; Michael Emery, *On the Frontlines: Following America's Foreign Correspondents Across the Twentieth Century* (Washington, DC: American University Press, 1995), p. 28.

⁷³ Elshtain, *Women and War*, p. 164.

⁷⁴ See, for example, Zena Beth McGlashan, 'Women Witness the Russian Revolution: Analyzing Ways of Seeing', *Journalism History*, 12:2 (1985), pp. 54–61; Chambers et al., *Women and Journalism*; Roth, *Historical Dictionary of War Journalism*; and Julia A. Mickenberg, *American Girls in Red Russia: Chasing the Soviet Dream* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2017).

the October Revolution from Petrograd.⁷⁵ All four women were required to adopt a human interest or, as it was often called, a ‘woman’s angle’ by their editors. However, like Tyrkova-Williams, none of these women journalists saw warfare during their time in Russia.

Research Questions and Methodology

This thesis seeks to understand the extent to which Russian women used journalism, and the press more widely, as a means of documenting and attempting to shape the events of the October Revolution and civil wars. Stemming from this over-arching research question, it will address four main themes. The first relates to the rationale underpinning women’s journalism and work in the press during the immediate post-revolution years. Why did women enter, or continue working in, the press and how did their understanding of journalism change during the period 1917 to 1926? To what extent did the revolutions and civil wars, including ideological and organisational changes in the press, open up new opportunities for women in this sphere?

The second area concerns the style and content of women’s journalism. Specifically, it questions whether there were particular genres or themes common to women’s journalism during this period of conflict, and, if so, whether they crossed ideological, social and geographical divides. Thirdly, this thesis examines the practical aspects of women’s work in the press in the immediate post-revolution years, including the types of roles they held, their relationships with editors, legal status and remuneration. The final theme addressed in this thesis is associated with the reception of women’s journalism and roles in the press. This poses questions relating to how their work and experience has been viewed by their contemporaries and later scholars and to what extent it has been conceived as gendered.

In order to address these questions and wider themes, this thesis applies a comparative, archival-based case study approach. As demonstrated by the wide use of case studies or ‘life histories’ in women’s and feminist history, case study methodology can be highly informative for analysing and comparing women’s cultural and political

⁷⁵ Wilda M. Smith and Eleanor A. Bogart, *The Wars of Peggy Hull: The Life and Times of a War Correspondent* (El Paso, TX: Texas Western Press, 1991), pp. 135–141; Rheta Childe Dorr, *Inside the Russian Revolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1917); Bessie Beatty, *The Red Heart of Russia* (New York: Century Co., 1918); and Louise Bryant, *Six Red Months in Russia: An Observer’s Account of Russia Before and During the Proletarian Dictatorship* (New York: George H. Doran, 1918).

outputs and experiences.⁷⁶ Although not unique to women's history, Barbara Caine has observed that there is a wider interest within this field 'in the use of detailed case studies which use the situation, experiences and life-course of one women or a group of women to illuminate and to concretise the broader situation of women generally'.⁷⁷ This rationale underpins the use of a case study approach in this thesis. Through a detailed study of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner's press activities and experiences, it is possible to understand and compare the wider situation of women in the press.

As the social anthropologist Clifford Geertz has emphasised when discussing the use of case studies, contextualisation is paramount.⁷⁸ When considering new approaches to case study research, L. Bartlett and F. Vavrus stress the importance of eschewing traditional approaches that rely on a 'static, confined and deterministic sense of context' in favour of a broader understanding of context that is 'constituted by social interactions, political processes, and economic developments across scales and across time'. This in turn facilitates and compliments a comparative approach.⁷⁹ With regards to the comparative aspect, my methodology will support Bartlett and Vavrus's argument that case study comparison should be conducted across three axes:

A horizontal look that not only contrasts one case with another, but also traces social actors, documents, or other influences across these cases; a vertical comparison of influences at different levels, from the international to the national to regional and local scales; and a transversal comparison over time [...].⁸⁰

Examining and comparing the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner on a horizontal (directly comparing their work and experience), vertical (comparing and situating their work and experiences within their immediate circles, the Russian press more broadly, and the international press) and transversal (comparing their work and experiences across a longer timeframe within the history of women and the press) level

⁷⁶ See Barbara Caine, 'Feminist Biography and Feminist History', *Women's History Review*, 3:2 (1994), pp. 247–261 for a detailed discussion of this point.

⁷⁷ Caine, 'Feminist Biography and Feminist History', p. 252.

⁷⁸ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. xi.

⁷⁹ L. Bartlett and F. Vavrus, 'Comparative Case Studies: An Innovative Approach', *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education (NJCIE)*, 1:1 (2017), pp. 5–17 (p. 12; p. 13).

⁸⁰ Bartlett and Vavrus, 'Comparative Case Studies: An Innovative Approach', pp. 5–17 (p. 14).

not only enables us to identify and contrast themes common and specific to their work and experiences, but it also facilitates and contributes to the widening of the fields of women's journalism history and revolutionary Russia.

While I believe this case study approach supports the study of women journalists in the Russian revolutions and civil wars well, it is important to acknowledge some of the challenges it can present. As Zena Beth McGlashan highlights in her article on American women journalists who witnessed the Russian revolutions, as journalism historians we must be careful not to create 'journalism heroes' of women journalists in our quest to 'expand the framework of the discipline to include women'. Instead, it is vital that we critically examine the quality of their work to the same degree as that of their male contemporaries.⁸¹ Caine echoes this argument in her discussion of feminist biography and feminist history.⁸² This issue further underlines the importance of context and the ways in which an individual case study can illustrate wider themes.

Discussing the issue of so-called compensatory history in the context of the Russian revolutionary movement, Turton further highlights the danger of focusing on 'individual women who were successful on "male" terms [...] but whose lives differed dramatically from those of the majority of women'.⁸³ As we saw with Shklovskii, it is clear that Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner were viewed (and praised) by many of their contemporaries and later biographers as exceptional for their perceived 'masculine' behaviour and style of writing.⁸⁴ Prior to the October Revolution, Russian women journalists almost exclusively came from educated backgrounds and were overwhelmingly based in Moscow and St Petersburg. Although the revolutions and civil wars opened up opportunities for women from different backgrounds to report from all over the country and beyond, the majority of those carrying out key organisational and journalist roles during the conflicts had been active in press or literary work prior to the October Revolution and/or were closely affiliated with a political group. However, while this study makes no attempt to hide the fact that Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner

⁸¹ McGlashan, 'Women Witness the Russian Revolution', p. 54.

⁸² Caine, 'Feminist Biography and Feminist History', pp. 247–261.

⁸³ Turton, 'Men, Women and an Integrated History of the Russian Revolutionary Movement', p. 120.

⁸⁴ See, for example, Shklovskii's comments on Reisner's writing style, 'Bessmyslenneishaia smert'' in *Gamburgskii schet*, pp. 60–62), and Anita Norman's commemorative article on Tyrkova-Williams, 'Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, November 26, 1869-January 12, 1962', *Russian Review*, 21:3 (1962), pp. 277-281 (p. 280).

were not representative of the majority of women, I believe these two case studies are important for the ways in which their work and experience provide valuable insights into the public roles of women during the revolutions and civil war, and contribute to the ever-widening field of Russian women's history and journalism history.

The key context informing the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner is approached from a gender perspective. Journalism has, for the most part, historically been viewed as a public discourse. With regards to women's journalism in late imperial Russia, Gheith notes that 'the intersections of public and private were constantly being explored in published journals as well as personal diaries [...]'. In light of this, she argues that studying women's journalism 'helps to untangle and re-imagine the lines of the public and private, not just in women's journalism, but in Russian journalism in general'.⁸⁵ Yet, as feminist scholars such as J. Ann Tickner have noted, the public/private divide is problematic as it 'reinforces the view that women belong in the private realm and men in the public, and with that conventional view comes the assumption that therefore the public sphere is more important (and worthy of study) than the private sphere'.⁸⁶ Joyce P. Kaufman and Kristen P. Williams, in their book on gender identity and activism in times of conflict, instead argue that '[...] the public versus private spheres are better understood as a continuum, with women crossing these spheres'.⁸⁷ It is this approach that I have chosen to use in this thesis, as I believe it facilitates the study of journalism from a gender perspective.

Understanding of the public/private as interconnected and continuous in turn lends itself to an integrated approach when examining women and the press during the revolution. As Joan W. Scott and others have demonstrated, gender analysis provides a framework for a more integrated history in general. Scott argues that the use of the term 'gender' when studying women, for example, implies that men's and women's lives cannot be separated and rejects the dichotomy of separate public and private spheres. While this thesis does not claim to attempt an integrated history of the press during the revolution, by focusing on the family, party and professional networks of women

⁸⁵ Gheith, 'Introduction' in *An Improper Profession*, p. 1.

⁸⁶ J. Ann Tickner, 'You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements between Feminists and IR Theorists', *International Studies Quarterly*, 41:4 (1997), pp. 611–632 (p. 622).

⁸⁷ Joyce P. Kaufman and Kristen P. Williams, *Women and War: Gender Identity and Activism in Times of Conflict* (Sterling, V.A.: Kumarian Press, 2010), p. 6.

working in the press through a case study approach, it is an important and much-needed step towards achieving this goal.

Chronology and Scope

The chronology of this thesis encompasses the late nineteenth century up until 1926 (the year of Reisner's death), with a particular focus on the period from the October Revolution to the introduction of the New Economic Policy in 1921. This chronology serves two purposes. Firstly, the extended timeline helps to situate the years of revolution and war within the wider context of Russia's early twentieth century and facilitates a comparative analysis of pre- and post-revolutionary journalism in both Russia and the West.⁸⁸ Secondly, by focusing on a narrower period within this broader chronology, this thesis provides an in-depth examination and comparison of women's press activities during the October Revolution and first years of the civil wars. This period of conflict brought new opportunities, as well as challenges, for women journalists and press workers, and is central to understanding later developments and trends in the Soviet and Russian émigré press.

The timeline presented in this thesis is also closely linked to the life histories of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner. In order to understand and contextualise their contribution and experiences in the press after the October Revolution, it is necessary to first examine their early lives, careers and writing, and the situation of women in the pre-revolutionary press more broadly. This includes their family, social and political circles, organisations and networks (namely the Kadet Party, Women's Liberation Movement and the RSDLP), as well as their specific roles within them. The main body of this thesis, which concerns the period after October 1917, will focus in greater detail on Tyrkova-Williams's and Reisner's journalism and other press activities while continuing to examine the local, national and international factors shaping their work. This thesis does not attempt to present comprehensive biographies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner, however. Rather, through a specific focus on their press activities, it seeks to enhance existing knowledge and reveal new information about different aspects of their lives within the context of women's journalism history and studies of the revolutionary period.

⁸⁸ This extended chronology also covers the duration of the civil wars within the territory of the former Russian Empire as set out by Jonathan D. Smele (see Notes and Abbreviations).

This thesis focuses on the work and experience of women journalists in non-gender specific publications, rather than journalism written expressly by women for women. While some women, such as Kollontai, traversed the line between the two, this thesis, with the exception of contextual references, will not focus on publications aimed at women, such as *Rabotnitsa*. As outlined above, this subject has been covered fairly extensively in works on Bolshevik revolutionaries and women's movements. It is also important to note that while this research project covers a wide range of women's functions in the press, its main focus is on the journalistic (i.e. as writers) and organisational roles women held, as opposed to their involvement in technical aspects such as typesetting and printing. Although these latter roles are included in the analysis of women and the early Soviet press in Chapter Three, they are not examined in any considerable detail due to the scope and aims of this thesis.

This research project focuses primarily on Russian women who worked for, or published in, newspapers based in Moscow and Petrograd. With regards to the period after the October Revolution, the scope also includes women who were involved in the émigré press or opposition publications based in White-held territory outside of the two main cities. This includes a more in-depth study of regional press organs in southern Russia, particularly those based around Rostov-on-Don, included in the case study of Tyrkova-Williams (see Chapter Two). This focus on Moscow, Petrograd and opposition publications in specific areas reflects the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner, as well as the sources available within the scope of this project. I also believe, however, that it is important to understand the broader national picture before examining this topic on a local level. In the same way that this study aims to build on existing scholarship on Russian women and the pre-revolutionary press, the hope is that this thesis will act as a starting point for further research on women's journalism.

With regards to the international context, this thesis examines the dissemination and reception of journalism by Russian women writers abroad and compares the experience of Russian and Western women working in the press at this time. Specifically, it draws on scholarship and primary source material relating to women and the British and American press as a point of comparison. There are a number of reasons for this, not least the fact that the history of women and the press in the US and Britain has been widely documented and thus provides a comprehensive basis for comparison. This approach is also particularly valuable due to the fact that Tyrkova-Williams, Reisner and other Russian women journalists published in British and American publications

during this period. In addition, this comparison is strengthened by the fact that a small number of American women also travelled to Russia to report on the revolution and civil wars. In such cases, their editors emphasised the supposedly feminine qualities they would bring to the role. Russian women writing for the Western press were largely exempt from such norms and expectations. This approach can therefore raise questions about different cultural constructions of gender and the ways in which they emerged and manifested themselves. Properly contextualized case studies can therefore inform a nuanced account of journalism and gender in the Russian revolutionary period.

Case Studies

The rationale for choosing the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner can be supported by Bartlett and Vavrus's three axes for case study comparison. Firstly, these two figures allow for an informative and revealing horizontal, or direct, comparison. Although Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner belonged to different generations and held opposing political beliefs, their experiences bear a number of striking similarities. Both women began their involvement in political journalism at a time of revolutionary activity and change, Tyrkova-Williams in the first years of the twentieth century and Reisner in the months leading to the October Revolution. They were members of political parties, the Kadets and Bolsheviks, respectively, and held influential literary and political contacts, which, in part, provided them with the opportunities and authority necessary to carry out their journalistic activities. Both women also had literary ambitions beyond journalism, which were reflected in their articles. While Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner are by no means representative of all Russian women journalists of this period, and are indeed exceptional figures in general, the richness of their under-studied personal archives and journalism allows for a balanced and revealing comparison of their work and, more specifically, attitudes towards war, gender and journalism.

Secondly, Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner lend themselves to vertical comparison on a local, national and international level. Both women belonged to influential networks, circles and organisations and had activities that extended beyond Russia. Tyrkova-Williams's prominence, as well as the wealth of sources she left, facilitates the wider examination of women who contributed to émigré and Kadet-affiliated publications in Russia during this period. Given that very few women participated in such publications,

her case study is particularly valuable when addressing this topic. In addition, Tyrkova-Williams also serves as an important point of comparison when examining women in the early Soviet press. There are a number of similarities, for example, between her early political journalism and that of the women revolutionaries who continued working, at least initially, in the early Soviet press. The fact that Tyrkova-Williams published in British and American newspapers and journals during this period also contributes to her value as a case study when comparing her experience on a vertical level. By comparing her journalism and interactions with editors with that of British and American women, it is possible to widen the current field of scholarship on early women journalists.

Reisner's is a particularly effective case study for examining the wider role and experience of women in the early Soviet press as her background, experience and work reflect some of the continuities, but also many of the changes and tensions that characterised journalism after the revolution. This includes the shift towards a more professionalised culture of the press and the relationship between literature and journalism. She was also upheld as one of the most prominent Soviet women journalists (see Chapter Four), which in turn makes her an interesting and informative point of comparison when examining women in the wider press. The fact that Reisner actively published articles throughout the period 1917 to 1926 further enhances her value as a case study.

Lastly, on a transversal level, the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner help to situate the role and experience of Russian women journalists within the longer history of the Russian press, as well as the history of women and the press more broadly. This enables us to suggest ways in which earlier developments in the culture of the press impacted on their work and roles, while also drawing parallels with the current state of Russian journalism and women journalists across the world.

Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams

Despite Tyrkova-Williams's prolific press activity in the decade following the October Revolution, no comprehensive study of her work during these years has been completed. Tyrkova-Williams lived to the age of 92 and the first substantial reviews of her life and work (in English and Russian) were published as commemorative articles to

mark the occasion of her 90th birthday and her death.⁸⁹ These articles, the most comprehensive being a piece by A. Rakitin for the journal *Vozrozhdenie*, side-line her journalism during this period, instead focusing on her humanitarian activities.

Like Reisner, Tyrkova-Williams's gender also shaped the way her contemporaries and later scholars viewed her life and work. When referenced, her literary works have often been judged by their femininity, or lack thereof. Discussing the merits of Tyrkova-Williams's non-fiction work in an article written shortly after her death, Anita Norman, who was at the time deputy editor of *The Russian Review*, remarked that 'her admirers, noting her lucidity and logic, commented: "she writes like a man"'.⁹⁰ As with Shklovskii's comment about Reisner's 'unfeminine' writing style, this view of Tyrkova-Williams's work emphasises an underlying belief that women's writing was inferior to the standard, 'male' characteristics of literature or journalism at this time. Others falsely linked the success of her civil-war activities in Britain and elsewhere purely to her husband's position and emphasise her humanitarian work over her journalism. A bilingual piece published by St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church of Washington DC to commemorate Tyrkova-Williams's 90th birthday in 1959 claimed:

In 1918 she left Russia and went to England with her husband [...] She continued public and social work in London and thanks to her husband's position – he occupied the post of editor of the foreign section of the London newspaper 'Times' – she was able to accomplish a great deal towards interpreting the dangers of bolshevism to the English people, and likewise in the relief for the refugees. In England she was for many years the president of the society for the relief of Russian refugees.⁹¹

Tyrkova-Williams outlived the majority of her close contemporaries and those who published articles to mark her death did not know her during the years of revolution and civil war. As such, they rely heavily on Tyrkova-Williams's memoirs (which cover, in varying degrees of detail, the period of her life up to 1917), her dated but nevertheless

⁸⁹ See for example Norman, 'Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams', pp. 277-281; A. Rakitin, 'Zhizn' Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovo-Vil'iams', *Vozrozhdenie*, 123 (1962), pp. 23-38.

⁹⁰ Norman, 'Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams', p. 280.

⁹¹ Article to commemorate Tyrkova-Williams's 90th birthday published by the St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Washington DC, December 1959, pp. 5–6. BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 20, ll. 8–14 (l. 12).

important book in English on the year following the February Revolution of 1917, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk: The First Year of the Russian Revolution*, and an account by her son, Arkadii Borman, which was written two years after her death and based on her letters and diaries.⁹² These works by Tyrkova-Williams and Borman are understandably highly subjective, however, and contain some inaccuracies, which has in turn contributed to some confusion among historians concerning dates and biographical information.⁹³ The fact that Tyrkova-Williams wrote her memoirs from memory in the last decade of her life is a particularly important factor to consider.⁹⁴

These autobiographical sources have also formed the basis for subsequent scholarship on Tyrkova-Williams. Existing studies have tended to focus on one of two strands, namely her work in the women's liberation movement or her association with the Kadets and wider Russian emigration. With regards to the first strand, Stites, Ruthchild and Natalia Novikova have addressed this period of Tyrkova-Williams's life in the most detail.⁹⁵ All three historians approach her role from a biographical perspective. Ruthchild in particular focuses on Tyrkova-Williams's early life and journalism, including some of the factors and events that shaped her entry into this

⁹² The first two volumes of Tyrkova-Williams's memoirs (*Na putiakh k svobode* and *To, chego bol'she ne budet*) have been published together as Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, *To chego bol'she ne budet: vospominaniia izvestnoi pisatel'nitsy i obshchestvennoi deiatel'nitsy A.V. Tyrkovoii-Vil'iams, 1869–1962* (Moscow: Slovo, 1998). The third part of her memoirs was published in the émigré journal *Vozrozhdenie*, see 'Pod'em i krushenie', *Vozrozhdenie*, 1956, No. 51–53, 55, 57; 1957, No. 74. See also Tyrkova-Williams, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk: The First Year of the Russian Revolution* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1919); and Arkadii Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams po ee pis'mam i vospominaniiam syna* (Washington DC: Luven, 1964).

⁹³ In *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, for example, Tyrkova-Williams incorrectly states that the Decree on the Press was issued on 10 November 1917. It was in fact issued the day before, on 9 November. See *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, p. 398.

⁹⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, p. 211.

⁹⁵ Ruthchild, 'Writing for Their Rights' in *An Improper Profession*; Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia*; Ruthchild, 'Tyrkova, Ariadna (1869–1962)' in *Encyclopedia of Russian Women's Movements*, p. 93; and Natalia Novikova, 'Linking Party Politics and Women's Suffrage: The Case of Ariadna Tyrkova' in *Suffrage, Gender and Citizenship: International Perspectives on Parliamentary Reforms*, ed. by Irma Sulkunen, Seija-Leena Nevala-Nurmi and Pirjo Markkola (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), pp. 160–176. See also Ol'ga Kaznina, 'Tyrkova, Ariadna Vladimirovna' in *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, pp. 675–677; and Linda Harriet Edmondson, *Feminism in Russia, 1900–1917* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1984).

sphere as part of a broader case study of four women who used the press to advocate for women's equality in her chapter in *An Improper Profession*. Novikova, on the other hand, only briefly touches upon Tyrkova-Williams's early years, instead focusing on the development of Tyrkova-Williams's role in the women's liberation movement and views on gender equality after 1905 within the context of the wider Russian feminist tradition. The greatest strength of her article lies in her analysis of the factors driving Tyrkova-Williams's work in this area, notably the importance she placed on liberty and her unwavering belief in the relationship between morality and politics. While Stites and Ruthchild, in her chapter in *An Improper Profession*, provide a limited discussion of some of Tyrkova-Williams's early journalism, none of these works draw on archival sources or connect this period with her later work during the October Revolution and civil wars. With regards to the limitations of Tyrkova-Williams's autobiographical sources, Ruthchild importantly observes that she 'played down her feminist activity' in her memoirs.⁹⁶ Although Ruthchild does not suggest Tyrkova-Williams's reasons for doing so and does not discuss the effect of her conscious or unconscious decision on later scholarship, one can speculate that in later life she wished to be remembered more for her literary achievements and work in the Kadet Party than for her role in the women's liberation movement.

The second, connected, strand shaping scholarly interest in Tyrkova-Williams concerns her involvement in Russian liberalism and the émigré community in Britain after the October Revolution. One of the first and most important works on this topic is of course Rosenberg's *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, which, as expected from her prominent role in the Kadet Party, contains a number of references to Tyrkova-Williams. However, there are also some errors of fact.⁹⁷ Stockdale's book on Miliukov also contains some references to Tyrkova-Williams's political views and activities in the Kadet Party, including a brief discussion of rumours that she and Miliukov had an affair.⁹⁸ An article by A. M. Karabanova on Tyrkova-Williams as a woman leader of the Kadet Party details her political career up until October 1917 (with only a brief mention of some of her activities after this point), focusing on her exceptional position as a

⁹⁶ Ruthchild, 'Tyrkova, Ariadna (1869–1962)', p. 93.

⁹⁷ Rosenberg claims that Tyrkova-Williams returned to Russia in July 1919 for example, when she did not in fact arrive until September (see Chapter Two). Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, p. 438.

⁹⁸ Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia*, n. 165, pp. 336–337.

financially independent woman working in the political sphere and the factors that enabled her to succeed in this male-dominated sphere.⁹⁹ However, while Karabanova provides an important study of Tyrkova-Williams's early political activities, she has a tendency to glorify her position as a woman politician and to overly praise her character.

An increased interest in Russian émigré organisations in the 1990s, which coincided with the opening of Russian archives, led to the publication of two chapters on Tyrkova-Williams, with a specific focus on her émigré activities, by Kaznina. The first, published in 1997, is a chapter in Kaznina's important book *Russkie v Anglii*. While Kaznina's chapter on Tyrkova-Williams provides the most detailed account of her life and activities, it only broadly touches upon her civil-war activities, both in Russia and abroad.¹⁰⁰ Given the focus of Kaznina's 1997 book, the chapter focuses primarily on Tyrkova-Williams's activities in, and relationship to, Britain, particularly the literary and political circles she frequented and cultivated there. Tyrkova-Williams also features in other chapters throughout the book, including Kaznina's discussion of the émigré author Ivan Alekseevich Bunin's relationship to Britain and the assistance Tyrkova-Williams provided to him.¹⁰¹

Kaznina revised and expanded this chapter for publication in the 1999 edited collection *Literatura russkogo zarubezh'ia: 1920–19*.¹⁰² Although this second chapter contains more references and examples of Tyrkova-Williams's journalistic activities and style, it still does not demonstrate the full extent of her organisational role in émigré press organs nor her relationship with the international press. Kaznina mentions Tyrkova-Williams's important association with the American newspaper *The Christian Science Monitor* in passing, for example, but does not examine her work for the paper or refer to any of her specific articles.

Tyrkova-Williams's pivotal role in the RLC has been similarly overlooked or glossed over in existing scholarship. In her monograph on Tyrkova-Williams's husband, Harold Williams, Alston notes that Tyrkova-Williams 'undertook much of the day to

⁹⁹ A. M. Karabanova, 'A. V. Tyrkova – zhenshchina-lider kadetskoï partii: osobennosti sotsializatsii i politicheskoi kar'ery', *Zhenshchina v rossiiskom obshchestve*, 3–4 (2005), pp. 60–72.

¹⁰⁰ Kaznina, 'A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams' in *Russkie v Anglii*, pp. 70–78.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 365–366.

¹⁰² Kaznina, 'Tyrkova-Vil'iams (1869-1962)' in *Literatura russkogo zarubezh'ia: 1920-1940*, vypusk 2, ed. by O.N. Mikhailov (Moscow: IMLI-Nasledie, 1999), pp. 298-317.

day running' of the RLC but does not go into further details, as is understandable given the subject of her book is Williams and not Tyrkova-Williams.¹⁰³ Alston's article on the RLC contains a number of further references to Tyrkova-Williams but again does not examine her work and experience in detail.¹⁰⁴ Gerald Stanton Smith, in his work on the Russian émigré political and literary historian Dmitrii Petrovich Sviatopolk-Mirskii (who wrote under the English pen name D. S. Mirsky), rightly emphasises the central function the Williamses played in the committee, but incorrectly claims that they were behind its organisation 'after their return to London from Denikin's Russia'.¹⁰⁵ Not only was the RLC established a year prior to this, but it was also originally founded on the initiative of the Russian classical historian Mikhail Rostovtsev, albeit with significant input from other figures including the Williamses.

Kaznina and Rakitin describe Tyrkova-Williams as one of the main 'masterminds' behind the RLC's creation and work, and a 'leading' member of the organisation, respectively, but they do not expand on her specific activities.¹⁰⁶ Norman, in her obituary of Tyrkova-Williams, neglects to mention her work for the committee at all.¹⁰⁷ A recent Russian work on Russian émigré organisations similarly does not contain a biography of Tyrkova-Williams despite the fact it includes a section on Harold Williams.¹⁰⁸ While she is mentioned as one of the initiators of the RLC in a separate profile on the organisation, no detailed information about her life or role in émigré groups or activities is given, a curious fact given the book's emphasis on international archives and Tyrkova-Williams's inseparable connection to the British Library's H. W. Williams Papers, among other archives.

Tyrkova-Williams's eclipse by Harold Williams in existing scholarship is a recurring theme. Another, more recent, book by Martin Edmond, which focuses on Harold Williams and three other men who were born in New Zealand but achieved fame in

¹⁰³ Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?*, p. 150.

¹⁰⁴ Alston, 'The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee in London, 1919–1924'.

¹⁰⁵ Gerald Stanton Smith, *D.S. Mirsky: A Russian-English Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 89.

¹⁰⁶ Kaznina, 'Tyrkova-Vil'iams (1869-1962)' in *Literatura russkogo zarubezh'ia*, p. 304; Rakitin, 'Zhizn' Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovo-Vil'iams', pp. 23–38.

¹⁰⁷ Norman, 'Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, November 26, 1869–January 12, 1962', pp. 277–281.

¹⁰⁸ *Zarubezhnaia Rossiia: Organizatsii rossiiskoi emigratsii 1917–1939: materialy k mezkharkhivnomu spravochniku*, ed. by I. V. Sabennikova, V. L. Gentshke and A. S. Lobtsov (Moscow; Berlin: Direkt-Media, 2017).

Europe, similarly references Tyrkova-Williams.¹⁰⁹ However, although colourfully and engagingly written, it is not a rigorously academic work and indeed does not claim to be. While some of Edmond's material is drawn from the Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams Papers in the Bakhmetev Archive at Columbia University, the bulk of the narrative is based on Tyrkova-Williams's account of Harold, *Cheerful Giver: The Life of Harold Williams*, and Alston's monograph, and does not contain any new information on Tyrkova-Williams.¹¹⁰

The most important and substantial piece of scholarship on Tyrkova-Williams is a 2012 collection of her diaries, letters and journalism spanning the period 1894–1960, which was compiled and annotated by Nadezhda Kanishcheva and published by ROSSPEN.¹¹¹ Tyrkova-Williams's diaries, as well as many of the letters published in the collection, are held by The State Archive of the Russian Federation (*Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi federatsii*; GARF) in Moscow. The remaining letters included in the volume are held by the Bakhmetev Archive, the Manuscript Department of the Russian State Library (*Otdel rukopisei Rossiiskoi natsional'noi biblioteki*), and the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (*Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva*; RGALI). However, while the collection is a hugely valuable source, it does not contain any of Tyrkova-Williams's correspondence or articles from the British Library's rich H. W. Williams Papers. Kanishcheva's foreword to the collection, although detailed, is similar to Kaznina's articles in its lack of coverage of her civil-war press activities.¹¹² It is also important to note that the bulk of existing scholarship on Tyrkova-Williams, including by Kaznina, Alston, and Ruthchild, was published before 2012, and thus was unable to benefit from the ROSSPEN collection and Kanishcheva's research. Thus, this is the first scholarly work to examine and translate into English parts of Tyrkova-Williams's diaries and letters compiled in this volume.

By examining works by Tyrkova-Williams and Borman in conjunction with Tyrkova-Williams's journalism and archival papers in Russia, the US and the UK and other primary sources including newspaper articles and accounts written by her

¹⁰⁹ Martin Edmond, *The Expatriates* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2017), pp. 16–101.

¹¹⁰ Tyrkova-Williams, *Cheerful Giver. The Life of Harold Williams* (London: Peter Davies, 1935).

¹¹¹ *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï: dnevniki, pis'ma*, ed. by N. I. Kanishcheva (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2012).

¹¹² Kanishcheva, 'Foreword' in *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 3–33.

contemporaries, this thesis aims to address the gaps in scholarship relating to her civil-war press activities and to provide a more comprehensive and balanced account of her life and work during this period by connecting and expanding the different areas of existing research. In addition, the bibliography of Tyrkova-Williams's civil-war journalism included in this thesis (see Appendix I) demonstrates the scope and importance of her work and, as a piece of original research, invites and facilitates further study into a wide range of themes, including women's political activism and journalism in the early twentieth century, and the organisation of anti-Bolshevik groups and publications.

Larisa Reisner

Although there has been more sustained interest in Reisner from biographers and scholars than in Tyrkova-Williams, much of what has been written has been influenced heavily by the myths that emerged following her death in 1926. Due to the fact she died tragically young, Reisner's contemporaries played a major role in shaping the way she has been viewed ever since.¹¹³ Her civil-war activities as a woman journalist, combatant and political activist have attracted particular attention and reflect the mythology associated with historical Russian women warrior figures and the hagiography of women revolutionaries. The Reisner family friend Vadim Andreev astutely noted that Reisner's early death had led to the creation of 'many legends' and that he was unable to tell 'which were true, which had been exaggerated, and which had no basis at all'.¹¹⁴ The writer Boris Pasternak, in a poem written in Reisner's memory in 1926, similarly foretold her mythical status with the lines: 'In depths of legend, heroine, you'll walk, Along that path your steps shall never fade.'¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Immediately following her death, several commemorative and biographical books, pamphlets and articles appeared, including L. Sosnovskii, 'Pamiati Larisy Reisner', *Zhurnal'ist*, 1926, No. 3, pp. 13–15; Innokentii Oksenov, *Larisa Reisner: kriticheskii ocherk* (Leningrad: Priboi, 1927); and Larisa Reisner, *Sobranie sochinenii*. 2 vols. (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1928).

¹¹⁴ Vadim Andreev, 'V Sem'e Reisnerov' in *Larisa Reisner v Vospominaniakh Sovremennikov*, ed. by A. I. Naumova (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1969), p. 44.

¹¹⁵ Boris Pasternak, 'In Memory of Larisa Reisner' quoted in Larisa Vasil'eva, *Kremlin Wives* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1994), trans. and ed. by Cathy Porter, p. 46. Pasternak is also said to have named the character of Lara in *Doctor Zhivago* after Reisner.

Even before the revolution, Reisner attracted considerable attention in artistic and literary circles. A striking, somewhat enigmatic, portrait of her painted by Vasilii Shukhaev in 1915 is a lasting reminder of her early influence and connections.¹¹⁶ Shukhaev lived next to the Reisner family at the time and met them socially, including to play lawn tennis. The portrait, which is believed to have been commissioned by Reisner's father, Mikhail Andreevich, is painted in a renaissance style, with a rich, dark colour palette and set against a background depicting a window with a landscape view. Although she was only 20 years old at the time, Shukhaev painted Reisner as a much older woman, exaggerating her features and downplaying her famed beauty. In her hands, she is depicted holding a book with clean, white pages, which hints of future literary works and the possibility for her to write her own narrative.

Reisner has remained a figure of interest to this day and has inspired a host of characters in Russian film, TV and theatre, and even had a doll made in her likeness. The earliest representation of Reisner in popular culture was as the figure of the Commissar in Vsevolod Vishnevskii's 1933 play *Optimisticheskaia tragediia* ('An Optimistic Tragedy'). A film adaptation of the play was released in 1963. More recently, she served as the prototype for the protagonist in Aleksei Fedorchenko's 2014 feature film *Angely revoliutsii* ('Angels of the Revolution'), and appeared 'as herself' in the 2017 Russian TV series *Trotsky*.¹¹⁷ Such depictions of Reisner in popular culture, which are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four, have further served to strengthen and perpetuate the myths surrounding her.

A number of collected volumes of Reisner's work were published before and immediately after her death and they have overshadowed the original articles they are based on.¹¹⁸ The first published translation of Reisner's writing was a 1925 German edition of her sketches on the 1923 workers' uprisings in Hamburg, *Gamburg na barrikadakh* (Hamburg at the Barricades), published by Neue Deutsche Verlag (NDV). NDV, which was affiliated with the Communist Party of Germany (KPD), published

¹¹⁶ Vasilii Shukhaev, 'Portret Larisy Reisner', 1915, Vladimir Dahl Russian State Literary Museum (*Gosudarstvennyi muzei istorii rossiiskoi literatury imeni V. I. Dalia*; GLM).

¹¹⁷ Vsevolod Vishnevskii, *Optimisticheskaia tragediia: p'esa v trekh aktakh* (Moscow: GIKhL, 1933); *Optimisticheskaia tragediia*, dir. by Samson Samsonov (1963); *Angely revoliutsii*, dir. by Aleksei Fedorchenko (2014); *Trotsky*, dir. by Aleksandr Kott and Konstantin Statskii (Echo Rights, 2017).

¹¹⁸ A number of collections of Reisner's work were published in the period immediately before and after her sudden death in 1926 (see the Bibliography to this thesis for full details).

another collection of Reisner's work, entitled *Oktober*, in 1926.¹¹⁹ However, after receiving considerable attention and acclaim during the 1920s, Reisner's work fell into relative obscurity during the Stalinist period. As with many of those who had played key roles in the civil war, even after her death she was side-lined for her connections to blacklisted figures including Trotsky and Raskol'nikov. The only publication of Reisner's work between 1928 and the 1950s was an English-language translation of her civil-war article 'Sviiashsk'. The booklet was published in Maradana, Sri Lanka, in 1948 by the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), a Trotskyist party founded in Sri Lanka in 1935. It is dedicated to the memory of Trotsky, who was assassinated in August 1940. Several works by, or relating to, Trotsky were published by the LSSP, making Sri Lanka one of the main places to publish Trotskyist works at a time when they were banned in the Soviet Union. As noted by the editors of the LSSP edition of 'Sviiashsk', Reisner's civil-war sketches were also forbidden in the Soviet Union during this period 'for their unforgettable portraits of the civil-war leaders murdered by Stalin'.¹²⁰

The Soviet thaw of the 1950s and 1960s and the simultaneous rehabilitation of many party activists brought renewed interest in Reisner within Soviet Russia, however. In 1958, a collection of her work was published for the first time since 1928.¹²¹ A few years later, in 1965, the Russian State Library's manuscript department published a guide to Reisner's archive, which had originally been donated to the State Academy of Artistic Sciences in 1928 by her father, Mikhail Andreevich. The papers were transferred to the Russian State Library in 1932 but owing to Reisner's association with Raskol'nikov and other blacklisted figures such as Trotsky, they were not re-organised and made accessible until the 1960s.¹²²

The 1960s also saw the publication of a collection of reminiscences of Reisner by her contemporaries (including the journalist and writer Vera Inber, Shklovskii, Vishnevskii and Vadim Andreev), some of which were collated and re-published from their original

¹¹⁹ Reisner, *Hamburg auf den Barrikaden. Erlebtes und Erhörtes aus dem Hamburger Aufstand 1923* (Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1925); *Oktober* (Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1926).

¹²⁰ Reisner, *Sviazsk: An Epic of the Russian Civil War – 1918* (Maradana: Hashim Press, 1948). The article was originally published as Reisner, 'Sviiashsk,' *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1923, No. 6–7, pp. 177–189.

¹²¹ Reisner, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1958).

¹²² See 'Arkhiv L. M. Reisner', *Zapiski Otdela rukopisei, Gos. b-ka SSSR im. V. I. Lenina* 27 (1965), pp. 43–92. (pp. 53–54).

sources, as well as the aforementioned film adaptation of ‘An Optimistic Tragedy’.¹²³ A further collection in German translation, which included some of her German sketches, was printed by Dietz of Berlin in 1960, and an English translation of *Hamburg at the Barricades*, which also included translations of texts written to commemorate Reisner’s death, appeared in 1977.¹²⁴

However, despite the resurgence of interest in Reisner, her relationship with Raskol’nikov remained obscured well into the 1980s. Accompanying introductions to the 1958, 1965 and 1980 collections of her works published in the Soviet Union, as well as a biographical portrait published in 1962, contained no references to Raskol’nikov, an impressive feat given the pair were married and worked closely together for much of the period between 1918 and 1923 in Russia and Afghanistan (see Chapter Four).¹²⁵ Eleonora Solovei, in a separate study of Reisner’s work and life published in 1985, similarly omitted Reisner and Raskol’nikov’s relationship.¹²⁶

The renewed interest in Reisner in the late 1950s and 1960s also revived many of the myths that had emerged in the 1920s and these views have served to inform accounts of Reisner to this day. Biographies of Reisner by Cathy Porter and Galina Przhiborovskaia, published in 1988 and 2008, respectively, for example, are highly romanticised and gloss over the more troubled aspects of her life and work.¹²⁷ In Porter’s case, her biography of Reisner relies solely on published works and does not contain any archival material. While Przhiborovskaia conducted extensive archival research, she overlooked some of the more difficult aspects of Reisner’s career and personality, playing down

¹²³ *Larisa Reisner v vospominaniakh sovremennikov*.

¹²⁴ *Hamburg auf den Barrikaden und andere Reportagen* (Berlin: Dietz, 1960); *Hamburg at the Barricades, and Other Writings on Weimar Germany*, translated from the Russian and edited by Richard Chappell (London: Pluto Press, 1977).

¹²⁵ See Jonathan D. Smele, ‘A Bolshevik in Brixton Prison: Fedor Raskol’nikov and the Origins of Anglo-Soviet Relations’ in *Reinterpreting Revolutionary Russia: Essays in Honour of James D. White*, ed. by Ian D. Thatcher (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 105–129 (p. 123). B. Brainina, ‘Larisa Reisner’, in *Izbrannye proizvedeniia*, pp. 3–20; I. Kramov, ‘Larisa Reisner’ in *Izbrannoe* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965), pp. 3–18; I. Kramov, ‘Larisa Reisner’ in *Izbrannoe* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1980), pp. 3–16; and ‘Larisa Reisner’ in I. Kramov, *Literaturnye portrety* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel’, 1962), pp. 3–45.

¹²⁶ E. Solovei, *Larisa Reisner: ocherk zhizn’ i tvorchestva* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel’, 1985).

¹²⁷ Cathy Porter, *Larissa Reisner* (London: Virago, 1988); Galina Przhiborovskaia, *Larisa Reisner* (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2008).

disputes between Reisner and her editors, for example. This perhaps reflects the fact she began her research on the book in the Soviet period. Her completed book, some 40 years later, was published as part of the well-known series of books ‘Lives of Remarkable People’ (*Zhizn' zamechatel'nikh liudei*), which began in 1890 and continued through the Soviet period to the present day. Although it certainly has considerable value, the series is seen by some critics today as little more than a chance to ‘put one’s subject on a pedestal’.¹²⁸

An article on Reisner by N. A. Permiakova, which was included in a 2003 collection of articles on prominent Russian journalists of the twentieth century, similarly distorts Reisner’s life and work.¹²⁹ Interestingly, Permiakova’s article on Reisner is included in the section entitled *Publitsistika 30-kh* (‘Political Journalism in the 1930s’), despite the fact she died from illness in 1926. While such a decision could be attributed to a lack of scholarly rigour, it could also be indicative of the continuous desire to mould Reisner’s work and experience to fit a particular narrative. Zhirkov, in his study of civil-war journalism, also categorises Reisner as a *publitsist* or ‘political journalist’ and devotes a small section to outlining her work and achievements.¹³⁰ His account of Reisner nevertheless follows the same mould as that of previous biographers and he makes no mention of gender in his work.

Reisner’s romantic relationships, both proven and rumoured, have attracted significant interest. Her short-lived affair with the poet Nikolai Gumilev, for example, has been the subject of a novel by the writer Adel’ Alekseeva and also features in Igor’ Talalaevskii’s recent work on the women in Gumilev’s life.¹³¹ Reisner’s unsubstantiated affair with Trotsky has also been alluded to by historians and, as recently as 2017, was referenced in the opening episode of the Trotsky miniseries.¹³² Other historians have

¹²⁸ See, for example, D. D. Nikolaev, ‘Kreid V. P. Georgii Ivanov. Moscow, Molodaia gvardiia, 2007’, *Novyi istoricheskii vestnik*, 20:2 (2009) <http://ninvestnik.ru/2009_2/18.shtml> [Accessed 2 September 2017].

¹²⁹ N.A. Permiakova, ‘Prezhde vsego – zhurnalist’ in *Zhurnalisty XX veka: liudi i sud’by* (Moscow: Olma-press, 2003), pp. 144–149.

¹³⁰ Zhirkov, *Zhurnalistika dvukh Rossii*, pp. 172–174.

¹³¹ See Adel’ Alekseeva, *Krasno-belyi roman: Larisa Reisner v sud’be Nikolaia Gumileva i Anny Akhmatovoi* (Moscow: Algoritm, 2008); Igor’ Talalaevskii, *Neistovyi konkvistador: zhenshchiny Nikolaia Gumileva* (St Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2016).

¹³² See, for example, Joshua Rubenstein, *Leon Trotsky: A Revolutionary’s Life* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2011), p. 110; and the *Trotsky* series.

similarly defined Reisner more by her sexuality and relationships than her work. Describing the links between the Bolshevik ruling elite and artistic and literary figures, Donald Rayfield, for example, refers to Reisner as follows:

The poet Larisa Reisner, who had flirted with Blok and Mandelstam and slept with Gumiliov, became, as soon as revolution broke out, the consort of the commander of a group of Petrograd sailors Raskolnikov, and later of the wittiest and most cynical of the Bolshevik inner circle [international revolutionary] Karl Radek [sic].¹³³

As I will discuss in more detail in Chapters Four, such descriptions are problematic as they present Reisner solely in relation to the men she is associated with and erase her identity as a successful and driven journalist and writer.

It was not until 1992, with the publication of an article by Alla Zeide, that the myths surrounding Reisner were first challenged.¹³⁴ However, while Zeide presents a welcome alternative account of Reisner, her argument that she was created by the revolution and ‘no more than a Soviet-type journalist par excellence’ removes all agency from her and largely dismisses her literary achievements and unique style. Like Porter’s biography, Zeide’s article does not use material from Reisner’s personal archive to support her argument, relying instead on Reisner’s published works and accounts written by some of her contemporaries. Larisa Vasil’eva similarly addressed some of the myths surrounding Reisner in her 1993 work *Kremlevskie zheny*, which was edited and translated into English as *Kremlin Wives* the following year by Cathy Porter.¹³⁵ However, like Zeide, Vasil’eva did not draw on archival sources for her chapter on Reisner.

This thesis is the first scholarly work to extensively draw on documents from Reisner’s personal archive while also addressing her unique contribution to the early Soviet press and women’s journalism more widely. By examining these archival documents alongside her journalism, writings and contemporary accounts, this study aims to provide a more factual and complete account of her life and work during this period and, where possible, draw attention to existing myths and their origins. In

¹³³ Donald Rayfield, *Stalin and His Hangmen: An Authoritative Portrait of a Tyrant and Those Who Served Him* (London: Penguin, 2005), p. 90.

¹³⁴ Alla Zeide, ‘Larisa Reisner: Myth as Justification for Life,’ *Russian Review*, 51: 2 (1992), pp. 172–87.

¹³⁵ ‘The Legend of Larisa – Woman of the Revolution’, in Vasil’eva, *Kremlin Wives*, pp. 38–46.

addition, as with the bibliography of Tyrkova-Williams's journalism included in this thesis, a record of Reisner's published articles written during or about the civil wars provides a further original contribution to these topics (Appendix II).

Sources

The archival sources examined in this thesis can be grouped into two categories: personal and institutional. With regards to the case study of Tyrkova-Williams, this research draws extensively on materials from the three main archives that contain her personal papers: The H.W. Williams Papers at the British Library, the Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams Papers held by The Bakhmeteff Archive at Columbia University in New York, and her papers held by GARF (see Bibliography). The majority of the archival documents examined in this study, including draft articles and letters, are unpublished and have not previously been examined.

The H. W. Williams Papers, which are loosely grouped chronologically in 41 volumes, contain Russian, English, German and French-language letters and papers addressed to (and, more rarely, from) Tyrkova-Williams and Williams. These documents primarily relate to the activities of the RLC and other London-based Russian émigré organisations with which the Williamses were involved, and span the period 1918 to 1929. The archive additionally contains a number of draft articles written by Tyrkova-Williams, as well as a small number of letters relating to her journalism work outside of the RLC. Although Tyrkova-Williams and Williams jointly collected the materials, Tyrkova-Williams became the sole custodian of the collection after Williams's sudden death in November 1928. Given that Tyrkova-Williams was also based in London for most of the civil-war period, with the exception of a few months in southern Russia in late 1919 and early 1920, and played a far more central role in the RLC than her husband did, serving as a committee member and secretary for much of its existence (see Chapter Two), it is likely that she collected the bulk of the material relating to the committee in the collection.

The H. W. Williams Papers not only contribute to our understanding of the organisation of the RLC and aspects of the White movement more broadly, but, more importantly for the purpose of this thesis, they also provide a valuable source for examining the life and work of a woman who I argue was one of the most remarkable and historically important women public figures and journalists of the early twentieth

century. With the exception of Alston, who has focused primarily on the collection's English-language material, and Rashit Iangirov, who has examined Tyrkova-Williams's letters to Berdiaev, the papers have not featured in published scholarly research.¹³⁶ The collection of Tyrkova-Williams's letters and diaries published by ROSSPEN does not include any of her letters held in the British Library archive. Instead, it draws on material held by the Bakhmeteff Archive and GARF.

In contrast with the H. W. Williams Papers, the materials held in the Bakhmeteff Archive and GARF were collected and donated by Tyrkova-Williams's son, Arkadii Borman, and great-granddaughter, Ekaterina Likhvar' (Katherine Lickwar).¹³⁷ The role of Tyrkova-Williams's descendants in organising her papers is particularly apparent from documents in Tyrkova-Williams's archive in GARF, some of which bear her son Arkadii's notes and observations.¹³⁸ As well as holding Tyrkova-Williams's personal letters and diaries, these two archives also contain her draft articles and newspaper clippings. In addition, the archives include a large number of documents relating to the RLC and activity connected to the White movement and other émigré organisations. This includes copies of and information about their publications, remuneration and receipts of purchases. Thus, there is a clear overlap between the personal and institutional in all the three archives containing Tyrkova-Williams's papers. This further serves to highlight the importance of her role in organising the RLC and other émigré organisations during the civil-war period.

Unlike Tyrkova-Williams's archives, Reisner's personal papers are all located in Russia. This thesis draws extensively on her archive held by the Manuscript Department of the Russian State Library and, to a lesser degree, a small collection of her papers held by RGALI (see Bibliography). Although Reisner died unexpectedly at the age of just 30 in 1926, she was extremely prolific in the decade before her death and many letters and

¹³⁶ Rashit Iangirov, 'Protiv techeniia: Nikolai Berdiaev i ego spor s belym delom o Rossii', *Otechestvennye zapiski*, 3:36 (2007).

¹³⁷ According to provenance records, Tyrkova-Williams's son, Arkadii Borman, deposited the Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams Papers in the Bakhmeteff Archive in 1965, shortly after her death in 1962. Tyrkova-Williams's great-granddaughter, Ekaterina Likhvar' (Katherine Lickwar), gave some of her diaries to GARF in 2009. See *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoii*, p. 35.

¹³⁸ See, for example, a draft article by Tyrkova-Williams entitled 'Soiuzniki i uchreditel'noe sobranie. 1917' on which Borman has written the following note: 'Ochen' vazhnyi istoricheskii dokument podpisannyi A. T.' (A very important historical document signed by Tyrkova-Williams). GARF, f. 10230, op. 1, d. 34, ll. 1-5v.

drafts of her work have been preserved. Reisner's archive at the Russian State Library, which was originally donated to the State Academy of Artistic Sciences by her father in 1928, additionally contains a large number of personal and official documents relating to Reisner's activities during this period. Among them are publishing and newspaper contracts, permits and information relating to her salary. The RGALI archive holds a much smaller collection of just 30 files, which include copies of her literary works (from 1910), articles and letters, as well as obituaries and biographical sketches written by her contemporaries after her death. In addition, individual letters sent by Reisner, newspaper clippings and a photograph are held in other personal fonds within RGALI, including that of the poet Anna Andreevna Akhmatova.¹³⁹

As well as drawing on archives containing personal and in some cases also institutional papers, this thesis additionally examines materials from the archive of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists (*Moskovskii soiuz sovetskikh zhurnalistov*), which is held by RGALI. These documents include membership lists and questionnaires of the Union, which was in existence between 1918 and 1919. These materials, which have never been examined from a gender perspective, provide a valuable insight into women's participation in the early Soviet press and serve to provide important context for the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and, most significantly, Reisner.

While the foundation of this work is archival, it is also heavily informed by published journalism and memoirs. When examining these texts, I will apply qualitative textual analysis while also situating them within a wider context. Comparing these published sources with draft articles, personal and professional correspondence, and publishing/contractual information, further provides a more nuanced and balanced account of women's press work and experience during the period in question. My reading of memoirs and other autobiographical sources will be contextualised and informed by gendered theories of life writing, as detailed in Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson's important work in this area.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ See *fond* 13 held by RGALI.

¹⁴⁰ *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Madison, WI; London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

Chapter Outline

This thesis is formed of four chapters. While the body of this research project is concerned with the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner, including their lives, careers and creative works, their respective chapters are preceded by and situated within a close study of the environments in which they were operating. Due to her extensive pre-revolutionary press activities and the fact that far fewer women contributed to opposition publications than Bolshevik press organs in the years immediately after the October Revolution, the case study of Tyrkova-Williams appears larger than that of Reisner. However, this format facilitates the inclusion, examination and comparison of the limited number of other women contributing to émigré, Russian and international publications in support of the anti-Bolshevik Whites within the framework of a more detailed study of Tyrkova-Williams. By contrast, a much larger number of women, including those new to journalism, contributed to Bolshevik press activities after the revolution. As such, the case study of Reisner compliments and benefits from a separate, preceding chapter examining the situation surrounding women's involvement in the early Soviet press.

Thus, the first chapter in this thesis examines some of the key themes and factors that influenced women's journalism and other press activities in Russia before the October Revolution. Using Tyrkova-Williams's early career as a foundation point, it situates her work and experience within the broader topic of women, journalism and activism, both in Russia and the West. By including and examining the voices of women from different political groups and journalistic traditions, it is possible to identify connections and common themes that characterised women's journalism, and the press more broadly, during this period. It particularly focuses on how women combined family duties with political and/or professional journalism work, and the extent to which women's roles in the illegal press were gendered. This in turn enables us to assess how typical Tyrkova-Williams's entry into and experience of journalism was for women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and to what extent these common characteristics were present in women's press work after the October Revolution.

This chapter is followed by an in-depth case study of Tyrkova-Williams's press activities between October 1917 and 1922 (Chapter Two). Drawing on material from all three of Tyrkova-Williams's archives, as well as her published journalism, memoirs and accounts by her contemporaries, it explores how she navigated the international press,

formed and maintained influential international networks, built her reputation as an 'expert' on the revolution and civil wars, campaigned for humanitarian relief for refugees, and attempted to influence public opinion through her journalism. While Reisner's journalistic work was to a large extent, controlled by the Bolshevik party, Tyrkova-Williams experienced considerable freedom due to the fragmented nature of opposition publications after the October Revolution and throughout the civil wars. Combined with the development of liberal journalism in late Imperial Russia, which saw women participate in almost all areas of journalistic production and use journalism as a form of social and political activism, these factors allowed Tyrkova-Williams to become a central figure in White movement-affiliated publications during the civil wars and to enter the international press.

The third chapter focuses on the position of women in the early Soviet press. It traces the development of Bolshevik journalism as a form of party work to a more professionalised status, and the direct and indirect opportunities and challenges this transition presented for women. In order to address this topic, this chapter analyses membership and delegate records from the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists. This in turn enables us to understand for the first time the extent to which women were represented in official press organisations in the first two years after the October Revolution and how their roles and profiles compared with those of their male counterparts. It then examines in detail a number of the women identified in these documents, as well as some who were not members or delegates of these organisations, in order to present their individual backgrounds, roles in the press, and their later careers and fates. By documenting their family and party networks, including where and with whom they lived, this chapter proves and explains how the public and private intersected and the importance of this information in understanding the wider revolutionary experiences of both women and men.

Chapter Three is followed by a case study of Reisner's journalistic activities between 1917 and 1926, with a particular focus on her work and experiences during the civil-war period (Chapter Four). Despite the fact that Reisner was celebrated by many as a talented journalist (particularly after her death) and enjoyed a host of privileges during her short career, her participation in the early Soviet press was by no means free from challenges and difficulties. It traces the development of her career through her contracts, privileges, remuneration, and relationships with editors and party figures, and compares

her experience with that of other women active in the early Soviet press to determine how representative she was as a young woman Bolshevik journalist and how her gender affected her status and activities. Alongside archival materials, including official documents and permits, and correspondence, from Reisner's personal archive held by the Russian State Library's Manuscript Department, this section draws on her published journalism and books. It also examines the reception of her work and activities in articles, memoirs and commemorative pieces written by her contemporaries and biographers, as well as her legacy more generally.

Lastly, the concluding section will examine Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner's activities along Bartlett and Vavrus's three axes for case study comparison (horizontal, vertical and transversal) in order to identify common, or in some cases specific, themes in and influences on their journalism and experience during this period. These include the representation of women (including themselves) in their work, the influence of different literary genres, and the manipulation of narrative as a propaganda tool, and, specifically, a direct comparison of the environments and tasks that shaped their journalism.

Chapter One: Women and Journalism Before the October Revolution

In an article published in 1927, the Soviet journalist and writer Vera Mikhailovna Inber claimed that before the October Revolution in Russia there were no women ‘journalists’ in the Soviet sense.¹ Instead, she observed, there were women *publitsisty*, novelists, (many) poets, and even critics. While Inber’s comments must be viewed within the context in which she made them, namely their role as Soviet propaganda to illustrate how women’s lives had changed in the years since the revolution, there is some truth in her words. As Gheith has highlighted, journalism during this period was ambiguous, particularly for women. Their difficulties in entering this sphere and the patriarchal structure of press organs made their association with journalism as a profession even more complicated. This is further highlighted by the fact that there was only one woman among the pre-revolutionary Russian Union of Journalists’ 460 members.²

However, despite the complex nature of pre-revolutionary Russian journalism and women’s association with it, some women certainly viewed journalism as a way of earning a living and wrote articles that did not fall neatly into any of the four narrow categories presented by Inber. Furthermore, many of its more ambiguous aspects continued beyond the October Revolution. Building on the important work by Gheith, Norton, McReynolds and others, this chapter will identify and examine some of the key pre-revolutionary trends that shaped women’s involvement in Russian press organs after October 1917. This includes attitudes towards women’s education, the ways in which they combined family duties with political and/or journalism work, and ideas about objectivity and gendered styles of writing. In addition, it will contextualise and compare the work and experience of Russian women in the press with those in Britain and America. Although the editors of *An Improper Profession* offer an informative insight into some of the differences in the way Russian and Western women’s journalism developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the introduction to their volume, the individual chapters do not continue this discussion in any detail. Thus, this chapter will seek to expand upon Gheith and Norton’s work to better situate this topic within the wider context of women and the history of the press. By including and

¹ Vera Inber, ‘Chetyre zhenshchiny’, *Zhurnalist*, 1927, No. 11, pp. 23–25.

² Svitich, *Professia: zhurnalist. Uchebnoe posobie*, p. 83.

examining the voices of women from different political groups and journalistic traditions, it is possible to identify connections and common themes that characterised women's journalism, and the press more broadly, during this period.

In order to present and analyse these themes and events, this chapter will focus particularly on the case study of Tyrkova-Williams. It will examine her family background, education, reasons for entering journalism and the personal and professional challenges she faced in her early career, as well as the style and genre of her writing from these years. It will also address the development of her political consciousness, views and networks, and their impact on her journalism, particularly focusing on her involvement in the underground liberal press, the Kadet Party, and the women's liberation movement. Connected to this, it will highlight some of the key themes that emerged in her writing during this period, notably ideas of moral duty and the implementation of constitutional democracy in Russia, and the ways in which her understanding of journalism and the role of the journalist shifted during this period. This approach enables us to assess how typical Tyrkova-Williams's entry into and experience of journalism was for women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and to identify key themes in her early work. Understanding this context in turn allows for a more nuanced examination of her journalism and activities after the October Revolution.

Entry into Journalism

Tyrkova-Williams's pre-revolutionary political and journalistic work, often one and the same, laid the foundations for her press activities during the revolutions and civil wars. Her early experience and work is typical of the liberal journalistic tradition in which she began her career, in that she used her writing as a means of attempting to affect political and social change at a time when political and press rights were restricted. Born in 1869 in Novgorod Province, Tyrkova-Williams came from a large family of old, landed gentry. Her father was a civil service official and her mother, to whom she was particularly close, was of Polish-Baltic German origin. According to Tyrkova-Williams, she owed much to her mother, whose own liberal views had been cultivated through Christian teaching and her love of books.³

³ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, p. 209.

Her happy early years were interrupted, however, when, her older brother Arkadii was exiled for twenty years to Siberia for his involvement in *Narodnaia volia* (The People's Will), the group responsible for the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881. Arkadii's arrest and exile had a profound effect on the Tyrkov family and was one of the factors for Tyrkova-Williams's expulsion from her *gymnaziia* (high school) in St Petersburg shortly after, which she attended along with her close friend Nadezhda Krupskaiia, the future Bolshevik revolutionary and wife of Lenin. Tyrkova-Williams (known affectionately as 'Dina') later described their friendship, as well as Krupskaiia's early life, in her memoirs.⁴

In 1889, after resuming her studies, Tyrkova-Williams entered the mathematics faculty of the Bestuzhev Higher Courses (*Bestuzhevskie kursy*). Established in St Petersburg in 1878 by a group of public figures, including the feminist and philanthropist Anna Pavlovna Filosofova, the Bestuzhev Courses was the first and largest higher education institution available to women in Imperial Russia.⁵ Tyrkova-Williams was therefore among the first generation of women to benefit from access to higher education in the country and her fellow students included Krupskaiia. She had originally wished to become a doctor, but the medical and natural science courses were closed to women the year she enrolled, leaving her with a choice between History-Philology and Mathematics.⁶ Tyrkova-Williams's family background was typical of the students who attended the courses. In 1881, out of 938 students, 610 came from a gentry background. The remaining pupils came from merchant, clerical, *meshchantstvo* (lower urban class), peasant and military families.⁷ Although conducted 20 years after Tyrkova-Williams enrolled in the Bestuzhev Higher Courses, a 1909 survey of its students still revealed that 40 percent 'claimed gentry origin'.⁸

As demonstrated by Ruth Dudgeon in her study of women students in Imperial Russia, there were a variety of factors (many contradictory) that motivated women to enter higher education during this period:

⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, p. 112–113.

⁵ See Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia*, p. 83.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁸ Ruth A. Dudgeon, 'The Forgotten Minority: Women Students in Imperial Russia, 1872–1917', *Russian History*, 9:1 (1982), pp. 1–26 (p. 21).

Higher education meant many things for women – a means to existence, escape from parental authority and from traditional female roles, intellectual growth and development, an opportunity to be part of the exciting changes taking place within Russia [...].⁹

However, as well as the intellectual and personal development opportunities, it appears that some women students, particularly those from the provinces, also saw the courses as a chance to find a husband.¹⁰

Dudgeon has also highlighted the importance of the courses as ‘a training ground for social and political activism’.¹¹ Although women students were involved in the same activities and came from similar social backgrounds to their male colleagues, they nevertheless faced considerable hostility from both the state and society. Dudgeon links this hostility to the development of particular skills, views and character traits that led to many women students later becoming leaders of the women’s liberation movement and revolutionary and non-revolutionary political activists.¹² While a student, Tyrkova-Williams was warned by the director to stay away from political demonstrations. She argued that she had simply attended a funeral (of the Russian revolutionary and political journalist Nikolai Vasil’evich Shelgunov, 1824–1891) and not a demonstration but confessed in her memoirs that she knew full well the political significance of funerals as sites of opposition at this time.¹³

Although Tyrkova-Williams showed some interest in political activities while a student, she left her course after just one year to pursue the more traditional route of marriage. Her husband was Alfred Nikolaevich Borman, a naval engineer by profession and a friend of one of her brothers.¹⁴ The marriage was unhappy, however, and in 1897, shortly after the birth of her second child, Sofiia, she separated from Borman, taking her two young children with her. Divorce was still extremely rare and difficult to obtain at this time. It is unclear when, or indeed if, Borman and Tyrkova-Williams actually filed for a divorce and there is some uncertainty surrounding the legal status of her

⁹ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 21.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 26.

¹² Ibid., p. 26.

¹³ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 204–205. Funerals had held political significance in Russia since at least the burial of Dostoevsky in 1881.

¹⁴ See Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil’iams*, p. 29.

relationship with her second partner Harold Williams.¹⁵ Another notable woman who separated from her first husband at this time was Kollontai, who, in 1898, left her marriage to pursue further study in Switzerland. There she became involved with exiled Russian revolutionaries.¹⁶

Like a number of women journalists in the late nineteenth-century, both in Russia and in the West, Tyrkova-Williams's journalism career emerged out of a combination of circumstance, financial need, and a passion for writing.¹⁷ Unprepared for earning her own living and without a 'profession', she had limited options given that many paths were closed to women or required further qualifications.¹⁸ As Ruthchild notes in her chapter on women 'feminist' journalists in late Imperial Russia, Tyrkova-Williams's decision to pursue a career in journalism undoubtedly stemmed in part from the fact that it required no professional licence or extensive training.¹⁹ Of the few professional options available to women at this time, many, such as medicine, required far more training and often time spent abroad. Prior to the establishment of the first medical school for women in Russia in 1872, scores of women migrated to Zurich in the 1860s and early 1870s to enrol in medical studies. As noted by Stites, there was a 'tradition of social consciousness in the medical profession' in Russia and many women who enrolled in medical courses, such as Vera Figner, went on to become leaders of the women's liberation and revolutionary movements.²⁰

Nevertheless, despite her lack of experience she was clearly drawn to journalism, favouring it above other possible career options open to women such as translation.²¹ Her decision to pursue journalism is not surprising. In 1895, she noted in her journal that she had thought about writing as a career for a while. She was worried that life would pass her by and she would have nothing to show for it (apart from her children). She had ideas for a novel about the life of a woman based on Sofiia Vasil'evna

¹⁵ See Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?* pp. 60–61 for more on the status of Tyrkova-Williams's relationship with Williams.

¹⁶ Natalia Gafizova, 'Kollontai, Alexandra (1872–1952)' in *Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements and Feminisms in Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe*, p. 254.

¹⁷ For more on the backgrounds of nineteenth-century American and British women journalists see ed. by Chambers *et al.*, *Women and Journalism*, p. 15.

¹⁸ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 213–214.

¹⁹ Ruthchild, *An Improper Profession*, p. 171.

²⁰ Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia*, p. 84.

²¹ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, p. 214.

Kovalevskaia, a Russian mathematician (and the first woman to gain a doctorate in mathematics in modern Europe) who entered into a marriage of convenience in order to continue her studies abroad.²² She had also previously thought about writing a chronicle of her family history.²³ Thus, journalism provided Tyrkova-Williams with an opportunity to both establish herself as a writer and earn money to support her young family.

The experiences of other women in entering journalism in the late nineteenth century are discussed by some of the contributors to *An Improper Profession*.²⁴ Here the associations with journalism as either party and/or social activism or as a literary endeavour are apparent. Kuskova, for example became involved in journalism through her Marxist activities in the 1890s. Her partnership with the Russian economist and, at the time, fellow-social democrat Sergei Nikolaevich Prokopovich also played a significant role in her initial entry into journalism. However, Norton argues: ‘while it may have been Prokopovich’s money rather than Kuskova’s own abilities that provided her entrée into the world of émigré journalism, her literary skills and aptitude for the technical aspects of publication soon revealed themselves’.²⁵

Some similarities can also be drawn between women’s entry into the press in Russia and in the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Discussing the background of British and American women journalists during this period, Chambers *et al.* note that:

[...] the women who managed to enter paid journalism were highly educated, white [...] and from middle-class backgrounds. Some women were forced to earn a living as writers and journalists because they were single and/or because their family's economic circumstances had declined. Others managed to move into journalism with the help of family connections as wives or daughters of male journalists.²⁶

²² Diary entry, 18 May 1895 (O.S.), Tyrkova-Williams, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 45–46.

²³ Diary entry, 8 January 1894 (O.S.), Tyrkova-Williams, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 45.

²⁴ See for example, Norton, ‘Journalism as a Means of Empowerment: The Early Career of Ekaterina Kuskova’ in *An Improper Profession*, p. 224.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

²⁶ Chambers *et al.*, *Women and Journalism*, p. 15.

While Tyrkova-Williams had no family connections to facilitate her initial entry into journalism, she was certainly well educated and from a 'middle-class' background. She also entered this sphere in large part due to a change in her economic circumstances. However, while Tyrkova-Williams's initial decision to find newspaper work stemmed from her literary rather than political interests, other women, such as Kuskova, initially became involved in journalism through their political activities.

By contrast, men's entry into journalism in Russia differed in some crucial ways to that of women. For men, there was a link between journalism and public speaking. As Stephen Lovell observes, public speaking as a genre emerged in Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century:

From the early 1860s onwards, Russia developed unprecedented forms of public assembly and disputation: university debates, municipal dumas, zemstvo assemblies, law courts. Even if the government tried to hem them in, these new institutions changed for good the technologies and possibilities of political communication.²⁷

Access to these public spaces would have been restricted to women, as universities, the legal profession and the political sphere in Russia were almost entirely closed to women in the nineteenth century. Thus, women were more likely to enter journalism from literary and social activist backgrounds than as a result of their engagement in Russia's limited political and legal institutions.

Tyrkova-Williams initially found work with provincial newspapers, including the *Severnyi krai* ('Northern Region'), a liberal-leaning daily newspaper published in Yaroslavl between 1898 and 1905. The paper had ties with the *zemstvo* movement, a liberal opposition movement that called for the expansion of the rights of the *zemstva* (rural self-government bodies) and many of its members were among its contributors.²⁸ Tyrkova-Williams's decision to turn to provincial newspapers reflected the lack of opportunities available in St Petersburg and the fact that she was unknown as a journalist and writer. She initially wrote essay-type pieces on a range of topics, including cultural observations from St Petersburg (written as a weekly article

²⁷ Stephen Lovell, 'Glasnost' in Practice: Public Speaking in the Age of Alexander II', *Past and Present*, 218:1 (2013), pp. 127–58.

²⁸ Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 38. Many members of the *zemstvo* movement later joined the liberal Kadet Party after it was formed in 1905.

‘Peterburgskie pis’ma’ or ‘Petersburg Letters’), under the male pseudonym A. Vergezskii, which she took from the name of her family’s country house, Vergezha.²⁹ Tyrkova-Williams associated Vergezha with positive feelings and memories and it is highly likely this influenced her choice of pseudonym. In 1896, a year before her separation from Alfred Borman, she confided in her diary that it was the only place that she could truly ‘feel, think and live’.³⁰ This confession also hinted at the unhappiness in her personal life. While she frequently referred to her children in her diaries from this period, she made no mention of Borman.

The first years of Tyrkova-Williams’s journalism career were fraught with difficulties, however. Decades later, she described in her memoirs the challenges of juggling family and professional duties, noting that she knew from experience ‘how difficult it is, especially for women, to establish a balance between the personal and the societal’.³¹ Her mother provided considerable help in the form of childcare and moral support but was unable to help with financial difficulties.³²

In terms of the professional obstacles she faced, Tyrkova-Williams’s decision to adopt a male pseudonym reflects the fact that women found it far more difficult to publish than men during this period. This was in large part due to the notion that objectivity was a male trait. In the Western context, Chambers *et al.* have observed that, ‘a dilemma facing women journalists from the start was that the very notions of “objectivity” and “impartiality” were anchored within a partial, male-oriented construction of knowledge, reportage and “news” which produced a patriarchal framework for the professionalisation of the occupation’.³³ This can also be applied to women and Russian journalism.

The Russian writer Nadezhda Aleksandrovna Lokhvitskaia, who herself wrote openly under the name ‘Teffi’, later somewhat ironically reflected on women and their use of pseudonyms in her short sketch ‘My Pseudonym’:

²⁹ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 214–215; Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil’iams*, p. 38.

³⁰ Diary entry, 4 June 1896, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 47.

³¹ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, p. 221.

³² *Ibid.* p. 221.

³³ Chambers *et al.*, *Women and Journalism*, p. 7.

[...] women writers tend to go for male pseudonyms. A wise and circumspect move. It is common practice to regard ladies with a somewhat ironic smile, and even with incredulity:

How on earth did she come up with something like this?

Her husband must be doing the writing for her.³⁴

Although Teffi approached the subject through humour, the issue was very real. Indeed, at the beginning of her journalism career, Tyrkova-Williams experienced a similar incident where, following an enquiry from an unnamed woman, she revealed her identity as the writer behind the pseudonym Vergezshkii. The woman did not believe her, however, and instead asked for her husband.³⁵

Another illustrative (although likely fictional) story was later recounted by Inber in an article published by the journalism trade magazine *Zhurnal'ist* ('Journalist') in 1925.³⁶ In the episode, which reportedly took place in 1912 in Switzerland, three male journalists, from Romania, France and Russia, are staying at a guesthouse to convalesce. They strike up a conversation with a woman guest named Geraldine Pearst and soon begin discussing a 'devilishly talented' young, male journalist named Pearson Lee, who, they note, had appeared out of nowhere and written several brilliant articles about the Italo-Turkish War of 1911–1912. Praising his concise and accurate articles, they conclude that he must 'without a doubt' be a military man himself. Suddenly an unknown person, with the 'appearance of a poet', comes into the salon where they are sitting and politely asks to speak with Mr Pearson Lee. When the others claim he is not there, he then asks for Geraldine Pearst, who, he says, you must know writes under the pseudonym Pearson Lee and sends her articles to London from Switzerland. By presenting this anecdote, Inber was also criticizing and refuting stereotypes of the masculine journalist figure. The fact that one of the male journalists in the story is Russian serves to equate pre-revolutionary, Russian commercial journalism with the Western press.

³⁴ Teffi, 'Pseudonim', *Vozrozhdenie*, 20 December 1931, p. 2. This article was translated and published as 'My Pseudonym' in Teffi, *Rasputin and Other Ironies*, ed. by Robert Chandler and Anne Marie Jackson and trans. by Robert Chandler, Elizabeth Chandler, Rose France and Anne Marie Jackson (London: Pushkin Press, 2016), pp. 18–24 (p. 18).

³⁵ See Rakitin, 'Zhizn' Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoii-Vil'iams', p. 25.

³⁶ Inber, 'Nechto srednee mezhdu pisatelem i avantiuristom', *Zhurnal'ist*, May 1925, No. 5, pp. 25–27.

However, pseudonyms were not only used to conceal the gender of women writers. After Tyrkova-Williams began to write political pieces in the early 1900s for illegal publications, her use of a pseudonym was likely as much, if not more, a means of concealing her identity from the authorities. As Barbara T. Norton notes, Kuskova, who also contributed to the underground press at this time, used pseudonyms – including ‘Vsegda nekogda’ (No time) and ‘Kredo’ (Credo) – in her early career ‘not as gender camouflage but as a means of maintaining her anonymity with tsarist authorities’.³⁷ Male writers also adopted pseudonyms for this same purpose. The Russian liberal politician Miliukov, for example, used the pseudonym ‘ss’ when writing for illegal publications at the turn of the century.³⁸

The Illegal Press

The considerable changes in Tyrkova-Williams’s personal and professional life coincided with the flurry of revolutionary activity in the late 1890s and early 1900s.³⁹ This influential period in Tyrkova-Williams’s life marked the beginning of her political consciousness and activity. After a few difficult years scraping together a living writing for provincial newspapers, she became involved with the illegal liberal constitutionalist journal *Osvobozhdenie* (‘Liberation’), a decision that would have a profound impact on her work and personal life thereafter.⁴⁰ Tyrkova-Williams’s association with *Osvobozhdenie* can be traced to her work for *Severnyi krai*, which she continued writing for in late 1902 and 1903. D. I. Shakhovskoi, a *zemstvo* leader and later a founding member of the radical-liberal Union of Liberation (*Soiuz osvobozhdeniia*), was the newspaper’s editor at this time.⁴¹

³⁷ Norton, ‘The Early Career of Ekaterina Kuskova’ in *An Improper Profession*, p. 227.

³⁸ Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia*, n. 83, p. 320.

³⁹ Tyrkova-Williams notes in her memoirs that the ‘quickening of the revolutionary rhythm coincided with a sharp change in my personal life’. Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, p. 213.

⁴⁰ *Osvobozhdenie* was established in July 1902. It was originally published in Stuttgart, before moving briefly to Paris in 1905.

⁴¹ The illegal Union of Liberation was formally established at a congress in St Petersburg in January 1904 but its origins date to the Schaffhausen Conference held in Switzerland in July 1903. The Union sought to abolish the autocracy and establish Russia as a constitutional regime based on suffrage. See Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia*, p. 107; and Andrew Kier Wise, ‘Introduction’ in *Cultural Identity and Civil Society in Russia and Eastern Europe: Essays in Memory of Charles E.*

She was also connected to the group surrounding *Osvobozhdenie* through her ties to Petr Struve, the former Marxist turned liberalist and founder of the journal *Osvobozhdenie*, and his wife and Tyrkova-Williams's school friend, Nina Aleksandrovna (née Gerd). Tyrkova-Williams's increasing political awareness at this time is apparent from the fact that she was arrested in 1901 at a student demonstration in St Petersburg along with Struve. She was imprisoned for 10 days before she was released.⁴²

In the autumn of 1903, Kuskova, who was also affiliated with the newly formed Union of Liberation, approached Tyrkova-Williams with a request to travel to Finland (an autonomous part of the Russian Empire until it gained independence in 1917) in order to smuggle copies of the journal back into Russia. Kuskova had broken away from organised social democracy in the late 1890s, a decision Norton argues was in part due to the fact that men and women were expected to play significantly different roles within the movement. She subsequently became involved with the Union of Liberation when it was founded in 1903 and was one of the few women contributors to its journal, *Osvobozhdenie*.⁴³

Despite not being well-acquainted with Kuskova, Tyrkova-Williams agreed to the mission and, together with the Russian literary critic and historian Evgenii Vasil'evich Anchikov, set off for Finland. Transporting illegal literature was risky and both Tyrkova-Williams and Anchikov were arrested upon re-entering Russia after border guards discovered the contraband in Anchikov's overcoat, which was hanging in their train compartment. By her own account, Tyrkova-Williams, on the other hand, had more successfully hidden her share of the papers under her skirt.⁴⁴ She was nevertheless searched and arrested alongside Anchikov and put on trial.

Timberlake, ed. by Andrew Kier Wise, David M. Borgmeyer and Nicole Monnier (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), pp. 1–27 (p. 13).

⁴² Kanishcheva, 'Foreword' in *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 5.

⁴³ For more on Kuskova's involvement with social democracy, including the reasons for her departure, see Barbara T. Norton, 'Eshche raz ekonomizm: E. D. Kuskova, S. N. Prokopovich and the Challenge to Russian Social Democracy', *The Russian Review*, 45:2 (1986), pp. 183–207; and Barbara T. Norton, 'The Making of a Female Marxist: E. D. Kuskova's Conversion to Russian Social Democracy', *International Review of Social History*, 34 (1989), pp. 227–247.

⁴⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 300–302.

There was a gendered aspect to the role of smuggling illegal newspapers and other political literature from Europe to Russia in the early 1900s that traversed different political groups. Specifically discussing the role of revolutionary women in underground press activities, Richard Stites notes that, ‘The founding of *Iskra* and of a national Social Democratic Party at the opening of the century created a type known as “the Iskra girl” (*Iskrovka*), the well-dressed young lady, skirts bulging with illegal newspapers, who ran the route from Poland or Finland across the frontier into Russia’. Of this group of women, the best known was Elena Dmitrievna Stasova, who later wrote about how illegal party literature was produced and disseminated during these pre-revolution years.⁴⁵ Another woman revolutionary Liudmila Nikolaevna Stal’ similarly wrote about her arrest and imprisonment in 1901 for attempting to smuggle copies of the RSDLP’s official organ *Iskra* from Munich (where it was at the time being published) back to Russia.⁴⁶

There are also instances of women revolutionaries using other personal, gendered objects and items of clothing to transport illegal literature. The RSDLP activist Rozaliia Samoilovna Zemliachka, for example, used a mirror to smuggle party literature into Russia in the early twentieth century, a fragment of which is in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary History in Moscow.⁴⁷ Kollontai similarly describes in her autobiography how, while living in Sweden, she hid the identity papers of her close friend and party comrade, Aleksandr Gavrilovich Shliapnikov, who had just arrived illegally in the country from Russia in 1914, from police by concealing them under her blouse. Kollontai had taken Shliapnikov’s papers for safekeeping but was herself arrested and imprisoned for anti-war propaganda while still carrying his documents.⁴⁸

These early experiences of smuggling and hiding illegal papers and, in some cases, of arrest, later served to enhance the status of women activists in the party. Stal’ for

⁴⁵ Stites, *The Women’s Liberation Movement*, p. 274. Elena Stasova describes how illegal literature was smuggled into Russia in her article ‘Kak my poluchali i rasprostraniali nelegal’nuu literaturu’ in *Iz istorii nelegal’nykh bibliotek revoliutsionnykh organizatsii v tsarskoi Rossii. Sbornik materialov* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia Biblioteka SSSR im. V. I. Lenina, 1956), pp. 16–22.

⁴⁶ Liudmila Stal’, ‘God za tiuremnoi reshetkoi’, in *Put’ k oktiabriu. Sbornik statei, vospominanii i dokumentov*, Vol. 1, ed. by S. Chernomordika (Moscow, 1923), pp. 63–77.

⁴⁷ ‘Zerkalo revoliutsionerki Rozalii Zemliachki’, *Gosudarstvennyi tsentral’nyi muzei sovremennoi istorii Rossii*, [viewed January 2016].

⁴⁸ Kollontai, *The Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Communist Woman* (New York: Hender and Hender, 1971), pp. 24–25.

example later described her experience in an article published in the first volume of *Put' k oktiabriu* ('Road to October'), a collection of articles, memoirs and documents by revolutionaries relating to the years leading to the October 1917 revolution.⁴⁹ In the article, Stal' framed her arrest and imprisonment as a heroic act or rite of passage. Tyrkova-Williams similarly recounted the story of her arrest in detail in her memoirs and the episode is included in all biographical sketches of her life (see Introduction). Such accounts also reveal the conditions and lack of professional ethic of party journalism during this period. The use of women's everyday clothing and objects to conceal materials adds a further gendered dimension to this role and demonstrates the ways in which the personal and public intersected in party and press work.

Other roles held by women connected to pre-revolutionary illegal press organs could also be perceived as gendered. Prior to the October Revolution, Krupskaia worked for the illegal Bolshevik newspaper *Vpered* ('Forward') and was 'in charge of all correspondence with its journalists, editors, and the staff of its various local bureaus scattered throughout Russia'.⁵⁰ This is an early example of women taking on organisational roles in party newspapers, both socialist and non-socialist. In fact, Tyrkova-Williams discussed the similarities between techniques used by the different underground movements during this period in an article published in 1951, noting:

[...] in the first years of this century, when the constitutional movement was gathering momentum, there was a short period of collaboration between liberals and socialists in the common struggle for a constitution. In this struggle the liberals went so far as to adopt certain conspiratorial methods of the underground that were essentially alien to them.⁵¹

However, she was also careful to distance herself from the socialists. When she was on trial for smuggling copies of *Osvobozhdenie*, she claimed that she (unsuccessfully) tried to explain that her 'goal was not "revolution" but "constitution"'.⁵²

In Tyrkova-Williams's case, she was granted bail on health grounds and took the opportunity to flee abroad.⁵³ She had to make the difficult decision to initially leave her

⁴⁹ Stal', 'God za tiuremnoi reshetkoi'.

⁵⁰ Appendix, *An Improper Profession*, p. 294.

⁵¹ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Russian Liberalism', *The Russian Review*, 10:1 (1951), pp. 3–14 (p. 9).

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵³ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, p. 328.

two children with her mother in Russia.⁵⁴ She was not the first woman who had to do this for reasons linked to their involvement in illegal political activities. Kollontai similarly left her son, Mikhail, with her parents when she travelled to Switzerland to study Marx in the late 1880s.⁵⁵ The difficulties women faced in juggling their family duties with political and professional goals were far greater than those experienced by their male contemporaries. For this reason, many other women involved in underground movements at this time did not have children. In addition, the partners of those who were married often belonged to the same political circles, the most famous couple being, of course, Krupskaja and Lenin.

After initially arriving in Stockholm, Tyrkova-Williams travelled to Stuttgart, where she joined Struve's circle. She subsequently spent time in Switzerland and Paris, after Struve moved the publication of *Osvobozhdenie* there in September 1904.⁵⁶ Thanks to help from her first husband, Tyrkova-Williams's children, Arkadii and Sofiia, were able to join her in Paris.⁵⁷ *Osvobozhdenie*, along with the weekly journal *Pravo* ('Law'), was instrumental in the organisation of the Union of Liberation (*Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia*), one of the main liberal groups that merged to form the Kadet Party in 1905.⁵⁸ It was also while in Stuttgart that Tyrkova-Williams met the New Zealand journalist Harold Williams, who was to become her partner until his death in 1928.⁵⁹ Williams was at the time working as a correspondent on Russian affairs for *The Times*, in which capacity he had been tasked with reporting on the views of Russian reformers abroad.⁶⁰ Tyrkova-Williams returned to Russia in November 1905, in the wake of the amnesty granted by the October Manifesto, which promised to guarantee civil liberties and establish an elected parliament, or Duma.⁶¹

⁵⁴ Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, pp. 56–57.

⁵⁵ Gafizova, 'Kollontai, Alexandra (1872–1952)', p. 254.

⁵⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 329–351.

⁵⁷ Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 58.

⁵⁸ McReynolds, *The News Under Russia's Old Regime*, p. 210.

⁵⁹ See 'Emigratsiia' in Tyrkova-Williams, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 329–351 for Tyrkova-Williams's account of how she and Harold Williams met.

⁶⁰ See Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?* pp. 40–44 for a detailed account of Williams's activities in Stuttgart

⁶¹ Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 66.

The Kadet Party Press

Tyrkova-Williams's involvement with the Kadet Party shaped her journalistic work during this period considerably. Founded in October 1905 out of an assembly of liberals in Moscow, the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party was originally known as the Party of the People's Freedom (*Partiia narodnoi svobody*). The Kadets argued that Russia needed to develop as a constitutional monarchy, in which the powers of the tsar would be restricted by a democratically elected constituent assembly.⁶² In April 1906, Tyrkova-Williams was invited to join the Kadet Central Committee. She was the only woman member of the committee until May 1917, when Sofiia Panina was elected.⁶³ Kuskova, who had been a founding member of the Kadets, had publically stepped down as a member of its central committee and renounced all affiliation with the party after its first congress in mid-October, owing to a difference in opinion over its direction.⁶⁴ Tyrkova-Williams's invitation to sit on the committee is said to have been influenced by a speech she gave on the subject of women's liberation at the January 1906 congress of the recently formed Kadet Party.⁶⁵ She aligned herself with the right-wing of the party, along with figures such as Vasilii Alekseevich Maklakov and Struve, while Miliukov, the party's leader, was seen as the 'dominant voice of the party's centre'.⁶⁶

As Stockdale observes, this group of right-wing Kadets believed the party was insufficiently nationalistic:

In the eyes of the right wing of the party, a fundamental shortcoming of Kadet liberalism, aside from the excessive radicalism of the Miliukov line, was its insufficient

⁶² See Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*.

⁶³ Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 76. Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild notes that Tyrkova-Williams was aware of her position as the party's 'token woman' and "the condescending way in which she was often treated'. However, she was seen as an influential figure by the opposition, who joked that she was 'the only man' in the Kadet Party's Central Committee. See Ruthchild, 'Tyrkova, Ariadna (1869–1962)' in *Encyclopedia of Russian Women's Movements*, pp. 91–93; and *Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements and Feminisms in Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe*, p. 589.

⁶⁴ Newspaper clipping from *Russkie Vedomosti* explaining the decision of Kuskova and V. Bogucharskii to leave the Kadet Party, 1905. RGALI, f. 1696, op. 1, d. 11.

⁶⁵ See Ruthchild, 'Writing for their Rights', in *An Improper Profession*, p. 168 for more on this subject.

⁶⁶ Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, p. 36.

nationalism – and Russian nationalism, for many of these individuals, had a religious lining.⁶⁷

With regards to the religious association with nationalism, Tyrkova-Williams felt the link between politics and religion strongly. She even went as far as to criticise Miliukov's lack of religious feeling in an early example of their fractious relationship.⁶⁸

In terms of the party's press activities, Tyrkova-Williams contributed to the Kadet newspaper *Rech'* from its first year of publication, writing articles on the execution of Father Georgii Appolonovich Gapon (1870–1906) by the Socialists-Revolutionaries (SRs), and the suspicious death of imprisoned Moscow University student Nikolai Pavlovich Shmidt (1883–1907), which appeared in the paper under her pseudonym in May 1906 and February 1907, respectively.⁶⁹ While these articles highlight Tyrkova-Williams's lifelong interest in the genre of biography, they also served a political purpose. Just as funerals could be understood as sites of political expression and opposition, so too could these types of commemorative articles and obituaries.

The Kadet Party was not united in its views and in 1912 an independent newspaper, *Russkaia molva* ('Russian Talk'), was established in response to opposition towards the stance presented by *Rech'*. Tyrkova-Williams was appointed editor of the paper, which, according to Borman, was the first time in the history of Russian journalism that a woman had served as editor of a daily Petersburg newspaper.⁷⁰ Struve and the poet Aleksandr Blok held the positions of political and literary editor, respectively.⁷¹ While the paper closed after less than a year due to financial issues, Tyrkova-Williams's involvement with *Russkaia molva* illustrates not only her personal political views but also the fractures within the Kadet Party.⁷² These fractures continued after the October Revolution despite the fact that the party united in its fight against Bolshevism and will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

⁶⁷ Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia*, p. 186.

⁶⁸ Tyrkova-Williams, *Na putiakh*, p. 412. Cited by Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia*, p. 200.

⁶⁹ 'Gapon', *Rech'*, 4 May 1906, No. 64; and 'Shmidt', *Rech'*, 17 February 1907, No. 40.

⁷⁰ Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 99.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 103.

In addition to *Rech'* and *Russkaia molva*, Tyrkova-Williams also wrote for other papers that broadly supported the Kadets' agenda, including the liberal paper *Russkie Vedomosti* ('Russian News'). Founded in 1863 in Moscow, *Russkie Vedomosti* became the city's second-largest daily.⁷³ A commemorative book published for the paper's fiftieth anniversary contains a list of all its contributors between 1863 and 1913 and describes Tyrkova-Williams as a fiction writer and *publitsist*.⁷⁴ Her arrest for transporting copies of the journal *Osvobozhdenie* in 1903 is also mentioned, along with her subsequent escape abroad and return to Russia after the 1905 amnesty. Between 1901 and 1911, she published nine articles and short stories in the paper, some of which appeared under her pseudonym.⁷⁵ Her first piece was published in 1901, two years before she was arrested and forced to temporarily leave Russia, and four years before the Kadet Party was established. Published under her pseudonym, the article commemorated the death of the physician, public figure and editor of the medical gazette *Vrach* ('Doctor'), Viacheslav Avksent'evich Manasein (1841–1901). Manasein had been a former student of Sergei P. Botkin, an influential public figure and physician who is known as one of the founders of modern Russian medical science and education.⁷⁶

Tyrkova-Williams did not write again for the paper until 1908, by which time she had returned to Russia and was a member of the Kadet Central Committee. Her later articles covered topics including women's rights (see below for a discussion of these articles). In addition to Tyrkova-Williams, other women contributors to *Russkie vedomosti*, who covered subjects and genres ranging from political affairs and cultural reviews, to literary translations and horror stories, included Kuskova, Mariia Valentinovna Vatson, Aleksandra Adol'fovna Veselovskaia and Vera Figner. In her analysis of *Russkie vedomosti*'s 1913 jubilee volume of contributors, Mary F. Zirin concluded that approximately seven per cent of the paper's authors between 1863 and 1913 were women. Of these, more than half published fewer than five pieces in the

⁷³ Norton, 'The Early Career of Ekaterina Kuskova,' in *An Improper Profession*, p. 233.

⁷⁴ *Sotrudniki Russkikh vedomostei, 1863–1913* (Moscow: Russkie Vedomosti, 1913), p. 180.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.180.

⁷⁶ Galina Kichigina, *The Imperial Laboratory: Experimental Physiology and Clinical Medicine in Post-Crimea Russia* (Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2009), p. 223.

paper during its first fifty years.⁷⁷ Thus, as these statistics demonstrate, Tyrkova-Williams was still very much in the minority as a woman journalist in early twentieth-century Russia. These statistics further demonstrate how few women participated in journalistic activities during this period and the difficulties of defining journalism as a profession due to its close association with literature and/or social and political activism.

The Women's Liberation Movement

The topic of the women's liberation movement in Russia has been of considerable interest to scholars, both Russian and Western, since the 1970s (see above, Introduction). The campaign for women's suffrage and equality in Russia gained momentum during and after the 1905 Revolution and it was at this time that the more radical groups, such as the Russian Union for Women's Equality, and journals dedicated to the 'woman question' were established.⁷⁸ Bolshevik women revolutionaries were critical of what they saw as the 'bourgeois' women's groups, which were mainly run by women from privileged backgrounds, however. They argued that these 'bourgeois' women could not understand the needs of workers and peasant women and that the women's movement threatened working-class solidarity.⁷⁹

Tyrkova-Williams was a contributor to the feminist journal *Soiuz zhenshchin* ('Union of Women'), which was established by the Russian Union for Women's Equality. The journal ran from 1907 until 1909 and was under the editorship of the journalist Mariia Aleksandrovna Chekhova (1866–1934).⁸⁰ *Soiuz zhenshchin* included a wide range of articles, stories and information, from news of women's movements abroad to a translation of Oscar Wilde's short story 'The Nightingale and the Rose'.⁸¹

She also contributed articles on the subject of women's liberation for other publications. Two articles Tyrkova-Williams wrote for *Russkie Vedomosti* during this period particularly reflect her work in the movement and concern for social issues

⁷⁷ Mary F. Zirin, 'Meeting the Challenge: Russian Women Reporters and the Balkan Crises of the Late 1870s', in *An Improper Profession*, p. 143.

⁷⁸ For more on this topic see Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement*, p. 201.

⁷⁹ See Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild, *Equality and Revolution: Women's Rights in the Russian Empire, 1905-1917* (Pittsburg, PA; 2010), p. 183.

⁸⁰ *Soiuz zhenshchin*, 1907, No. 1, p. 24.

⁸¹ *Soiuz zhenshchin*, February 1908, No. 2.

affecting women. The first, a report on the 1908 First All-Russian Women's Congress, for which Tyrkova-Williams was a member of the organising committee, was written under her given name. The three-part article also contained sections written by Kuskova and another woman involved in the congress. The second, published in April 1910 and entitled 'Livestock' (*Zhivoi tovar*), discussed the first All-Russian Congress for the Struggle Against the Traffic in Women and its Causes, which had just taken place in St Petersburg.⁸² Tyrkova-Williams, who was a passionate advocate of eradicating the trafficking of women, was a delegate at the congress. and appeared in the delegate list as a writer (*literator*) and member of the St Petersburg Women's Club. Her role in the Kadet Party was not mentioned.⁸³

Sofiia Vladimirovna Panina, co-founder and financial supporter of the Russian Society for the Protection of Women (an anti-prostitution organisation) and later Kadet politician, and Dr Poliksena Nestorovna Shishkina-Iavein, President of the Women's Equality League and Russia's first female gynaecologist, also attended the conference.⁸⁴ According to Laurie Bernstein, 58 of the congress' 293 participants were associated with feminist organisations. In total, women counted for two-thirds of the delegates, although few had any political affiliation. Many of those associated with feminist groups, including Tyrkova-Williams, vocally denounced the regulation of prostitution at the congress.⁸⁵ The issues of prostitution and trafficking were closely connected to notions of morality.

Tyrkova-Williams appears to have begun publishing under her own name around 1908, a decision which was likely linked to her increasing public profile as a member of the Kadet Central Committee. In addition, women journalists were becoming increasingly prominent through their involvement in the women's liberation movement. Her transition from using a pseudonym to her real name is particularly evident where both names are given in publications. Adverts for subscriptions to the feminist journal

⁸² 'Zhenskii s"ezd', *Russkie vedomosti*, 20 December 1908, No. 295; and 'Zhivoi tovar', *Russkie vedomosti*, 27 April 1910, No. 95, p. 2.

⁸³ *Trudy pervovo vserossiiskogo s"ezda po bor'be s torgom zhenshchinam i ego prichinami proiskhodivshogo v S.-Peterburge s 21 po 25 Aprelia 1910 goda*. Volume I (St Petersburg: Tipolitografiia S.-Peterburgskoi odinochnoi tiurmy, 1911), p. 18.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16 and p. 19.

⁸⁵ Laurie Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 278–280.

Soiuz zhenshchin in 1908 listed Tyrkova-Williams as a contributor under her real name but, on some occasions, included her pseudonym in brackets alongside.⁸⁶ Interestingly, articles in which she used a male pseudonym did not address women's issues. Her decision to abandon her pseudonym and write under her own name could therefore be seen as a form of emancipation and self-definition in line with the values advocated by the women's liberation movement.

Tyrkova-Williams's reputation as a member of the women's liberation movement extended beyond Russia. In 1914, in her capacity as 'one of the leaders in the women's movement', she had been quoted in a number of American newspapers, including *The Sunday Star* (Washington, DC) and *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, following the breakup by police of a planned women's meeting in St Petersburg.⁸⁷ Like Tyrkova-Williams, many British and American women journalists similarly advanced their careers through advocacy journalism, particularly relating to the suffrage cause.⁸⁸

The February Revolution was an important turning event for the movement. On 19 March 1917, the largest women's demonstration in Russia's history took place in Petrograd. Led by Shishkina-Iavein, and the revolutionary Vera Figner, the march was attended by up to 40,000 women.⁸⁹ The following month, in the wake of the demonstration, Tyrkova-Williams was part of a delegation of women who met with Prince L'vov, then head of the Provisional Government, to discuss the issue of women's political rights. Suffrage was officially granted to women in Russia over the age of 20 in July 1917, along with the right to hold political office.

In a draft article Tyrkova-Williams penned in London in 1921, she presented her view on the background and specific characteristics of the Russian women's liberation movement and Shishkina-Iavein's role in leading the March 1917 demonstration:

⁸⁶ *Soiuz zhenshchin* (St Petersburg, 1907-1909).

⁸⁷ 'Russian Police Block Plans for Women's Day', *The Sunday Star*, 5 April 1914, Part Seven, p. 6; and 'Women's Meetings in St. Petersburg Broken Up by Police', *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, 26 April 1914, Part Two, p. 3.

⁸⁸ See Michelle Elizabeth Tusan, *Women Making News: Gender and Journalism in Modern Britain* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press; Chesham, 2005), pp. 8-9; and Maurine Hoffman Beasley and Sheila J. Gibbons, *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism*, 2nd ed. (State College, PA: Strata Pub, 2003), p. 12.

⁸⁹ For a detailed discussion of the 19 March demonstration and the meeting with Prince L'vov, see Ruthchild, *Equality & Revolution*, pp. 226-229.

In Russia the emancipation of women followed a different course from that of Western Europe. We had no militant feminism. From the middle of the XIXth century women in Russia took part in public life and stood much nearer to politics than their Western sisters. From time to time, however, it was necessary to give battle, to fight down the prejudice against women's rights which lingered on even in advanced Russian circles. This had to be done, for instance, at the time of the Revolution of 1917, when the Provisional Government was drafting the municipal and Zemstvo election and determining the franchise for the Constituent Assembly. The question of votes for women had as a matter of fact been already settled by years of preceding work and by the position which the Russian woman had acquired as doctor, administrative employee, nurse and simply as a member of the community. Yet in order to dispel all doubt and hesitation we quickly assembled a delegation of ten of the most prominent women-workers and waited on the Prime Minister, Prince Lvoff, for the purpose of securing to the Russian woman her right to vote. Dr Polixena Shishkina-Yavein was a prominent member of this delegation. But as a militant suffragist she held the view that such negotiations were insufficient. She considered that women must be raised en masse and the voice of the future voters heard; the support of the Soviet must also be obtained. With her impetuous energy she organised a huge women's demonstration after a crowded meeting at the Town Hall. A long procession of women walked through Petrograd to the Taurida Palace, where the Petrograd Council of Workmen and Peasants as yet representing not Bolsheviki but Moderate Socialists, was sitting. Raw March snow fell thickly on the demonstrators, but failed to quench their enthusiasm or the red flame of their placards and banners glowing with feminist and political mottoes. At the head of the procession marched Polixena Yaverin, like a commander leading his troops [sic].⁹⁰

While the purpose of this article when written in 1921 was to raise financial support for Shishkina-Iavein's family and appeal to Western women (see Chapter Two), it is a valuable source for understanding the way Tyrkova-Williams framed the women's liberation movement and her work in it, as well as women's public roles in Russia. Firstly, it emphasises the differences in women's entry into public life in Russia and the West, a fact that shaped women's journalism during this period. Secondly, by likening Shishkina-Iavein to an army commander, Tyrkova-Williams applied the masculine language of war to the movement and its members. Lastly, her description of the

⁹⁰ Untitled draft article by Tyrkova-Williams, 1921. BL, Add. ms. 54476, ff. 8–13.

political climate and institutions in Russia between the 1917 revolutions suggests a nostalgia for these times and helps to frame her later activities after the October Revolution.

While Ruthchild and Novikova discuss certain aspects of Tyrkova-Williams's involvement in the women's liberation movement in more detail in their works on the subject, this context is important for understanding Tyrkova-Williams's work during the revolution and civil wars.⁹¹ For example, her reputation in the West as a leading figure in the Russian women's movement is also likely to have later been beneficial when seeking to publish anti-Bolshevik articles in American and British newspapers after the October Revolution.

Networks, War and Revolution

As well as gaining professional experience, it was during this pre-revolutionary period that Tyrkova-Williams also formed the key personal, political and literary networks that would later prove central to her activities after the October Revolution. Through her involvement with *Osvobozhdenie* at the beginning of the century, for example, she came into contact with Miliukov and Struve, who went on to become leading figures in the Kadet Party and, later, émigré organisations. Kuskova similarly became a lifelong friend.

Tyrkova-Williams's early professional and personal activities were also strongly influenced by her relationship with Harold Williams, whom she met while abroad in 1903/4. Their relationship grew and their movements remained closely linked until Williams's unexpected death in 1928. In 1911, the couple moved to Constantinople after Williams was appointed correspondent there for the *Morning Post*. Tyrkova-Williams remained in the city until March 1912, during which time she sent articles to *Rech'* and other publications.⁹² Her articles were later published in the 1916 collection *Staraia Turtsiia i mladoturki: God v Konstantinopole*.⁹³ During the First World War, Harold Williams worked as a war correspondent. Although officially he was not allowed near the front, he managed to reach it through his network of friends and

⁹¹ See Ruthchild, 'Writing for their Rights', in *An Improper Profession*, pp. 167–187; Novikova, 'Linking Party Politics and Women's Suffrage: The Case of Ariadna Tyrkova'.

⁹² Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 95.

⁹³ Tyrkova-Williams, *Staraia Turtsiia i mladoturki: god v Konstantinopole* (Petrograd: B.M. Bol'fa, 1916).

contacts. Tyrkova-Williams, who was at the time working for All-Russian Union of Cities (a 'public' organisation established in August 1914 to aid the war effort), accompanied him to the frontline on occasion.⁹⁴

The period between February and October 1917 saw a number of changes in the press. As Kenez has observed, upon taking power in March 1917, 'one of the first acts of the Provisional Government was to abolish on March 4 (Old Style) the Central Administration for Press Affairs, which in effect abolished censorship [sic]'.⁹⁵ A number of socialist papers quickly began to appear, including *Pravda*. This period of relative freedom was, however, short-lived. Following the July Days (a spontaneous uprising of soldiers and workers against the Provisional Government) and the perceived growing threat from the Left, the Government re-instated military censorship and closed down many Bolshevik publications.⁹⁶

After the February 1917 Revolution the Kadets formed part of the newly established Provisional Government and between March and May 1917 the party dominated the government. However, the party's position in the government soon came under fire after a promise made by Miliukov, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Allies to continue the war was made public. He subsequently resigned from his post at the beginning of May, leaving the Kadet Party in a weak position.⁹⁷ Rosenberg argues that the only hope for a democratic political outcome was lost when the Kadets failed to work efficiently with the moderate socialists in the coalition government and make significant concessions to the lower classes.⁹⁸ Embracing the right of women to hold political office, Tyrkova-Williams was elected to the Petrograd City Council as a representative of the Kadets in the summer of 1917. She served as a member of the Council's Food Committee, which involved conducting a study of the problem of food distribution.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, *Cheerful Giver*, p. 153. For more on the All-Russian Union of Cities, see Melissa Kirschke Stockdale, *Mobilizing the Russian Nation: Patriotism and Citizenship in the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 113–116.

⁹⁵ Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State*, p. 29.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 30–35.

⁹⁷ William G. Rosenberg, 'The Constitutional Democratic Party (Kadets)' in *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914–1921* ed. by Edward Acton, Vladimir Iu. Cherniaev and William G. Rosenberg (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 256–257

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 256–257.

⁹⁹ Tyrkova-Williams, *Prodovol'stvennaia opasnost'* (Petrograd: Partiia narodnoi svobody, 1917).

Examining the topic of women and pre-revolutionary journalism through the case study of Tyrkova-Williams reveals the complex and often ambiguous nature of women's journalism, and journalism more broadly, during this period. Specifically, it illustrates the close relationship between journalism and political and social activism on the one hand, and literature on the other. It also highlights a number of parallels between the experiences of women from different political groups, notably the gendered nature of their roles in the illegal press and the specific challenges they faced in juggling professional and political activities with family life, as well as some similarities with women journalists in the Western context. The following chapters will examine how women's journalism and experiences in this sphere developed in the years immediately after October 1917 and how they were shaped by, or differed from, pre-revolutionary trends.

Chapter Two: Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams: From Liberalism to Anti-Bolshevism

The October Revolution marked the beginning of a profound change in Tyrkova-Williams's political and journalism career, and everyday life. On 25 November 1917 (12 November O.S.) she stood as a candidate in the Constituent Assembly elections in two provinces (her home province of Novgorod and the province of Ekaterinoslav) but, like the majority of her fellow Kadets, was defeated.¹ Although she had raised the possibility that the Kadets would do badly in the elections as early as July 1917, Tyrkova-Williams had been closely involved with the electoral campaign, giving speeches at public meetings in Petrograd.² She was greatly disillusioned by the electoral process and the political situation in Russia. A few days after the elections, she wrote in her diary:

I can neither write nor speak about the Constituent Assembly. I have no faith in it. There is no parliamentary route that can now put Russia on the right path. Everything is too confused, too dark. And these dark forces are invading, coming together and suffocating Russia.³

¹ Draft article written by Tyrkova-Williams about the elections entitled 'Soiuzniki i uchreditel'noe sobranie. 1917'. The draft is dated 10 June 1919, London. GARF, f. 10230, op. 1, d. 34, ll. 1–5v. It is unclear if this article was ever published, however extracts were published in Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, pp. 141–142. The Kadets received 1,986,601 votes (approximately 4.6 per cent of the overall votes for the country). The Bolsheviks received approximately 23.2 per cent of the votes and the combined SR vote was just over 50 per cent. See Oliver H. Radkey, *Russia Goes to the Polls: The Elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, 1917* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 18–19; and Rex A. Wade, *Revolutionary Russia: New Approaches to the Russian Revolution of 1917* (New York; London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 257–258. The Kadets' poor performance in the elections can be linked in part to the weakening of the party's position in the prior months (see Chapter One).

² Diary entry, 1 July 1917, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 183–184. See also Tyrkova-Williams, 'Soiuzniki i uchreditel'noe sobranie. 1917'; and Rosenberg, *Liberals in The Russian Revolution*, p. 272.

³ Diary entry, 28 November 1917, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 210.

These ‘dark forces’ determined the direction of Tyrkova-Williams’s activities, including her journalism, in the years following the revolution.⁴ While the focus of her political work had previously been the implementation of constitutional democracy in Russia, her main goal soon shifted towards bringing about the collapse of Bolshevik rule. Pursuing this goal would force her to leave her native Russia, but it would also open up new opportunities with regards to using the press as a form of political and social activism and place her at the heart of the Russian émigré community in Britain.

Arranged chronologically and thematically, this chapter seeks to address a series of questions linked to both Tyrkova-Williams’s specific experience and the wider study of women and journalism in the Russian Revolutions and civil wars. It focuses particularly on her journalism and other press activities in the period between the October Revolution and her departure from Russia in March 1918, and the time she spent in Britain during the civil-war years. Firstly, in connection with the question of women’s entry into, or continuation of, press work at the time of the October Revolution, and building on the discussion of Tyrkova-Williams’s pre-revolutionary activities presented in Chapter One, this chapter examines why she chose to engage in press activities and to what extent her understanding of journalism shifted during the period between 1917 and 1926. When she entered journalism in the late 1890s, she viewed it largely as a means to support herself and her two young children. While the financial element remained important to a greater or lesser degree, Tyrkova-Williams’s understanding of journalism was also heavily shaped by professional, political, creative and moral influences and changes throughout her life. The tumultuous years of revolution and civil war both heightened these existing influences and created new pressures, which were in turn reflected in her work.

Secondly, following on from the question of why she chose to carry out press work and how she viewed the role of the journalist, this chapter examines the content and style of her journalism during these years and the range and extent of the roles she held. To examine this area, my analysis will address the following questions. What were the main topics covered in her articles? Did she adapt the tone and style of her articles for different publications, particularly those aimed at a Western readership? When writing

⁴ In addition to Bolshevism, Tyrkova-Williams’s reference to ‘dark forces’ (*temnye sily*) may also have included anarchy. The term was also used at the time to describe rightish/monarchist conspiracies and pro-German groups.

for British and American publications, for example, did she accept or reject the 'women's style' expected by many editors and readers? How typical was her style and choice of subject matter in comparison to other women journalists, both Western and Russian, during this period? Were there literary influences in her journalism? Aside from writing articles, what other functions did she hold in the press?

Thirdly, this chapter focuses on the practicalities of Tyrkova-Williams's press work, including her relationship with editors, remuneration and working methods. In order to address this area, it will examine the following questions. Which newspapers and journals did she publish in and why? How frequently did she publish articles? Did she publish the same articles in different periodicals or did she write specifically for individual publications? How was she able to publish in international publications during these years and did she have any particular methods that helped her to do this? Was she paid for her articles during this period? How important was her relationship with Harold Williams in facilitating her press activities?

Fourthly, in addition to the practical aspects of her work, the content and style of her journalism, and the underpinning rationale of her work, this case study is also interested in the reception of Tyrkova-Williams's journalism and how she was introduced and presented by editors in specific publications. This poses the question of whether particular aspects of her background were emphasised by some editors over others to fit a specific angle, and to what extent her roles in press organs and articles were viewed as gendered, both by her contemporaries and in later scholarship.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly of all, this chapter is concerned with the value of studying Tyrkova-Williams's journalism and what we can learn about her personal experiences of the conflicts through her articles. One of the primary aims of this thesis is to understand how studying the work and experience of women journalists can contribute to our understanding of attitudes towards war, gender, activism and journalism during this period. By viewing the relationship between the public and the private as continuous and interconnected, it is possible to examine Tyrkova-Williams's journalism, diaries and letters to learn more not only about women's experiences of war and revolution, but also those in her wider circle. Stemming from Turton's argument that 'studying the family life of revolutionaries allows a bridge to be built between histories of the revolutionary movement and studies of women's involvement in it', I believe that studying women's journalism and press work during the revolutions and

civil wars similarly contributes to our understanding of women's roles in anti-Bolshevik organisations during this period.⁵

Journalism as Resistance

The immediate response of the Kadets to the events of the October Revolution was fragmented and confused.⁶ They placed considerable faith in the power of existing institutions, notably the Moscow and Petrograd City Dumas.⁷ After the Petrograd City Duma was officially dissolved by the Bolsheviks in December 1917, Tyrkova-Williams attended secret (and by Tyrkova-Williams's account, sometimes futile) meetings held by former members of the council to discuss how best to fight against the Bolsheviks.⁸ Members of the former Provisional Government similarly held underground meetings for some time after the institution ceased to exist. As former government ministers were arrested and conditions became more precarious for the Kadets in Petrograd, some, including Miliukov, moved to Moscow, while others were careful to stay away from their usual party haunts.⁹ On 11 December 1917 (28 November O.S.), the Kadets were the first party to be banned by the Bolsheviks and many of their leaders immediately faced arrest.¹⁰ The Decree on the Press, which had been issued by the People's Commissars of the Russian Republic (*Sovnarkom*) earlier in the month, had already made it difficult for opposition politicians and journalists to operate.¹¹

Despite the threat of arrest, Tyrkova-Williams publically took action against the Bolsheviks through the use of the press. Around the time of the Constituent Assembly elections she began publishing, along with A. S. Izgoev, Ivan Lukash and a group of other right-wing Kadets, a small but outwardly militant anti-Bolshevik newspaper in

⁵ Turton, *Family Networks and the Russian Revolutionary Movement*, p. xix.

⁶ See Rosenberg, 'The Agony of Political Irrelevance: Kadets in Moscow and Petrograd after October', in *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, pp. 263–300.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 266. See also Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia*, p. 263.

⁸ After its dissolution in December 1917, the Petrograd City Council continued to meet secretly for some time. See Tyrkova-Williams, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, pp. 330-331; p. 448.

⁹ Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, p. 265.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 271; Smele, 'Kadets' in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume One, pp. 530–532 (p. 532).

¹¹ 'Dekret o pečati' in *Dekrety Sovetskoi vlasti*, Volume One (Moscow: Gos. Izd-vo polit. literatury, 1957), p. 230. The decree, which was signed by Lenin, was issued on 9 November (27 October O.S.).

Petrograd under the title *Bor'ba* ('The Struggle').¹² Unsurprisingly, the Bolsheviks swiftly confiscated copies of the paper and shut down its printing office after only three issues. Tyrkova-Williams described her involvement in publishing the paper, as well as the methods the Bolsheviks used to shut down the opposition press in her account of the revolution, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*:

In November, during the elections for the Constituent Assembly, the Cadets wished to issue an evening paper, *Borba* (Struggle). I took part in it. We began the paper in a sharply outspoken, oppositional tone. On the very first evening our paper was bought wholesale on the Nevsky. And on the same evening several schoolboys were arrested. It was only on the second day that the Red Guards discovered the printing-office where the *Borba* was being printed, and arrived there in an armed crowd. They broke to pieces the set-up type. They tore to bits a batch of Cadet electoral proclamations and handbills, and spoilt the printing machines with their bayonets [sic].¹³

Notwithstanding the workmen's courage, we issued only three numbers [of *Bor'ba*]. Eventually the Reds came in and placed a sentry in the printing-office. They were stronger than we. The work had to be stopped. *Borba* (the Struggle) was ended [sic].¹⁴

Tyrkova-Williams's account clearly illustrates the use of journalism as an oppositional tool employed by the Kadets. As well as providing a space for the production of the newspaper, the printing office was also a site for producing party ephemera for the elections. When the paper first appeared, the Kadet Party had not yet been banned but, according to the timeframe presented by Tyrkova-Williams, the newspaper, as well as the party's activities, were officially curtailed just a few days later.

Borman gave a slightly different account of events, claiming that the newspaper moved to a new office after it was initially shut down and continued to exist for a short time under other names, including *Svoboda* ('Freedom').¹⁵ While these claims cannot be verified (indeed, as discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, both Borman's book and Tyrkova-Williams's *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk* contain some errors of fact), this episode nevertheless highlights Tyrkova-Williams's organisational role in illegal press activities and the methods employed by the Bolsheviks in countering such efforts.

¹² Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, pp. 142–143.

¹³ Tyrkova-Williams, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, p. 402.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 403.

¹⁵ Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, pp. 142–143.

Tyrkova-Williams later drew attention to the link between the ability of the Bolsheviks to quash underground activities and their own experience of operating in this way before the October Revolution:

The Communists now in power have not forgotten their past conspiratorial training and know how to cope with underground activities. Under their rule nether a human being nor the printed word can be safely smuggled across the Russian border. Under the monarchy this was being done all the time, which greatly facilitated the task of the revolutionaries.¹⁶

Yet, the Bolshevik crackdown on the opposition press in the months immediately after the revolution was also unpredictable and inconsistent. The history of the Kadet-affiliated newspaper *Rech'* illustrates this. Although the paper was closed on 8 November (26 October O.S.), the same day the Bolsheviks seized control of the Winter Palace, it re-emerged three weeks later, on 29 November (16 November O.S.), as *Nasha rech'* ('Our Speech'). In the space of two weeks, the paper appeared under five different titles; the longest running of these was *Nash vek* ('Our Century'), which was issued between December 1917 (November O.S.) and August 1918.¹⁷

Tyrkova-Williams, who had written for *Rech'* before the revolution, continued her association with the paper under its new guises. She was a frequent contributor to *Nash vek*, publishing at least nine articles between December 1917 and March 1918.¹⁸ Among its regular contributors were Dmitrii Vladimirovich Filosofov, the writer, journalist, political activist and son of Anna Filosofova, and the Kadet public figure Petr Iakovlevich Ryss. *Nash vek* covered events of concern to the Kadets, including the arrests of party members. The paper's first issue, which appeared on 13 December (30 November O.S.) 1917, carried an announcement of the arrests of Sofiia Panina, Fedor Fedorovich Kokoshkin, Andrei Ivanovich Shingarev, P. D. Dolgorukov and N. N. Kutler, all prominent Kadet politicians.¹⁹

¹⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Russian Liberalism', *The Russian Review*, 10:1 (1951), pp. 3–14 (p. 8).

¹⁷ *Rech'* was closed by the Bolsheviks immediately after the October Revolution but it quickly reemerged under the following titles: *Nasha rech'*, from 29–30 November; *Svobodnaia rech'*, on 2 December; *Vek*, from 6–7 December; *Novaia rech'*, on 10 December; and *Nash vek*, from 13 December until 3 August 1918.

¹⁸ See Appendix I for a list of Tyrkova-Williams's articles published in *Nash vek*.

¹⁹ *Nash vek*, 13 December 1917 (30 November 1917), No. 1, p. 1.

On 20 January (7 January O.S.) 1918, Kokoshkin and Shingarev, two of the party's founding members and former ministers of the Provisional Government, were murdered by Baltic sailors in the Mariinskaia Hospital, where they had been taken following their arrest and incarceration in the Peter and Paul Fortress in December 1917. The murders had a marked effect on Tyrkova-Williams and caused shock and outrage among the Kadets, prompting some to leave Russia for fear of their own safety.²⁰ Tyrkova-Williams wrote two articles for *Nash vek* commemorating their deaths.²¹ It was at this time that she also privately expressed her need to leave Petrograd, confiding in her diary that it felt as if she was living in dream-like state where people, conversations, streets all appeared ghostly.²² Moscow offered some (limited) respite during these months, however.²³

As political parties were banned and the Constituent Assembly was dispersed in January 1918, the newspaper office (whether underground or still tolerated) became the main space for opposition groups to discuss politics after the revolution. Tyrkova-Williams recalled a small meeting in *Rech'*'s editorial office in February 1918 at which contributors were 'talking, as usual, about the mysterious negotiations of Brest [Litovsk], about Germans, about the Allies, and what they were thinking, and whether we could succeed without their support [sic]'.²⁴ Such meetings were also spaces in which public and private concerns intersected. In the middle of their discussion of the most pressing political matters of the day, one of the editors reportedly turned to another pressing issue:

'I am hungry, you know.'

Other people present looked at each other smiling sadly and shrugging their shoulders.

'Hungry? Well, I am always hungry myself.'

'I also...'

²⁰ Tyrkova-Williams wrote about the murder of Kokoshkin and Shingarev in her account of the revolution, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, pp. 363–369, and in a diary entry from 27 January 1919. See *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 212–213. The Kadet Party's main press organ at the time, *Nash vek* carried articles about the murders for several weeks.

²¹ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Bol'shaia sovest'', *Nash vek*, 22 (11) January 1918, No. 6 (31), p. 2, and 'F.F. Kokoshkin', *Nash vek*, 25 (12) January 1918, No. 7 (32), p. 2.

²² Diary entry, 27 January 1918, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 212–213.

²³ Diary entry, 27 December 1917, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 211.

²⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, p. 446.

‘I too...’

And then we began talking at once about our editorial affairs, as if ashamed of this outburst. The man who started the hunger talk was a journalist with a well-known name, still earning plenty of money as the paper continued to appear, although at intervals.²⁵

This episode illustrates the tension and intersection between public and private concerns at the time. Conversations critical of the new government were now held in private spaces. Yet the site of the *Rech'* (or *Nash vek*) office was further complicated as it was still tolerated by the Bolsheviks and allowed to fulfil a public function. This conversation additionally highlights the overlap between professional, paid journalism and journalism as form of political activism and moral duty. Despite the uncertain future of *Rech'*, its journalists continued to write. By deciding to include such a conversation in her book on the first year of the revolution, Tyrkova-Williams provided a more personal, nuanced account of the situation affecting opposition journalists during these months.

In the same way that Bolshevik publications at this time were staffed by those who were connected to one another through party work and/or various party members, Tyrkova-Williams referred to the editor of *Nash vek*, I. I. Ivanov, as a friend in her account of this period. She described the anxiety felt by the paper's editors and their surprise and unease that the paper was allowed to continue when almost all other opposition publications were being shut down:

In February [1918] again all the papers were prohibited. But for some reason the chief Cadet paper, *Nash Viek* (the former *Rech*) [sic], was still allowed to appear. This made the editorial staff feel very uncomfortable. Many of them thought that it was wrong to benefit by the right of appearing, no one knew why, when all the other organs of Russian thought were condemned to silence. Still it was decided to continue the paper. This was the only tribune from which the voice of reason and conscience could be heard. Under what conditions the staff worked may be judged from the fact that when on the eve of my departure from Russia, in March, I went to *Nash Viek*, to which I regularly contributed, and took with me a short paragraph on a women's meeting at which Mme Kollontay, a zealous Bolshevik leader and Minister of Public Welfare, spoke, the editor, a friend of

²⁵ Ibid., p. 446. Tyrkova-Williams referenced similar conversations about hunger with journalists working for *Nash vek* in a diary entry from 27 January 1918. See *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 213.

mine, said, “It is very interesting, but if we publish it we shall have the sailors coming here with bayonets”. And he was right. All the articles were considered in that light: Would the Reds come with their bayonets or not? [sic].²⁶

Reflecting on the difficult conditions in which opposition journalists were operating during these months, Tyrkova-Williams described them as possessing ‘an unyielding stubbornness with the courage of real soldiers’.²⁷ Like soldiers, she understood the role of the journalist as fulfilling a duty, albeit in this case their duty was to lead ‘an unequal and obdurate struggle against the Bolsheviks, refuting their errors and exposing their crimes, the falseness of their ideals and the lunacy or treachery of their leaders’.²⁸

In addition, while it does indeed appear that Tyrkova-Williams’s piece on the women’s meeting and Kollontai was not published in the paper, this episode highlights her continued interest in women’s issues. American women journalists visiting Russia at the time were similarly interested in Kollontai. Bryant, for example, met with her on several occasions while in Russia in 1917 and 1918. She wrote a piece comparing Kollontai and Panina’s tenures as People’s Commissar for State Charity and assistant minister of State Welfare, respectively which was later re-published as a chapter in her book *Six Red Months in Russia*.²⁹

The increasing hostility of the Bolsheviks towards members of the Kadet Party and their affiliated publications led Tyrkova-Williams, Harold Williams and Tyrkova-Williams’s daughter, Sofiia, to reluctantly leave Russia for Great Britain in March 1918. The threat against Tyrkova-Williams immediately prior to her departure was apparently

²⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, p. 405.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 406.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 406.

²⁹ Bryant, ‘Two Ministers of Welfare’ in *Six Red Months in Russia*, pp. 122–134. Bryant praised Kollontai highly in her piece and clearly considered her to be a far more superior candidate for the role of welfare minister. In May 1917, Panina became the only woman member of the Provisional Government as assistant minister of State Welfare. She held this role until late July 1917, when she became assistant minister for education. See Adele Lindenmeyr, ‘The First Soviet Political Trial: Countess Sofia Panina before the Petrograd Revolutionary Tribunal’, *The Russian Review*, 60:4 (2001), pp. 505–525 (p. 509). Kollontai was People’s Commissar for State Charity between October 1917 and February 1918, when she resigned in protest against the proposed signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. See Smele, ‘Kollontai (Domontovic) Aleksandra Mikhailovna (19 March 1872–9 March 1952)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the “Russian” Civil Wars*, Volume One, pp. 593–594 (p. 594).

so great that she slept in a different location each night to avoid arrest.³⁰ Thanks to Harold Williams, she travelled as a British citizen, a fact that would have undoubtedly facilitated her ability to leave Russia. According to her son, Arkadii, nobody paid attention to the fact that Sofiia did not have a British passport.³¹ Sailing from Murmansk to Newcastle, the journey took a week. It was a dangerous passage and there were reports of German submarines along the route. From Newcastle they completed their journey to London, which, unbeknown to Tyrkova-Williams, would become her main home for the best part of the next two decades.³²

Entering the International Press

The October Revolution and civil wars, and Tyrkova-Williams's immigration to Britain more specifically, opened up opportunities for her to enter the international press arena. Yet, while the American and British press provided her with opportunities that Western women journalists normally found more difficult to access, her journalism was driven by ideological rather than commercial or professional aims. In May 1918, shortly after arriving in Britain from Russia, she confided in her diary that she considered a day 'wasted' if she did nothing to help the fight against Bolshevism.³³ She believed it was imperative to inform the West (and in particular the British) of what was 'really' happening in Russia.³⁴ Thus, she framed her activities during these years as a moral and public duty, a concept she also applied when appealing to Allied governments to intervene on behalf of the anti-Bolshevik Whites in the civil wars, whilst simultaneously showing great initiative by harnessing the international press and establishing her reputation as an authority on the situation to fulfil her aims.

After arriving in London in the spring of 1918, Tyrkova-Williams soon found herself at the heart not only of the growing Russian émigré community, but also influential

³⁰ Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 143.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 153-157. It is unclear whether Tyrkova-Williams and Williams registered their marriage shortly before leaving Russia in order to facilitate their travel to Britain. Kaznina claims they did so but does not provide evidence and other sources are inconclusive or, in the case of Tyrkova-Williams and Borman, silent on the subject. See Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?* pp. 60-61 for more on the status of Tyrkova-Williams's relationship with Williams.

³³ Diary entry, 19 May 1918, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 221-223.

³⁴ Kaznina, *Russkie v Anglii*, p. 72.

British political and literary circles. While these British connections were first made in large part thanks to Harold Williams's contacts, Tyrkova-Williams was instrumental in maintaining these networks and had a natural talent for doing so. Her son, Arkadii, noted that despite knowing few people (British or Russian) when she arrived in London, her apartment soon became a 'Russian centre', where the most pressing questions of the day were discussed.³⁵

The extent of Tyrkova-Williams's contacts in Britain is evident from her letters and diaries from this period, which note frequent visits to their home by friends, Kadet colleagues and other supporters of the fight against Bolshevism. On one particular day in June 1918, she noted that she had received people at her house from 11 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night.³⁶ Among the visitors that day was the former Russian Prime Minister Aleksandr Kerensky, who had just arrived in Britain after fleeing Russia. His arrival in London was initially kept secret by the Russian community, however the news reached the British press on 26 June, after Kerensky attended the Labour Party Conference.³⁷ Other guests included Konstantin Dmitrievich Nabokov, head of the Russian Imperial Embassy in London and brother of the Kadet leader Vladimir Dmitrievich Nabokov, and an unnamed singer.³⁸ By the end of the day she was exhausted (*vyzhata kak limon*; 'like a squeezed lemon') by the constant stream of callers and their demands. What more, she had not had a chance to finish the article she was working on.³⁹

The conflict between Tyrkova-Williams's reputation as a public figure and host in Britain and finding the time to write was a recurring theme in her diaries and letters from this period.⁴⁰ This tension also highlights how public and private desires and demands intersected in her life. Many of her visitors were not only colleagues but also long-standing friends. In addition, while much of the writing she referred to was

³⁵ Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 162.

³⁶ Diary entry, 19 June 1918, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 224–225.

³⁷ See Jonathan D. Smele, "'Mania Grandiosa' and 'The Turning Point in World History': Kerensky in London in 1918", *Revolutionary Russia*, 20:1 (2007), pp. 1–34.

³⁸ Staff at the Russian Imperial Embassy in London refused to serve the new Soviet government after the October Revolution. The embassy continued to exist until Britain established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1924.

³⁹ Diary entry, 19 June 1918, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 224–225.

⁴⁰ See letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Harold Williams, 10 June 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 332–333.

connected to her political work, she was also keen to find time to work on her literary projects. She had previously expressed this inner conflict in her diary in January 1918, declaring that she was ‘sick of politics’ and wanted only to focus on the biography of Pushkin she had just decided to write.⁴¹ Her public persona also appears to have masked a sadness and longing for Russia that she only privately expressed. In August 1918 she wrote, ‘How I wish to drop everything and return to Russia to see all of my nearest and dearest. Especially Arkadii.’⁴² Arkadii initially remained in Russia, where he was working as an undercover agent for the Whites in the Soviet government.⁴³

Commemorative articles published after Tyrkova-Williams’s death in 1962 highlighted her networks and natural hospitality. Anita Norman, Assistant Editor of the *Russian Review* at the time, noted that ‘at the Williams’s house [in London] one could meet anyone from a British Cabinet Minister or high officials of the Foreign Office to Russian Metropolitans, Anglican bishops, or [American businessman and member of the 1917 Special Diplomatic Commission to Russia] Charles Crane’.⁴⁴ An article published in the Russian émigré journal *Russkaia mysl’* a year after Tyrkova-Williams’s death similarly referred to her ‘talent’ of drawing interesting and influential people to her wherever she went, whether in St Petersburg, London, the south of France or America.⁴⁵ Her natural ability to form and maintain creative and political networks undoubtedly helped Tyrkova-Williams to establish herself as an international journalist and also enabled her to garner support for her other media activities connected to the anti-Bolshevik White movement.

Tyrkova-Williams’s initial arrival in Britain also corresponded with the emergence of her role as an eyewitness to the events in Russia. As a journalist who had experienced the events of the revolution first-hand, she was well placed to describe events to a British public who knew little about the situation. In July 1918, one of her articles was published in *The Evening Telegraph and Post*, a Dundee-based newspaper and the ‘most widely circulated evening paper in Scotland outside of Edinburgh or Glasgow’. It introduced her as follows:

⁴¹ Diary entry, 5 January 1918, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 212.

⁴² Diary entry, 2 August 1918, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 225–227.

⁴³ Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks in Power: The First Year of Soviet Rule in Petrograd* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008), p. 320.

⁴⁴ Norman, ‘Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams’, p. 279.

⁴⁵ ‘Pervaia godovshchina konchiny A. V. Tyrkovoï-Vil’iams’, *Russkaia mysl’*, 1963, No. 1943.

Madame Ariadna Tyrkova, the writer of this article, is a well-known Russian authoress, publicist, and novelist, many years member of the Cadet Party Central Committee, and one of the few women candidates to the Constituent Assembly. Having recently arrived from Petrograd, she is qualified to write on current events in Russia [sic].⁴⁶

This introduction indicates that the newspaper's editors judged Tyrkova-Williams's authority to report on the situation in Russia not only on her status as an eyewitness, but also on her reputation as a public figure in her home country and in certain British political and literary circles. However, while the paper highlighted her political standing, it additionally emphasised her literary background as a writer and novelist and drew attention to her gender and uniqueness as a woman politician. Tyrkova-Williams's husband, Harold Williams also wrote (infrequently) for the paper while he was still in Russia in 1917 and early 1918 and it is likely that he facilitated the publication of her article through his contacts.⁴⁷ Aside from a review of her book *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, it does not appear that the paper published any further articles by Tyrkova-Williams.⁴⁸

In terms of the tone and content of her July 1918 article, Tyrkova-Williams painted a damning picture of Bolshevik Russia, which was optimistically (and somewhat threateningly) entitled 'The Come-Back of Russia'. She expressed both scorn and pity for the 'average', uneducated Russians who, according to Tyrkova-Williams, thought they could solve the country's problems in their own way. Charting the revolution from their perspective, she contrasted people's expectations with what she observed to be the brutal realities of everyday life after the revolution:

Not only did life not become more reasonable, more humane, gentler and juster, but the whole country was turned into a realm of shades where all but a small handful of usurpers are crushed under a growing burden of anarchy. All classes are enduring bitter privations. In Petrograd almost all the factories are closed down [...] Banks have been closed since December [...]

⁴⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Come Back of Russia', *The Evening Telegraph and Post*, 2 July 1918, p. 2.

⁴⁷ Identified articles written by Harold Williams for the paper include 'The New Spirit in the Russian Army', *The Evening Telegraph and Post*, 13 July 1917, p. 3, and 'Released Prisoners Forged', *The Evening Telegraph and Post*, 22 February 1918, p. 5.

⁴⁸ 'How Kerensky Missed His Chance', *The Evening Telegraph and Post*, 31 October 1919, p. 4.

By referring to the collapse of private enterprises and the banks, Tyrkova-Williams was playing into the fears of the British public. She also drew attention to another contentious issue that had a direct impact on Britain, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and Russia's decision to pull out of the war with Germany. In the article, which was published while Britain was still in the throes of war, she framed ordinary Russians as contrite for having supported the withdrawal:

Through bitter experience they have now learned why the army was needed, why it was necessary to continue the war with Germany [...] Thirst for order, a yearning for the re-establishment of the state, despair at the thought of German domination – these are the feelings that are gaining ground in Russia.

This sense of contrition was further emphasised by the article's sub-heading, 'Lessons a Nation Has Learned'. Yet despite its political agenda and the fact that Tyrkova-Williams's political and literary standing was emphasised in the introduction, the article also conformed to British journalistic tradition of the period in that it highlighted the impact of the revolution on people's domestic, private lives, a sphere typically, albeit problematically, associated with women and women's journalism.⁴⁹ Discussing rationing, she noted that items such as bread and butter were now distributed by Bolshevik Committees and that, when she left Petrograd, 'the [bread] ration was an eighth of a pound per day, and the bread mixed with chopped straw was almost uneatable'. In order to give a sense of the impact of inflation, she provided examples of the prices (and scarcity) of everyday items associated with women, noting, 'women's boots cost 200 roubles (£20); a yard of chintz or print costs 10 roubles. More than that, their free sale is forbidden now [sic]'. Her decision to highlight these specific objects can be viewed as an attempt to draw attention to the day-to-day effects of war on women, notably the difficulties of obtaining goods and managing the household budget. This in turn illustrates how women's journalism can also be used as a source to examine the everyday experience of women during this period of conflict.

Tyrkova-Williams's account of life in Petrograd sheds further light on her personal experience and that of countless other women. As is evident from her diaries written in

⁴⁹ Kaufman and Williams, *Women and War*, p. 9.

late 1917 and early 1918, she had experienced first hand the hardships of the revolution and was particularly aware of the challenges women faced in trying to feed their families. Writing in her diary in January 1918, she noted that food dominated most people's thoughts and that 'as it has been through the ages', women were particularly preoccupied by such worries.⁵⁰ Referencing the Western context, Joyce Kaufman and Kristen Williams argue that 'as a country moves toward war [...] a government begins to make the "guns and butter" economic trade-offs that are necessary for a society at war, the social safety net upon which many women depend is removed, leaving them vulnerable while also relatively powerless'.⁵¹ Applying this argument to Tyrkova-Williams's article, it can be seen to indirectly provide a voice for the 'vulnerable' and 'relatively powerless' women caught between the end of the First World War and the beginning of the civil war.

Yet, while Tyrkova-Williams's article reveals information about women's experiences of the revolution, including her own, and provides an insight into her understanding of journalism as a means of turning public opinion firmly away from the Bolsheviks, its accuracy must be considered in light of its agenda. Although it goes without saying that the piece is unashamedly biased against the Bolsheviks, it does contain a substantial amount of factual, if sometimes exaggerated, information. By the time her article was published, the process of nationalising industry was in full swing and banks had been raided of their valuables by the party.⁵² In the spring of 1918, a policy known as 'the food-supply dictatorship', which focused on requisitioning food stocks and 'unifying and disciplining all state agencies dealing with food supply', had also been introduced.⁵³ It must be noted, however, that the Provisional Government had introduced bread rationing in Russia in March 1917, before the Bolsheviks seized power.⁵⁴ At the beginning of September 1917 (again prior to the Bolshevik seizure of

⁵⁰ Diary entry, 27 January 1918, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 212–216 (p. 213).

⁵¹ Kaufman and Williams, *Women and War*, pp. 2–3.

⁵² Sean McMeekin, *History's Greatest Heist: The Looting of Russia by the Bolsheviks* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).

⁵³ Lars T. Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia, 1914–1921* (Berkeley, CA; Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 126–128.

⁵⁴ Mauricio Borrero, 'Communal Dining and State Cafeterias in Moscow and Petrograd, 1917–1921' in *Food in Russian History and Culture*, ed. by Musya Glants and Joyce Stetson Toomre (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), p. 162.

power), the daily ration was drastically reduced from three-quarters of a *funt* (pound) of bread to one-quarter of a *funt*.⁵⁵

Comparing the prices she provided for the period immediately before she left Russia, it appears that they are in line with other accounts from this time. In a diary entry from 22 December 1917 (O.S.), Nikita Okunev, a shipping company employee and Moscow resident in his fifties who kept a fascinating and detailed diary during the years of war and revolution in Russia, gave the price of women's boots as 200–250 rubles. He recorded the price of an *arshin* (approximately 27 inches) of printed cloth as 2–4 rubles and the daily ration of bread as one-quarter of a *funt* per person, the same as it had been in September 1917.⁵⁶ Okunev noted a further deterioration in the bread ration in February 1918, when he observed that instead of bread, he received an eighth of a *funt* of rye crackers (*rzhanye sukhari*).⁵⁷ The latter ration was closer to the amount given by Tyrkova-Williams in her article for *The Evening Telegraph and Post*. Okunev's record of the average wages of workers during this period also provides a sense of the inflation of the goods described by Tyrkova-Williams. In April 1918, he noted that a skilled male worker received 18 rubles for an eight-hour day, while a woman worker of the same category received 15 rubles 30 kopecks. Unskilled workers received 10.65 rubles and 9.35 rubles, respectively.⁵⁸ By these accounts, the price of a pair of women's boots was the equivalent of between 10 and 25 days' wages for a worker.

With regards to genre, the article contains elements of reportage (particularly relating to Tyrkova-Williams's first-hand experience of the price of goods in Petrograd) but does not fully embody this style. Instead it is more representative of editorial or advocacy journalism from this period. While Tyrkova-Williams's credentials to write such a piece were emphasised by the paper's editors, she made no attempt to mask her lack of objectivity.

Another eyewitness-style account published by Tyrkova-Williams in a British publication in January and February 1919 similarly addressed the experience of women during the time of conflict. In the two-part article published in *The Englishwoman*, an

⁵⁵ Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia*, p. 65.

⁵⁶ N. P. Okunev, *Dnevnik Moskvicha, 1917–1920* (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1997), p. 120. The Russian pound, or *funt*, and *arshin* are obsolete Russian units of measurement.

⁵⁷ Diary entry from 3 March/18 February 1918, Okunev, *Dnevnik Moskvicha*, p. 155.

⁵⁸ Diary entry from 28/15 April, Okunev, *Dnevnik Moskvicha*, p. 173

English-language journal established to ‘promote the enfranchisement of women’, Tyrkova-Williams described meeting with soldiers from the 1st Petrograd Women’s Battalion.⁵⁹ Following the February Revolution, the Provisional Government had given authorisation for the creation of segregated women’s units. The first and most famous of these was the 1st Russian Women’s Battalion of Death, which was commanded by Mariia Leontievna Bochkareva, a peasant woman from Siberia.⁶⁰ Although this battalion saw some frontline service, its primary function was to shame non-combatant men into joining the army. By the autumn of 1917, the fate of the women’s units was uncertain. Nevertheless, the Department of Organization and Service of Troops was set to send another battalion, the 1st Petrograd Women’s Battalion, which had recently completed its combat training, to the front on 7 November (25 October O.S.) 1917. The battalion never saw frontline service, however, as events in Petrograd meant they were instead sent to defend the Winter Palace and members of the Provisional Government against the Bolsheviks on the eve of the revolution.⁶¹

As the Provisional Government surrendered, the women soldiers were ordered to lay down their weapons. They were subsequently taken to the barracks of the Pavlovskii Regiment before being transferred to the barracks of the neutral Grenadierskii Regiment. Following an intervention from members of the British mission in Russia, including Lady Georgina Buchanan, the wife of the British ambassador to Russia, Sir George Buchanan, and the British military attaché General Alfred Knox, the women were released by the Bolsheviks. While some left immediately, others returned to their camp at Levashovo. Following calls to disarm, a number of the women soldiers at Levashovo put up a resistance but they were ultimately disbanded.⁶²

Tyrkova-Williams travelled to meet the group of women soldiers stationed at Levashovo in her capacity as a member of the Petrograd City Council just a few days after the October Revolution. Her article for *The Englishwoman* therefore provides an account of the 1st Petrograd Women’s Battalion’s defence of the Winter Palace and the events that followed from the perspective of those who chose to resist disbandment.

⁵⁹ Tyrkova-Williams, ‘The Women’s Battalion’, Part One, *The Englishwoman*, No. 121, Vol. XL, January 1919, pp. 4–8, and ‘The Women’s Battalion’, Part Two, *The Englishwoman*, No. 122, Vol. XLI, February 1919, pp. 60–64.

⁶⁰ Mariia Bochkareva, *Yashka. My Life as Peasant Officer and Exile* (New York: F. A. Stokes Co., 1919).

⁶¹ Stoff, *They Fought for the Motherland*, pp. 150–151.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 157–159.

Although her piece was not published in the journal until over a year after the meeting took place, it was originally written in Russian in June 1918 shortly after Tyrkova-Williams had first arrived in London. It did not appear in print in Russian however until 1972, a decade after her death.⁶³ As examined later in this chapter, reusing and translating articles from Russian into English (and, less commonly, from English into Russian) for publication in different newspapers and journals were common working methods employed by Tyrkova-Williams during the early civil-war years.

In the 1919 article for *The Englishwoman*, Tyrkova-Williams specifically drew attention to the discrimination and sexual violence some of the women in the battalion were alleged to have faced at the hands of the Red Guards during the Bolshevik takeover of the Winter Palace. Describing a conversation overheard on a train to Petrograd just three days after the revolution, she gave the following account:

In a hushed voice, with furtive glances around, people related to one another details of the shooting, instances of cruelty, the number of victims. A soldier angrily and vindictively defended the Bolsheviks when, all at once, an indignant woman's voice broke out: 'Why do you defend them? What did they do to the women soldiers? They threw fifteen of them into the Neva, and how many of them did they outrage? How dare they do it? It was worse than the Germans – worse than any heathen!'

There were tears in her voice and her eyes flashed wrathfully. The soldier obstinately replied: 'And what were women doing at the Winter Palace defending the minister capitalists? Is that women's business? It serves them right!'⁶⁴

However, as Stoff has shown, such reports were largely based on rumours and misinformation and it is therefore difficult to establish what actually happened. Nevertheless, the answer Tyrkova-Williams recorded from the male soldier implies that some considered sexual violence to be acceptable given the 'unfeminine' behaviour

⁶³ Tyrkova-Williams originally wrote a draft of the article in Russian in June 1918. See 'Zhenskii batal'on', London, 16 June 1918, GARF, f. 10230, op. 1, d. 33, l. 36. The original Russian version was published in the US-based émigré publication *Russkaia mysl'* in 1972, a decade after Tyrkova-Williams's death. See Tyrkova-Williams, 'Zhenskii batal'on (iz proshlogo)', *Russkaia mysl'*, 19 October 1972, No. 2917, pp. 6–7, and 26 October 1972, No. 2918, pp. 6–7.

⁶⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Women's Battalion', Part One, p. 5.

demonstrated by the women.⁶⁵ In this context, the word ‘outrage’ (*nadrugat’sia*) is used as a euphemism for rape.

Although the women and the Commanding officer to whom Tyrkova-Williams claimed to have spoken denied any instances of sexual violence, the women soldiers certainly experienced discrimination as a result of their gender. Unlike a number of contemporary and even some more recent accounts, however, Tyrkova-Williams was careful not to portray the women as cowardly or as helpless victims.⁶⁶ When describing meeting the soldiers at Levashovo, she observed that far from finding the women ‘frightened and submissive’, she was ‘astonished at the keen, protesting, almost domineering, tone in which they addressed themselves to their conquerors’.⁶⁷

The women soldiers were a source of fascination in the West and a popular subject for journalists, who, as Stoff highlights, ‘quickly recognized the sensational value of such a striking phenomenon’.⁶⁸ The American journalist Louise Bryant, who travelled to Russia in August 1917 to report on events there, wrote that she had already ‘heard so much about them’ before she left America.⁶⁹ Like Tyrkova-Williams, Bryant spent time with some of the women and later described their meetings in her account of this period, *Six Red Months in Russia*.⁷⁰ Bessie Beatty, another American woman journalist who worked for the *San Francisco Bulletin*, similarly visited and wrote about the women’s battalion. Her account, which was initially published in the *Bulletin*, was later included in her book (based on her articles) *The Red Heart of Russia*.⁷¹

Comparing Tyrkova-Williams’s article on the women’s battalion with accounts by Western women journalists reveals the different biases and agendas that shaped

⁶⁵ Stoff, *They Fought for the Motherland*, p. 151.

⁶⁶ See Stoff, *They Fought for the Motherland*, p. 157, for a discussion of the historiography on this subject.

⁶⁷ Tyrkova-Williams, ‘The Women’s Battalion’, Part One, pp. 4–8.

⁶⁸ Stoff, *They Fought for the Motherland*, p. 4.

⁶⁹ Bryant, *Six Red Months in Russia*, p. 210.

⁷⁰ After returning to Russia in early 1918, Bryant wrote thirty-two articles on her time in Russia, which she sold to the Philadelphia Public Ledger. The articles appeared in book form as *Six Red Months in Russia* the same year. See ‘Biographical Sketch’, Guide to the Louise Bryant Papers Ms. 1840, Yale University Library.

<<http://drs.library.yale.edu/HLTransformer/HLTransServlet?stylename=yul.ead2002.xhtml.xsl&pid=mss a.ms.1840&clear-stylesheet-cache=yes>> [Accessed 12 February 2017]; Bryant, *Six Red Months in Russia*.

⁷¹ Beatty, *The Red Heart of Russia*, pp. 90-114.

reporting on this topic. It also provides a rare example of Russian and Western women journalists writing on the same topic for international publications. While Tyrkova-Williams highlighted the alleged brutality of the Red Guards towards the women soldiers, Bryant, who was sympathetic to the Bolshevik cause, painted the male soldiers in a different light. Having heard rumours about the mistreatment of women soldiers by Red Guards on the night the Bolsheviks took the Winter Palace, Bryant set out to find the truth. After finding one woman, a poor, young dressmaker named 'Kira Volakettnova', who had been in hospital from injuries sustained on the night in question, Bryant met with her and recorded her story:

'We were arguing with soldiers of the Pavlovsk regiment. A very big soldier and I had a terrible fight. We screamed at each other and finally he got so mad that he pushed me and I fell out of the window. Then he ran downstairs and all the other soldiers ran downstairs [...] The big soldier cried like a baby because he had hurt me and he carried me all the way to the hospital and came to see me every day'.⁷²

In recounting Kira's version of events, Bryant drew attention to the Red Guards' humanity over their violence. She also described how, by their own accounts, many of the women had been duped into joining the battalions and that as a result they welcomed the Bolsheviks. She drew attention to class tensions within the battalions, noting that one group of women soldiers described their horror when 13 'aristocrats' from their battalion left to join the Cossacks after they were disbanded.⁷³

Bryant and Tyrkova-Williams's varying accounts reflect the different groups of women soldiers to whom they had spoken. While Bryant focused on working class, pro-Bolshevik women soldiers who had already left the battalion, Tyrkova-Williams met with women at Levashovo who were refusing to stand down and, after no longer being permitted to fight on the Russian front, were determined to join the British Army. According to her son, Arkadii Borman, Tyrkova-Williams even became friendly with some of the women soldiers who opposed the Bolshevik takeover and helped them to escape to the Don region in southern Russia by providing them with civilian clothes and other assistance. Some of them subsequently joined the anti-Bolshevik Volunteer Army, which was formed in November 1917 and commanded by the former Tsarist General

⁷² Bryant, *Six Red Months in Russia*, pp. 213–214.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

Mikhail Vasil'evich Alekseev.⁷⁴ This account is supported by Tyrkova-Williams's article for *The Englishwoman*, in which she briefly noted that some of the disbanded women soldiers used her house a place to change out of their army uniforms.⁷⁵

These contrasting accounts of the women's battalion demonstrate the ways in which journalists, both Russian and Western, shaped their reports to fit their ideological beliefs and wider agenda. By choosing to include the testimonies of particular women, Tyrkova-Williams and Bryant created two different narratives in which the Bolsheviks were monsters or saviours, respectively. With regards to Tyrkova-Williams, her article for *The Englishwoman* would have been aimed at directing British public opinion, in this case middle-class British women, against the Bolsheviks. Although published over a year after the events had taken place, given the West's fascination with the Russian women soldiers, it is likely that the choice of subject (and eyewitness perspective) would have proved extremely popular with the journal's readership. Tyrkova-Williams's references to women soldiers wishing to join the British Army and to the role played by Lady Buchanan in securing their release from the Bolsheviks further add weight to this argument.

In terms of the timing of its publication, the article would have also sat well with the on-going attempts by some Russian émigrés, including Tyrkova-Williams, to lobby for Allied military intervention on behalf of the anti-Bolshevik Whites. By January 1919, Britain had already shown considerable commitment to supporting intervention in the Russian civil wars.⁷⁶ As Alston has observed, convincing the British government and public to continue this support was an important priority for anti-Bolshevik Russian politicians.⁷⁷ Finally, it is also important to note the fact that it appeared in print shortly after Beatty and Bryants' books were published. Although different in content and perspective, there are similarities in terms of style in both accounts. Both can be

⁷⁴ Borman, *A. V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 142. Many opponents of the Bolsheviks fled to the Don region in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution with the hope of gaining the support of the Don Cossacks and building up troops to fight the Bolsheviks. See Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars*, p. 35.

⁷⁵ Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Women's Battalion', Part Two, p. 63.

⁷⁶ See Alston, 'British Journalism and the Campaign for Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1918–20', *Revolutionary Russia*, 20:1 (2007), pp. 35–49. Although, as Smele notes, it must be remembered that the British initially sent some troops to Russia with the permission of the Bolsheviks in an attempt to safeguard Russian interests from the Germans after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (see Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars*, pp. 46–47), thereafter intervention became distinctly anti-Bolshevik in purpose.

⁷⁷ Alston, 'The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee in London, 1919–1924', p. 6.

described as reportage. However, while all of Bryant's articles from Russia adhered to this genre, Tyrkova-Williams's journalism from this period was written in a variety of styles, as her articles for the American daily newspaper *The Christian Science Monitor* (hereafter the *Monitor*) illustrate (see below).

In addition to publishing in the British press, Tyrkova-Williams also wrote two books in English about the revolution and civil wars. The first, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, was published in London in 1919. It received modest attention in the British press and was reviewed favourably by publications including *The Times Literary Supplement* (*TLS*).⁷⁸ The *TLS* observed that:

A connected account of the first phase of the Russian revolution has been badly needed. Up until now the revolution has mainly been treated in articles and pamphlets, which are not sufficient to give the reader a clear picture of the actual course of events and of the underlying causes that led from liberty to Bolshevism.⁷⁹

The book also brought welcome financial help. In a letter to Williams dated 13 June 1919, Tyrkova-Williams noted that she was owed £50 from Macmillan, the publisher of *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*.⁸⁰ The second of Tyrkova-Williams's books to be published during the civil-war period was *Hosts of Darkness*, a romantic, semi-autobiographical novel she co-wrote with Williams. Published in 1921 in London, the novel was set during the first years of the revolution and told the story of Katia, a Russian nurse, and Charles Ellis, a former British officer turned journalist who finds himself in Russia during the civil wars. It goes without saying that Ellis is based on Williams. However, while the novel has a clear moral and propagandistic purpose, Kaznina has questioned whether the Williamses wrote and published this book partly for financial reasons as Williams was out of work for some time after returning from Russia in 1920.⁸¹ Again Tyrkova-Williams originally wrote at least part of the original

⁷⁸ 'From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 6 November 1919, No. 929, p. 618.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 618.

⁸⁰ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Williams, 13 June 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 333–335.

⁸¹ Kaznina, *Literatura russkogo zarubezh'ia*, pp. 298–317.

draft of the novel in Russian.⁸² Like all of her literary and journalistic efforts during the civil-war period, these two books served as propaganda for the anti-Bolshevik Whites and were deliberately published in English in order to reach a specific audience.

The Christian Science Monitor

While Tyrkova-Williams published a handful of articles in the British press, her most significant and long-standing relationship with an English-language publication was with the *Monitor*, which had been established in Boston, Massachusetts in 1908 by Mary Baker Eddy, the controversial 87-year-old founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist.⁸³ Although not exclusively a religious publication, it contained a daily religious article and its net revenues were ‘turned over to The Christian Science Board of Directors’.⁸⁴ Eddy is said to have established the paper in response to the ‘yellow’ or tabloid press of the day.⁸⁵

Between August 1918 and May 1920, Tyrkova-Williams was named as the author of 25 articles for the paper and it is highly likely that more of her articles were published without her byline.⁸⁶ When she began writing for the paper, its circulation was at an all-time high of 123,000. Although a subsequent legal case beginning in 1919 drastically reduced circulation to approximately 30,000, the *Monitor* still provided Tyrkova-Williams with her largest readership during the civil-war period.⁸⁷

⁸² Draft extract from *Hosts of Darkness* written in Russian, ‘August 1920–May 1921, England’, GARF, f. 10230, op. 1, d. 82, l. 37. The extract does not appear in the final English novel.

⁸³ Between 1907 and 1908, a highly critical series examining Eddy’s life and work was published in *McClure’s* magazine. An accompanying book was published the following year. See Georgine Milmine, *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy and the History of Christian Science* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1909).

⁸⁴ Erwin D. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom. The Story of The Christian Science Monitor* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958), p. xvi.

⁸⁵ ‘The Life of Mary Baker Eddy’, The Mary Baker Eddy Library <<https://www.marybakereddylibrary.org/mary-baker-eddy/the-life-of-mary-baker-eddy/>> [accessed 25 June 2016].

⁸⁶ Many American newspapers did not publish bylines regularly until the mid-twentieth century. See W. Joseph Campbell, *The Year that Defined American Journalism: 1897 and the Clash of Paradigms* (New York; London: Routledge, 2006).

⁸⁷ Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, p. 109.

Crucially, her two-year association with the *Monitor* included a four-month stint in the south of Russia, during which time she was formally contracted and acknowledged as the newspaper's special correspondent in the region. While the bulk of Tyrkova-Williams's published articles for the *Monitor* were written prior to her return to Russia in autumn 1919, some, owing to logistics, were not published until several months later. A number of her articles were paraphrased from cables she sent to the paper, while others appeared as complete articles. Her published journalism for the *Monitor*, as well as correspondence with the paper's editors, have never before been studied and their inclusion in this research reveals new information about Tyrkova-Williams's civil-war activities, as well as the experience of a woman journalist contributing to a large American newspaper at this time.⁸⁸

In the first year she contributed to the *Monitor*, Tyrkova-Williams was credited as the author of her articles but, with the exception of a couple of references to the fact she was a 'Russian writer', the newspaper did not introduce her. The first instance of Tyrkova-Williams receiving an introduction from the *Monitor* in one of her articles was in August 1919, a year into her association with the paper, when she was described as 'the authority on Russia who has been a frequent contributor to these pages'.⁸⁹

Another figure who was viewed as an authority on Russia by the *Monitor* was Professor Samuel Harper of the University of Chicago. Erwin Canham, in his 1958 book on the history of the *Monitor*, described Harper as 'one of the world's great authorities on Russia' and noted that he frequently wrote articles from inside Russia for the paper.⁹⁰ The *Monitor* had taken an interest in Russian affairs since its inception, particularly keeping an 'intent watch on the progress of constitutional reform' in the country.⁹¹ The paper continued its interest in Russia, closely covering the events and aftermath of both the February and October revolutions in 1917.⁹² Nationally, American

⁸⁸ A bibliography of Tyrkova-Williams's articles for the *Christian Science Monitor* can be found in Appendix I to this thesis. Tyrkova-Williams's involvement with the paper has been mentioned in passing by Kaznina (in her 1999 chapter), Kanishcheva and Alston (see Introduction), but her articles have not been examined until now.

⁸⁹ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Bolshevism After Two Years' Test', Part I, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 13 August 1919, Vol. XI, No. 225, p. 6.

⁹⁰ Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, p. 240.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 240.

interest in Russia increased significantly in early 1918 following the country's military intervention in Murmansk, 'first against German attack and then against Bolshevik interference'.⁹³

It was largely through Harper that Tyrkova-Williams first made contact with the *Monitor* and he was forthcoming with his praise of the paper, describing it to her in a letter from early July 1918 as 'really the most influential paper we have now, because it helps one really to think'.⁹⁴ Harper's relationship with the *Monitor* gave him influence over the newspaper's Russia content, as seen by the publication of extracts from a letter he received from Tyrkova-Williams on the subject of Allied intervention in the *Monitor* in July 1918.⁹⁵ The following month, the paper published the first article containing Tyrkova-Williams's byline.⁹⁶ As Alston has highlighted, the connection between the Williamses and Harper was important. The reputation of Williams, who had published in the *Monitor* since 1916, also played a role in enabling Tyrkova-Williams to publish her articles in British and American publications during this period:

Since 1917 Williams's articles from the *Daily Chronicle* had been reprinted by a syndicate arrangement in the *New York Times*, and as a result his name was also known in the USA in connection with Russia. According to both Samuel Harper and Sergei Karpovich (the latter was assistant to Boris Bakhmetev at the Russian embassy in Washington), Williams's articles had considerable influence [...] Samuel Harper was also placing articles by Williams and Tyrkova-Williams in American publications, and he circulated their letters to influential persons with an interest in Russia, such as Charles Crane and John R. Mott.⁹⁷

However, although Harper, and to a lesser extent Williams, facilitated Tyrkova-Williams's relationship with the *Monitor*, her correspondence with the paper's

⁹³ Emery, *On The Front Lines*, p. 31.

⁹⁴ Letter from Harper to Tyrkova-Williams, 2 July 1918, BL, Add. ms. 54437, ff. 37-38.

⁹⁵ The extracts were published in the following article: 'Russia and her attitude toward the Bolsheviks', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6 July 1918, Vol. X, No. 188, p. 1. Harper mentioned that he was going to publish these extracts in the letter he wrote to Tyrkova-Williams on 2 July 1918. BL, Add. ms. 54437, ff. 37-38.

⁹⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Mr Kerensky and Russian Freedom', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 22 August 1918, Vol. X, No. 228, p. 7.

⁹⁷ Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?*, p. 135.

European bureau demonstrates that she actively strove to publish her work in the paper and communicated directly with editors. At the beginning of September 1918, she received a reply from the Bureau in response to a letter she had sent on 31 August to enquire about the status of one of her articles and to question the paper's inclusion of pieces by particular Russian figures, including Miliukov.⁹⁸ With regards to her article, she was assured that it was 'just a question of time and space in the paper' and it would certainly appear.

Tyrkova-Williams's attempts to shape the paper's content on the situation in Russia and their use of particular Russian contributors appear to have been successful, at least on paper:

Thank you very much indeed for your letter of 31st August explaining about Miliukoff. I have sent out a cable to Boston explaining that Miliukoff had changed his mind, indicating also how misguided he was in doing so [...] As regards Mme Polovtsev, M. Goroubkoff, etc., you see they just give another point of view, but I don't think I shall be using much if any more of her stuff. I quite appreciate what you say and am, I hope, alive to what is going on. We will talk it all over when you return to London.⁹⁹

With regards to the comment about Miliukov, it is likely the editor is referring to Miliukov's change of direction over forming an alliance with Germany. Although he had previously stated he would not seek German support, in May 1918 Miliukov negotiated with the German command in the hope of forming an anti-Bolshevik alliance. He subsequently resigned as chairman of the Kadet Central Committee following criticism from his fellow party members.¹⁰⁰

Tyrkova-Williams's view on the gravity of the issue is further evident from a letter she wrote to the editor of *The Daily News* at this time.¹⁰¹ In a bid to 'put the facts

⁹⁸ Letter from the *Monitor* to Tyrkova-Williams, 6 September 1918. BL, Add. ms. 54437, f. 58.

⁹⁹ An author with variations of the name 'M. Goroubkoff' could not be identified in the *Monitor's* online article archive. It is likely that Tyrkova-Williams was staying outside of London for part of the summer.

¹⁰⁰ See Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia*, pp. 266–270, for more on this episode.

¹⁰¹ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to the editor of *The Daily News*, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 331. The letter is undated, however the editors of the *Nasledie* collection incorrectly place it no earlier than the end of May 1919. Mirabach was assassinated in early July 1918, thus the letter is likely to have been written in late May or June 1918.

straight', she complained that the newspaper's Russia correspondent, Arthur Ransome, had given an incorrect description of the attitude of the Kadet Party towards the Germans:

As the only member of the Central Committee of the Cadet Party now in England I feel boomed to point out that the Cadets have always been and still are strongly pro-ally.

Your correspondent states that 'leading Cadets in Moscow have held consultation with Count Mirabach'. But Mirabach is the official German ambassador and the doors of Russia were opened to him by Bolsheviks and not Cadets.

Tyrkova-Williams's letter also conveyed the strong sense of duty she felt as the only member of the Kadet Central Committee in Britain at the time and demonstrates once again how notions of duty permeated her public and private thoughts and activities. In addition to providing a motive for her actions and illustrating her views on relations with Germany, the letter to *The Daily News* provides further evidence of how Tyrkova-Williams interacted with editors in the international press to attempt to shape the coverage of the Russian conflicts.

The second notable figure mentioned in the *Monitor* letter was Varvara Nikolaevna Polovtsova (referred to by the *Monitor* as Polovstev), a philosopher who had served as vice-president of the Petergof Town Council and worked in the ministry for the organisation of labour and social help under Kerensky. According to information from the *Monitor*, Polovtsova was sent to Britain by Kerensky, who was at the time in hiding in Russia, in late spring 1918 to study British labour organisations. While in Britain, she was active in émigré organisations, serving as secretary of the Russian Co-operative Society in London and chair of the Russian Red Cross in Great Britain.¹⁰²

Tyrkova-Williams's issue with Polovtsova appears to have been linked to their different viewpoints on the subject of Allied intervention in Russia. In June 1918,

¹⁰² The Soviet Russian Red Cross, which was established in 1918, must not be confused with the organisation of the same name that was run by White émigrés in London (see below). For more on the origins and role of the Soviet Red Cross see Raymond W. Leonard, *Secret Soldiers of the Revolution: Soviet Military Intelligence, 1918–1933* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999), p. 59. For further information on Polovtsova and her activities in Britain see Emily Lygo, 'Promoting Soviet Culture in Britain: The History of the Society for Cultural Relations Between the Peoples of the British Commonwealth and the USSR, 1924–1945', *The Modern Language Review*, 108:2 (2013), pp. 571–596.

Polovtsova was quoted by a *Monitor* correspondent on this subject. Much to Tyrkova-Williams's consternation, Polovtsova claimed she 'was not in favour of military intervention in Russia on the part of the Allies at the present moment'. She argued that 'military intervention might increase anarchy and divisions in Russia and so give further stimulus to the German invasion, which, without a strong Russian army, it would be impossible for the Allies alone to prevent'. Polovtsova instead advocated economic cooperation and, specifically, 'the formation of an interallied committee, meeting preferably in America or England, to find the means of opening relations with the de facto government of Russia [...]'.¹⁰³

Despite Tyrkova-Williams's interference, Polovtsova wrote and was referenced in a number of articles for the *Monitor* up until at least 1920. Many of these related to the subject of intervention and the cooperative movement.¹⁰⁴ The fact that pieces by both Tyrkova-Williams and Polovtsova on the same subjects were included in the *Monitor* indicates that the paper was attempting to provide different points of view on the conflicts in Russia. While Polovtsova does not appear to have given any interviews nor published any articles in the British press during this period, she was quoted by the *Derby Daily Telegraph* in June 1920 in an article detailing the proceedings of a congress of the Women's Cooperative Guild in Derby, at which she spoke on the issue of trade relations with Russia.¹⁰⁵

Tyrkova-Williams's support of Allied military intervention is evident from her early articles (in October and November 1918) for the *Monitor*.¹⁰⁶ Written immediately before and after the armistice that ended the First World War, respectively, she emphasised the continued threat of Germany towards the Allies through the latter's support of the Bolsheviks. Giving examples of how Russia came to their help in the

¹⁰³ 'Economic Aid to Russia Advocated', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 22 June 1918, Vol. X, No. 177, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ See for example, 'Policy of Allies Welcomed', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 22 January 1920, Vol. XII, No. 51, p. 2; and 'Russian Success With Cooperation', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 19 February 1920, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ 'Women Co-operators', *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 16 June 1920, Vol. LXX, No. 12,705, p. 2.

¹⁰⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Appeal to Allies to Redeem Russia', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 17 October 1918, Vol. X, No. 276, p. 5; and 'Russia's Claims to Active Allied Help', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15 November 1918, Vol. X, No. 301, p. 6.

course of the war, as well as instances of how Allied citizens had been affected by the revolution, she appealed to the Allies to intervene to end Bolshevik rule:

Intervention must be strengthened. The Allies must complete on the Russian front that work which at one time the Russian Army strove so heroically to accomplish. After the attack on the British Embassy when Captain Cromie was killed, after the imprisonment and maltreatment of British, French and American citizens, after the cold, brutal terror which has destroyed thousands of anti-Bolshevik Russians, the civilized world would be blind if it did not understand what dangerous criminals are they who hold Russia in their grip.¹⁰⁷

Once again playing on the fears of the paper's readers, she equated the Bolsheviks with anarchy and the Allies and anti-Bolshevik Russians with order and civilization. However, following the short-lived Prinkipo proposal in early 1919, in which the Allies invited the Bolsheviks and the leaders of the declared anti-Bolshevik governments in Russia to meet in an attempt to restore peace in the country, a change can be observed in the tone of Tyrkova-Williams's articles for the *Monitor*. The response of those affiliated with the White movement to the proposal was one of anger and despair that the Allies, who were supposed to be on their side, were asking them to sit down with the Bolsheviks.¹⁰⁸ In an article published in March 1919, Tyrkova-Williams addressed the attitude among many Russians that the Allies had abandoned Russia and that its efforts in the First World War had not been sufficiently recognised. Critical of the Allied leaders, she called upon ordinary citizens to do what was 'right':

Let the average man, let all those Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, who simply and humanly feel for the tormented Russian people, clearly see where the policy of their chiefs leads, and let their common sense, their conscience tell them, whether this policy has in it that conception of justice and right on which international relations must, in the end, be founded.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Russia's Claims to Active Allied Help', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15 November 1918, Vol. X, No. 301, p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ See John M. Thompson, *Russia, Bolshevism and the Versailles Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 82–130.

¹⁰⁹ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Allied Attitude Toward Russians', *The Christian Science Monitor*, (Part II), 31 March 1919, Vol. XI, No. 109, p. 7.

It is clear, then, that the tone and content of Tyrkova-Williams's articles was closely linked to the international agenda of the anti-Bolshevik Whites and her own personal circumstances. In addition to the topic of intervention, other recurring themes can be observed in Tyrkova-Williams's articles for the *Monitor*.

One such theme concerns the relationship between Tyrkova-Williams's personal experience and public persona. Her initial articles for the *Monitor* reflected her growing status as an eyewitness to the events of the revolutions in Russia and, in terms of style and tone, closely resembled the piece she wrote for the *Evening Telegraph and Post* around the same time. Her first article, published in August 1918 and entitled 'Mr Kerensky and Russian Freedom', described the last weeks of Kerensky's leadership in 1917 and the reaction to his arrival in Britain in June 1918.¹¹⁰ While Tyrkova-Williams did not criticise Kerensky outright in her article for the *Monitor*, she drew attention to what she believed were his failings in the context of the revolution and the demands made of him:

The revolution placed Mr Kerensky in an absolutely unique position. It placed in his hands enormous responsibilities and in return made on him demands as tremendous.

Mr Kerensky was lifted up on a shield by the so-called revolutionary party, or, to use an older phrase, the Russian intelligentsia. He himself reflected all its virtues and all its faults, but he was not original enough or strong enough to be able at the right moment to turn the party's course sharply and to direct the people along the right road.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Kerensky visited Tyrkova-Williams at her home in London on more than one occasion in June 1918. In the same way that the *Nash vek* newspaper office and the apartments of Kadet figures became places where private and public ideas and experiences overlapped in the period immediately after the October Revolution, so too did Tyrkova-Williams's home in London. These intersections were accordingly played out on the newspaper page.

Another of Tyrkova-Williams's early articles for the *Monitor*, published in September 1918, similarly drew on her first-hand experience of the October Revolution

¹¹⁰ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Mr Kerensky and Russian Freedom', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 22 August 1918, Vol. X, No. 228, p. 7.

and its aftermath by describing the Bolsheviks' treatment of the opposition press. She noted in the article:

The Bolsheviks have abolished law and liberty. The press, that most dangerous enemy of all despots, was gagged. The publication of papers was not only forbidden by decree, but armed bands of sailors and Red Guards broke into the offices, scattered the type, tore up the manuscripts and drove out all the journalists.¹¹¹

Her description of the treatment of opposition publications here bears a direct resemblance to her account of the Bolshevik shut down of *Bor'ba* in *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*. Once again, this example demonstrates the relationship between her personal experience and desire to shape a particular narrative for an international audience. In addition, it also indicates how she re-used ideas, phrases and arguments from her work, both journalistic and literary, during this period.

Another recurring theme relates to the struggle of good over evil and the notion of moral duty. References to the moral struggle against Bolshevism are littered throughout her articles. Although not officially a religious publication, this tone undoubtedly sat well with the paper's religious basis, as is evident from the introduction to one of Tyrkova-Williams's articles, entitled 'Appeal to Allies to Redeem Russia', from October 1918:

At the present moment of dawning victory for the Allies, Ariadne Tyrkova has appealed afresh to them through *The Christian Science Monitor*, to remember Russia and to free it from the German-protected Bolshevik autocracy if they wish to witness the triumph of good.¹¹²

By presenting Bolshevik rule and those opposed to it as a binary of evil versus good, Tyrkova-Williams provided the paper's readers with a clear option. She was also increasingly critical of the Allies, referring to their 'moral blindness,' which, she argued, stopped them from seeing that 'the Bolsheviks were daily and hourly infringing

¹¹¹ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Soviet Methods of Maintaining Power', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 13 September 1918, Vol. X, No. 247, p. 3.

¹¹² Tyrkova-Williams, 'Appeal to Allies to Redeem Russia', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 17 Oct 1918, Vol. X, No. 276, p. 5.

the commonest rules of humanity and morals'.¹¹³ This tone was a feature of Tyrkova-Williams's journalism and many of her other draft and published pieces written for different publications at this time referenced the 'moral degradation' caused by the Bolsheviks coming to power.¹¹⁴

As well as its use as a propaganda technique, this emphasis on morals also reflected Tyrkova-Williams's personal religious beliefs. An article published by the St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church of Washington DC to commemorate Tyrkova-Williams's ninetieth birthday noted that 'in the course of her life outside Russia, Ariadna Vladimirovna continued her close association with the Russian orthodox church'. Harold Williams shared her religious beliefs, with the St Nicholas publication remarking that 'towards the end of his life he was accepted as a member of the Orthodox faith'.¹¹⁵ Thus, it appears that Tyrkova-Williams ultimately saw the fight against the Bolsheviks as a moral question and her own contribution, whether through journalism or other forms of activism, as a moral duty. This viewpoint can further be viewed as an extension of her pre-revolutionary association of politics and nationalism with morality (see Chapter One).

Although Tyrkova-Williams's position as a woman political journalist, and later foreign correspondent in southern Russia, was uncommon in America at the time, the *Monitor* was by no means averse to hiring women in roles typically reserved for men. In fact, the newspaper had included women among its political correspondents from a relatively early stage. One of the most notable was Cora Rigby, who worked as a reporter for publications in New York and London before joining the *Monitor's* Washington D.C. bureau in 1919. She became the bureau's manager three years later, a role she held until her death in 1930. Rigby was one of only ten women who, along with 100 men, gained

¹¹³ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Russia's hopes in liberating armies', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6 Oct 1919, Vol. XI, No. 271, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, draft article entitled 'The Russian Example', undated. GARF, f. 10230, op. 1, d. 41, l. 1-15. It is unclear if this draft was ever published.

¹¹⁵ Bilingual publication of St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Washington DC, December 1959, pp. 5-6. GARF, f. 10230, op.1, d.177, l. 8-14.

access to the United States House and Senate press galleries in 1919.¹¹⁶ In the same year she also founded the National Women's Press Club (NWPC) as 'an alternative to the men-only membership requirement of the National Press Club'.¹¹⁷ The *Monitor's* relatively liberal attitude to allowing women journalists to cover political issues could be explained in part by the fact it was founded by a woman. Although Eddy died in 1910, just two years after the *Monitor* was established, she had a lasting impact on the direction and ethos of the paper.

However, while there were undoubtedly exceptions, the majority of Western women journalists were expected to write from a 'woman's angle' and were more likely to write on societal affairs than politics. A 1926 American 'guide to the opportunities and a manual of the technique of women's work for newspapers and magazines' acknowledged the 'triumph' that women had managed to enter almost all fields of journalism, many 'hitherto sacred to men', whilst simultaneously advising women to carve out a 'feminine' niche for themselves in order to advance their journalism careers:

While there always will be women who prefer and are specially equipped to compete with men in newspaper work, there remain a great majority who can succeed more quickly and be of more service by making a distinctly feminine contribution – one in which they may capitalize their tastes and instincts rather than oppose them, as they are called upon to do in many lines of newspaper writing in which they duplicate men's work.¹¹⁸

This so-called 'distinctly feminine contribution' was encouraged by male editors who sought to capitalise on the growing number of women journalists and readers. In the handful of occasions where women received commissions to travel to Russia to report on events there, their editors emphasised the supposedly unique, feminine qualities they would bring to the role. The example of Bessie Beatty can be used to support the point above. As a feature writer for the *San Francisco Bulletin*, Beatty secured a commission to travel to Russia in the spring of 1917 to report on the aftermath of the February

¹¹⁶ 'Women of History: Cora Rigby', 3 December 2015, Mary Baker Eddy Library, <<https://www.marybakereddylibrary.org/research/women-of-history-cora-rigby/>> [Accessed 1 September 2017].

¹¹⁷ Bradley, *Women and the Press*, p. 213.

¹¹⁸ Genevieve Jackson Boughner, *Women in Journalism: A guide to the opportunities and a manual of the technique of women's work for newspapers and magazines* (New York; London: D. Appleton & Co., 1926), p. viii.

Revolution from St Petersburg. Her trip would take her not only across Russia on the Trans-Siberian but also to China, Japan, Korea and much of war-torn Europe. As promoted by the *Bulletin*'s editor, Beatty's series of articles, written under the heading 'Around the World in Wartime', were intended to provide a 'human-interest' perspective on events:

Her happy and intimate manner of writing, which makes her readers imagine they, too, are spectators of the human drama with which she deals, makes her especially well fitted for this important commission [...] It will be a war-time trip around the world, and Miss Beatty will tell about it in her heart-to-heart way through the columns of The Bulletin. It will be as if her thousands of friends were themselves taking this wonderful journey with her and were seeing history made with their own eyes.¹¹⁹

As this example illustrates, Beatty's editors were deliberately emphasising what they believed to be distinctly feminine qualities in order to promote and justify their decision to give her the commission. By using words and phrases such as 'happy', 'intimate' and 'heart-to-heart' they disassociated Beatty's column from the 'hard' news reports typically associated with male journalists. By contrast, Tyrkova-Williams's articles for the *Monitor* were closer in style to the latter type of reporting and her work was not framed as containing a 'woman's angle'.

Working Methods

While publishing her work in the international press gave Tyrkova-Williams a much wider platform from which to disseminate information and propaganda pertaining to the White movement, it also presented new challenges. Aside from writing in English, she had to establish relationships with new editors and adapt to the style and formalities particular to the British and American press. It is unclear how proficient Tyrkova-Williams's command of English was when she arrived in Britain in 1918. Kaznina claims that she had not learned English before arriving in Britain.¹²⁰ However, although Tyrkova-Williams's grasp of the language was understandably less than fluent when she first arrived, letters in English that Tyrkova-Williams received shortly after arriving in

¹¹⁹ 'Bessie Beatty Going Around the World', *The Bulletin* (San Francisco), 2 April 1917, Vol. 23 62, No. 151, p. 1.

¹²⁰ Kaznina, *Literatura russkogo zarubezh'ia*, pp. 298-317.

Britain in 1918, including from Samuel Harper, R. A. Leeper (who worked in the British Foreign Office) and an editor from the *Monitor*, demonstrate that she was effectively corresponding in English during this period and using English as one of her main working languages, alongside French.¹²¹ Draft articles written in English in Tyrkova-Williams's hand within the first year of her arrival in Britain similarly highlight her competence in the language.¹²² Although Williams was fluent in Russian, given the demands on his own time and work, it is unlikely that he directly translated Tyrkova-Williams's work into English. Rather, he appears to have provided editorial advice.

A strong indication of Williams's editorial help can be observed in a draft article by Tyrkova-Williams entitled 'The Russian Example'.¹²³ Although the draft is not dated, there are clues as to when it was written. Tyrkova-Williams states in the article, for example, that 'there has been no great change since Lenin proclaimed two years ago the new economic policy, the so-called "NEP"', which places the article in the year 1923. It has been heavily edited by hand and the nature of the edits, including substantial grammar, spelling, vocabulary and syntax changes and corrections, indicates a native English speaker edited the article. Given the fact the draft is held together with Tyrkova-Williams's personal papers in GARF, it is highly likely that Harold Williams was the editor in question. A comparison of his handwriting provides further evidence of this. Alongside changes to the article itself, the editor has amended the author's name at the end of the piece, replacing 'Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams' with 'Ariadna Williams'. This seemingly minor edit says much about the importance placed by the editor on adapting to the English-language press as removing 'Tyrkova' from the byline has the effect of anglicising the author's name. Interestingly, however, almost all of Tyrkova-Williams's published English-language articles refer to her as 'Ariadna Tyrkova', perhaps indicating that she preferred to use this name when submitting articles to international publications.

¹²¹ Letter from Harper to Tyrkova-Williams, 2 July 1918, BL, Add. ms. 54437, ff. 37-38; Letter from R. A. Leeper to Tyrkova-Williams, 29 August 1918, BL, Add. ms. 54437, ff. 49-49v; and Letter from the *Monitor* to Tyrkova-Williams, 6 September 1918, BL, Add. ms. 54437, f. 58.

¹²² See for example Tyrkova-Williams's draft article in English on the Women's Battalion, BL, Add. ms. 54476, ff. 27-46.

¹²³ Tyrkova-Williams, draft article entitled 'The Russian Example', undated. GARF, f. 10230, op. 1, d. 41, ll. 1-15.

Another characteristic of Tyrkova-Williams's writing process that enabled her to maximize the impact of her journalism was the fact that she submitted the same, or similar, articles to different publications. On more than one occasion she re-used articles, in their entirety or in parts, that she had originally published in the *Monitor* for British and American émigré journals, for example. This included an article entitled 'Some Paradoxes of Warring Russia', concerning the grain situation in Russia, which Tyrkova-Williams wrote while based in Rostov-on-Don. It was first published in the *Monitor* in November 1919, and re-published by the New York-based Russian émigré journal *Struggling Russia* the following month.¹²⁴

By 1922, Tyrkova-Williams viewed herself as an expert on publishing in the international press. She had been living in the UK (on and off) for four years by this point and, coupled with the fact that Harold Williams had recently been appointed foreign editor at *The Times*, she had a particularly comprehensive understanding of the workings of the British press. In a letter she sent to her friend Kuskova in July 1922, she provided advice on publishing articles in the UK, the cost of translation and even offered her services as a literary agent.¹²⁵ Kuskova, who was at the time living in Berlin, had only just arrived in Europe from Russia after being exiled for three years with her husband, S. N. Prokopovich. The pair had been arrested in August 1921 in connection with their work for the All-Russian Famine Relief Committee (*Vserossiiskii komitet pomoshchi golodaiushchim*; VKPG).¹²⁶ As observed by historian Stuart Finkel, the committee emerged in large part out of a sense of social and moral duty.¹²⁷

While attached to the VKPG, Kuskova published at least two articles on the famine gripping Russia. One article, entitled 'Tridtsat' let nazad (o golode v Rossii v 1891)' ('30 Years Ago (On the 1891 famine in Russia)'), appeared in the Petrograd daily

¹²⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Some Paradoxes of Warring Russia', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 14 November 1919, Vol. XI, No. 305, p. 9; 'Some Paradoxes of Warring Russia', *Struggling Russia*, 27 December 1919, Vol. 1, No. 41, pp. 653–655.

¹²⁵ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Kuskova, 6 July 1922, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 363–364.

¹²⁶ Questionnaire conducted by the Moscow Political Red Cross, 1921, GARF, f. 8419, op. 1, d. 202, l. 76.

¹²⁷ Stuart Finkel, 'Purging the Public Intellectual: The 1922 Expulsions from Soviet Russia', *The Russian Review*, 62: 4 (2003), pp. 589–613 (p. 594).

newspaper *Krasnaia gazeta* in July 1921, while a second article, ‘Pod krasnyi krest’ (‘Under the Red Cross’), was published in VKPG’s bulletin *Pomoshch’* a month later.¹²⁸ Kuskova, who claimed she supported ‘neither the Reds nor the Whites’, promoted the idea of non-political help through her journalism. In her article for *Krasnaia gazeta*, she referred to victims on both sides of the conflict and drew parallels with the famine of 1891–92, which she had also experienced and provided humanitarian relief for while based in Saratov. Upon her arrest, Kuskova declared her profession in a questionnaire for the Moscow Committee of the Political Red Cross (*Moskovskii komitet Politicheskogo Krasnogo Kresta*) as ‘writer’ (*pisatel’nitsa*), despite noting that following the closure of the opposition press she had worked in a technical school and, from 1921, was engaged in work with the VKPG.¹²⁹ In April 1917, Kuskova had co-founded, edited and contributed (along with Prokopovich) to *Vlast’ naroda* (‘People’s Power’), a daily newspaper in Moscow known for its alternative politics and focus on the cooperative movement.¹³⁰ During the paper’s existence, Kuskova authored at least 125 articles. The paper was closed by the Bolsheviks the following year. The fact that she defined herself as a writer rather than a ‘journalist’ by profession in the questionnaire sheds light on how she viewed journalism and implies that she viewed her role as a writer as part of her identity. The questionnaire further highlights the types of roles in which opposition journalists who refused to support the Bolsheviks found themselves.

The Russian Liberation Committee

Tyrkova-Williams’s skill in navigating the international press also extended to Russian émigré publications. Her role in émigré press organs required far more than only writing articles, however. Soon after arriving in Britain in 1918, she became involved in setting up the Paris-based Russian National Committee and an early committee in London in

¹²⁸ Kuskova, ‘Tritsat’ let nazad (o golode v Rossii v 1891)’, *Krasnaia gazeta*, 30 July 1921, No. 159; ‘Pod krasnyi krest’, *Pomoshch’*, 16 August 1921, No. 1.

¹²⁹ Questionnaire conducted by the Moscow Political Red Cross, 1921, GARF, f. 8419, op. 1, d. 202, l. 76.

¹³⁰ For a detailed examination of Kuskova’s earlier articles for *Vlast’ naroda* see Norton, ‘Laying the foundations of democracy in Russia: E. D. Kuskova’s contribution, February–October 1917’ in *Women and Society in Russia and the Soviet Union*, ed. by Linda Edmondson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 101–123.

1918 around the Russian Imperial Embassy.¹³¹ However, her most extensive émigré activities were focused around the RLC. In addition to coordinating the day-to-day running of the RLC for much of its existence and contributing to its publications, Tyrkova-Williams also published in émigré journals and newspapers in Paris and New York during this period. Her involvement in the RLC and similar organisations highlights the integral but often less visible and celebrated roles that women, both Bolshevik and those affiliated with opposition groups, played in political and press structures throughout the civil-war years.

Originally known as the Russian Liberation Union, the RLC was the most significant émigré organisation to emerge in Great Britain in the period after the October Revolution. The aim of the RLC, which was established in London in February 1919, was ‘the overthrow of Bolshevism, the restoration of order and the regeneration of Russia’.¹³² In order to achieve this, it sought to ‘inform the British public about the true situation in Russia’ through the publication of its own bulletins and journals.¹³³ It also acted as a telegraph agency for Admiral Kolchak’s government in Omsk and translated and distributed these telegrams, as well as other news items, to the British press.¹³⁴ Tyrkova-Williams was a committee member and served as the organisation’s secretary from its inception.¹³⁵ Other members of the original committee included Pavel Miliukov, Petr Struve, Vladimir Ivanovich Isaev, and the Russian *publitsist* and writer Isaak Vladimirovich Shklovskii (Dioneo), as well as Harold Williams and Arkadii Borman. S. V. Denisova, the wife of the RLC’s wealthy Russian businessman backer

¹³¹ See Kaznina, *Russkie v Anglii*, p. 72.

¹³² Dioneo (I. V. Shklovsky), *Russia Under the Bolsheviks* (London: Russian Liberation Committee, 1919). Information about the RLC was printed on the inside cover of the pamphlet. See Alston, ‘The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee’, p. 7 for more on the origins of the RLC.

¹³³ *Rassvet*, 10 June 1919, No. 1 p. 1; Alston, ‘The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee’, p. 7.

¹³⁴ Alston, *Russia’s Greatest Enemy?*, p. 150.

¹³⁵ Tyrkova-Williams transferred her secretarial duties to Isaev when she returned to Russia in September 1919. In a letter she wrote to Williams on 26 July 1919, she noted that she was waiting to pass on the role to Isaev and that he would make a ‘good secretary’. *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 337-339.

Nikolai Khrisanforovich Denisov, also sat on the committee.¹³⁶ The RLC's office was located at 173 Fleet Street in London, the heart of Britain's journalistic life.

As one of only two women on the RLC's original committee, Tyrkova-Williams's role as secretary could be conceived as gendered. Yet this position, strengthened by her wide network of contacts, placed her at the heart of the organisation and enabled her to influence, take decisions, and gather and preserve information relating to the committee's activities. As secretary, she was responsible for recording the minutes of meetings, but she also raised a number of issues herself (sometimes as many as a third of the points discussed).¹³⁷ On at least one occasion, the committee met at Tyrkova-Williams's home in Cromwell Crescent, Kensington, and she appears to have coordinated with members to arrange the practicalities of their meetings.¹³⁸

As well as dealing with practical matters concerning the committee, Tyrkova-Williams liaised with figures within the White movement in Russia to request news and Russian newspapers from inside the country. In April 1919, shortly after the RLC was established, Tyrkova-Williams sent a telegram to the White Army's political section in Ekaterinodar requesting information for distribution in the British press:

Have organised news agency here receive telegrams from Omsk which widely circulated
Stop Urgently require telegrams from you describing military economic situation Stop
Strong opinion in Press and Parliament favour support sane elements but hostile
propaganda also active Stop Kolchaks brilliant successes stimulating healthy interest but
we also want full information from you address Russian Liberation Committee [sic].¹³⁹

Parallels can be drawn between Tyrkova-Williams's role as secretary of the RLC and that of the many women who worked as editorial secretaries of Bolshevik and early Soviet publications. This position was essential to the running and organisation of party newspapers and was overwhelmingly carried out by women with ties to the Bolshevik

¹³⁶ List of RLC committee members, BL, Add. ms. 54466, f. 18. Denisov pledged £10,000 to the RLC, which was distributed by his wife and committee member, S. V. Denisova. See Alston, 'The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee', pp. 7–8.

¹³⁷ Documents and minutes from RLC meetings, Feb-June 1919, BL, Add. ms. 54466, ff. 10-36.

¹³⁸ Copy of a telegram informing J. Crookston that the RLC was to meet at Tyrkova-Williams's home, 10 Warwick Mansions Cromwell Crescent. 6 February. BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 27, Folder 4.

¹³⁹ Telegram from Tyrkova-Williams to 'Vasili Stepanoff or Astroff, Political Cabinet, Ekaterinodar', 22 April 1919, BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 27, Folder 17.

Party (see Chapter Three). Like Tyrkova-Williams, however, their contribution has been overlooked. By examining the organisational roles that women carried out in both Bolshevik and non-Bolshevik publications, this thesis challenges existing male-dominated narratives of the press during this period and champions individual women actors that have hitherto been marginalised.

Tyrkova-Williams was paid for her work with the RLC, at least in its first year of existence. According to a cash statement detailing salaries paid to those working in the committee office, she received £50 for her work between 3 April and 2 May 1919.¹⁴⁰ Her son, Arkadii Borman, and Isaev were paid £28.15 and £40, respectively. The list of those receiving payment for their work also included a number of British individuals, including a Mr E. Hamilton who was paid £100. These were substantial sums. In a letter to Harold Williams dated 26 July 1919, Tyrkova-Williams noted that they (herself and her family) were living on approximately £50 per month.¹⁴¹ Thus, it appears that the bulk of Tyrkova-Williams's income at this time came from her work with the RLC, which is in turn indicative of the large amount of work she was undertaking for the committee. Denisov was initially the organisation's main financier, while additional support later came from Kolchak's government in Omsk.¹⁴²

As well as undertaking central organisational and administrative roles in the RLC, Tyrkova-Williams was a regular contributor to the committee's bulletins, pamphlets and journals aimed at British politicians, the general public and the Russian community. In the first year of its existence, the RLC published a weekly bulletin, which was available free of charge through its secretary, Tyrkova-Williams. An early bulletin published by the organisation described the source of its material and stressed the seeming impartiality of its correspondents, many of whom were Kadets and supporters of the anti-Bolshevik White movement:

The Russian Liberation Union, which has been founded in London, has decided to furnish the English public, from time to time, with facts throwing light on the state of affairs in Russia. The facts are taken either from Bolshevik newspapers or communicated by eye-

¹⁴⁰ RLC financial information, BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 27.

¹⁴¹ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Williams, 26 July 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 337–338.

¹⁴² *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 747–748.

witnesses who have just arrived from Russia, or else by the Union's own correspondents. The Union has no reason to doubt either the good faith or impartiality of its correspondents.¹⁴³

While the reports were by no means impartial given the correspondent's political affiliations, the RLC committee clearly felt the need to emphasise their reliability to the British (and, more broadly, international) public. Tyrkova-Williams echoed this sentiment in article for the *Monitor* in August 1919, in which she expressed her frustration and view that anti-Bolshevik eyewitnesses were seen as the least trustworthy of all eyewitness sources by foreign newspapers:

The country is ruined. The population is starving and beggared. The productiveness of labor has declined. The factories have stopped working. Civil war is raging not only on the borders, but all over the country. All this is related by eyewitnesses – Russians, English, French, Danes, Swedes, at times even Americans. Russians are believed the least, as for some reason or other it is supposed that we ourselves are the last to be able to appreciate the condition of Russia properly. Less credit is given to the opponents of bolshevism [sic] than to the Bolsheviks, although the latter have never been famed for their truthfulness, nor have they indeed tried to acquire that reputation.¹⁴⁴

The importance placed on impartiality and reliability by Tyrkova-Williams and the RLC reflected changing notions of objectivity after the First World War. William P. Cassidy observes in his study of 'the professional role conceptions of male and female newspaper journalists' that it was only after the war that 'objectivity became prominent in mainstream journalism' as a result of the work of prominent media critics. This included Walter Lippmann's 1922 book *Public Opinion*, which 'stressed the importance of scientific rationale of ascertaining facts through professional methods'.¹⁴⁵ Thus, although writing before Lippmann's work was published, it would appear that Tyrkova-

¹⁴³ RLC Bulletin, February 1919, BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 27.

¹⁴⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Bolshevism After Two Years' Test', Part I, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 13 August 1919, Vol. XI, No. 225, p. 6.

¹⁴⁵ See Walter P. Cassidy, 'Traditional in Different Degrees: The Professional Role of Conceptions of Male and Female Newspaper Journalists', *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 16:2 (2008), pp. 105–117 (p. 107).

Williams was aware of the importance of shifting Western attitudes towards ideas of objectivity.

The RLC also produced a series of pamphlets alongside the bulletins. An early committee document from February 1919 outlined the subjects of pamphlets that various committee members would write. Tyrkova-Williams was to write on the subject of 'the Allies and Europe', a topic she was familiar with and wrote about regularly for Russian and English-language publications during this period.¹⁴⁶ While this pamphlet does not appear to have been published, Tyrkova-Williams produced a separate pamphlet, entitled *Why Soviet Russia is Starving*, for the RLC in March 1919.¹⁴⁷ Drawing on her previous position as a member of the Food Committee of the Petrograd City Council in 1917, she argued that the Soviet regime was responsible for the famine gripping Russia. She attributed no blame to the Provisional Government, instead presenting their original grain monopoly as a 'painful wartime necessity'.¹⁴⁸ However, as Lars T. Lih has observed, she 'is somewhat coy about Kadet responsibility for the introduction of the grain monopoly in the first place'.¹⁴⁹ As well as serving a propaganda and humanitarian purpose, the subject of this pamphlet would have been of interest to British politicians given the trade links between the two countries.

Relations within the RLC were not entirely harmonious however, and in the early stages of the organisation's existence, disagreements arose over the format and direction of the committee's publications. As Rosenberg has observed, 'Emigration had an interesting effect on Russia's leading partisans of state authority. For some, distance reinforced past hostilities. Despite the dramatic change in their physical surroundings, they took up old battles, and fought with new intensity...'¹⁵⁰ Relations between Tyrkova-Williams and Miliukov certainly did not improve in emigration. In June 1919, Tyrkova-Williams wrote to Williams complaining that Rostovtsev had left for France, leaving her to deal with Miliukov. She explained that Miliukov had decided to publish a

¹⁴⁶ See for example Tyrkova-Williams' articles 'Allied Attitude Toward Russians,' *The Christian Science Monitor*, 31 March 1919, Vol. XI, no. 109, p. 7 and 'Rossiia i soizuzniki' *Svobodnaia Rech'*, 29 September 1919, No 210, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷ Tyrkova-Williams, *Why Soviet Russia is Starving* (London: Russian Liberation Committee, 1919).

¹⁴⁸ Lih uses Tyrkova-Williams's pamphlet to present the Kadet critique of the Bolsheviks' food-supply dictatorship, see *Bread and Authority*, p. 164.

¹⁴⁹ Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia*, p. 165, n. 60.

¹⁵⁰ Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, p. 436.

newspaper under the title *Rassvet* ('Dawn'), which she considered 'boring', 'mediocre' and pointless when considering how 'superior' the Helsinki-based Russian-language publication *Russkaia zhizn'* ('Russian Life') was. Tyrkova-Williams was instead far more enthusiastic about the RLC's plans to publish an English-language journal under the title *The New Russia*.¹⁵¹ She referred to the issue again the following month, telling Williams that she had argued with Miliukov over the paper.¹⁵² Tyrkova-Williams's support for an English-language journal was much more practical given attempts to increase public support and allied intervention for the anti-Bolshevik cause.

Rassvet was first published on 10 June 1919 and contained news from and on the situation in Russia, including a section on 'war with the Bolsheviks' and an article on the general situation concerning the anti-Bolshevik front. The first issue of the paper also presented information about the aims and committee members of the RLC.¹⁵³ The second issue of the paper was approximately one third larger in size and included information about the cost of everyday foodstuffs in order to demonstrate the rising prices in Petrograd and, by association, discredit the Bolshevik regime.¹⁵⁴ Following *Rassvet's* limited publication, the RLC's first English-language journal, *The New Russia*, first appeared on 5 February 1920 and ran until 16 December of the same year, when it was forced to close due to funding issues.

When the weekly journal first appeared, the Whites were in a very different situation than they had been when the RLC had been established just a year earlier. Defeats in the south of Russia and Siberia, an increasingly apparent lack of interest on the part of the Allies, and the mass displacement and evacuation of citizens and White army personnel could not be ignored. As such, *The New Russia* claimed to be open to a 'frank investigation' of the causes of White mistakes, and to 'exponents of opinions other than our own'.¹⁵⁵ An advert for the journal published in one of its bulletins highlighted these changes but nevertheless used the same moral rhetoric when describing its

¹⁵¹ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Williams, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, 13 June 1919, pp. 333–335.

¹⁵² Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Williams, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, 26 July 1919, pp. 337–339.

¹⁵³ *Rassvet*, 10 June 1919. The paper was published and edited by the RLC in London.

¹⁵⁴ *Rassvet*, 25 June 1919.

¹⁵⁵ Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, p. 438.

correspondents as was commonly used by Tyrkova-Williams and other Kadets in their articles:

Allied policy is about to enter a new stage and fresh efforts will be needed to explain Russia and Russian affairs to the British Public [...] Representative Russians will by their contributions enable readers to get the best of what can be said on Russia by her more responsible citizens.¹⁵⁶

Although Tyrkova-Williams stepped down from her role as secretary while she was in the south of Russia between autumn 1919 and spring 1920, she continued her close involvement with the RLC. An article she wrote on the retreat from Rostov-on-Don, for example, was published in the first issue of *The New Russia* in February 1920 (this piece is discussed in the following section on Tyrkova-Williams's articles from the frontline).¹⁵⁷ On her return to Great Britain, she resumed her RLC press activities, writing one further article for *The New Russia* before it folded. The article, entitled 'The Children in the Crimea. An Appeal', appeared in November 1920. It served both a humanitarian and propaganda purpose and reflected the fundraising and publicity work Tyrkova-Williams was doing for various émigré charitable organisations at this time (see below).

Following the closure of *The New Russia*, Tyrkova-Williams managed to secure funds to set up a new monthly RLC journal, *Russian Life*, in August 1921.¹⁵⁸ She discussed the new journal and its funding situation in a letter she sent to Rostovtsev at the time the new journal was established, noting that it had almost a tenth of the budget that *The New Russia* had had. She also raised the issue of the future of the RLC more widely. Although they had received some money from Paris, the future of the organisation was uncertain.¹⁵⁹ Her pessimism was founded and *Russian Life* lasted only until March the following year.

¹⁵⁶ Advert for *The New Russia*, BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 27.

¹⁵⁷ Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Retreat in the South', *The New Russia*, Vol. I, 19 February 1920 (London, 1920) pp. 88-89.

¹⁵⁸ Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'iams*, p. 202.

¹⁵⁹ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Rostovtsev, August 1921, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 359-360.

Under Tyrkova-Williams's editorship, the journal had a strong focus on raising awareness and support for Russian refugee children and the agencies (including the Save the Children Fund and the American Relief Administration) that were working to help them. As noted by Alston, this new journal also 'concentrated much more firmly on émigré life; on the work of Russian scientists abroad, for example, and on Russian soldiers in exile, who were ready to return to the army whenever they were needed'.¹⁶⁰ Although Tyrkova-Williams was mostly preoccupied with editorial duties, she did find time to write two articles commemorating the deaths of Aleksandr Blok, with whom she had worked with on *Russkaia molva*, and the Russian monarchist politician Aleksandr Vasil'evich Krivoshein in 1921 for the journal.¹⁶¹ As noted by Norman and supported by her pre-revolutionary articles, Tyrkova-Williams 'had a special talent for biography' and wrote numerous obituaries during her lifetime.¹⁶²

Tyrkova-Williams's émigré press activities in 1919 and 1920 also extended beyond London and the RLC. In addition to RLC publications, she also published in émigré periodicals based in New York and Paris during this period. One such periodical was the New York-based *Struggling Russia*, which was advertised as a 'weekly magazine devoted to Russian problems' that 'fights the Bolshevik tyranny and stands for the establishment in Russia, through an All-Russian Constituent Assembly, of a Government of the people, by the people and for the people [...]'.¹⁶³ Regular contributors included Miliukov, Harold Williams, Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaia and Rostovtsev. Between June 1919 and January 1920, Tyrkova-Williams contributed six articles to the journal, five of which were reprinted from the *Monitor* and her pamphlet, *Why Soviet Russia is Starving*.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Alston, 'The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee in London, 1919–1924', p. 14.

¹⁶¹ Tyrkova-Williams, 'In Memoriam Alexander Blok, (1880-1921)', *Russian Life*, September-October 1921, No. 2-3, pp. 70–71; 'A.V. Krivoshein', *Russian Life*, November 1921, No. 4, p. iii.

¹⁶² Norman, 'Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams', p. 280.

¹⁶³ Taken from an advert published in June 1919 in a variety of US newspapers including *The Sun* (New York, No. 291) on 18 June 1919, p. 3; *The New York Tribune*, 18 June 1919, No. 26,512, p. 6; and *The Evening Star* (Washington DC), 18 June 1919, No. 27,447, p. 18.

¹⁶⁴ See Appendix I for the full list of articles.

Due to its emergence as a stronghold for émigré Kadets, Tyrkova-Williams made regular trips to Paris during early civil-war years for official and informal meetings.¹⁶⁵ She also contributed a small number of pieces to Vladimir Burtsev's Paris-based newspaper *Obshchee delo* ('La Cause Commune'; 'The Common Cause'). The paper, which first appeared in Paris on 17 September 1918 under the bilingual Russian-French heading, was a continuation of Burtsev's St Petersburg paper of the same name. The latter had been closed by Kerensky on 3 November (21 October O.S.) 1917 for breaching laws governing war-time reporting.¹⁶⁶ Like the Williamses, Burtsev, who had been forced to flee Russia following his arrest at the hands of the Bolsheviks, was a firm and vocal advocate for Allied intervention against the Bolsheviks.¹⁶⁷ Robert Henderson notes that in June 1918, Williams sent Burtsev a telegram informing him it was "necessary" for him to come to Britain for discussions on the subject and that he had secured an entry permit for him.¹⁶⁸

In a similar way to the RLC and its publications, *Obshchee delo* acted as a bridge between Russia and the West. It published reports from the *Russkoe Telegrafnoe Agentstvo 'Union'*, which Burtsev had established for the purpose of 'the communication of reliable information on Russian affairs and the transmission directly to Russia or via international agencies, of news of West European political life, particularly with regard to Russian affairs'. The paper additionally described how the conflicts in Russia were described in Western newspapers.¹⁶⁹ Although Tyrkova-Williams contributed to *Obshchee delo* from as early as December 1919, she was not listed as an official contributor to the paper until 15 October 1920 (the first time the newspaper appeared as a daily) and was one of only two women contributors, the other being Panina.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ See for example Tyrkova-Williams's diary entry from 26 July 1920, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 238–239.

¹⁶⁶ Robert Henderson, *Vladimir Burtsev and the Struggle for a Free Russia. A Revolutionary in the Time of Tsarism and Bolshevism* (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), p. 197.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 213–124.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

¹⁶⁹ *Cause commune*, 1 January 1919, No. 31, p. 4, quoted and translated by Henderson in *Vladimir Burtsev and the Struggle for a Free Russia*, p. 219.

¹⁷⁰ The first identified article by Tyrkova-Williams in *Obshchee delo* was 'Pis'mo iz Rossii', *Obshchee delo*, 10 December 1919, No. 62, p. 3, which was written while she was in southern Russia.

A number of Tyrkova-Williams's other Kadet allies and former *Rech'* colleagues, including Ryss, Miliukov and V. D. Nabokov, were also among the paper's contributors.¹⁷¹ In a 'Letter to the Editor' published in *Obshchee delo* in November 1921, Tyrkova-Williams criticised Dr Fridtjof Nansen, the Norwegian diplomat, explorer and scientist who had been appointed the League of Nations first High Commissioner for Refugees earlier that year. This role involved overseeing the resettlement of Russian refugees displaced by the revolution and civil wars. Prior to taking this role, Nansen, as a delegate to the League, was responsible for organising the repatriation of the Central Powers' prisoners of war, including from Russia.¹⁷² In a letter introduced on the front page of the newspaper by Burtsev, Tyrkova-Williams expressed her anger that Nansen had entered into talks with the Bolsheviks and claimed his role in overseeing the plight of Russian refugees was a 'mistake'. She further called on Russian political and philanthropic émigré organisations to protest against his position. This was a topical issue and of personal importance to Tyrkova-Williams. *Russian Life*, of which she became the editor the following year, ran an on-going campaign against Nansen. This illustrates how Tyrkova-Williams attempted to shape public opinion on particular topics through different émigré publications.

Return to Russia in 1919

In the midst of her work for the RLC, Tyrkova-Williams made the decision to return to Russia. She arrived in the southern Russian town of Rostov-on-Don in September 1919, after 18 months in Great Britain, to report on the civil wars and to aid the Whites' administrative work in the area.¹⁷³ As of autumn 1919, Rostov served as home to the Armed Forces of South Russia's (AFSR) administrative offices (Special Council) following General Denikin's decision to move his government north from Ekaterinodar

¹⁷¹ See list of contributors in *Obshchee delo*, 15 October 1920, No. 92, p. 1.

¹⁷² Tyrkova-Williams, 'Ne Nansen spasit bezhentsy! Pis'mo v redaktsiiu', *Obshchee delo*, 17 November 1921, No. 487, p. 1. For more on Nansen's role see Elizabeth White, 'The Legal Status of Russian Refugees, 1921–1936', *Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung*, 2017, pp. 18–38; and James E. Hassell, 'Russian Refugees in France and the United States Between the World Wars', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 87 (1991), pp. 16–21.

¹⁷³ Diary entry, 1 September 1919 (O.S.), *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 231–232.

as the Whites advanced from the North Caucasus towards Moscow.¹⁷⁴ Although Rostov did not form part of the physical military front line when Tyrkova-Williams arrived in September 1919, by December the fighting had approached the town.¹⁷⁵ So, given Rostov's importance as the AFSR's administrative hub in autumn 1919, and Tyrkova-Williams's propaganda work in the area, her activities between September 1919 and February 1920 can be described as front-line.

Tyrkova-Williams's reasons for traveling to Rostov in September 1919 were driven by a combination of public and private desires. She had dreamt of returning to Russia for some time, although her work with the RLC in London had also left her with conflicted feelings. In June 1919 she wrote to Williams of her dilemma:

I know the work we're doing here [in England] has grown in seriousness and importance [...] but I have a feeling [...] that I would be of more use in Russia at present.¹⁷⁶

Williams had been in Russia since May 1919 and was attached to the British military mission in Ekaterinodar as a correspondent for *The Times* and the *Daily Chronicle*.¹⁷⁷ In the same letter, Tyrkova-Williams expressed her desire to join him in the south of Russia, noting that they both worked better when they were together. As journalists both committed to the fight against Bolshevism, the pair often shared information and observations (obtained in a professional capacity) informally through letters and in conversation with one another. Tyrkova-Williams claimed, for example, in June 1919, that Williams's account of the Russian refugees in a letter to her had only increased her desire to return to Russia.¹⁷⁸ When Tyrkova-Williams left Britain, she believed she was returning to Russia for good. Little could she know that within less than six months she would have to leave again, this time forever.

¹⁷⁴ The Special Council (*Osoboe soveshchanie*) was founded on 31 August 1918 by General M. V. Alekseev at Ekaterinodar. See Smele, 'Special Council' in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 1101–1102, for a detailed description of its activities.

¹⁷⁵ As a result of events, namely the AFSR's hasty retreat from central Russia.

¹⁷⁶ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Williams, 10 June 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 332–333.

¹⁷⁷ Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁸ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Williams, 10 June 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 332–333.

Although Tyrkova-Williams began her preparations to travel to Russia as early as June 1919, a series of delays, primarily concerning her son Arkadii's difficulties in obtaining a visa, meant she did not arrive in Rostov until September of that year.¹⁷⁹ Frustrated by the delay to their journey, she (or someone on her behalf) contacted Samuel Hoare, the Conservative politician and White sympathiser, for assistance. Hoare in turn wrote to the officer in charge of the British Passport Office in July 1919, to ask that everything be done to 'facilitate the journey of Mrs H. Williams to the south of Russia', noting in the letter that Tyrkova-Williams is 'officially connected with Admiral Kolchak's Government, [and] is joining her husband in Russia.'¹⁸⁰

Hoare's letter not only shows that Tyrkova-Williams and her husband had influential political contacts in Britain, but also that she was linked to the campaign of a senior White figure. However, while Tyrkova-Williams supported and was connected to Kolchak through her work for the RLC, it was Denikin and not Kolchak who commanded the Whites in southern Russia, where Tyrkova-Williams was endeavouring to travel to.¹⁸¹ Hoare's confusion can be seen as part of a wider British government and military ignorance of Russian affairs during this period. Prime Minister David Lloyd George himself famously thought Khar'kov, a city in eastern Ukraine, was in fact the name of a White General.¹⁸²

Despite the perception among some, such as Hoare, that Tyrkova-Williams's main reason for travelling to Rostov was to join her husband, she had secured her own work as a special correspondent for the *Monitor* prior to arriving. Her ability to do so in fact proved useful when acquiring the necessary permits to travel to Russia.¹⁸³ Given that she had been writing for the *Monitor* since August 1918, it is natural that she sought to continue this association while in the south of Russia. While there is no evidence that she was officially accredited as a war reporter, this does not mean she was not one,

¹⁷⁹ Tyrkova-Williams left London in late July 1919 but stopped in Paris before travelling on to Russia. The journey to southern Russia took her through Rome, southern Italy and Constantinople. See Diary entry, 2 August 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 228–229; and diary entry, 1 September 1919 (O.S.), *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 231–232; Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'yams*, p. 175.

¹⁸⁰ Letter from Hoare to the British Passport Office, 18 July 1919, BL, Add. Ms. 54438, f. 47.

¹⁸¹ Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?* p. 151.

¹⁸² Lloyd George, speech before the House of Commons, April 16, 1919, in *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919–1939*, Vol. V (London: H.M.S.O., 1956), p. 311.

¹⁸³ Letter of 26 July 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 337–339.

since the official appointment of a women war or foreign correspondent was still rare in American journalism, as the example of Peggy Hull has shown.

Although Tyrkova-Williams understandably relied on Williams for (mutual) emotional and professional support, she was also quite able to survive in Rostov using her own means and contacts. Her involvement with the Kadet Party played an important role in shaping her experience and work from southern Russia. By the time Tyrkova-Williams arrived in Rostov, the Kadets formed the political leadership corps of General Denikin's Special Council, and indeed the leadership corps of other White regimes.¹⁸⁴ The prominence of the Kadets in Denikin's government meant that many of her friends and acquaintances were already in the town and she had no difficulty finding lodgings. Upon their arrival, she and her son Arkadii were able to obtain rooms in an apartment that served as a 'sort of barracks' for ministers and their families until Williams returned from the front.¹⁸⁵ According to Arkadii, the building housed the families of members of Denikin's Special Council, including Kadet politicians Konstantin Nikolaevich Sokolov and Nikolai Ivanovich Astrov. While based in southern Russia, Tyrkova-Williams continued her Kadet Party commitments, including attending the party's last congress in Khar'kov in November of that year.¹⁸⁶ However, she privately questioned the direction and purpose of the party, noting in her diary in September 1919: 'What is the current role of the Kadet Party? Is it needed? We have many mistakes and sins on our shoulders. How do we make amends?'¹⁸⁷ The guilt Tyrkova-Williams felt on behalf of the Kadet Party manifested itself in the way she viewed journalism as a moral duty during this period.

In addition to writing for the *Monitor*, Tyrkova-Williams also published articles in newspapers in the territory under White control. Lazarski notes that 'from 1918 onwards, the South experienced a proliferation of press publications in spite of paper shortages'.¹⁸⁸ During her time in southern Russia, Tyrkova-Williams published at least

¹⁸⁴ Smele, 'Kadets' in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume One, pp. 530–532 (p. 532). On the 'leadership corps', see Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*.

¹⁸⁵ Borman, *A.V. Tyrkova-Vil'yams*, p. 179.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

¹⁸⁷ Diary entry, 13 September 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoii*, pp. 232–233.

¹⁸⁸ Lazarski, 'White Propaganda Efforts in the South during the Russian Civil War, 1918-19 (The Alekseev-Denikin Period)', pp. 690–691.

three articles for the Kadet Party-affiliated newspaper *Svobodnaia rech'*. The paper was later published in Rostov, between August and December 1919, and Novorossiisk, between January and February 1920. Tyrkova-Williams was first listed as a contributor to *Svobodnaia rech'* in August 1919, shortly before she arrived in Rostov. Among the paper's other contributors were Kadet politicians Miliukov and Pavel Dmitrievich Dologrukov.¹⁸⁹ Out of 25 listed contributors, only one other woman featured, Mariia Semenovna Ancharova (née Stoianovskaia).

While articles frequently did not carry by-lines, Ancharova was named as the author of a piece on municipal elections in Rostov in September 1919. She described the elections as the first test of a wide section of the population's 'social maturity'.¹⁹⁰ By 3 December 1919, Ancharova was no longer listed as a contributor to *Svobodnaia rech'*. The same year, she had also served as editor and wrote for the Rostov-based *Russkaia mysl'* ('Russian Thought'), a weekly independent newspaper that shared a name with the more famous journal edited by Petr Struve. The paper appeared between January and December 1919 and Ancharova was identified as the author of two articles on Russian theatre published in September 1919.¹⁹¹ While in Rostov in 1919, she additionally authored a pamphlet entitled *Rabotnitsa* ('The Woman Worker'), in which she describes the first months following the October Revolution from the perspective of a woman worker.¹⁹² In particular, she contrasted the woman worker's optimistic expectations against the bitter 'reality' she was faced with.

Prior to the October Revolution, Ancharova had written a column for Kuskova's paper *Vlast' naroda*, which had appeared frequently between May and July 1917 under the title 'Kartinki' ('Pictures').¹⁹³ We also know that she wrote a number of political pamphlets during this period on topics ranging from 'women and the Constituent Assembly elections' to the pogroms against Jews.¹⁹⁴ One pamphlet, entitled *Zhenskaia dolia* ('A Woman's Lot'), was published in 1917, after women received the vote but

¹⁸⁹ Pavel Dolgorukov was one of the founders of the Kadet Party and served as chairman of its central committee from 1911 to 1915. He was executed by the Bolsheviks in 1927.

¹⁹⁰ Mariia Ancharova, 'Gorodskie vybory', *Svobodnaia rech'*, 22 September 1919, No. 195, p. 2.

¹⁹¹ Ancharova, 'Nachalo sezona', *Russkaia mysl'*, 1919, No. 33, p. 2; and 'Teatr', *Russkaia mysl'*, 1919, No. 36, p. 2.

¹⁹² Ancharova, *Rabotnitsa* (Rostov-on-Don, 1919).

¹⁹³ See for example, 'Kartinki', *Vlast' naroda*, 14 May 1917, No. 14, p. 4.

¹⁹⁴ Ancharova, *Zhenshchina i vybory v Uchreditel'noe sobranie* (Moscow, 1917).

before the Constituent Assembly elections in November. Ancharova stressed the importance of women voting in the Constituent Assembly elections. It was part of the series of pamphlets ‘Volia, zemlia i trud’ published by Osip Solomonovich Minor, a member of the SRs and editor of its Moscow Committee’s newspaper, *Trud* (‘Labour’), which ran from March 1917 until it was closed in March 1918.¹⁹⁵ Ancharova’s participation in press activities in the south of Russia is interesting given her previous association with the non-Kadet press organs *Vlast’ naroda* and an SR publisher. As such, she can be viewed as a rare example of a woman journalist who appears to have begun writing for Kadet publications during the civil-war period.

Tyrkova-Williams also sent at least one political review of events in southern Russia to Paris and London from Rostov.¹⁹⁶ The review is likely to have been sent to émigré anti-Bolshevik organisations such as the RLC for re-publication or dissemination in the international press. Sent at the end of November 1919, the review began by noting that fate has tested the stability of the White Army. She referred to recent military events and losses, noting that Rostov was now full of refugees fleeing the ‘Red terror’. Tyrkova-Williams also addressed how Whites in southern Russia were reacting to Lloyd George’s speech of November 1919, in which he advocated ending supplies to White troops. His speech followed the withdrawal of British troops from Murmansk and Archangel between March and October 1919. Making light of the situation, Tyrkova-Williams wrote that Lloyd George’s speech was no less alarming to the Whites than recent defeats at the front.

As a vocal advocate for foreign intervention in the civil wars on behalf of the Whites, Lloyd George’s speech would have in fact upset Tyrkova-Williams considerably. Just nine days after arriving in Rostov, she attended a meeting in the office of Konstantin Sokolov, the head of Osvag, during which she advocated to establish an international propaganda department.¹⁹⁷ Tyrkova-Williams was the only woman in attendance at the

¹⁹⁵ Ancharova, *Zhenskaia dolia* (Moscow: D. Ia. Makovskii, 1917).

¹⁹⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, ‘Politicheskii obzor’, BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams. Box 10. Re-printed in *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 1060–1063.

¹⁹⁷ Osvag (*Osvedomitel’noem agenstvo*, later *Otdel propagandy pri pravitel’sve Vooruzhennykh sil iuga Rossii*) was established in the summer of 1918 in Ekaterinodar by General Anton Ivanovich Denikin, the then-commander of the Volunteer Army. It functioned as the department of information and propaganda of the Volunteer Army and later for the AFSR.

meeting, which included senior Osvag figures such as Ervin Davidovich Grimm and Iu. Shumakher.¹⁹⁸ She recounted the meeting a few days later in her diary:

I told them my plan — that there should be a special section [in Osvag] for international propaganda, with its own budget, links and couriers, delegate [...] At first they were opposed to my proposal. Comrade Nikolai [one of the attendees] attacked my idea to centrally manage the section. He then began to consider my plan and is now zealously adopting it. Perhaps something will come of it after all.¹⁹⁹

Ultimately, though, her plans for an international propaganda department were never realised and she appears to have been left largely idle in terms of work associated with Osvag. She lamented in her diary later in September that, with the exception of better understanding the ‘many circles of chaos’ around her, she had so far achieved very little.²⁰⁰

Nevertheless, Tyrkova-Williams was clearly viewed as an expert on foreign affairs in southern Russia. On 17 September 1919 (O.S.), she spoke at a well-attended meeting on the subject of Russia’s international and domestic position. Pavel Dolgorukov also gave a lecture. The Sevastopol’-based newspaper *Iug* (‘The South’), which covered the meeting, described her talk as the most interesting of the programme. It drew particular attention to her experience of living abroad, which informed her observations, adding weight to her reputation as an authority on foreign affairs.²⁰¹ Tyrkova-Williams had considerable experience as a speaker and speechwriter, having written and presented on topics ranging from women’s rights to the first Duma.²⁰²

Tyrkova-Williams’s time in southern Russia was short-lived, however. Towards the end of 1919, as the *Konarmia* (Cavalry Army) advanced further south and the ASFR

¹⁹⁸ Grimm was a lawyer, professor and member of the Kadet Party Central Committee. He served as an aide to Sokolov from autumn 1918 until March 1920. Iu. Shumakher was head of the Information Section of Osvag in 1919. See GARF, f. 440, op. 1, d. 17, ll. 1—81.

¹⁹⁹ Diary entry, 13 Sept 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 232—233.

²⁰⁰ Diary entry, 19 Sept 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 233.

²⁰¹ ‘Doklad A. V. Tyrkovoï’, *Iug*, 21 September 1919 (O.S.), No. 46, p. 3.

²⁰² See ‘Women’s Meetings in St Petersburg Broken up by Police’ *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, 26 April 1914; Tyrkova-Williams, ‘Pamiati V. D. Nabokov’, *Russkaia mysl’*, book VI-VII, 2 May 1922, pp. 272-283. Tyrkova-Williams gave this speech at a meeting of the London branch of the Russian National Committee.

was forced to retreat towards the North Caucasus.²⁰³ Khar'kov fell on 11 December 1919 (O.S.), and Rostov-on-Don and Novocherkassk on 7 January 1920 (O.S.). On December 14 1919 (O.S.) it was decided to move the government institutions from Rostov to the port town of Novorossiisk. According to Williams, '[t]his created a panic, and all sorts of wealthy people hurriedly made preparations to leave the town, often paying enormous prices for a railway ticket to Novo-Rossisk [sic]'.²⁰⁴ Tyrkova-Williams similarly noted the state of panic among civilians in Rostov, but happily observed that the army were taking events more calmly.²⁰⁵

Just a few days later, on 17 December (O.S.), General Denikin disbanded the Special Council and replaced it with a Government of the Main Commander of the AFSR. As the front crept nearer to Rostov, people began to leave in the hundreds, heading towards Novorossiisk, despite the fact the formal evacuation of the town had yet to be announced. The confusion and panic continued. Brigadier H. N. H. Williamson, who was serving with the British Military Mission, later gave an account of the retreat south from Rostov and Taganrog in his memoir. He describes seeing people desperately trying to cram onto trains heading south, refugees suffering from hunger and typhus, and the looting of civilians.²⁰⁶

As a result of Williams's links to the British Military Mission, as well as Tyrkova-Williams's status within the Kadet party, she was fortunate to receive a train passage to Novorossiisk at the beginning of January.²⁰⁷ In a diary entry from 4 January (O.S.) 1920 she wrote of her shock at the fall of Khar'kov to the Red Army and the fact that nobody could understand how such a situation had happened. 'Preparations for the evacuation of Novorossiisk are being made in haste', she wrote. In the same way she had agonised over her involvement, and that of the Kadets more broadly, in the October Revolution after leaving Russia in 1918, she again expressed feelings of guilt for the way events

²⁰³ See Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars*, pp. 134–140.

²⁰⁴ 'Last Days at Rostoff. (From a Special Correspondent)', *The Times*, 31 January 1920, p. 12.

²⁰⁵ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Iu. F. Semenov, 16 December 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 342.

²⁰⁶ H. N. H. Williamson, *Farewell to the Don. The Journal of Brigadier H. N. H. Williamson*, ed. by John Hams (London: Collins, 1970), pp. 245–247.

²⁰⁷ Tyrkova-Williams, 'How People Trek in Southern Russia', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 3 May 1920, Vol XII, No. 138, p. 7.

had turned out, noting, ‘We have been blind and deaf.’²⁰⁸ Despite the retreat and chaos that loomed around her, however, Tyrkova-Williams still remained loyal to Denikin:

The government is crumbling. Nobody knows who is in charge now, where they are, and what they are called. Nevertheless, the shadow of Denikin still looms on the horizon, the word ‘stavka’ still means something.²⁰⁹

It was from Novorossiisk that the Williamses, along with the British Military Mission and scores of White politicians and soldiers of the AFSR, were evacuated in February and March 1920. Williams had been recalled to London in mid-February after the newspapers he was working for decided they no longer wanted him to remain in the region.²¹⁰ After stopping in Constantinople and Salonika to search for Tyrkova-Williams’s daughter, Sofiia, who had been working as a nurse but was evacuated after contracting typhus, they returned to Britain.²¹¹

Reporting from the frontline

Through her correspondent position for the *Monitor*, Tyrkova-Williams was able to present a carefully constructed image of the Whites in southern Russia for a large American readership. In October 1919, for example, the paper ran her article entitled ‘Non-Bolshevist Russia Still Rich’, in which she painted an unjustifiably positive picture of the food situation in White-controlled southern Russia and offered reassurance that the abundance of corn would ‘draw Russia into the international market’ once the country’s infrastructure had been repaired.²¹²

As Tyrkova-Williams was clearly aware, the subject of trade with Russia, particularly the import of grain, was of key importance to the West at this time. She published a similar article on this subject for the *Monitor* in November 1919, which was re-published in the American anti-Bolshevik publication *Struggling Russia* in December

²⁰⁸ Diary entry, 4 January 1920, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 233–235.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Sofiia Borman, 11 February 1920, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 342. See also Alston, *Russia’s Greatest Enemy?*, pp. 163–164.

²¹¹ Tyrkova-Williams, *Cheerful Giver.*, pp. 249–252.

²¹² Tyrkova-Williams, ‘Non-Bolshevist Russia Still Rich’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 11 October 1919, Vol. XI, No 276, p. 1.

1919. Entitled ‘Some Paradoxes of Warring Russia’, the piece compared the abundance of food and prices in southern Russia with Britain and the US, and used much of the same language as the October 1919 *Monitor* article. However, it provided a more in-depth comparison of food prices in the south of Russia and the West and drew on Tyrkova-Williams’s first-hand experience of living in Britain:

The market places [...] are overflowing with bread, eggs, butter, meat, fish, fruit, etc. It is true, all this is sold at very high prices, although if transferred into American currency probably American housekeepers would envy us the low prices at which we buy excellent butter, choice fish, and fine chickens. At any rate, I can buy chickens for one-third of what I paid in London, and eggs, etc., for one-fifth.²¹³

While writing as an authority on Russian affairs for a public audience, Tyrkova-Williams’s second piece for the *Monitor* from southern Russia also referenced her private life and the domestic activities she carried out in addition to her dual role as a journalist and politician. She acknowledged the preoccupations of women struggling to purchase goods and manage the household during a period of conflict. As such, she highlighted the interlocked nature of the public and private spheres and gave them equal weight. The similarity between the articles also reveals information about Tyrkova-Williams’s working methods and the image of the Whites she was endeavouring to present to the West.

Denikin was closely linked to the image she wished to present to the world.²¹⁴ In an article for the *Monitor* published in December 1919, shortly after his failed Moscow campaign, Tyrkova-Williams referred to Denikin as both a ‘military chief’ and ruler of liberated Russia. The article could be seen as a deliberate move to bolster his reputation abroad at a time when he was facing serious criticism from within the White movement, particularly from General P. N. Wrangel.²¹⁵ Focusing on Denikin’s role in introducing

²¹³ Tyrkova-Williams, ‘Some Paradoxes of Warring Russia’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 14 November 1919, Vol. XI, No. 305, p. 9, and *Struggling Russia*, 27 December 1919, pp. 653–655.

²¹⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, ‘Russian Conditions in Liberated Area’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 20 Dec 1919, Vol XII, No. 23, p. 7.

²¹⁵ At the beginning of December 1919, Denikin transferred command of the Volunteer Army to General Wrangel (replacing V. Z. Mai-Maevskii). Wrangel’s command of the army was short-lived, however, lasting only until the beginning of January 1920. The ongoing dispute between Denikin and Wrangel, concerning strategy in the Whites’ Moscow offensive in autumn 1919, escalated in early 1920 and

democratic self-government in the region, Tyrkova-Williams addressed critics directly in her article:

A new electoral law has been elaborated, in accordance with advanced democratic ideas, and should surely satisfy those ill-disposed critics who accuse General Denikin of not being sufficiently democratic in his tendencies.

Nevertheless, critics of Denikin's attitude towards democracy were justified in their concerns. Geoffrey Swain notes that 'By October 1919 approximately 40 million people lived under his [Denikin] rule in four military governorships: Khar'kov, Kiev, Odessa and North Caucasus'. Nevertheless, Denikin ignored 'pleas that the democratic regional and city councils be reconstituted', instead 'introducing a strict franchise relating to property ownership and length of residence'.²¹⁶

Tyrkova-Williams's attempt to highlight Denikin's policies and counter claims that he was not democratic was echoed by Harold Williams. In an article for the *Times* published on 19 November 1919, Williams also addressed critics and provided extracts from speeches by Denikin and Kolchak in order to 'show conclusively that those leaders are working not only to free Russia from the horrors of Bolshevism, but to establish a full democratic government in which the needs of the peasants and workmen shall find ample satisfaction'.²¹⁷ Williams's lack of objectivity has been the subject of criticism. Philip Knightley, for example, described him as 'by far the worst war correspondent in Russia' and gave a damning verdict on his war reporting from the civil wars:

One journalist, Harold Williams, who was in southern Russia for *The Times* of London and the *New York Times*, and therefore a correspondent of immense influence, was so

Wrangel was accused of conspiracy and exiled to Constantinople in March of that year. He subsequently returned to Crimea as Denikin's successor. See Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars*, pp. 136–137.

²¹⁶ Geoffrey Swain, *Russia's Civil War* (Stroud: History Press Limited, 2008), p. 110.

²¹⁷ 'A Free Democratic Russia', *The Times*, 19 November 1919, No. 42261, p. 11. The author of the article is not named, however Williams was known to be the special correspondent in southern Russia for the *Times* during this period.

personally involved with the anti-Bolshevik forces that he should never have been given the assignment.²¹⁸

However, although Tyrkova-Williams's was also clearly heavily invested in the anti-Bolshevik cause, she was publically critical of the Whites for the first time in an article for *The New Russia*, written on 22 December 1919 but not published until February 1920:

Not all is well [...] in the region occupied by the Volunteer Army. The administration is too weak. There is hardly any police and bands of brigands are freely plundering the countryside.²¹⁹

Given that Wrangel was in command of the Volunteer Army (VA) at this point, as well as his open hostility toward Denikin, it appears that Tyrkova-Williams was yet again displaying her loyalty to the latter. However, while the VA was just one constituent of the AFSR (the other major ones being the Don Army and the Kuban Army), contemporaries often referred to the VA (or 'the Volunteers') when discussing the Whites in general.

There was also a distinct change in Tyrkova-Williams's journalism on the retreat from Rostov in that her articles were less detached and instead more in line with the first-person style of Reisner or Beatty's work. Tyrkova-Williams's diaries contain more information about events than her articles and assume a style much closer to factual reportage than her more literary articles. While this change in tone and style could be explained as a conscious propaganda move to drum up sympathy from her audience, it could also be indicative of the personal trauma Tyrkova-Williams was herself experiencing.

She wrote about the retreat of the Whites and the plight of refugees in December 1919 and early 1920 for two different English-language publications, the *New Russia*

²¹⁸ Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist and Myth-Maker from the Crimea to Iraq*, intro. by John Pilger (London: Andre Deutsch, 2003), p. 155; pp. 147–148.

²¹⁹ Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Retreat in the South', *The New Russia*, Vol. I, 19 February 1920, pp. 88–89.

and the *Monitor*.²²⁰ Focusing on the human cost of war, the two articles recorded the plight of the ‘tens of thousands of refugees’ who were forced to flee their homes as the Red Army advanced and the ASFR retreated. While her articles for *The New Russia* and *Monitor* were both eyewitness accounts, the *Monitor* piece was not published until May 1920, almost five months after the events she described took place. The reason for its delay in publication is unclear. While the article states it was written from Novorossiisk, it is possible it was written later. Alternatively, with the chaos of the evacuation, it is plausible that Tyrkova-Williams was unable to send it immediately. By that point the article would have been ‘old news’ but still deemed of enough interest for editors to publish it in the *Monitor*.

Tyrkova-Williams’s *New Russia* article, written on 22 December from Rostov, reflected the changing situation in southern Russia. While she retained some of her earlier optimism, noting that ‘Mercifully, the White army is retreating, not fleeing, and General Wrangel has succeeded in arresting for a few days the pressure of the Reds, affording thereby the possibility of evacuating Khar’kov’, she was decidedly pessimistic about the economic situation, observing, ‘economic life is at a standstill. Grain is plentiful in the south, but export has not been organised. High prices create dissatisfaction’. She was also critical of the Don Government’s failure to provide adequate help for the thousands of refugees fleeing south. Nevertheless, she held fast on her propagandistic view that the people preferred to flee than to live under the Bolsheviks.

The New Russia article also had a strong focus on women, which Tyrkova-Williams drew attention to through the heading ‘women who do not fear death’. Once again drawing on the victimhood narrative, in which women are presented as passive victims of war and men as the perpetrators of violence, she concluded her article with the words: ‘The weak; the small; the children; the women have to flee. The men have to fight. That is the situation’. However, Tyrkova-Williams did not put herself in the category of women who ‘have to flee’.

She described in the *Monitor* article how she watched processions of refugees on foot from the windows of her railway car, thus creating a sense of ‘us and them’. In this

²²⁰ Tyrkova-Williams, ‘The Retreat in the South’, *The New Russia*, Vol. I, 19 February 1920, pp. 88-89; ‘How People Trek in Southern Russia’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 3 May 1920, Vol XII, No. 138, p. 7.

context, she was neither an impartial observer nor an ordinary citizen in that she was involved and caught up in events but belonged to a privileged category thanks to her proximity to Denikin's government and Williams's position with the British Military Mission.

Interestingly, in her article for *The New Russia*, Tyrkova-Williams observed with some admiration that the Bolsheviks had created a sort of 'Red nobility' in their army. She argued that the creation of such an elite was beneficial to the Red Army, but was lacking in the Don Government, where officials were, she reported, 'very poorly paid'. Reiser undoubtedly belonged to this so-called 'Red nobility'. However, despite issues of pay, a similar class of generals, ministers and their families existed in the White-occupied regions of southern Russia. Furthermore, Tyrkova-Williams was very much part of this privileged group.

From her diaries and articles, we get a sense of this community of White generals and ministers and their wives. In her piece for the *Monitor*, she drew attention to the 'hardships' experienced by the women in the White elite:

Here, in the south of Russia, which so many are apt to think of as a gathering place of reactionaries and rich bourgeois, ladies have learned to do everything themselves. My friends, the wives of ministers and well-known generals, cook their dinners and wash their linen themselves. This astonishes no one.

Her friends, for example, included Sofia Mikhailovna Lukomskaia, the wife of White General Aleksandr Sergeevich Lukomskii, chairman of the Special Council in autumn 1919 and head of the Government of the Main Commander of the AFSR from 30 December 1919.²²¹ In a diary entry from 9 January 1920 (O.S.), Tyrkova-Williams described how she defended Lukomskii when he was discredited for 'making preparations for his own departure from Rostov'.²²² This episode not only demonstrates Tyrkova-Williams's influential contacts within the White movement, but also the fractures within it.

Although she was at the time a respected politician and acquainted with senior figures in Denikin's government, Tyrkova-Williams chose to draw attention to her

²²¹ Smele, 'Lukomskii, Aleksandr Sergeevich (10 July 1868–25 January 1939) in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume One, pp. 689–691.

²²² Diary entry, 9 January 1920, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 235.

gender and the everyday lives of bourgeois women in her article for the *Monitor*. In doing so, she demonstrated that despite her acceptance into the masculine worlds of politics and journalism, she was still very much an exceptional figure for a woman of her time. The above example, in which she describes the everyday lives of the wives of ministers and generals, highlights perfectly how public and private life were intertwined and how this manifested itself in Tyrkova-Williams's journalism. To view these spheres as separate would, in this case, obscure our understanding of her life and work.

Humanitarian Press Activities

After leaving Russia for the final time in early 1920, Tyrkova-Williams became increasingly involved in humanitarian organisations aimed at providing aid to those affected by Bolshevik 'atrocities' in the civil wars. As the Whites suffered more defeats, thousands of soldiers and civilians fled abroad. Many more were unable to leave and faced starvation or worse. The withdrawal of Allied troops from Russia from 1920 meant that Tyrkova-Williams re-directed her energies from lobbying for Allied intervention to fundraising for those left destitute by the civil wars. In addition to writing appeals and articles for Russian émigré periodicals, she also served as chairman of the Russian Refugees Relief Association (RRRA), an organisation set up after the evacuation of General Petr Nikolaevich Wrangel's Army from the Crimea in November 1920.²²³

Charitable work, especially that aimed at helping women and children, was a common pastime for middle-class women in early twentieth-century Britain. As Helen Jones notes in her study of women in British public life in the first half of the twentieth century, there were some key differences in the way women historically conducted and understood charity work. Whereas charity work in the nineteenth century was largely carried out in private spaces, in the twentieth century it began to take on the status of state professional work. However, Jones highlights that there was considerable continuity relating to the motives of the women carrying out this work. Discussing women's charitable work to support working-class women's welfare during the First World War, Jones notes:

²²³ Papers relating to the Society to Aid Russian Refugees, BL, Add. ms. 54466, f. 68.

The motives of the volunteers were not so different from their nineteenth century mothers either: a sense of public service heightened by the war; Christian duty; and a desire to offer advice to less fortunate women.²²⁴

Similarities can be drawn here with Tyrkova-Williams's work to raise money for and draw attention to the plight of Russian refugees among the émigré community and sympathetic British public. Although operating within the context of a different war (the civil wars), she too was driven by a sense of public and moral, Christian duty. As an article she wrote on the trafficking of women for prostitution in the early 1900s demonstrates, she also had a particular interest in the welfare of vulnerable women (see Chapter One).²²⁵ By writing articles calling for help for Russian women and children, Tyrkova-Williams can be seen to reflect the shift of charity work from private into public spaces.

One such example was an appeal for donations that she wrote on behalf of the Russian Red Cross Children's Relief Committee, which was run by White émigrés including Miliukov's wife, Anna Miliukova. The appeal, which was published in a November 1920 issue of the RLC's English-language journal *The New Russia* under the title 'The Children in the Crimea: An Appeal', was aimed at the Russian émigré community and non-Russians sympathetic to their cause.²²⁶ Drawing on extracts from documents sent by children's homes and charities (including the Save the Children League) to give weight and credibility to her appeal, Tyrkova-Williams drew attention to particularly emotive images, such as a description of children 'huddling together like sparrows in the cold [...] going blind from starvation'.

Writing in the first person, Tyrkova-Williams referred in the article to her own experience of emigration to create an emotional bond with the reader and further persuade them that they must do something to help the cause. Noting, 'I know that all of us, living in well-fed and organised countries, are bound to help. I know it well [...]', she specifically named some of the small 'pleasures' that could be renounced in order to save money to send to help the starving children, such as 'an extra dish', a 'bottle of

²²⁴ Helen Jones, *Women in British Public Life, 1914–50: Gender, Power and Social Work* (Harlow, Pearson Education, 2000), p. 34.

²²⁵ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Zhivoi tovar', *Russkie vedomosti*, 27 April 1910, No. 95, p. 2.

²²⁶ Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Children in the Crimea: An Appeal', *The New Russia*, Vol. III, 11 November 1920, pp. 352–353.

wine' or a 'bottle of scent'. The appeal concluded with a direct call for donations, which were to be addressed to either 'Mrs A Tyrkova-Williams' or 'Mrs Anna Miliukova', the committee's chair. A Russian language draft of this article was identified in the Bakhmetev archive and further supports the aforementioned theory that Tyrkova-Williams first wrote her articles in Russian before translating them, often with the help of Williams.²²⁷

Indeed, in October 1920, a month before the article appeared in *The New Russia*, Tyrkova-Williams wrote to Miliukova, to tell her she hoped to publish the article in Burtsev's newspaper *Obshchee delo*. She wanted to ask Miliukova's permission to add her name and position within the Red Cross to the bottom of the article. Stressing the urgency of her reply, she expressed her hope that the article would appear in the paper within the following day.²²⁸ A subsequent letter to Miliukova indicated that the paper had published only a small notice about the situation, rather than an appeal. Tyrkova-Williams was disappointed, as it would not have the fundraising impact she had intended. Nevertheless, this correspondence indicates that Tyrkova-Williams initially planned to publish the article in Russian and was constantly looking for ways to maximise the impact of such articles.

Drafts of a similar appeal in English and Russian were identified in the British Library's H. W. Williams Papers.²²⁹ Written on behalf of the RRRRA, the appeal asked for donations to aid Russian refugees suffering from the effects of the civil war. Although the drafts are neither signed nor dated, they are remarkably similar in style, tone and content to the above November 1920 appeal for *The New Russia*. Given Tyrkova-Williams's position as chairwoman of the organisation, it is likely she wrote the article. The author repeatedly highlighted the plight of 'children, women, invalids and all those who are unable to find work require assistance' in their article, yet again drawing attention to the human impact of the war. A reference is also made to a man burning himself alive because of the hopelessness of his situation, recalling Tyrkova-Williams' aforementioned January 1920 article for *The New Russia* in which she

²²⁷ Undated draft article by Tyrkova-Williams entitled 'Deti v Krymu', BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 18, Folder 8.

²²⁸ Letters from Tyrkova-Williams to Miliukova, 'October 1920' and 13 October 1920, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 344 and p. 346.

²²⁹ Undated appeal written on behalf of the Society to Aid Russian Refugees, BL, Add. ms. 54466, ff. 74-82.

describes a woman who is prepared to poison herself and her daughter should the Bolsheviks win the war.²³⁰ A further indication of Tyrkova-Williams' authorship is found towards the end of the article. The author describes various charitable acts and events organised by Russian émigrés and British citizens sympathetic to the anti-Bolshevik cause. One such event was a dance arranged in June 1922 at Chesham House, the former Russian Embassy, by a dozen or so women, the last in the list being Tyrkova-Williams herself.

Regardless of whether Tyrkova-Williams authored this appeal, it is interesting to note her position as chairwoman of the RRRA and her more gendered role as a member of an all-female organising committee of a charity dance. As one of only a few women members of the organisation's board and as a journalist promoting the plight of the refugees through her articles, she combined what were seen as the masculine roles of journalism and public leadership with the more 'feminine' domestic and organisational roles associated with charity work. By comparison, other Russian women participated in charity work but did not have the opportunity, skills or inclination to publish appeals in the international press themselves. An appeal for aid published in *The Times* in January 1920 illustrates this point. Written by Lieutenant-General Sir C. J. Briggs, Chief of the British Mission in Russia, on behalf of 'Madame Denikin' (Kseniia Vasil'evna Denikina, the wife of General Denikin), it called on 'the women of England' to send 'any sheets, pillow-cases, blankets, hospital clothing' to aid hospitals in southern Russia.²³¹ This appeal further demonstrates the deliberate use of gender when discussing humanitarian issues. The items requested are framed as belonging to the domestic sphere and, by association, women.

These examples once again illustrate how Tyrkova-Williams both subverted and conformed to traditional ideas of gender within the framework of journalism and war. On the one hand, by organising and running charities to help those displaced by the civil wars she undertook a wartime role traditionally associated with women. Yet on the other hand, she skilfully used her experience as a journalist to produce articles for a Western and émigré audience in order to simultaneously raise funds for refugees and attempt to swing public opinion in favour of the anti-Bolshevik Whites. In order to achieve her aim, she combined extracts from official reports with aspects of her

²³⁰ Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Retreat in the South', *The New Russia*, Vol. I, 19 February 1920, pp. 88-89.

²³¹ 'Mme. Denikin's Appeal to Englishwomen', *The Times*, 1 January 1920, No. 42296, p. 11.

personal experience in order to appeal to give her appeals credibility and an air of humanity. Unlike Kseniia Denikina and Anna Miliukova, Tyrkova-Williams had the skill and experience to write and publish humanitarian appeals for a Western audience herself.

Beyond the Civil Wars

In 1921 the Kadets finally split following Miliukov's assertion that the party should turn away from the defeated White generals and instead align itself with the Social-Revolutionaries in order to 'support the democratic forces active in Russia'.²³² Some members of the party supported Miliukov, while others such as Tyrkova-Williams reacted furiously and distanced themselves from their former leader.²³³ However, Tyrkova-Williams, along with other Kadet figures, was involved with the Paris-based Russian National Committee, which was established in June 1921 at the National Centre (which was established in 1918) European-wide Congress of National Union.²³⁴

While an émigré press continued to grow outside of Russia, publications established for the specific purpose of informing and mobilising support for the anti-Bolshevik Whites did not survive beyond the initial civil-war years. Tyrkova-Williams did not continue her association with the international press beyond this point in any political capacity. A letter she wrote on 'Russian and British poets a hundred years ago', which was published in *The Times Literary Supplement* in 1923, indicates her move (in part) away from political subjects and her shift in focus towards her literary work, notably the biography of Pushkin she had been itching to write throughout the civil-war years.²³⁵

Despite the collapse of the White movement and Kadet Party, Tyrkova-Williams remained a staunch critic of the Soviet regime throughout her life and continued to publish articles in émigré periodicals, including *Vozrozhdenie*, *Russkaia mysl'* and *Segodnia* ('Today'). In May 1926, while still in Britain, she wrote a series of articles in Russian entitled 'Pis'ma iz Anglii' (Letters from England), which discussed her

²³² Marinus Antony Wes, *Michael Rostovtzeff, Historian in Exile: Russian Roots in an American Context* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990), p.60.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

²³⁴ Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt, 1921* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), p. 105.

²³⁵ Tyrkova-Williams, 'Russian and British Poets A Hundred Years Ago', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 24 May 1923, No. 1114, p. 355.

observations of political and cultural life in the country.²³⁶ Her interest and talent for writing biographies (as well as her wide network and the fact that she significantly outlived most of her contemporaries) also led her to continue writing commemorative articles, which were published in émigré journals.²³⁷ Tyrkova-Williams's later literary works included a biography of her husband, Harold Williams, after his sudden death in 1928, as well as her two-volume work on Pushkin.²³⁸ While the former book was published in English in London, the latter work was published in Paris by YMCA-Press, which was based in Paris from 1925 and focused primarily on religious and philosophical texts. Although Tyrkova-Williams's fiction is not considered exceptional, her non-fiction has received greater acclaim.²³⁹

Although Tyrkova-Williams was never a member, a Union of Russian Writers and Journalists was founded in Paris in 1920. Bunin initially served as chairman of the Union, until Pavel Miliukov took over this role in 1921. Its secretary was V. F. Zeeler and it had branches in Berlin, Prague, Belgrade and Warsaw. The aim of the Union was to help émigré writers to publish their work abroad. Its members included Mark Aldanov, Konstantin Bal'mont, Teffi and Aleksandr Kuprin. The First Congress of the Union of Russian Writers and Journalists Abroad took place in Belgrade in 1928 and marked the first time members from the various branches came together. The fact that the Union included both writers and journalists highlights the closeness of the two genres at this time, while Tyrkova-Williams's absence from the organisation is perhaps a further indication that she did not view her journalism as a profession and did not need help to publish her later literary projects abroad due to her already well established links with publishers in Britain.

She also continued her charity work to aid Russian refugees throughout the 1920s. This included the families of deceased friends, to whom she remained fiercely loyal. In

²³⁶ Newspaper clipping, 'Pis'ma iz Anglii', 4 May 1926. See GARF, f. 10230, op. 1, d. 45, ll. 6–7.

²³⁷ See for example her obituaries and commemorative articles for Sofiia Panina, 'Zamechatel'naiia Russkaia zhenshchina', *Novoe russkoe slovo*, 21 June 1956; and Vasilii Alekseevich Maklakov, 'Redkostnyi dar', *Novoe russkoe slovo*, 24 July 1959.

²³⁸ Tyrkova-Williams, *Cheerful Giver; Zhizn' Pushkina* (Paris: YMCA-Press, Volume 1, 1929; Volume 2, 1948). YMCA-Press had religious origins and was widely viewed as the European Russian intellectual publishing house after 1925. Following Williams's death, Tyrkova-Williams moved to France to live with her son Arkadii's family in 1939. In 1951, she immigrated to the US, again with her son's family. She died in Washington D.C. on 12 January 1962 at the age of 92.

²³⁹ Norman, 'Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams', p. 280.

1927, she wrote an appeal for funds to support the 70-year-old Vladimir Vladimirovich Filosofov, the elder son of her deceased friend Anna Filosofova. Vladimir, a former Russian official, was at the time living in emigration in France in, according to Tyrkova-Williams, ‘almost total destitution’. Focusing on Anna’s contribution to women’s education and the International Women’s League, which was founded in 1888, Tyrkova-Williams aimed her appeal directly at ‘English women’, who she hoped ‘in memory of this noble Russian woman would like to help her son in his hour of need’.²⁴⁰ Vladimir died just two years later, in 1929. This echoed an earlier article written in 1921, in which Tyrkova-Williams appealed to British women to help the family of her friend Shishkina-Iavein.²⁴¹

Thus, in one form or another, activism and a sense of duty continued to drive Tyrkova-Williams’s journalism in the decades after the main phase of the civil wars had been lost to the Bolsheviks. Her press activities between 1917 and 1921, however, are particularly remarkable in terms of their scope. The fact that Tyrkova-Williams was able to publish in such a range of newspapers and journals during this period can be linked in large part to her ability to tailor, re-use and translate much of her work. While she certainly benefited from Williams’s contacts and his language and journalistic experience (particularly relating to the British press), she sought out her own opportunities and, in London, became synonymous with the heart of the Russian émigré community. Lastly, Tyrkova-Williams’s journalism is an important legacy of the events and social and political causes that shaped her life (and her circle more broadly) and, as a source, is vital for understanding how her public and private experiences, desires and duties were connected and expressed. These themes will be further examined and compared in the context of the early Soviet press and, specifically, the case study of Reisner, in the remaining two chapters of this thesis.

²⁴⁰ English-language draft article by Tyrkova-Williams calling for donations for V. V. Filosofov, 10 February 1927. BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams, Box 18, Folder 4.

²⁴¹ Untitled draft article by Tyrkova-Williams, 1921. BL, Add. ms. 54476, ff. 8–13.

Chapter Three: Women and the Early Soviet Press, 1917–1926

As has long been observed by historians of women and Soviet Russia, despite declaring gender equality after the October Revolution, the party's structures, as well as many associated spheres, remained under the stronghold of male party leadership.¹ The press was no exception, with the official contributors and editorial boards of the main Bolshevik party newspapers continuing to consist of predominantly male, long-standing party members. In July 1918, for example, an advert for subscriptions to *Bednota* ('Poverty'), a daily newspaper for peasants and workers established in Moscow in March 1918, featured a list of its contributors. Among them were key party figures including Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Krupskaja, Grigorii Evseevich Zinov'iev and Iakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov, chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. Of the fourteen contributors listed, Krupskaja was the only woman.² Subscription notices and editorial information for other publications similarly emphasized their prestigious male editors and contributors.³

While we know that women in fact contributed to *Bednota*, *Pravda*, *Izvestiia* and other early Soviet publications in a wide range of capacities including as news reporters, typists, editors and translators, their underrepresentation in official adverts and literature demonstrates the extent to which the organisation of the press reflected the organisation of the party as a whole in the first years of the revolution. Similarly, it also reinforces how the party continued to view press work as a form of political activism to be carried out, at least superficially, by longstanding, trusted party members. As Lenoë has highlighted with regards to the 1920s, 'the head editor of major central newspapers was usually a first- or second-level party leader who lacked the time to do real journalistic work [...] The actual job of running the paper was done by the second-in-command

¹ Wood notes that even by 1924, 'women still constituted only 9–10 percent of party members, and less than 3 percent of the staffs of provisional party committees and soviets'. Women's low levels of participation in party government were, as Wood highlights, 'blamed on traditional failings of women themselves: their low cultural levels; their religious "stagnation"; and their enslavement in the family'. See Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, p. 208.

² *Pravda*, 21 July 1918, No. 151, p. 4.

³ See for example *Pravda*, 19 March 1918, No. 52, p. 1.

(*sekretar* or *zamestitel zaveduiushchego* [sic]), who worked closely with the heads of the various departments.⁴

Among those who carried out these nominally supporting roles were a number of women. Lenin's sister, the longstanding party activist Mariia Il'inichna Ul'ianova, served as secretary to the editorial board of *Pravda* but, as Lenoe observes, was the newspaper's 'de facto head editor' during the civil-war period. As secretary she was also responsible for 'all of the administrative and secretarial duties of the editorial offices, distributing pencils from her desk and determining employee eligibility for food rations'.⁵ Such positions held by women in the party press were not new, as Krupskaja's organisational role in the illegal Bolshevik party journal *Vpered* before the revolution illustrates (see Chapter One). Thus, the example of Mariia Ul'ianova also demonstrates how characteristics of the pre-revolutionary party press were reproduced in the early Soviet press.

Yet, while journalism remained a form of party activism throughout the Soviet period, a clear shift can be observed in the early- to mid-1920s, during which time some attempts were made to organise and, to an extent, professionalise those working in the press. This shift coincided with the end of the major conflicts of the civil wars and the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP), the latter of which 'saw the simultaneous attempt by the party to organise an administrative hierarchy that would connect Moscow to the periphery of the Soviet Union, and to promote a limited kind of commercial market complete with print advertising'.⁶ Changes to the culture of journalism brought new challenges and heightened pre-existing issues for women.

This chapter addresses the work, experience and development of women in the early Soviet press. Given that many articles were not attributed to particular journalists during this period and women often held less visible organisational and technical roles in the press, it is difficult to obtain a full picture of women's participation in this sphere. In view of these challenges, I have chosen to analyse membership and delegate records from the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists (*Moskovskii soiuz sovetskikh zhurnalistov*), which existed between 1918 and 1919, and the November 1918 First All-

⁴ Lenoe, *Closer to the Masses*, pp. 15–16.

⁵ Lenoe, *Closer to the Masses*, p. 13. Lenoe quotes the unpublished memoirs of N. M. Rabinovich, courier and researcher for *Pravda*, as his source.

⁶ Thomas C. Wolfe, *Governing Soviet Journalism: The Press and the Socialist Person After Stalin* (Bloomington, I.N.: Indiana University Press; Chesham: Combined Academic, 2005), p. 25.

Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists (*I-yi vserossiiskii s"ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov*) in order to demonstrate for the first time the extent to which women were represented in official press organisations in the first years of the revolution and how their roles and profiles compared with those of their male counterparts.

In order to address this topic, this chapter will pose the following questions. How and why did women enter or continue to carry out press work in the period after the October Revolution? To what extent was participation in the press understood as a form of party work throughout the period in question? What kinds of roles did women hold in the press and to what extent were they (and their journalism) perceived as gendered? What were the specific challenges and issues affecting women in the press during this period, and to what extent did they reflect wider changes to the organisation and culture of journalism?

Examining archival documents from official press organisations also enables us to uncover the identities of many of the women who worked in Bolshevik party publications during these years and to trace their careers in the press in the decade after the October Revolution. This includes those whose work in this sphere has until now remained obscured. While the women represented in these early journalism organisations held a range of roles, the availability of biographical information relating to their backgrounds and work in the press varies greatly. In 1918 and 1919, the focus of early journalism organisations was also primarily on the intellectual rather than manual contribution to the press. As such, this chapter inevitably focuses more heavily on those who came from more educated backgrounds and have greater profiles as a result of publishing memoirs or their proximity to more prominent party figures. In addition, it also focuses on those who worked in the press in a professional or party capacity and does not examine women and the phenomenon of the worker-peasant correspondents (*rabsel'kory*), which emerged in 1922.⁷

Although historians have previously examined some of these sources, gender has not featured as one of the criteria for analysis.⁸ As well as demonstrating the initial

⁷ On the topic of worker-peasant correspondents see Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State*, pp. 23–239 and Jeremy Hicks, 'From Conduits to Commanders: Shifting Views of Worker-Correspondents, 1924–26', *Revolutionary Russia*, 19:2 (2006), pp. 131–149.

⁸ Zhirkov, for example, examines the results of questionnaires completed by delegates attending the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists in November 1918. Zhirkov, *Zhurnalistika dvukh Rossii*, pp. 112–113.

continuity between party journalism before and immediately after October 1917, and the transition to a more professional, regulated Soviet press in the early 1920s, examining the early Soviet press from the perspective of the women who worked in it contributes more widely to scholarship on gender relations within the party and in early Soviet society.

Women and the Party Press after the October Revolution

The October Revolution marked a shift in the way the party press was organised. Upon taking power, the Bolsheviks began to make the transition from small-scale, illegal party journalism to a state-regulated press, which aimed to reach both broad and specific groups of the population. As the new regime sought to secure and legitimize its power, it began to target opposition publications. However, as Kenez and Resis have demonstrated, the Bolsheviks did not immediately secure a monopoly of the press; as of early 1918, the party still had weak control over workers in Moscow and Petrograd and little to no control over the rest of the country.⁹ Their initial treatment of the opposition press was chaotic and inconsistent.¹⁰ Nevertheless, by the summer of 1918, all opposition publications in Moscow and Petrograd had been closed and by the end of 1918, the circulation of Bolshevik papers had increased approximately tenfold since the October Revolution.¹¹

The sharp increase in the number of Bolshevik party newspapers, combined with an exodus of liberal and commercial journalists and editors, created a need for press workers, particularly in the provinces.¹² While Lenin had to ‘admonish his colleagues repeatedly to write more often for the newspapers’, a new generation of sympathetic young writers and activists were attracted to the press.¹³ During the civil-war period

⁹ For a detailed examination of Bolshevik policies towards the press in 1917 and 1918 see Kenez, *Birth of the Propaganda State*; Albert Resis, ‘Lenin on Freedom of the Press’, *The Russian Review*, 36:3 (1977), pp. 274–296; and Strovsky and Simons, ‘The Bolshevik Policy Towards the Press in Russia: 1917–1920’.

¹⁰ Kenez, *Birth of the Propaganda State*, p. 42; Tyrkova-Williams, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, pp. 401–405.

¹¹ Kenez, *Birth of the Propaganda State*, p. 44. It is important to note, however, that the overall number of publications decreased during this period, as opposition papers and journals were closed and journalists fled abroad. See Lenoe, *Closer to the Masses*, p. 16.

¹² Kenez, *Birth of the Propaganda State*, pp. 45–46.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

there was little opportunity to publish literature and, as a result, many writers also turned to journalism as a means of making a living during these difficult years. The relationship between literature and journalism in the first decade after the October Revolution is particularly important when examining the topic of women in the press during this period. As Jeremy Hicks observes:

While journalism is often seen as the antithesis of literature, the two enjoyed a close and productive relationship in the Soviet Union in the decade following the Revolution. The influence of the Bolshevik press was key to Red victory in the Civil War, and much of Bolshevik journalism's power stemmed from its application of literary methods to factual genres and harnessing of literary talents such as Vladimir Mayakovsky.¹⁴

The combining of literary methods to factual subjects is best observed in the genres of the *ocherk* (or sketch) and the feuilleton (a short, satirical article). While these genres were already established in the pre-revolutionary period, the Bolsheviks developed them as tools of persuasion after the October Revolution. Hicks notes that, 'these two genres represent two major tendencies in Soviet journalism: the tendency towards sharp juxtaposition, irony and a critical edge in the feuilleton, and the tendency towards description, praise and heroisation in the light of the ultimate goal of the *ocherk*'.¹⁵ The emphasis on invention rather than the transmission of verified facts in the *ocherk*, and its association with *publitsistika* (political or committed journalism), is further highlighted by Evgeniia Zhurbina.¹⁶

Somewhat problematically, the shortage of journalists also led to poorly educated, sometimes even illiterate, individuals working on newspapers, including on editorial boards, a fact that caused concern among some of the old party elite working in the press.¹⁷ Such concerns were raised at meetings, including the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists in 1918, which were organised to discuss the role and direction of the press after the revolution. The trade journal *Zhurnalist* ('Journalist')

¹⁴ Hicks, 'Worker Correspondents: Between Journalism and Literature', p. 568.

¹⁵ Hicks, *Dziga Vertov: Defining Documentary Film* (New York; London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), p. 10.

¹⁶ Evgeniia I. Zhurbina, *Isskustvo ocherka* (Moscow, 1957), p. 112.

¹⁷ This issue was discussed at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists in November 1919 by party figures, including Liudmila Stal'. See *I-yi vsereossiiskii s'ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov (Iz stenograficheskogo otcheta)* (Moscow, 1918), pp. 22–23.

also provided a platform for discussing the direction and issues of the Soviet press and the role of the journalist during this period.¹⁸

Despite the fact that the Bolsheviks gained a monopoly over the press in the territories under their control and increased their number of publications, the lack of a professional culture and ethic that characterised pre-revolutionary party journalism continued through the revolution and into the early civil-war period. This culture had particular consequences for women carrying out press work. Although the revolution had theoretically opened up opportunities for all women in terms of abstract rights, the association of the press with party work meant that it was, at least initially, far easier for women who had privileged contacts within the party to gain entry into this sphere – particularly to the more prominent roles of journalist or, in some cases, editor of a provincial newspaper. The women who held these roles were, on the whole, also party members and/or members of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists. While many had little or no journalism experience, several came from literary backgrounds and had published in some form prior to the revolution. Although the few women involved in debating the direction of the press in the first years of the revolution were almost exclusively members of the old party elite, the new generation of women newspaper workers were nevertheless instrumental to the running of the early Soviet press in the first years of the revolution.

Writing in 1925, Inber observed that Soviet journalism did not emerge until after the civil wars and the ‘storm’ of revolution had died down.¹⁹ Indeed, as the tumultuous and difficult main civil-war years came to a close, the emphasis of Bolshevik journalism began to shift from mobilising the population to engage in military action, to educating the masses and implementing their vision for a new society. As Mueller demonstrates in her work on the training of early Soviet journalists, in the early 1920s, the Soviet press was expanded to fulfil a range of functions, from disseminating news and information and educating the population, to providing a means of communication between the regime and the masses through its network of worker-peasant correspondents.²⁰

¹⁸ *Zhurnalists* first appeared in 1914 but closed the following year due to financial difficulties. It re-appeared in 1920 as *Krasnyi zhurnalists* (‘Red Journalist’) and from 1922 was published under its original title, *Zhurnalists*.

¹⁹ Vera Inber, ‘O zheltom, serom i krasnom’, *Zhurnalists*, August–September 1925, No. 8–9, pp. 25–26.

²⁰ Mueller, ‘Staffing Newspapers and Training Journalists in Early Soviet Russia’, pp. 851–873.

At the same time, Mueller notes, ‘during NEP Soviet journalists were not supposed to be propagandists, they were supposed to be cadre/professionals, people who were both ideologically steadfast and professionally competent.’²¹ To achieve this, the party established technical and ideological training for those who fulfilled certain social and political requirements. Nevertheless, the strict entry requirements were often ignored as the number of those who possessed both the desired class and political backgrounds and technical competence was insufficient.²² Training was also provided for the more technical aspects of newspaper work. With regards to women print workers, Koenker observes that ‘the Marxist project of the emancipation of women and the Soviet project of productivism dovetailed neatly when it came to promoting women's occupational training’.²³

The development of journalism training for women in the West followed a different path to the one in Russia. While separate training had been open to some women in America from the late 1800s, and in non-segregated schools from the turn of the century, they were taught along gendered lines and treated as second-rate to their male colleagues. As it was expected that women would leave journalism once they married, they were not encouraged to develop their careers along the same lines as men or to compete for jobs. Men were trained to write ‘hard news’ articles about politics and public affairs, while women were expected to focus on ‘soft news’, such as feature stories.²⁴ Both women and men of colour were barred from some journalism schools until the 1950s.²⁵

Challenges and issues affecting women in the early Soviet press

Despite organisational and ideological differences, Western and Russian women working in the press in the 1920s faced a number of the same issues. The shift towards a more organised and professional culture of journalism in early Soviet Russia raised additional, or heightened existing, challenges and issues, including harassment and

²¹ Ibid., p. 851.

²² Ibid., p. 854.

²³ Koenker. ‘Men against Women on the Shop Floor in Early Soviet Russia: Gender and Class in the Socialist Workplace’, p. 1451.

²⁴ See Bradley, *Women and the Press*, pp. 202–206; Beasley and Gibbons, *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism*, p. 12.

²⁵ Bradley, *Women and the Press*, p. 207.

discrimination in the workplace, and the pressure of juggling work and family life. While such issues were undoubtedly not new or unique to the press, the professionalization of newspaper work and the hierarchies and contracts that accompanied it amplified existing problems.

With regards to the treatment of women workers (particularly focusing on the printing industry in early Soviet Russia), Koenker clearly demonstrates that misogynistic behaviour, so prevalent in the pre-revolutionary workplace, continued into the Soviet period. She further argues that despite some official attempts to cultivate new attitudes towards women in the workplace, ‘divisions between men and women in Soviet work places became more distinct, not less, by the eve of the First Five-Year Plan’.²⁶ Male print workers were reluctant to hire and train women, as many believed marriage and children would interfere with their work. They similarly viewed women as less serious and political-minded than male workers.²⁷ A comment from a male typist at *Izvestiia*, published in a piece for *Zhurnalist* in 1925, further demonstrates the attitude of some men towards their women colleagues. Discussing the physical difficulties of his job (notably sore fingers, a stiff neck and the loud noise), the typist, one V. M. Zhukov, remarked: ‘These things don’t bother me. I’m a man. But the women, they complain.’²⁸

Wider changes to the culture of the press, as well some of the specific issues women faced, were discussed in *Zhurnalist* and also reflected in its official agenda, format and target readership. When the journal was re-launched in September 1922, its objective was to discuss issues relating to the Russian and foreign periodical press, as well as the lives of Russian and foreign journalists and writers. Its editorial board comprised four male journalists and party members: A. A. Beliakov, Il’ia Vardin (the pen name of Illarion Vissarionovich Mgeladze), Sergei Borisovich Ingulov and Lazar’ Iur’evich Shmidt, a former SR who joined the RKP(b) in 1920. Additional contributors included Bukharin, Mariia Ul’ianova, Trotsky, Radek, and the celebrated artist known as Dmitrii Moor (Dmitrii Stakhievich Orlov).²⁹ As indicated by its mission statement, in 1922, the journal specifically targeted ‘journalists’ and ‘writers’. This changed in May 1923, however, as the term ‘journalist’ was replaced by ‘press worker’. With the exception of

²⁶ Koenker. ‘Men against Women on the Shop Floor in Early Soviet Russia: Gender and Class in the Socialist Workplace’, p. 1439.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.1441–1442.

²⁸ ‘Kazhdyi rabotnik pechati o svoem remesle’, *Zhurnalist*, May 1925, No. 5, pp. 32–37.

²⁹ *Zhurnalist*, September 1922, No. 1.

Beliakov, the editorial team remained the same.³⁰ Although it claimed to include press workers, the journal was also still very much aimed at journalists and writers, with an advert included in the July 1924 issue urging every new (*nachinaiushchii*) journalist or writer to read *Zhurnalists*.³¹

The journal underwent additional changes in 1929 as its target readership expanded even further to include worker and peasant correspondents, contributors to wall and factory newspapers, and ‘all those interested in the work and challenges of the press’. To this end, a new cover design, typeface and format were introduced, complete with a large number of illustrations, photographs and caricatures, and the subscription price was reduced. The newly-styled ‘mass’ journal now appeared bi-monthly.³² The journal’s initial inclusion of writers alongside journalists and, later, press workers, illustrates how journalism and literature were viewed as separate but interconnected spheres.

The position of women in the press and the specific issues they faced were discussed in *Zhurnalists* from at least the late 1920s. Although written outside of the period covered in this thesis, one such article published in February 1929 is an important source for understanding the experience of women in the press in the years following the October Revolution. Entitled ‘Women Journalists’, the article by one A. Krylova discussed the prevalence of women in the Soviet press, the types of roles they held, their routes into journalism and some of the difficulties they faced in the workplace. Discussing the backgrounds of the women working in journalism, Krylova observed:

[...] Their backgrounds are unusual and varied. The older of them stood up for the revolutionary cause while the younger emerged from the revolutionary yeast (*revoliutsionnye drozhzhi*).³³

Once again, the October Revolution is framed as a turning point for women and journalism. However, while Krylova argued that women could now be found on the staff of all but two Moscow newspapers and that the situation concerning women journalists was drastically different from that of the pre-revolutionary ‘yellow’ press, she

³⁰ *Zhurnalists*, May–June 1923, No. 6.

³¹ *Zhurnalists*, July 1924, No. 13.

³² See, for example, *Zhurnalists*, 1 February 1929, No. 3.

³³ A. Krylova, ‘Zhurnalistski’, *Zhurnalists*, 1 February 1929, No. 3, pp. 80–81.

nevertheless observed that only four women journalists – Inber (1890–1972), Zinaida Vladimirovna Rikhter (1890–1967), Mariia Mikhailovna Shkapskaia (1891–1952) and Marietta Sergeevna Shaginian (1888–1982) – were really known.

Brooks has also argued that there was a lack of visibility for early Soviet women journalists in his chapter ‘*Pravda* and the language of power in Soviet Russia, 1917–28’:

The workers, so important in Bolshevik ideology, rarely appeared as agents of action, either individually or collectively, although they were often featured as the objects of action. Women suffered a similar eclipse; they were seldom active protagonists in newspaper stories or authors except on the special women's page that appeared occasionally.³⁴

However, while women working in the press were certainly overshadowed by their male colleagues and less likely to be recognized for their work, Brooks’ suggestion that women journalists were confined to special women’s pages is inaccurate and misleading.

Commenting on the roles held by women in the press and their style of writing, Krylova argued that they brought a distinct, gendered contribution to journalism:

It is normal to see women in a Soviet editorial office. They serve as secretaries, carry out proof reading, work on reports, supply satirical articles (feuilletons), essays, information – in short, they bring warmth and life to the bare skeleton of the newspaper page.

This view of women’s roles in the press illustrates the continuation, and even amplification, of gender hierarchies in this sphere. Many of the tasks listed by Krylova fall into the support category and she makes no mention of women holding editorial roles. As many older women revolutionaries moved away from the newspaper work in the 1920s, the new generation of women did not fill the few editor positions they had held. Furthermore, Krylova’s description of women’s contribution to the press can be compared with the human interest or ‘women’s style’ of journalism that women were often expected to produce in the West.

Importantly, Krylova also drew attention to issues affecting women working in the press and in Soviet society more widely, such as the difficulties women faced in

³⁴ Brooks, ‘*Pravda* and the language of power in Soviet Russia, 1917–28’, p. 162.

combining work and family life and harassment in the workplace. She was critical of male journalists for their lack of support and interest in helping to address these issues, a fact echoed by Koenker in her study of attitudes of male print workers towards their women colleagues.³⁵ Concerning workplace harassment, Krylova's advice to women newspaper workers was to 'be on guard' and 'rebuff' advances from male colleagues, which she equated to an annoying swarm of mosquitoes, rather than to report such behaviour to the local or bureau section.

An illustration accompanying the article further demonstrated attitudes of male colleagues towards women working in the press and in Soviet society more broadly. Depicting a young woman working at her desk while a lecherous older male colleague leans over her, the caption read: '[s]he has to defend herself from annoying advances' (*Ei prikhoditsia oboroniat'sia ot nazoilivogo ukhazhivaniia*). The treatment of this topic by Krylova and the illustrator, E. Mandel'burg, suggests that workplace harassment was considered and accepted to be an everyday, albeit irritating, occurrence for women that they were expected to learn to deal with. While Koenker has demonstrated that women print workers complained of workplace harassment through letters of complaint and hearings, she also notes that such complaints were rarely taken seriously and the perpetrators often went unpunished.³⁶ Nevertheless, the fact that issues pertaining specifically to women working in the press were discussed by women in the main Soviet journalism magazine highlights their awareness of such problems and the fact that they were able to raise these issues in a public space. Furthermore, it also supports the view that women's experiences in this sphere need to be understood within the wider context of Soviet attitudes towards gender.

The move away from journalism solely as purely a form of party activism and the emphasis on training and the professionalisation of press work was greatly different to the environment in which pre-revolutionary party activists had operated. By 1922, the older women party revolutionaries or 'Bolshevichki' constituted just eight per cent of party members. Of the party's 30,547 members in 1922, 29,172 had joined since the February Revolution.³⁷ By the mid to late 1920s, many of the older generation of

³⁵ Koenker. 'Men against Women on the Shop Floor in Early Soviet Russia', p. 1445.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 1450.

³⁷ See Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, p. 162.

women Bolsheviks were no longer working in the press. The reasons for this can be linked to both a change in party dynamics, as previously prominent figures, notably Kollontai, were side-lined for questioning the direction of the party and sought to protect themselves by renouncing many of their earlier works, and also a shift towards a more professional culture of journalism. Longstanding women activists became increasingly absent from the top of the party's leadership. Barbara Evans Clements notes that, 'Before 1918 they [Bolshevichki] played an active role in the party leadership, especially at the local level. After 1921 they took government jobs in education, health care, journalism, editing, and economic management'.³⁸ Kollontai, for example, was appointed as Soviet representative to Oslo (becoming the world's second woman ambassador) in 1923, after joining the Workers' Opposition, a left-wing break-away faction, and becoming a vocal critic of the party's leadership. She held diplomatic posts for the next two decades.³⁹ Other women similarly left roles in the press to take up various political, administrative or literary roles, including for the Cheka.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the *Zhenotdel*, of which many of these women were founders and key organisers, was closed in 1930 and had already lost much of its influence before then.⁴¹ Thus, on the whole, the old cohort of women revolutionaries were not seen as posing a significant threat to the regime by the time of the purges in the late 1930s. The emphasis on sacrificing one's private life for the good of the revolution and party also meant that many of the old women revolutionaries were single, a fact Clements also argues contributes to their survival during the purges.⁴² The evidence that many of the original Bolshevik women revolutionaries lived long lives and avoided the purges that befell so many of their male counterparts supports these arguments.

Nevertheless, as Krylova's 1929 article illustrates, a handful of women, particularly those who joined the press at the time of the revolution, continued to work as journalists in a more professional capacity throughout the 1920s. Examining the work and experience of those who were members of early journalism organisations enables us to

³⁸ Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, p. 11.

³⁹ Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist*, pp. 223–224.

⁴⁰ Natalia Alekseevna Roslavets-Ustinova, for example, edited a number of Bolshevik newspapers after the revolution, before joining the Cheka in late 1918.

⁴¹ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, p. 221.

⁴² Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, pp. 280–281.

widen our understanding of developments in the early Soviet press and the specific ways in which women navigated these changes.

Representation of Women in Journalism Organisations, 1918–1919

In 1918, the first journalism organisations emerged and meetings were called to discuss the role, future direction, and challenges of the press. Two of the most significant were the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists, which took place a year after the October Revolution. Men dominated these early organisations and meetings. Of the 106 delegates who attended the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists, for example, only seven women were identified.⁴³ Analysing membership lists and questionnaires from these organisations, enables us to understand the representation and backgrounds of women who were involved in them. This in turn sheds light on the relationship between gender and journalism during this period.

The Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists

While the idea of bringing together Soviet journalists had been discussed for some time, the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists was not officially established until November 1918. One Comrade Antonov stated that there had been considerable debate concerning who should be admitted to join the organisation. Speaking in November 1918, he noted:

The idea of uniting all Soviet journalists arose quite a while ago. The May [1918] meeting of the initiative group showed that two tendencies existed among journalists: one view was that all journalists who had supported the October Revolution should be brought together, including Left SRs and anarchists, who subsequently withdrew their support. The other group believed that only those journalists who strongly supported the Soviet government should join the Union. This question was not resolved and a special commission was elected to deal with this issue. The commission met for three months, after which time another meeting was convened and a new charter was proposed. In this

⁴³ As only surnames were given for the delegates, it has not been possible to determine the exact number of women delegates. However, Russian naming traditions (by which a woman bears a feminized version of her father or husband's surname – Volkov becomes Volkova, for example) and further research demonstrate that only a very small percentage of delegates were women.

charter, the question was resolved as follows: the Union would admit all journalists who recognized and actively supported the Soviet government.⁴⁴

As of November 1918, the Union had 273 members, 153 of whom were members of the RKP(b). While the majority were from Moscow, the Union also included members from the provinces and abroad. Lenin, who himself had argued that writers/journalists should be members of party organisations in his 1905 article, was a member of the Union. Following the establishment of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, similar organisations began to appear in cities across Russia.⁴⁵

According to an early Union membership list, of 317 members admitted to the Union in 1918–1919, only 39 women were identified (approximately 12 per cent).⁴⁶ However, given that out of 470 members of the pre-revolutionary Union of Journalists there was believed to have been only one woman, these figures are more encouraging.⁴⁷ The most common profession listed for the Union's women members, where stated, was news reporter (*khroniker*), while others were listed as secretaries, typists, writers (*literatory*) and translators. Kollontai and Mariia Ul'ianova, were among the Union's members, and both were listed as working for *Pravda*.

Several of the women members worked for the same newspapers or agencies, the most common being *Bednota*, *Pravda*, *Izvestiia*, the state news agency Rosta (Rossiiskoe telegrafnoe agentstvo; The Russian Telegraph Agency), and the Petrograd-based evening newspaper *Vecherniaia krasnaia gazeta* ('The Evening Red Gazette').⁴⁸ Although the Union was based in Moscow, its members also worked for publications outside of the capital city. There is also evidence that men and women who held the same roles and worked for the same newspapers became members of the Union together. Among them was Ekaterina O. Shipova, a news reporter for *Vecherniaia krasnaia gazeta*, who joined the Union on 20 August 1918 along with her two male news reporter colleagues, Vladimir A. Lunaevskii and Karl K. Makar. A number of the

⁴⁴ *I-yi vserossiiskii s"ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov*, pp. 3–4.

⁴⁵ Zhirkov, *Zhurnalistika dvukh Rossii*, p. 113.

⁴⁶ Membership list for the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, 1918/1919. RGALI, f. 1600, op. 1, d. 12, ll. 1–5.

⁴⁷ Svitich, *Professiia: zhurnalist. Uchebnoe posobie*, p. 83. This statistic is also referenced by Krylova in her 1929 article for *Zhurnalist* (see above).

⁴⁸ *Vecherniaia krasnaia gazeta* was published in Petrograd and first appeared in July 1918.

women members also resided in the same buildings or hotels in the centre of Moscow. Four gave the Hotel Metropol' (known as the Second House of Soviets after it was nationalised by the Bolshevik administration in 1918) as their address, while another two lived at 14 Prechistenskii Boulevard (now Gogolevskii Boulevard) in the central Arbat District of the city.

The types of roles women held in the press can further be observed in a questionnaire distributed to members of the Union in April 1919.⁴⁹ While it cannot be assumed that male and female members were equally likely to return the questionnaires, the fact that only eight out of 54 completed questionnaires were returned by women reflects the Union's low female membership rate. Of these eight respondents, three held technical roles (*zhurnalist-tekhnik*), four were literary translators (including one woman who also worked in production), one was head of the telegram department at *Pravda*, and the remaining member served on the editorial board at an unnamed newspaper. Only one of these women, Roza Borisovna Barkhina, was also included on the aforementioned Union membership list.⁵⁰

The questionnaire was issued following a proposal in March 1919 to reorganise the Union of Soviet Journalists into the Union of Scientific, Artistic and Literary Workers (*Soiuz rabotnikov nauki, iskusstva i literatury*). The new union would comprise four sections: the section of Soviet writers, artists and poets; the section of Soviet scientists and philosophers; the section of Soviet critics, *publitsisty* and journalists; and the section of Soviet journalists and newspaper technicians. Members were asked to state which section they would like to become members of and which section(s) they would like to have the right to vote as part of on matters concerning the Union as a whole. Six of the women listed the fourth section (Soviet journalists and newspaper technicians) as the sole or one of their choices for membership. Sections one (Soviet writers, artists and poets) and three (Soviet critics, publicists and journalists) were listed by two and three respondents, respectively.⁵¹ It is interesting to note here that *publitsisty* (political journalists) were viewed as separate to journalists. The proposed new Union was never

⁴⁹ Questionnaire issued to members of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, April 1919. RGALI, f. 1600, op. 1, d. 13, ll. 1–54.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Very little information was identified relating to Barkhina.

⁵¹ Ibid.

established and the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists was officially dissolved in May 1919.

These statistics indicate a distinction between journalists (including *publitsisty*) and technical newspaper workers. In terms of gender, women appear to have been more prevalent in the latter group. By 1920, women working in some of the more manual aspects of the press were viewed as distinct, gendered groups. Women print workers (*pechatnitsy*), for example, were singled out in two articles published on the women's page ('Zhizn' rabotnitsty'; The Life of Women Workers) of *Kommunisticheskii trud* ('Communist Labour'), the organ of the Moscow city committee of the RKP(b) and the Moscow Soviet, on 15 July 1920.⁵² The articles criticised women print workers for failing to seize the opportunities given to them by the revolution and, in the first, for their lack of contribution to 'women workers' pages' (*stranichki-rabotnits*), despite the fact that most of the women working in this area had, according to the author of the article, a good level of literacy.⁵³ The second article claimed that these women were succumbing to influence from the Mensheviks or the so-called 'yellow' or sensationalist press.⁵⁴ Reminding women print workers of how the revolution had transformed their lives and the vital importance of press work at the present time, the author of the article, one typesetter (*naborshchitsa*) by the name of Kandeeva, called on them to apply themselves to their work and to the task of building a brighter communist future.⁵⁵

A 1925 article published by *Zhurnalist* and entitled 'Kazhdyi rabotnik pechati o svoem remesle' (Different press workers talk about their craft) featured profiles of different press workers.⁵⁶ Four of the 15 chosen to discuss their roles and reasons for choosing their profession were women: E. A. Afanas'eva, a newspaper seller (*gazetchitsa*) for *Vecherniaia Moskva* ('Evening Moscow'); S. Pol'-Mari, a typist (*mashinistka*) at *Izvestiia*; one comrade Amchislavskaia, a dispatcher (*ekspeditor*) for

⁵² I. Mol., 'Pechatnitsa i revoliutsiia', *Kommunisticheskii trud*, 15 July 1920, No. 95, p. 4; and Naborshchitsa Kandeeva, 'Tovarishcham-pechatnitsam', *Kommunisticheskii trud*, 15 July 1920, No. 95, p. 4.

⁵³ Mol., 'Pechatnitsa i revoliutsiia', p. 4

⁵⁴ For more on the political history of press workers in Tsarist and Soviet Russia see Diane P. Koneker, 'Class and Consciousness in a Socialist Society. Workers in the Printing Trades During NEP', in *Russia in the Era of NEP. Explorations in Soviet Society and Culture*, ed. by Shelia Fitzpatrick, Alexander Rabinowitch and Richard Stites (Bloomington; I.N.: Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. 34–57.

⁵⁵ Kandeeva, 'Tovarishcham-pechatnitsam', p. 4.

⁵⁶ 'Kazhdyi rabotnik pechati o svoem remesle', *Zhurnalist*, May 1925, No. 5, pp. 32–37.

Rabochaia Moskva ('Working Moscow'); and M. F. Ivanova, a proof reader (*korrektor*) also working for *Izvestiia*. Quotes ostensibly from the women illustrate their roles in the press, as well as the class differences between those working as journalists, editors and editorial secretaries, and those carrying out the more manual tasks associated with journalism.

Afanas'eva, for example, had previously worked as a dish-washer but became a newspaper seller after she lost her job. She noted that the worst parts of her job were bad weather and when newspapers came out late. On the contrary, the best was when newspapers sold quickly, which was, Afanas'eva observed, dependent on how sensational the stories were. The more sensational the stories, the more newspapers she sold. She wished that all newspapers were interesting so that circulation would increase. The issue of dull newspaper articles was observed by many, including Inber. In 1925, she wrote that journalists had left behind the pre-revolutionary Aesopian language used to avoid censors as well as the simple, 'leathery' (or hard) rhetoric of the early days of the revolution and replaced it with formulaic, colourless language. She noted that she was not referring to worker and peasant correspondents but to 'professional journalists'.⁵⁷ While Afanas'eva and Inber called for more interesting stories and language, proof reader Ivanova issued a plea to journalists to 'respect their work and the work of type setters and write legibly'. Her 'worst nightmare' was an illegible original article.⁵⁸

The woman who gave her name as 'Pol'-Mari' similarly fell into newspaper work by chance: she began typing, found it profitable and became a typist. What is interesting, however, is that she claimed to have worked as a typist for 18 years, beginning her career a decade before the October Revolution. While it is unclear when she began working for *Izvestiia*, or indeed whether she worked specifically as a typist for newspapers prior to the revolution, the length of her career suggests that she did not belong to the group of women who entered press work for political reasons. However, she noted in her profile that she had copied speeches by Lenin and Kamenev and sometimes taken dictation, indicating a pride in her role and political awareness.⁵⁹ However, as Koenker has observed when analysing items contributed to the printers'

⁵⁷ Vera Inber, 'O zheltom, serom i krasnom', *Zhurnal'ist*, August–September 1925, No. 8–9, pp. 25–26.

⁵⁸ 'Kazhdyi rabotnik pechati o svoem remesle', *Zhurnal'ist*, May 1925, No. 5, pp. 32–37.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

union press between 1918 and 1930, ‘as workers learned “to speak Bolshevik”, in the phrase coined by Stephen Kotkin’, it is difficult to distinguish between the voice of the party and the voice of the workers themselves.⁶⁰

These articles discussing the work of women press workers demonstrate how the revolution influenced women’s roles in the press. While there were of course exceptions, before the revolution, the technical side of press work (such as type-setting and printing) was predominantly carried out by men, in part reflecting their higher levels of literacy. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there was a need for press workers after the revolution, as Bolshevik publications drastically increased and opposition newspapers were closed. The shortage of press workers would have been further exacerbated by the mobilization of men to fight in the First World War and later the civil wars. Women, particularly those from the working class, thus helped to fill technical roles in the Bolshevik press after the revolution. The fact that women print workers were addressed in women’s pages as a separate group highlights their significance by 1920. By 1923, women accounted for 25 per cent of the print workers in Moscow (five times as many as in 1912) and 35 per cent in Petrograd.⁶¹

The First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists

The First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists, which took place in November 1918, was held under the auspices of the Moscow Committee of the Union of Soviet Journalists, which had been organised in August 1918. Delegates at the Congress discussed issues relating to the challenges and tasks (*zadachi*) of the Soviet press, the centralization of printing (*pechatnoe delo*), the contents of newspapers and ‘freedom of criticism’ (*svoboda kritiki*), as well ideas to establish a school and an All-Russian Union for Soviet Journalists. As set out by contemporary reports, notable delegates included Kamenev, Radek, Lunacharsky, Steklov and Kollontai. The resolutions passed at the Congress included a plan to establish a Central Council of the All-Russian Union of Soviet Journalists (*Tsentral’nyi sovet vserossiiskogo soiuza Sovetskikh zhurnalistov*), which would promote links between regional unions, undertake the organisation of

⁶⁰ Koenker. ‘Men against Women on the Shop Floor in Early Soviet Russia’, p. 1440; Stephen Kotkin, ‘Coercion and Identity: Workers’ Lives in Stalin’s Showcase City’, in *Making Workers Soviet: Power, Class, and Identity*, ed. by Lewis H. Siegelbaum and Ronald G. Suny (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 274–310.

⁶¹ Koenker. ‘Men against Women on the Shop Floor in Early Soviet Russia’, p. 1440.

future congresses and conferences, and be responsible for all decisions concerning the organisation of the Soviet press. However, according to an article written by *Zhurnalist's* editorial board in 1923, few of the resolutions were met and the Central Committee (*Tsentrosovet*) had limited influence and was soon disbanded. As such when the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists was held in May 1919, they practically had to 'start from the beginning'.⁶²

79 out of 106 delegates to the Congress were members of the RKP(b), while a further 13 supported the party (*sochuvstvuiushchie kommunistam*). A further five considered themselves variously as Internationalists, while the remainder supported various other communist and anarchist groups. Only one delegate was listed as not affiliated with a party (*bespartiinyi*). While the Congress' delegates came from across the country, Russia's regions and cities were not evenly represented, with over half (58) of all delegates coming from Moscow. According to the results of questionnaires completed by delegates, the majority derived their main income from journalism or literary work, while 24 listed their main occupation as Soviet service (*sovetskaia sluzhba*). Approximately one-fifth (20) of the delegates had only begun participating in journalism after the February Revolution, including 15 who only became active in the press after the October Revolution. In comparison, 57 delegates had been involved in journalism since the 1905 revolution, and 20 had begun their journalism careers prior to 1905. Two delegates were under the age of 20, over half (58) were aged 20 to 30, 36 were between 30 and 40, nine between 40 and 50, and only one older than 50. In addition, 29 had completed higher education, 33 had not (yet) completed their higher education, 25 delegates had completed high school, four had not completed their high school education, six had primary education, and a further six had been home schooled.⁶³ Thus, the majority of delegates were well-educated and fairly established as journalists at the time of the October Revolution. While just under a quarter considered their main occupation to be party work, the rest viewed themselves as journalists or writers by profession. This implies that although journalism was conceived as a form of party work at the time of the revolution, many of those contributing to the press also viewed this work as a career.

⁶² 'Tri s"ezda', *Zhurnalist*, February 1923, No. 4, pp. 3–8.

⁶³ *I-yi vserossiiskii s"ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov*, p. 64

The statistics provided by the questionnaire are useful as they provide a benchmark for examining and comparing women's participation in the early Soviet press. With only seven women out of 106 delegates, the Congress was overwhelmingly male. Of the women delegates who completed the questionnaire, only two, the long-standing party revolutionary Liudmila Stal' (1872–1939) and Ekaterina Naumovna Kats (b. 1887), who joined the Bolsheviks from the Left SRs in 1918, have significant profiles. Stal' attended the Congress as a representative of the Viatka-based newspaper *Izvestiia gubispolkoma* (*The News of the Provincial Executive Committee*), while Kats was affiliated with *Znamia trudovoi kommuny* ('The Banner of the Labour Commune').

A comparison with the overall results of the questionnaire places Stal' among one of only nine delegates between the ages of 40 and 50 in 1918. She does not appear to have completed higher education and became active in the press prior to 1905, placing her among 20 delegates to have done so. While we do not know whether she considered her main profession to be journalism or party work, her Marxist background and pre-revolutionary activities suggest she would have fallen into the latter category.⁶⁴ Stal''s experience and work is typical of women activists who contributed to party journalism both before and immediately after 1917 in that she participated in revolutionary activities and underground circles in Russia as a teenager and young adult, before travelling to Europe where she became involved in the RSDLP shortly after it was established in 1898 (see Chapter One).⁶⁵ Among other roles, she contributed to *Pravda* and helped to establish *Rabotnitsa* in Paris in 1914. Stal''s involvement in *Rabotnitsa* and other activities placed her among the core group of women activists, which, among others, included Inessa Armand, Clara Zetkin, Kollontai and Krupskaiia. She continued working on women's issues, publications and education throughout her life, helping to organise, for example, the First Petrograd Conference of Working Class Women shortly after the October Revolution. Stal''s trusted position within the party is clear from the fact that Lenin requested her to travel to Stockholm at the end of 1916 in order to

⁶⁴ The following biographical information on Stal' was informed by L. Bogutskaia, 'Liudmila Stal'', in *Slavnye Bol'shevichki*, ed. by E. D. Stasova, Ts. S. Bobrovskaia (Zelikson), and A. M. Itkina (Moscow, 1958), pp. 291–300; and Liudmila Stal', 'God za tiuremnoi reshetkoi', pp. 63–77.

⁶⁵ Stal''s revolutionary involvement began early, when she was expelled from school for distributing illegal pamphlets and collecting money for political prisoners. In her early twenties, she spent a year working in Omsk, Siberia, for the Marxist newspaper *Stepnoi krai* ('Steppe Land'), before moving to Moscow to take part in underground revolutionary student circles and activities.

organise the transportation of literature into Russia. She returned to Russia after the February Revolution and, in the period immediately before the October Revolution, worked in Kronstadt as editor of *Kronshtadtskaia pravda* ('Kronstadt Truth'), as well as a member of the Kronstadt Bolshevik Committee and the Executive Committee of the City Soviet.

At the beginning of 1918 Stal' was appointed editor of *Soldatskaia pravda* ('Soldier's Truth'), a Bolshevik daily originally established as the organ of the Military Organisation of the Petrograd Committee in April 1917. The paper closed in March 1918 but, together with *Derevenskaia bednota* ('The Rural Poor') and *Derevenskaia pravda* ('Rural Truth'), formed the basis for a new publication, *Bednota*, which first appeared on 27 March 1918. Over the next few years of civil war, she held various editorial positions and carried out political agitation across Russia. There was a need for trusted and experienced party activists to staff newly-formed newspapers in the provinces. As Kenez notes, during the civil war, '[...] every local Soviet and army unit wanted to have its own paper [...].'⁶⁶ Thus, between 1918 and 1920, she lived in Viatka, where she was a member of the Provincial Committee (*Biuro gubkoma*) and editor of *Viatskaia pravda* ('Viatka Truth') and *Izvestiia gubispolkoma*. She also edited the newspaper of the twelfth army, *Bor'ba* ('The Struggle'). One of only two identified women to speak at the Congress, Stal's participation, further demonstrates her trusted and privileged position within the party press.

However, Stal's work in the party press soon gave way to roles in government education and publishing, particularly in connection with the work of the Zhenotdel. In 1920, she left Viatka to carry out party work in Moscow, primarily connected to the education and engagement of women workers and peasants. Her roles included serving as a member of the International Women's Secretariat, as head of the department of mass-circulation literature for working and peasant women at the State publishing house Gosizdat, and as editor of the women's magazine *Kommunistka* ('The Woman Communist'). Her involvement in women's publications is reflected in an article published in *Zhurnalist* in 1927, in which she outlined the origins and history of *Rabotnitsa* and *Kommunistka*. She drew particular attention to the importance of the worker-peasant press for women, noting that 'we' should take pride in its

⁶⁶ Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State*, p. 46.

development.⁶⁷ As Brooks observes, ‘the Bolsheviks often expressed their self-awareness and sense of power in the press during the first decade of their rule by the use of the pronoun “we”’.⁶⁸ From 1928 Stal’ carried out research at the Museum of Revolution and died from natural causes the following decade, in 1939.

Stal’'s experience supports the argument presented in this chapter that the distinct lack of professional ethic that characterised pre-revolutionary party journalism continued through the first years of the revolution. As a trusted, inner member of the party, she was appointed as an editor of a key Bolshevik paper, *Soldatskaia pravda*, in early 1918, before being sent to edit provincial publications, including in Viatka. While Stal’ had considerable press experience, having been involved with *Iskra*, *Pravda* and *Rabotnitsa* before the revolution, her contributions to this sphere were driven by party loyalty rather than professional ambition. However, after the civil war, she moved away from the mainstream party press, instead holding a number of government and education roles and, from 1924 until 1928, served as editor of the women’s publication *Kommunistka*. By the late 1920s, she was no longer contributing to the press.

Kats, by contrast, was only thirty-one when she completed the questionnaire for delegates to the Congress and also appears to have become involved in journalism as a form of political work. She had completed higher education, training as a statistician and later attending the historical-philological department at the University of Bern. In 1902, she became a member of the SRs but left Russia after spending time in prison for her activities. After returning to Russia, Kats was elected to the Northern regional council of the SRs in 1917, before becoming a member of the Standing Committee of the Left SRs in September 1917, where she worked as head of the party’s publishing section.

Following the October Revolution, Kats became head of the department for agricultural statistics at the People’s Commissariat.⁶⁹ She joined the Party of Populist Communists (*Partiia Narodnikov-Kommunistov*), a breakaway group of Left SRs who sided with the Bolsheviks following the failed Left-SR uprising of July 1918, and was one of the editors of its paper, ‘The Banner of the Labour Commune’.⁷⁰ Originally

⁶⁷ Liudmila Stal’, ‘Zhenskaia rabochaia pechat’, *Zhurnalist*, 1927, No. 11, pp. 45–48.

⁶⁸ Brooks, ‘*Pravda* and the language of power in Soviet Russia, 1917–1928’, p. 158.

⁶⁹ ‘Partiia Sotsialistov-Revoliutsionerov’, <<https://socialist-revolutionist.ru/component/content/article/34-people/1118-kacz-kamkova-ekaterina-naumovna>> [Accessed 22 May 2017].

⁷⁰ *I-yi vserossiiskii s"ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov*, p. 61.

published under the title *Znamia bor'by* ('The Banner of Struggle'), this publication was the press organ of the Left SRs between July and August 1918. From 21 August 1918, the paper existed as the mouthpiece of the Party of Populist Communists. 'The Banner of the Labour Commune' closed in November 1918, after a decision was taken by members of the Party of Populist Communists to dissolve the party and merge with the All-Russian Communist Party.⁷¹ In addition to being a delegate at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists, Kats was also a member of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists.⁷² Thus, her educational background, age and route into the press were also fairly typical compared to other delegates to the Congress.

The minutes from the Congress, as well as the list of delegates and a summary of the questionnaire results were published in 1918. While some of the above-mentioned statistics relating to the profile of the Congress' delegates (based on the results of the questionnaires) have been presented and discussed by Zhirkov in his book on Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik journalism between 1917 and 1920, they have not previously been examined in relation to the Congress's women delegates. These documents reveal important information about the demographics and roles of women working in the Bolshevik press during this period.⁷³

Stal', in her capacity as a delegate for *Izvestiia gubispolkoma*, and Alexandra Kollontai, who was not officially listed as a delegate, were the only two women to give speeches at the congress. In her speech, Stal' began by calling for the Soviet government to pay more attention to the standard of editors. According to Stal', when she came to Viatka and took control of *Izvestiia gubispolkoma*, she found that many among the paper's editorial staff were illiterate, disorganised and unfit for the job. She argued that the Soviet government must encourage initiatives by Petrograd and Moscow journalists to instruct those in the provinces on how to run newspapers.

In her address, Stal' also raised the issue of how news reached the provinces, stating that telegrams from Rosta, the State news agency, reached provincial newspapers later than newspapers from Moscow themselves. She criticised the accuracy of the telegrams and argued that it was necessary to ensure that those writing and sending these

⁷¹ V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 50 (Moscow: Prospekt, 2013), p. 768.

⁷² RGALI, f. 1600, op. 1, d. 12, ll. 1–5 (Membership list for the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, 1918/1919); *I-yi vsrossiiskii s"ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov*, p. 61.

⁷³ See Zhirkov, *Zhurnalistika dvukh Rossii*, pp. 112–113. Kenez also discusses the themes and resolutions of the congresses, particularly the first, in *The Birth of the Propaganda State*, pp. 47–48.

telegrams were able to do so in a clear and concise manner. Finally, she turned her attention to the government's relationship with the press. Stal' argued that the press must be allowed to criticise the government, as Lenin himself had argued. However, she gave an example of an exposé she wrote in Viatka about food production, for which she was admonished and threatened with court by a Commissar and party member. According to Stal', the press ought to mercilessly fight and expose these officials and the bureaucratic systems (*volokita*; red tape). Furthermore, it must discuss the 'needs of the illiterate, forgotten population who do not know but feel what Soviet government is'.⁷⁴

In contrast to Stal', Kollontai focused specifically on women's themes. She spoke on the subject of how Soviet journalism could engage the huge numbers of women workers and peasants. After drawing attention to the Soviet women's publication *Rabotnitsa* ('The Woman Worker') and other international publications aimed at women, she posed the question of whether there was a need for a press organ aimed specifically at women. Kollontai argued that it was more beneficial to dedicate one page in provincial newspapers to the concerns, questions and involvement of women workers and peasants because 'life is the best agitator'. According to Kollontai, these pages should deal with issues of childrearing, housekeeping and socialist education, as well as prostitution and other moral and ethical issues that concerned the working class. She stressed that it would be an unforgiveable mistake for journalism to forget about these issues, which in turn contributed to the party's aims and work. Finally, she noted that while they first and foremost concerned women, these questions were not specifically 'women's issues'.⁷⁵

These two addresses by prominent Bolshevik women activists reveal much about gender dynamics within the party and, more specifically, within the party press. Stal''s experience and inner position in the party gave her the authority to raise concerns about the organisation and running of the press after the revolution. As a trusted member of the Bolsheviks, Stal' was appointed editor of provincial party newspapers. However, she was admonished and threatened by a party commissar when she wrote an article critical of the new regime.

⁷⁴ *I-yi vserossiiskii s"ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov*, pp. 22–23.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

The fact that only two women spoke at the congress demonstrates the imbalance of women and men holding key editorial or party roles. While Stal' was editor of provincial publications, only a very small number of women served on the editorial boards of the main party newspapers based in Moscow and Petrograd. This gender distribution was more broadly mirrored in the party's leadership, with far more male party members holding 'high-ranking and mid-range party offices' than women.⁷⁶ Women were also far more likely to hold local as opposed to central government roles. As Clements notes, the inclination of Bolshevik men to marginalise women in the party had existed before the revolution but it had been of much less consequence 'because the party was a small underground movement with very little power to distribute and because the revolutionary ethos prescribed countervailing egalitarian values'.⁷⁷

A second All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists took place in May 1919 in Moscow. The minutes and profiles of delegates from this congress do not appear to have been published and it is unclear how many women delegates were in attendance. However, the tone of the second congress differed significantly from that of the first. As observed by Kenez, 'the organisers understood that in the developing system there could be no such profession as journalism but simply a party function for publishing newspapers'.⁷⁸ An article published by the editors of *Zhurnalist* in 1923 summarised the second congress and argued that the failures of the first congress were connected to its attempt to mix the professional, party and Soviet functions of the press. Rather, it concluded, 'the union of journalists must exist as a party association or not exist at all'.⁷⁹ In short, the party continued to view journalists as party activists, thus continuing its pre-revolutionary attitude.

The Third Congress of Soviet Journalists was held in January 1922. It was subsequently renamed the All-Russian Congress of Press Workers (*Vserossiiskii s"ezd rabotnikov pechati*), which first took place in February 1923.⁸⁰ While the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and the First and Second All-Russian Congress of Soviet

⁷⁶ Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, p. 159.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁷⁸ Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State*, p. 48.

⁷⁹ 'Tri s"ezda', *Zhurnalist*, February 1923, No. 4, pp. 3–8.

⁸⁰ See *Zhurnalist*, March–April, 1923, No. 5, for reports from the Fourth All-Russian Congress of Press Workers.

Journalists primarily admitted only journalists who displayed active support of the Soviet regime, from 1922 the scope was expanded to include technical press workers as well as journalists. However, an article by S. Ingulov, published in *Zhurnalist* in April 1925 argued that although the fourth congress was officially called the All-Russian Congress of Press Workers, in reality it was merely a continuation of the congresses of Soviet journalists, as only a handful of technical press workers were permitted to attend while the majority of delegates were editors, literary writers and head of newspaper sections.⁸¹ Thus, by examining these congresses, it is possible to observe wider changes to the way the press was organised during this period.

In order to better understand who these women were and how and why they entered the press, the second part of this chapter will examine the lives and work of a number of other women Union and Congress members. In doing so, it reveals the extent to which women contributed to the functioning and direction of the press during this period, their reasons for engaging in this work and their backgrounds and fates, while also highlighting some of the less-celebrated and visible roles they undertook.

Overview of Other Women Union and Congress Members

Aside from Kollontai and Ul'ianova, other women Union and Congress members have received little, if any, scholarly attention. For the purpose of this chapter, it is possible to group women members into four broad categories: those, like Kollontai, Ul'ianova and Stal', who were active in the pre-revolutionary party press; those who entered the party press from an SR background; those who had little or no prior experience but joined the press at the time of the revolution; and those who came from literary backgrounds but found work in journalism during the revolution and civil-war period. The remaining section of this chapter will focus on the latter three groups. By examining the backgrounds and work of some of these women, as well as their reasons for becoming involved in the press and their later careers, it is possible to widen the narrative of early Soviet journalism. The following overview of women Union and Congress members focuses on those who have received little or no scholarly attention.

⁸¹ S. Ingulov, 'Piat' s"ezdov', *Zhurnalist*, April 1925, No. 4, pp. 3–5.

The non-Bolshevik revolutionaries

A handful of women who had been active in the revolutionary movement and affiliated with different parties prior to the October Revolution also began working in the Bolshevik press after 1917. Nadezhda Aleksandrovna Golovina (1855–1943), Natalia Alekseevna Roslavets-Ustinova (1888–1957) and Kats (see above) all became involved in Bolshevik press activities in 1918 after having previously been affiliated with the SRs and/or Left SRs. Golovina, who was born into an impoverished noble family, was active in populist circles from the 1870s. In 1917, she became a member of the editorial board of *Izvestiia Zemgora* ('News of the Union of Zemstvos and Towns'), and that summer, she joined the SRs but left the party shortly after.⁸² The following year, she worked as an editor of *Zemlia* ('Earth'), a joint publication between the Bolsheviks and Left SRs, before it was shut down in autumn 1918. She subsequently worked at *Izvestiia Narodnogo komissariata zdravookhraneniia* ('News of the People's Commissariat for Health') and joined the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists. A serious illness prevented her from working from 1919 until 1921, when she joined the All-Union Society for Political Prisoners and Exiles (*Vsesoiuznoe obshchestvo politkatorzhan i ssyl'no poselentsev*). She retired in 1931 and died in 1943 at the age of 88.⁸³

Roslavets-Ustinova also had a fairly typical revolutionary background in that she completed higher education and joined the SRs prior to 1917. She subsequently became a member of the Left SRs in November 1917, before joining the Russian Communist Party in August 1918. During this period she served as a member of the Elets Regional Executive Committee and edited a number of newspapers, including *Kommunar* ('The Communard'), the Moscow-based daily published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party.⁸⁴ In November 1918, the focus of Roslavets-Ustinova's party work shifted and she became an investigator with the Moscow Cheka (*chrezvychainaia komissiiia*; Emergency Committee). She later became head of the department for combatting counter-revolution, as well as a member of the Moscow Cheka board

⁸² The Union of Zemstvos and Towns (*Zemgor*) was established in 1915 to help to supply the army, aid refugees and tend to the wounded.

⁸³ 'Nadezhda Aleksandrovna Golovina, Autobiography, 1925', in *Bol'shaia biograficheskaia entsiklopediia* <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enc_biography/36816> [Accessed 2 May 2017].

⁸⁴ RGALI, f. 1600, op. 1, d. 12, ll. 1–5 (Membership list for the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, 1918/1919).

(*kollegiia*).⁸⁵ In May 1924, Roslavets-Ustinova began working in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and, in 1926, she was appointed secretary to the Soviet embassy in Greece.⁸⁶

Kats, who was both a member of the Union and a delegate at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists, had similarly joined the SRs before the revolution. As these profiles demonstrate, women from other socialist backgrounds became involved in Bolshevik press activities, and the party, during the first years of the revolution. As opposition papers were closed, joining the Bolshevik party and press was one of the only options open to other socialist activists and journalists. The fact that these women were all members of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and Kats was also a delegate at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists is significant. While party membership was not an explicit requirement for entry into these organisations, the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists was clear, following several months of debate, that it would only admit members who 'recognized and actively supported the Soviet government'.⁸⁷ By late 1918, all three of the women profiled above were editing and/or writing for Bolshevik publications, having previously been affiliated with the SRs and/or Left SRs.

While little is known of Kats' later life and death, both Golovina and Roslavets-Ustinova also survived the purges of the 1930s and lived long lives. Golovina joined the All-Union Society for Political Prisoners and Exiles in 1921, while Roslavets-Ustinova began a long career in the secret police and People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in 1918. Parallels can thus be drawn with the group of older Bolshevik women activists who contributed to the party press before and after the revolution.

A new generation of women journalists

Unlike press organs affiliated with the White movement, a new generation of young women was attracted to work in the Bolshevik party press after the revolution. The majority of those profiled below were members of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, demonstrating their close support of the party and affiliation with many of the main party newspapers. Of these, almost all initially gained access to this sphere

⁸⁵ F. Ia. Berezin, *Neizvestnoe o Moskovskoi ChK* (Moscow: Galeriia, 2007), p. 26.

⁸⁶ 'Biograficheskii slovar', Arkhiv Aleksandra N. Iakovleva, <<http://www.alexanderyakovlev.org/almanah/almanah-dict-bio/1019161/15>> [Accessed 10 August 2017].

⁸⁷ *I-yi vserossiiskii s"ezd sovetskikh zhurnalistov*, p. 61.

through their familial relationships with prominent party figures. The majority had no substantial prior political or journalistic experience. While Larisa Reisner perhaps best demonstrates this route into Bolshevik journalism (despite the fact she was not a member of the Union), her party and literary background was by no means unique.

Nina Sergeevna Aksakova (1890–1962), for example, belonged to the well-known literary Aksakov Family.⁸⁸ After attending music school, she married the Bolshevik revolutionary Nikolai Ivanovich Smirnov (1893–?) in 1917. Smirnov had joined the Bolsheviks in 1912 and had been involved in revolutionary activities prior to the October Revolution. He was a colleague of Viacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, a leading Bolshevik revolutionary, and, in 1919, became editor of *Bednota*. Aksakova and Smirnov lived in the Nirnzee House (*Dom Nirnzee*), famous for being Moscow's first skyscraper at the beginning of the twentieth century. The building housed party functionaries, as well as the offices of a number of newspapers. Much to her family's dismay, Aksakova joined the party and worked as assistant to the secretary of *Vecherniaia krasnaia gazeta*. She later worked as deputy head of the personnel section at Gosplan, the State planning committee, and died in 1962. Smirnov was expelled from the party and arrested in 1937. He was not heard of again after 1940.⁸⁹

Another young woman with family connections to the party was Ianina Mechislavovna Kozlovskaiia (1901–1970). Aged just 16 at the time of the October Revolution, Kozlovskaiia was the daughter of the Russian-Polish-Lithuanian revolutionary Mechislav Iul'evich Kozlovskii.⁹⁰ In 1918, she began working at *Bednota*, first as a writer and later as secretary to the editorial staff. She held various

⁸⁸ Members of the Aksakov family included the nineteenth century literary figures Sergei Aksakov, Vera Aksakova and Aleksandr Aksakov, the journalist Ivan Aksakov, and the critic and Slavophile Konstantin Aksakov. See A. S. Kuleshov, *Aksakovy. Istoriia razbitykh sudeb* (Moscow: Territoria, 2009).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 121–126.

⁹⁰ Born in Vilnius in 1876, Mechislav Kozlovskii was active in the Polish, Lithuanian and Russian revolutionary movements prior to 1917. After the February Revolution, he became a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and represented the Bolshevik Party at a special conference to draft legislation for elections to the Constituent Assembly. Following the October Revolution, Kozlovskii was chairman of the investigation commission of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and a member of the People's Commissariat of Justice. He helped to prepare a number of Soviet decrees. He died in 1927. See G. I. Kopanev, *Geroi Oktiabria: Biografii aktivnikh uchastnikov podgotovki i provedeniia Oktiabr'skogo vooruzh. vosstaniia v Petrograde*, Part 1 (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1967), pp. 544–47.

roles at *Bednota* until 1929. Kozlovskaiia was an acquaintance of the poet Sergei Esenin and school friend of Galina Arturovna Benislavskaiia, friend, lover and secretary to Esenin. According to Kozlovskaiia, her father, who had served as chairman of the Investigation Commission of the Petrograd Soviet Military Revolutionary Committee, recommended Benislavskaiia for a job with the Cheka when she arrived in Moscow in 1919. Benislavskaiia later joined *Bednota* in 1923.⁹¹ In 1936, Kozlovskaiia was arrested and sent to a labour camp. She was released in 1947 and rehabilitated in 1956.⁹² Kozlovskaiia's father, Mechislav, was transferred to diplomatic work in 1922 and died following an illness in 1927.

Other women entered the press through their literary and artistic connections, as well as their links to the party. Among the Union's members was the writer, translator and literary critic Lidiia Petrovna Toom. Born in 1890 near Tartu, Estonia into a family of teachers, Toom, like a number of other revolutionaries, was expelled from her *gimnaziia* for participating in student unrest. She later studied and worked in Russia, including in Moscow, and began publishing in 1918.⁹³ Between 1918 and 1922, Toom worked at *Tvorchestvo* ('Creation'; 'Art'), an illustrated literary and art journal published in Moscow. It was also in 1918 that she joined the newly established Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists.⁹⁴ In the early 1920s, she began working for *Pravda*, as well as several other publications including *Molodaia gvardiia* ('The Young Guard') and *Oktiabr'* ('October'). An address aggregator indicates that in 1926, Toom was still working at *Pravda* and lived in Flat 17, Building Two, Briusovskii Pereulok, along with her younger sister and fellow *Pravda* colleague, Ol'ga Petrovna Toom (1895–1978).⁹⁵ A number of other *Pravda* colleagues, as well as the poet Esenin, lived in the same building as the Tooms.⁹⁶ Lidiia Toom joined the party in 1927 and died in 1976.⁹⁷

⁹¹ N. Chkheidze, 'Iz vospominanii (o G. A. Benislavskoi)', *Literaturnaia Gruziiia*, No. 5–6 (Tbilisi: Zaria vostoka, 1969), p. 16.

⁹² *S. A. Esenin: materialy k biografii*, ed. by N. B. Volkova, N. I. Guseva, S. I. Subbotin, S. V. Shumikhin (Moscow: Istoricheskoe nasledie, 1992), p. 356.

⁹³ 'Biografiia i knigi avtora Toom Lidiia', *Elektronnaia biblioteka RuLit*, <<http://www.rulit.me/authors/toom-lidiya>> [Accessed 2 May 2017].

⁹⁴ RGALI, f. 1600, op. 1, d. 12, ll. 1–5 (Membership list for the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, 1918/1919).

⁹⁵ Address aggregator for 1926, <<http://www.apartment.ru/Article/48796329.html>> [Accessed 2 May 2017].

⁹⁶ S. A. Esenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 6 (Moscow: Nauka; Golos, 1999), p. 225.

A pianist by training, Lidiia's sister Ol'ga was married to the celebrated Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov between 1918 and 1920. While little biographical information was identified for Ol'ga, she is believed to have worked (as well as Vertov himself) at *Pravda* until at least 1926 and to have accompanied Krupskaia and Mariia Ul'ianova on propaganda trains (*agit-poezda*) around the country.⁹⁸ Announcements published in *Pravda* in April 1918 advertised an evening organised by the Union of Working Youth (*Soiuz rabochei molodozhi*; also known as the Third International) in Moscow, at which Ol'ga Toom was to play the piano. The evening, which was to take place on 14 April 1918, featured a lecture on the youth leagues of the West, Poland and Russia as well as a musical recital.⁹⁹ Toom later worked at the Moscow Conservatoire and, in 1931, married the musicologist and music critic Daniel Vladimirovich Zhitomirskii (1906–1992).¹⁰⁰ Lidiia and Ol'ga's familial relationship, coupled with the fact that Ol'ga had links to Vertov, Krupskaia and Ul'ianova, demonstrates the interconnectivity of women (and indeed many men) working in the press during this period and thus, its lack of professional culture and ethic.

Another woman, the painter Evgeniia Vladimirovna Muratova (1884/5–1981), similarly had literary and party connections. Her first husband, Pavel Pavlovich Muratov, was a Russian critic, writer and playwright, and her second husband, Viktor Ivanovich Strazhev, a poet, critic and biographer, who worked in the People's Commissariat of Education from 1921. Muratova was a member of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists in 1918–1919 and held an unspecified position at Rosta, the State news agency of Soviet Russia during this period.¹⁰¹ She later worked as a secretary to the editorial board of *Krasnaia nov'* ('Red Virgin Soil'), a monthly Soviet literary

⁹⁷ 'Biografiia i knigi avtora Toom Lidiia'.

⁹⁸ 'Dziga Vertov. Rezhisser i stsenarist', Internet Museum TsSDF, <<https://csdfmuseum.ru/names/1-%D0%94%D0%B7%D0%B8%D0%B3%D0%B0-%D0%92%D0%95%D0%A0%D0%A2%D0%9E%D0%92>> [Accessed 5 June 2017].

⁹⁹ *Pravda*, 11, 12, 13 and 14 April 1918, Nos. 69, 70, 71 and 72, 4. The Union of Working Youth was founded in Moscow in the summer of 1917 from existing worker youth movements and was a precursor of the Komsomol.

¹⁰⁰ S. V. Zhitomirskaia, *Prosto zhizn'* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 95; pp. 98–99.

¹⁰¹ RGALI, f. 1600, op. 1, d. 12, l. 1–5 (Membership list for the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, 1918/1919).

journal that ran from 1921 until 1941 and included Esenin, Mayakovsky and Gorky among its early contributors.¹⁰²

As these profiles illustrate, the new generation of women who were attracted to the press did not belong to the top ranks of the party's leadership, despite the fact that some of their husbands or fathers were prominent in the party. However, like the women revolutionaries of the nineteenth century, many came from affluent families and had a higher education. As with the majority of women active in the pre-revolutionary party press, the new generation of women journalists also lived long lives and, with the exception of Kozlovskaja who spent several years in a labour camp, avoided the purges of the 1930s. This can be largely attributed to the fact that most of these women worked for literary journals and/or pursued careers in literature and translation after the immediate years of revolution and civil war. As such, they were not seen as a threat in the same way that Reisner, had she lived beyond 1926, may have been. Nadezhda Mandelstam later recalled her husband, Osip Mandelstam, saying at the height of the Stalinist purges in 1937, 'how lucky Larisa had been to die in time: all the people in her circle were now being destroyed wholesale'.¹⁰³

From writer to party journalist

Some of the women who began working in the Bolshevik press after the revolution had prior experience as journalists and writers with non-party publications. The writer Margarita Vladimirovna Iamshchikova (Rokotova; 1872–1959), who used the pseudonym Aleksandr Altaev, began her pre-revolutionary career writing stories for children and biographies of historical cultural figures.¹⁰⁴ In the early 1900s, she became involved with revolutionary student circles and, in 1905, the first issue of the Social Democratic student paper *Iunaia Rossiia* ('Young Russia'), to which Gorky and Lunacharsky contributed, was compiled in her St Petersburg apartment.¹⁰⁵ In her memoirs, published in 1955, Iamshchikova describes the moment she first heard Lenin speak in 1917 as a turning point in her life. Although her description is overly nostalgic

¹⁰² 'S. A. Esenin i ego okruzhenie' in *Bibliograficheskii spravochnik* <<http://zinin-miresenina.narod.ru/m.htm>> [Accessed 20 May 2017].

¹⁰³ Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Hope Against Hope: A Memoir*, trans. by Max Hayward (London: Collins & Harvill Press, 1971), p. 111.

¹⁰⁴ Mildred Davies, 'Altaev, Al.', *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, pp. 22–24.

¹⁰⁵ Al. Altaev, *Pamiatnye vstrechi* (Moscow: Sovetskaia pisatel', 1955), p. 340.

and borders on hero worship, in fitting with the style of Soviet memoirs of the 1950s and 60s, this event nevertheless had a profound effect on the direction of her subsequent life and career.¹⁰⁶

After expressing interest in joining the Bolsheviks' activities and helping to edit soldiers' letters to the Bolshevik press, Iamshchikova was invited to become editorial secretary of *Soldatskaia pravda* by Nikolai Il'ich Podvoiskii, a leading revolutionary and the newspaper's editor, at the end of September 1917. She initially refused, citing her lack of newspaper experience as the reason in her memoirs. Vera Mikhailovna Velichkina, an established Bolshevik activist and secretary of *Izvestiia* in 1917, persuaded Iamshchikova to change her mind, however. As secretary, Iamshchikova was responsible for compiling the newspaper, a task she initially found daunting. Her trepidation was further increased when Podvoiskii told her they were planning a second newspaper, *Derevenskaia bednota*, of which she would also serve as secretary.¹⁰⁷

Iamshchikova began her work as secretary of *Soldatskaia pravda* shortly before the October Revolution and, as such, was at the heart of events. Her office was moved to the Smol'nyi Institute, where she sat an 'arm's distance' from Mariia Ul'ianova, who was at the time editorial secretary of *Pravda*. Velichkina, who was working on the small newspaper *Rabochii i soldat* ('Worker and Soldier'), also shared the same office. As well as compiling the paper, Iamshchikova sourced material and wrote feuilletons. She hid her esteemed literary background and pseudonym from her colleagues, noting her amusement when she was praised for her writing style.¹⁰⁸ When *Derevenskaia bednota* was established in October 1917, Iamshchikova also wrote articles in addition to her secretarial duties. Between November and December 1917, for example, she wrote at least seven articles for the paper on rural themes including one entitled 'How the Constituent Assembly elections in the countryside are held'.¹⁰⁹

In March 1918, a decree from the Central Committee ordered the establishment of a new Moscow-based newspaper, *Bednota*, to be established in place of *Soldatskaia pravda*, *Derevenskaia bednota* and the Moscow paper *Derevenskaia pravda*. Iamshchikova was informed that she, along with her *Soldatskaia pravda* colleagues,

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 341–342.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 342–349.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 349–360.

¹⁰⁹ Al. Altaev, 'Kak prokhodiat vybory v Uchreditel'noe Sobranie v derevne', *Derevenskaia bednota*, No. 32, 18 November (1 December) 1917, pp. 2–3.

was to move to Moscow to work on *Bednota*. Her work on the new paper included writing a daily column under the pseudonym *Chuzhoi* (Stranger; Outsider).¹¹⁰ While working for *Bednota* in 1918, Iamshchikova became a member of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and is listed on its membership list as ‘Margarita Vladimirovna Altaev’, an amalgamation of her birth name and pseudonym. The membership list also gives her address as the central, upmarket Moscow hotel ‘Metropol’.¹¹¹ Iamshchikova took up residence in the hotel after arriving in Moscow from Petrograd in 1918 and lived there for many years.¹¹² She subsequently edited the section ‘Derevnia’ for *Litagit*, one of Rosta’s wall newspapers, between 1919 and 1921. In 1921 she became secretary of the journal *Krasnyi pakhar’* (‘The Red Ploughman’), and in 1922 she edited the ‘Agitprop’ section of *Trudovoi put’* (‘Labour Path’).¹¹³

In line with her work for peasant newspapers, Iamshchikova published a hand-bill entitled ‘How the Peasants Seized their Land’ in 1920 for the ‘worker-peasant’ series of hand-bills (*raboche-krest’ianskie listovki*) organised by the state publisher Gosizdat.¹¹⁴ She continued researching and writing historical fiction and biographies, especially for young people alongside her work for the party press, however. In the 1920s, as well as publishing the party pamphlet, she also published a historical novel based on the life of Leonardo da Vinci.¹¹⁵ These two publications demonstrate the different roles and influences shaping her literary work during these years. In the course of her literary career she wrote over 100 books and gained considerable acclaim as a children’s writer during her lifetime. Iamshchikova similarly escaped the purges of the 1930s.¹¹⁶

Iamshchikova’s memoir provides a rare first-hand account by a woman specifically writing about her experience working in the party press during the revolution. It reveals the passion and dedication with which men and women contributed to party newspaper work, as well as the chaos and lack of professionalism that characterized the party press during this period. Despite her limited newspaper experience, Iamshchikova was

¹¹⁰ Altaev, *Pamiatnye vstrechi*, p. 362.

¹¹¹ RGALI, f. 1600, op. 1, d. 12, l. 1–5 (Membership list for the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, 1918/1919).

¹¹² Davies, ‘Altaev, Al.’, *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, pp. 22–24.

¹¹³ ‘Appendix’ in *An Improper Profession*, p. 291

¹¹⁴ Altaev, *Kak krest’iane otobrali svoiu zemliu* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1920).

¹¹⁵ Altaev, *Vpered i vekov. Istoricheskaia povest’ iz zhizni Leonardo da Vinchi* (Petersburg, 1920).

¹¹⁶ Davies, ‘Altaev, Al.’, *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, p. 23.

appointed secretary of one of the most important party publications of the time, *Soldatskaia pravda*. Those contributing to this work were expected to learn and work fast and to throw their whole body and soul into their tasks.

Her account also reveals information about other women involved in the paper and those who shared or visited her office, including Stal', Kollontai, Elena Fedorovna Rozmirovich, Krupskaja and Ul'ianova.¹¹⁷ As such, it sheds light on the organisation of the party press during this period, as well as gender relations within the party. The figures Iamshchikova mentions are overwhelmingly women, from her young assistant, Anka, to the fellow secretaries of central newspapers. This supports the argument that while women were largely absent from the editorial roles of the major party newspapers (with the exception of women's publications), they were instrumental to the functioning of the press in less visible or celebrated roles. Iamshchikova's account of how she was ordered to move to Moscow also reveals how women were expected to put aside their personal lives for the good of the revolution. Despite the fact that she had a grown-up daughter, Liudmila Andreevna Iamshchikova-Dmitrieva (1893–1978), Iamshchikova makes no mention of her existence when describing her work after the revolution and move to Moscow in her memoir.¹¹⁸ The women who were most prolific in the party and early Soviet press were largely unattached, in the sense that they either had no children or had grown-up children.

Although Iamshchikova was involved in some revolutionary activities before she joined the party after the February Revolution in 1917, she did not belong to the inner core of women party activists active in the preceding decades. Nevertheless, she was given a remarkable level of responsibility in the Bolshevik press despite her relatively late admission to the party and her lack of newspaper expertise. Thus, her experience in the party press from 1917 typifies its chaotic and unprofessional nature during the first years of the revolution but also the way in which new figures gained entry into this work at a time of extreme upheaval, expectation and change.

While not members of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, several other notable women combined literature with journalism during the early Soviet period. Among

¹¹⁷ Altaev, *Pamiatnye vstrechi*, p. 348; p. 351.

¹¹⁸ Iamshchikova's daughter, Liudmila Andreevna Iamshchikova-Dmitrieva, also became a historical writer. Writing under the pseudonym 'Art. Feliche,' she wrote several novels and co-authored a number of books with her mother. See Davies, 'Altaev, Al.', *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, p. 22.

them were Shaginian, Shkapskaia and Inber.¹¹⁹ These women, who all came from literary backgrounds, were referenced by Krylova in her 1929 article as three of the only known women journalists of the time (the fourth being Rikhter).¹²⁰ Inber had herself written a similar article for *Zhurnalists* in 1927, in which she praised Shaginian, Rikhter, Shkapskaia and Larisa Reisner as the four most prominent women journalists.¹²¹ Entitled ‘Chetyre zhenshchiny’ (Four Women), the article outlined the careers of these four women, as well as the main characteristics of their journalism.

When Shaginian entered Soviet journalism, she was already an established literary figure. Prior to the revolution, she had published poetry and plays and contributed regularly to newspapers in the Russian Empire, including *Baku* (‘Baku’), *Kavkazskoe slovo* (‘The Caucasian Word’) and *Priazovskii krai* (‘Azov Region’), on cultural topics.¹²² Her intellectual and artistic circle during the pre-revolutionary period included the Symbolist poet and journalist Zinaida Gippius.¹²³ She found work in the Bolshevik press with *Izvestiia* and *Pravda* from 1920 and also reported from the frontline in the civil wars. However, in contrast to Iamshchikova, Shaginian did not fall into the party press so easily. In her memoirs she recalls the difficulties she faced trying to obtain work at a time when food and fuel were scarce and work was a necessity.¹²⁴ After her articles were initially rejected by *Pravda* and *Ekonomicheskaiia zhizn’* (‘Economic Life’), she later moved from Moscow to Petrograd and managed to find work with *Izvestiia*. Her first article for the paper was entitled ‘Something about the Intelligentsia’ and the second concerned the theatre of Vsevolod Meyerhold.¹²⁵

Like Reisner, Shaginian belonged to the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia and she had to work hard to shed this image.¹²⁶ Shaginian also did not immediately identify as a Communist after the revolution. She noted that at the time of writing her first articles for *Izvestiia*, ‘I was not yet a Communist, I believed in God, I wore a cross around my

¹¹⁹ Irina Corten, ‘Inber, Vera Mikhailovna’, in *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, pp. 259–262.

¹²⁰ Krylova, ‘Zhurnalistski’.

¹²¹ Inber, ‘Chetyre zhenshchiny’.

¹²² Marietta Shaginian, *Chelovek i vremia* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1980), p. 546.

¹²³ Mildred Davies, ‘Shaginian, Marietta Sergeevna’, *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, p. 568–569.

¹²⁴ Shaginian, *Chelovek i vremia*, p. 636.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 636; pp. 639–640.

¹²⁶ Davies, ‘Shaginian, Marietta Sergeevna’, *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, p. 569.

neck [...].¹²⁷ Nevertheless, Shaginian produced several pro-Bolshevik articles and books depicting Soviet life in the 1920s and 30s, including the popular *Mess-Mend* series (1924–25), which she wrote under the pseudonym Jim Dollar, and *Gidrotsentral* (Hydrocentral), a novel about Soviet industrialization published in 1931.¹²⁸ Despite criticism of a number of her works, including her 1938 historical novel about Lenin, Shaginian was awarded the Stalin Prize in 1951, the Lenin Prize in 1972, and the title ‘Hero of Socialist Labour’ in 1976.¹²⁹

In her 1927 article, Inber commented on Shaginian’s style and working methods, noting her passion (*strast’*) for travelling (which had been cultivated before the revolution) and observing that ‘she sees things as a woman but writes like a man’.¹³⁰ Inber’s comments not only provide an insight into Shaginian, but, more importantly, they further illustrate contemporary attitudes towards gender and journalism and illustrate that women also subscribed to the idea that there were distinctly gendered styles of writing. The poet and journalist Shkapskaia, also wrote about distinctly ‘feminine’ themes, such as motherhood. Shkapskaia’s entry into Soviet journalism is typical of other writers who wished to continue to live and work in Russia after the October Revolution. As Barbara Heldt observes, in order to do this, ‘[...] she had to accept becoming a different kind of writer, a writer of prose sketches in a set journalistic mold rather than a writer of poetry in a new voice’.¹³¹

Inber, who was a cousin of Trotsky, similarly began her literary career before the revolution, writing and publishing a number of poetry collections. Despite working as a journalist throughout the 1920s, she did not join the party until during the Second World War. As well as writing articles, Inber continued to publish verse and prose. Her work during the early Soviet years was influenced by the Constructivists and Irina Corten argues that ‘their idea that literature should convey a “real life” feeling by utilizing the techniques of reportage helped create the clipped, graphic narrative style

¹²⁷ Shaginian, *Chelovek i vremia*, p. 640.

¹²⁸ Marietta Shaginian, *Mess-mend, ili Ianki v Petrograde* (Moscow; Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo, 1924); *Gidrotsentral’* (Moscow; Leningrad, 1931).

¹²⁹ Davies, ‘Shaginian, Marietta Sergeevna’, *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, p. 569.

¹³⁰ Inber, ‘Chetyre zhenshchiny’.

¹³¹ Barbara Heldt, ‘Motherhood in a Cold Climate: The Poetry and Career of Mariia Shkapskaia’, *The Russian Review*, 51:2 (1992), pp. 160–171 (p. 160).

characteristic of her mature writing'.¹³² She appears to have enjoyed a number of privileges, notably the opportunity to work and travel abroad. Between 1924 and 1926, she worked as a journalist in Paris, Berlin and Brussels.¹³³ Discussing women's writing in the first decades after the October Revolution, Catriona Kelly observes that some women writers deliberately conformed to party-approved topics or genres or distanced themselves from earlier work with the view of protecting themselves and their interests. According to Kelly, Inber 'complied partly because she felt under constant threat, being a first cousin of Lev Trotsky, and partly because she knew that literary conformity would secure her the trips abroad which were her one source of unalloyed pleasure'.¹³⁴

As well as demonstrating the continuation of the lack of professional ethic that characterized party journalism into the first years of the civil war, the backgrounds and work of these women journalists further highlight the links between literature and journalism during this period. As Shaginian implies in her memoirs, journalism also provided a welcome income for many writers during this period (despite, or in spite of, their political affiliations). Among the more famous was Isaac Babel, who was attached to the 1st Cavalry Army during the civil wars and wrote articles for the newspaper *Krasnyi kavalerist* ('The Red Cavalryman') under the pseudonym Kiril V. Liutov ('fierce'). The newspaper *Krasnyi kavalerist* was distributed to the fighters of the Cavalry Army (*Konarmii*) during the Soviet-Polish War of 1920.¹³⁵ Babel also used his Liutov persona in his *Red Cavalry* stories, which were based on his diaries while working as a journalist attached to the 1st Cavalry Army. His decision to choose a distinctly Russian, as opposed to Jewish, persona can be seen as an attempt to 'deflect the ruthless anti-Semitism of his Cossack colleagues'.¹³⁶

Thus, there was a clear overlap or tension between literature and journalism. For Babel, the tension was particularly pronounced. Issues of gender and ethnic identity were simplified in his journalism for propaganda purposes but are much more complex in his *Red Cavalry* stories. However, like Babel, Iamshchikova, Shaginian, Shkapskaia

¹³² Corten, 'Inber, Vera Mikhailovna', in *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*, pp. 259–262 (p. 260).

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 259–262.

¹³⁴ Catriona Kelly, *A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820–1992* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 235.

¹³⁵ Isaac Babel, *The Complete Works of Isaac Babel*, ed. by Nathalie Babel and trans. by Peter Constantine (London: Picador, 2002), p. 363.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 363.

and Inber are far better known for their literary rather than journalistic works. Although she had only just begun her literary career at the time of the October Revolution, Reisner similarly crossed the divide between literature and journalism, a tension that is discussed in the following chapter.

Conclusions

The statistics and profiles examined in this chapter shed light on women's entry into journalism at the time of the October Revolution. As set out by Antonov in his speech at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists, members to the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists had to recognise and actively support the Soviet government. Lenin had gone even further than this in 1905 when he had argued that all journalists should be members of party organisations.¹³⁷ The profiles of the women members examined above reflect the Union's requirement. Several, such as Roslavets-Ustinova and Aksakova, were members of the Bolshevik party and had either been involved in revolutionary activity prior to 1917 or were the daughters, relatives or wives of revolutionaries.

Although this chapter focuses on the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists and, by association, primarily examines women who worked for Moscow and/or Petrograd-based publications, their profiles reveal the extent to which family, party and/or literary connections shaped the entry of women into Bolshevik journalism around the time of the October Revolution. Many of these women knew each other or shared acquaintances, and worked for the same newspapers. A large number also belonged to the privileged political and cultured classes. Many had some prior literary or journalism experience and/or higher education.

The interconnectivity of these women and the ways in which they entered the press in turn demonstrate the lack of professional culture and ethic that characterized Bolshevik journalism during this period. Women active in pre-revolutionary party journalism drew on their experience to continue their press activities after the October Revolution. Seen as a subset of activism, these women did not aim to forge a career in journalism. Instead, they continued to view the press as a tool to disseminate party propaganda and, given their trusted positions within the party, were given the platforms to do so. Those who had been members of the SRs or Left SRs prior to the revolution

¹³⁷ Lenin, 'Partiinaia organizatsiia i partiinaia literatura'.

transferred their party allegiances before becoming active in the Bolshevik press after October 1917. Women writers who had written for non-party publications and/or published fiction and poetry prior to 1917 were also drawn to the Bolshevik press after the revolution for ideological and/or financial reasons. By the late 1920s, the journalists deemed to be the most visible and best-known (notably Shaginian, Inber, Shkapskaia, Rikhter and Reisner), mostly came from a literary background and the influence of literary genres is evident in their journalism. In addition, a number of these women were permitted to travel and produced articles detailing their observations from across Russia and abroad.

Like those active in the pre-revolutionary party press, the majority of the women prominent in party journalism after October 1917 also put aside their personal lives in order to apply themselves to party work. Most of those profiled above did not have children, or had children who were grown-up. As the cases of Ol'ga Toom and Aksakova demonstrate, of those who were married, their husbands were frequently prominent party figures or active in party work. Soviet biographies and memoirs written by women party activists remove or else downplay any references to their private lives.¹³⁸ By the late 1920s, however, it appears that women working in the press were more openly discussing the challenges of combining work and family life. This supports the argument that the culture and understanding of press work moved towards a more professional status after the initial civil-war years.

The new generation of women who entered the press at the time of the revolution experienced both continuity with the culture of pre-revolutionary journalism and the gradual shift towards journalism as a profession. While their entry into party journalism and lack of experience belonged to the former category, by the mid- to late-1920s those still active in the press had a much more structured existence, even profession, in this sphere. The Toom sisters, for example, lived in a building alongside several other *Pravda* colleagues in 1926, while others made the shift from party to literary publications. On the whole, however, very few of the original women members of the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists were still contributing to the party press by the late 1920s, a fact that illustrates the shift in the culture of journalism during this decade and a general trend among some women to toe the party line. This move away from party journalism, whether by choice or force, in the 1920s was arguably a contributing factor

¹³⁸ Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, pp.15–16.

to why so many of the women active in the party press before and immediately after the revolution survived the purges of the 1930s.

Examining documents from official early Soviet journalism organisations also sheds light on the types of roles women held in the press and the extent to which they were represented in discussions on the organisation and direction of this sphere. While women were grossly underrepresented in organisation such as the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists, their overall contributions to the press were substantial and vital to its organisation and development during the early years of Bolshevik rule. This included speaking at the Congress and contributing to *Zhurnalists*, as well as taking on the important position of editorial secretary and filling the more manual roles associated with newspaper production. While the few women editors identified almost exclusively hailed from the ranks of long-standing revolutionaries with prior experience in establishing and running party publications, a new generation of women was drawn to the press after the revolution and worked in a wide range of roles including as news reporters, translators, type-setters and secretaries to editorial staff. Many of these roles were gendered and, as a result, have received less attention. There was also class distinction between the more intellectual side of journalism and its more manual tasks, with the former predominantly filled, at least initially, by women from educated, often bourgeois, backgrounds and the latter by those of working class origins.

For those women who continued working in the press into the second half of the 1920s, this shift towards a more professional culture of journalism also heightened existing issues and tensions and raised new challenges. With regards to the former, issues of harassment, gender inequality and a lack of visibility for women journalists were exacerbated as the press became more institutionalised. As Inber and Krylova illustrated in their articles, there is evidence that throughout the early Soviet period, women, as well as men, also subscribed to the view that there were distinct male and female styles of journalism. These themes, including the specific challenges faced by women working in the press, will be explored in greater detail in the following case study of Larisa Reisner.

Chapter Four: Larisa Reisner: The First Soviet Woman Journalist?

In her 1927 article ‘Chetyre zhenshchiny’ for *Zhurnalists*, Inber described Reisner as ‘the first or one of the first’ Soviet woman journalists and claimed that her path to this role had been ‘short and direct’.¹ Reisner was certainly one of the most celebrated woman journalists of the early Soviet period, owing in large part to the reception of her literary work, but also her military activities, charisma, contacts and early death. Yet, despite her seemingly easy and successful career as a journalist, she faced a number of challenges and difficulties in both her professional and personal life, including ill health, problems with editors and dissatisfaction over her status within various publications.

These challenges were closely linked to changing views on the role of party journalism in the years after the October Revolution. As a young, aspiring writer with party connections, Reisner belonged to the new generation of women who entered the Bolshevik press at the time of the revolution. While her entry into party journalism and her multiple roles as a journalist, political commissar and combatant during the civil-war period are characteristic of the pre-revolutionary understanding of journalism as a form of party work, a change in the nature and direction of her journalism career can be observed from the early 1920s. No longer required in a military capacity, Reisner’s attention began to shift more towards journalism as a career. This shift coincided with the beginning of the NEP and a greater emphasis on journalism as a profession.

Applying a chronological and thematic approach, this chapter examines Reisner’s journalism and role in the press from the months leading up to the October Revolution until her death in 1926. It will focus particularly on the period between 1918 and 1920, of which she spent the significant part on the frontlines of the civil wars. As with the case study of Tyrkova-Williams presented in Chapter Two, it will address five main themes. The first theme relates to Reisner’s entry into journalism and how her understanding and conception of her role as a journalist shifted during the years of revolution and civil war. In order to analyse this area, this chapter will pose the following questions. Why did she choose to work as a party journalist and what factors

¹ Inber ‘Chetyre zhenshchiny’.

enabled her to enter this sphere? What was the impact of wider changes to the institutional and ideological role of the press on Reisner's professional development and identity as a journalist?

Secondly, this case study examines the content and style of Reisner's journalism. To address this topic, it will seek to answer the following questions. What were the main themes and genres presented in Reisner's articles and how did they reflect official party views at the time? How typical was Reisner's style of journalism compared to that of other early Soviet journalists, as well as woman journalists operating in different contexts? To what extent did her style of writing change throughout the period 1917 to 1926? For example, is there a marked difference in the style and tone of Reisner's journalism from the frontline? What was the impact of Reisner's exposure to literary movements before the revolution on her later journalism?

The third theme addressed in this chapter concerns the practicalities of Reisner's press work, including her changing legal status and rights as a journalist in different newspapers. This poses the following questions. Where and how frequently did she publish her work? Was she paid for her articles and did she hold contracts with newspapers? Did she receive any particular benefits or special treatment as a party journalist? Did she publish any articles outside of Russia? How important were her relationships with other party members, particularly her husband, Raskol'nikov, and father, Mikhail Andreevich, in facilitating her press activities?

Fourthly, this case study will analyse the reception of Reisner's work. We have a considerable number of sources that discuss the style and content of her writing at the time of her death, when she was still very much at the peak of her journalism career. In order to address this topic, this chapter will examine the following questions. How was Reisner's frontline journalism and experience presented by her contemporaries and to what extent were their views shaped by attitudes, both new and historical, towards war and gender? Was her journalism viewed differently before and after her death? What was the role of Reisner's journalism in developing the myths that came to define her life?

Lastly, this chapter is interested in the value of studying Reisner's journalism and experience as a woman journalist. Much of her journalism from the civil wars was written from the frontlines and can be described as reportage. After leaving the conflicts, Reisner similarly spent time documenting her observations and experiences from Afghanistan, Germany and the Ural region in Russia. There is a considerable gulf

between her private experiences and the public persona she presented in her journalism. By studying her articles, alongside her private letters, documents and published collections, it is possible to understand how and why she emphasised, exaggerated, or even fabricated, certain aspects of her experience and what this can reveal more broadly about attitudes towards gender, journalism and war in early Soviet society.

Entry into Bolshevik Journalism

Reisner's early life is central to understanding her entry into party journalism and her later press activities. Born in Lublin, Poland, into a Polish-German, intelligentsia family in 1895, her father, Mikhail Andreevich, was a law professor, and her mother, Ekaterina Aleksandrovna (née Khitrovo), belonged to one of Lublin's wealthiest noble families. Reisner spent part of her early childhood in the Siberian city of Tomsk, where her father held a law professorship, but the family emigrated in 1903 as a result of Mikhail Andreevich's Marxist views and activities. They lived in Germany and France before, like Tyrkova-Williams and many others involved in underground political activities, returning to Russia in the wake of the amnesty granted by the 1905 October Manifesto, this time to St Petersburg. Reisner was influenced by her family's political views from a young age; in Germany, family friends included the revolutionary theorists August Bebel and Karl Liebknecht.² In St Petersburg, Reisner studied at the Psycho-Neurological Institute and attended lectures in the Law and Philology Department at St Petersburg University, where her father taught.³ Vadim Andreev, the son of the Reisner family friend and writer Leonid Andreev, later wrote that in 1913 the eighteen-year-old Larisa was preoccupied with revolution because 'in the Reisner family it was not possible to not think about revolution'.⁴

Larisa Reisner also held literary ambitions from a young age. In 1913, shortly after finishing school, her first (and last) drama, *Atlantida* ('Atlantis'), was published in the almanac *Shipovnik* ('The Wild Rose') with the help of Leonid Andreev, who happened to be *Shipovnik's* literary editor.⁵ The same year, her first book, about portrayals of

² Karl Radek, 'Larisa Reisner' foreword to Larisa Reisner, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1928), p. v.

³ Permiakova, 'Prezhde vsego – zhurnalist', p. 145.

⁴ Vadim Andreev, 'V Sem'e Reisnerov' in *Larisa Reisner v vospominaniakh sovremenikov*, p. 45.

⁵ 'Atlantida. P'esa v 5-ti d. i 8-mi kart.', *Literaturno-khudozhestvennye al'manakhi izdatel'stva 'Shipovnik', 21* (St Petersburg, 1913).

Ophelia and Cleopatra in Shakespeare's dramas, also appeared.⁶ As well as writing poetry and drama, Reisner also tried her hand at journalism. Between 1915 and 1916 she co-edited (with her father) and wrote literary criticism for an anti-war, satirical journal, *Rudin* (named after the eponymous hero of Ivan Turgenev's novel).⁷ She published *Atlantida* and her book on Shakespeare under the pseudonym Leorinus (Leo Rinus) and her articles for *Rudin* under the additional pseudonyms of L. Khrapovitskii and E. Nimand.⁸ Reisner chose the pen-name Leo Rinus for its connection to a German Reisner family ancestor. It also conveniently echoed her own initials and name. Her choice to write under male pseudonyms is typical of other women writers at the time and, in Reisner's case, could be seen to particularly reflect her lack of experience and uncertainty as a young woman writer and journalist given that objectivity was still viewed as a male trait.

Perhaps the most defining experience and influence on Reisner's subsequent work was her association with the Acmeists (a group of post-Symbolist poets) and the circle around the Modernist literary journal *Apollon* ('Apollo') in St Petersburg before the October Revolution. Among the group's best-known members were Nikolai Gumilev, Anna Akhmatova, and Osip Mandel'stam.⁹ Reisner later wrote about these years in her unfinished *Avtobiograficheskii roman* ('Autobiographical novel'), which she worked on between 1919 and 1921.¹⁰ Her later contemporaries similarly credited her style of journalism with her early involvement with these movements. In 1926, Shklovskii wrote that it was Reisner's exposure to the Acmeists and Symbolists in the period before the revolution that taught her 'the knack of seeing things' and made her a 'true reporter'.¹¹

Reisner's brief relationship with Gumilev, which took place between 1916 and 1917, also had a profound effect on Reisner. Their letters reveal much about Reisner's literary development, as well as how her state of mind became more politicised throughout

⁶ *Zhenskie tipy Shekspira* (Riga: Nauka i Zhizn', 1913).

⁷ Reisner, 'Rudin. Avtobiograficheskii roman' in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*. Vol. 93. (Moscow: Nauka, 1983), pp. 190–260.

⁸ Permiakova, 'Prezhde vsego – zhurnalist', p 146.

⁹ For more on the Acmeist movement see Justin Doherty, *The Acmeist Movement in Russian Poetry: Culture and the Word* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

¹⁰ Reisner, 'Rudin. Avtobiograficheskii roman'.

¹¹ Viktor Shklovskii, 'Bessmyslennishaia smert', pp. 14–15, *Zhurnalist*, February 1926, No. 2.

1917. Shortly after they began their liaison, Gumilev joined the army and the pair wrote to each other while apart. Addressing each other as ‘Leri’ and ‘Gafiz’, Reisner and Gumilev shared poetry as well as their personal hopes and frustrations. By February 1917, Gumilev’s letters to Reisner were more formal, however, reflecting the cooling of their relations. On 5 June 1917 (O.S.), in what was one of their last exchanges, he wrote to Reisner, addressing her as ‘Larisa Milkhailovna’ rather than the more affectionate ‘Leri’, and ending the letter by telling her to ‘have fun’ but not to ‘engage in politics’ (*Nu, do svidaniia, razvlekaites’, no ne zanimaites’ politiko!*).¹² Gumilev was himself anti-Bolshevik, a position he paid for with his life in 1921. While Reisner’s and Gumilev’s affair is discussed in greater detail by Alekseeva, Porter, Przhiborovskaia and others (see Introduction), this episode is important for understanding Reisner’s shifting political views and literary influences.

Reisner’s association with Maxim Gorky’s publications *Letopis’* (‘The Chronicle’) and *Novaia zhizn’* (‘New Life’) in the months leading to the October Revolution illustrates both the impact of her relations with Gumilev on her literary work, but also her increasing political awareness and involvement. Established in April 1917 by a group of Mensheviks and writers associated with *Letopis’*, the Petrograd-based Socio-Democratic Internationalist newspaper *Novaia zhizn’* included among its contributors the writer and journalist Isaac Babel and the Marxist revolutionary, journalist, critic, and later the first People’s Commissar of Education, Anatolii Lunacharsky.¹³ Reisner’s first piece published in *Novaia zhizn’* was an anti-war poem addressed to Gumilev, which appeared in the paper on 30 April 1917.¹⁴ The poem, entitled ‘Pis’mo’ (‘Letter’), was likely written earlier in the war but not published until after Gumilev had been sent to the front.

She also published several articles in *Novaia zhizn’* over the course of 1917 on literary affairs, including theatre and poetry reviews. Ignoring Gumilev’s advice, Reisner’s journalism for the paper became more politically focused throughout the year. In June, she travelled to Sestroretsk, a municipal town on the shores of the Gulf of Finland, approximately 35 kilometres northwest of Petrograd, to report on ‘worker’s

¹² Correspondence between Gumilev and Reisner, RGB, f. 245, karton 6, d. 20.

¹³ Okorokov, *Oktiabr’ i krakh russkoi burzhuaznoi pressy*, p. 44.

¹⁴ Reisner, ‘Pis’mo’, *Novaia zhizn’*, 30 April 1917 (O.S.), No. 11.

theatre' and other cultural topics.¹⁵ Her later articles, published between September and November 1917, also discussed socialist theatre and cultural activities available to workers, particularly workers' clubs and theatre.¹⁶ Reisner's prominence at the paper is evident from a *propusk* (pass) dated September 1917 allowing her, as a colleague of the newspaper *Novaia zhizn'*, to receive tickets (seat four, row 54) for the State Mikhailovskii Theatre in Petrograd for the season 1917–1918.¹⁷ Yet her association with the paper was short-lived and her last article was published in November 1917.¹⁸ Despite the mass closure of opposition papers in late 1917 and early 1918, *Novaia zhizn'* was allowed to continue for some time after the October Revolution, a fact Mark D. Steinberg suggests was due to Gorky's reputation. In July 1918, the Bolsheviks finally closed the paper for good.¹⁹

It was during the period immediately prior to the October Revolution that Reisner began working with Lunacharsky, a fellow contributor to *Novaia zhizn'*. After spending a considerable time abroad, Lunacharsky had returned to Russia in May 1917, travelling from Switzerland through Germany on the second 'sealed train' along with a group of predominantly Menshevik political émigrés. Once in Petrograd, he joined Gorky's paper *Novaia zhizn'* and, until July, worked as head of the cultural-educational section of the Petrograd City Duma. Lunacharsky was arrested during the July Days and while in prison he was readmitted to the Bolshevik Party, having broken from them (along with Gorky and the writer, revolutionary and Lunacharsky's brother-in-law Aleksandr Bogdanov) over his difference in views with Lenin in 1909 and decision to establish a separate left-wing group, *Vpered* (Forward). Following his re-admission to the party, Lunacharsky stood as a Bolshevik candidate and was elected as deputy to the mayor of

¹⁵ See Reisner, "'Gamlet" v Sestroretskom teatre,' *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 61, 29 June (12 July) 1917; 'Proryv Sestroretskogo fronta', *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 73, 13 (26) July 1917; and 'Peredvizhnoi teatr I narodnaia sstena v Sestroretske', *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 76, 16 (29) July 1917.

¹⁶ See Reisner, 'Rabochii teatr', *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 106, 20 August (2 September) 1917; 'V rabochnikh kvartalakh', *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 160, 22 October (4 November) 1917; and 'Sotsialisticheskii teatr', *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 176, 9 (22) November 1917.

¹⁷ *Propusk* issued to Reisner for the State Mikhailovskii Theatre, September 1917. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 10, l. 6.

¹⁸ Reisner, 'V zimmem dvortse', *Novaia zhizn'*, No. 178, 11 (24) November 1917.

¹⁹ Maksim Gorky, *Untimely Thoughts: Essays on Revolution, Culture and the Bolsheviks, 1917–1918*, trans. by Herman Ermolaev; intro. by Mark D. Steinberg (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. ix.

Petrograd. In September 1917, he became president of the Petrograd Party Committee's newly formed cultural-educational commission.²⁰

By mid-September (O.S.) 1917, Reisner was carrying out secretarial work for Lunacharsky. She copied out a letter, for example, on his behalf to the chair of the executive committee of the Kronstadt Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies concerning the re-organisation of public theatres in the Petrograd region. Dated 14 September 1917 (O.S.), the letter spoke of the 'opportunity to purge (*ochistit'*) the old theatres and establish new proletarian ones' and called on the Kronstadt Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies to 'contribute to this great cultural endeavour'.²¹ Reisner was also involved in other initiatives spearheaded by Lunacharsky. In the week prior to the Bolsheviks seizing power, Lunacharsky, as president of the cultural-educational commission of the Petrograd Party Committee, organised a conference of proletarian cultural-educational organisations. The conference took place in Petrograd between 16 and 19 October 1917 (O.S.) and was attended by 208 delegates representing the Petrograd Party Committee. During the conference, a central committee of Petrograd 'proletarian cultural-educational organisations' was elected. Among its members were Lunacharsky, Fedor Ivanovich Kalinin (part of the *Vpered* group), Krupskaja and Larisa Reisner.²²

Reisner's role in the October Revolution has been particularly mythologised. Vadim Andreev referred, for example, to the legend that Reisner had been aboard the cruiser *Aurora* on the night of 25 October and that she had been the one to open fire on the Winter Palace.²³ Yet, as Vasil'eva has observed in *Kremlin Wives*, historical records show that the only woman to set foot on the *Aurora* that night was Countess Panina, as one of three official representatives of the Petrograd Duma tasked with persuading the sailors not to fire on the palace.²⁴ Another legend claims that Reisner was responsible for preserving the treasures of the Winter Palace after the Provisional Government had been expelled. As Zeide notes in her 1992 article on the myth of Reisner, a number of

²⁰ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Commissariat of Enlightenment. Soviet Organisation of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky, October 1917–1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 2–9.

²¹ Letter from Lunacharsky typed by Reisner, 14 September 1917. RGB, f. 245, karton 6, d. 107, ll. 1–3.

²² Fitzpatrick, *The Commissariat of Enlightenment*, p. 90.

²³ Andreev, 'V sem'e Reisnerov', p. 44.

²⁴ *Zhurnal Petrogradskoi Gorodskoi Dumy*, no. 93 (session of 25 October 1917), p. 3; Vasil'eva, *Kremlin Wives*, p. 38–46.

biographers have mistakenly taken Reisner's pamphlet on Kerensky, 'V zimmem dvortse', published on 11 November 1917, as evidence of this role.²⁵ Among them is Permiakova, who writes that Reisner worked for a time as part of a commission to record and preserve the treasures of the Hermitage and museums of Petrograd and that the pamphlet was linked to her work on the commission.²⁶

Yet, despite the uncertain (and often dubious) nature of her role in the October Revolution and its immediate aftermath, it is clear Reisner was working for the party in some, not inconsiderable, capacity. A permit dated 8 November 1917 confirms that she was permitted unimpeded access to the Winter Palace, while another permit signed by the commandant of the city gave her the right to freely walk the streets at any time of day or night.²⁷ These documents demonstrate Reisner's position and contacts within the Bolshevik Party at the time of the October Revolution, despite the fact she was not yet a member. This in turn helps to support the thesis that, like Ianina Kozlovskaia, her initial entry into Bolshevik journalism was largely due to her father's standing in the party and the contacts she formed in the months leading up to the revolution. Nevertheless, although her contacts facilitated Reisner's entry into the party, it was her drive and dedication to the revolutionary cause that shaped her work over the next decade.

The Civil Wars

The year 1918 marked a significant turning point in Reisner's personal life and career. She joined the Bolshevik Party and spent time working as an agitator at the Kronstadt naval base, where she met her husband, Raskol'nikov. While in Kronstadt, Reisner published an article in *Izvestiia*, which is believed to be her first for the paper.²⁸ Reisner and Raskol'nikov were married in the summer of 1918 and shortly after travelled to Kazan on the Eastern Front, Raskol'nikov in his capacity as a naval commander and Reisner as a political intelligence officer and correspondent for the Soviet government newspaper *Izvestiia*.²⁹

²⁵ Reisner, 'V zimmem dvortse'. See Zeide, 'Larisa Reisner: Myth as Justification for Life', pp. 172–87.

²⁶ Permiakova, 'Prezhde vsego – zhurnalist', p. 146.

²⁷ *Propusk* allowing Reisner access to the Winter Palace, 8 November 1917. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 10, l. 5; *Propusk* allowing Reisner freedom of movement around Petrograd. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 10, l. 8.

²⁸ Reisner, '1-e maia v Kronshtade', *Izvestiia*, 12 May 1918, No. 93, p. 2.

²⁹ 'In the summer of 1918, he [Raskol'nikov] was sent to the Eastern Front, where he joined its Revvoensovet [the Revolutionary Military Council; the highest military authority in Soviet Russia, and

Like the factors that influenced Tyrkova-Williams's decision to go to southern Russia in 1919, Reisner's reasons for travelling to Kazan were also driven by a mixture of personal, professional and ideological considerations. As Raskol'nikov's wife she is likely to have wanted to accompany him on his commission to the front, yet it is clear that she was also beginning to forge her own path as a party journalist and political agitator. As Gumilev had observed, Reisner was increasingly drawn to revolutionary activity in the period immediately before the October Revolution and the fact that the Bolsheviks emerged victorious is likely to have facilitated her thirst for adventure and involvement. This would have also sat well with her literary ambitions.

Reisner was among the first to report from the front lines in the civil wars for the Bolsheviks. Her initial experience of the civil-war conflicts was the Volga Campaign, which took place between May and November 1918 and marked a turning point for the Red Army.³⁰ When Reisner arrived on the Eastern Front in July 1918, Communist rule 'hung by a thread'.³¹ The revolt of the Czechoslovak Legion in May, which resulted in the overthrow of local Bolsheviks, followed by the Murav'ev Revolt, a mutiny at the top of the Volga Red Army command, had left Red troops demoralised and in a poor state.³² The situation was so dire that Trotsky, in his capacity as War Commissar, was sent to the Volga to take things in hand.³³ He was *en route* when anti-Bolshevik forces

later the USSR, between September 1918 and June 1934], commanded the Red Volga Military Flotilla (from 23 August 1918), and assisted in the capture of Kazan'. See Smele, 'Raskol'nikov (Il'in), Fedor Fedorovich (28 January 1892–12 September 1939)' in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 917–919 (p. 918).

³⁰ See Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War*, p. 69 and Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars*, p. 88.

³¹ Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War*, p. 57.

³² The Murav'ev Revolt was an anti-Bolshevik uprising on the Volga in July 1918 that was led by the Reds' main commander of the Eastern Front, Colonel M. A. Murav'ev, a member of the Party of Left Social Revolutionaries. After arriving in Kazan on 10 July 1918 with 1,000 men, Murav'ev, who was opposed to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, declared himself 'Main Commander' of the 'Army Against Germany and sent telegrams to Sovnarkom (the Council of People's Commissars), the command of the Czechoslovak Legion and the German Embassy in Moscow stating that he had declared war on the Central Powers and calling for the legion and all units of the army to move toward the Volga in advance of pressing west to confront the Germans. Sovnarkom swiftly declared Murav'ev to be a counter revolutionary and he was killed under confusing circumstances on 11 July 1918. See Smele, 'Murav'ev Uprising' in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 773–774.

³³ Trotsky was appointed Commissar for War in March 1918 and sent to the Eastern Front to take charge of the Red Army's floundering position there in August 1918.

unexpectedly took control of the city of Kazan in early August. Arriving at Sviiazhsk, the Red Army base camp just outside Kazan, Trotsky cracked down on dissenting troops in an attempt to rectify the situation.³⁴ The fall of Kazan caused considerable alarm in Bolshevik ranks.³⁵ Lenin responded by continuing to order large numbers of troops and equipment to the Eastern Front from the northern and western screens and more than 30,000 troops were transferred to the region between 25 July and 18 August 1918.³⁶ The navy was also deployed to the area, with four Baltic Fleet destroyers, commanded by Raskol'nikov, sent to overthrow Czechoslovak control of the Volga River.³⁷

This was the political and military situation that Reisner and Raskol'nikov were faced with in July 1918. Raskol'nikov's commission was undoubtedly helped by his links to Trotsky. According to Christopher Read, '[...] Zinoviev and political commissar of the Baltic Fleet N. N. Kuzmin [...] both saw Raskol'nikov as a protégé of Zinoviev's rival, Trotsky'.³⁸ Correspondence shows that by 1921, if not earlier, Reisner and Trotsky were on close terms, with Reisner addressing him as *dorogoi drug* (dear friend) in correspondence.³⁹ The extent to which Reisner's relationship with Trotsky facilitated her career during this period is unclear, but we do know that they both participated in events at Sviiazhsk in August 1918, for which they held each other in high regard.⁴⁰

Reisner was attached to the 5th Army, which has been credited as fighting the most important battle in the struggle to regain control of Kazan.⁴¹ The Red Army entered Kazan on 10 September, retaking the city from the exhausted Czechoslovaks and People's Army. In arguing that the Volga Campaign was a turning point for the Red Army, historian Evan Mawdsley observes that although the army was 'not as close-knit, disciplined, or, indeed, heroic as Trotsky suggested,' the campaign 'stimulated the Red

³⁴ Swain, *Russia's Civil War*, p. 34.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

³⁶ Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars*, p. 87.

³⁷ Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War*, p. 67.

³⁸ Christopher Read, *From Tsar to Soviets: The Russian People and Their Revolution, 1917–21* (London: UCL, 1996), p. 145.

³⁹ Letters from Reisner to Trotsky, 1921–1922, RGB, f. 245, karton 5, d. 21, ll. 1–10.

⁴⁰ See Leon Trotsky, *My Life: An Attempt at an Autobiography* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), pp. 425–426; and Larisa Reisner, 'Sviiazhsk,' *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1923, No. 6–7, pp. 177–189.

⁴¹ Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War*, p. 67.

Army's development' and 'prepared the Reds for what was to come'.⁴² Smele credits the flood of troops and equipment to the Eastern Front in response to the weak position of the Red Army there and the capture of Kazan in early August by anti-Bolshevik troops as the main reason the Bolsheviks were able to regain control of Kazan in September 1918.⁴³

The events surrounding the Kazan operation also led to the formation of the Revvoensovet of the Republic (RVSR), or 'Revolutionary War Council', on 6 September 1918, 'to coordinate operational and administrative affairs'. Chaired by Trotsky, the RVSR template was, from December 1918, reproduced more widely. Red armies were grouped into fronts and each was assigned a Revvoensovet. This, combined with the policy of assigning military commissars 'to shadow commanders and to offer ideological guidance and motivation to Red forces', meant that regular units replaced the irregular ('partisan') formations.⁴⁴ Smele argues that 'the structure of the Red Army that would eventually emerge victorious from the wars was thus essentially in place before the end of the first year of serious struggle.'⁴⁵

Reisner's first article for *Izvestiia*, which provided an eye-witness account of fighting along the Volga river, was published by the paper in autumn 1918 under the title 'Pis'ma s vostochnogo fronta' (Letters from the Eastern Front).⁴⁶ It was the first in a series of six articles she wrote for the paper, the final three being published under the more general title 'Pis'ma s fronta' (Letters from the Front) as her work and events took her away from the Eastern Front.⁴⁷ In addition to her work for *Izvestiia*, Reisner also

⁴² Ibid., p. 69.

⁴³ Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars*, p. 88.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 88.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 88.

⁴⁶ 'Pis'ma s vostochnogo fronta (pis'mo vtoroe)', *Izvestiia*, 16 November 1918, No. 250, p. 2.

⁴⁷ Six known articles were published as part of this series, the first three of which were numbered as follows: 'second letter' (pis'mo vtoroe), No. 250, 16 November 1918; 'third letter' (pis'mo tret'e), No. 257, 24 November 1918; and 'fifth letter' (piatoe pis'mo), No. 17, 25 January 1919. The sequence appears to be incomplete, with earlier biographers of Reisner also identifying only the 'second', 'third' and 'fifth' letters. Reisner took up a post as a naval commissar in Moscow in late 1918 and did not return to the front until June 1919. Her first 'letter' after returning to the front was published on 31 August 1919. This article, and the two that followed, were not numbered, published instead under the general title 'pis'ma s fronta'. The final letter in the series was published exactly a year after the first, on 16 November 1919 (see Appendix II).

later published two articles about her first few months on the Eastern Front in the Soviet historical journal *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia* ('Proletarian Revolution') in 1922 and 1923.⁴⁸ Her civil-war journalism, which combined Modernist literary traditions with heroic, revolutionary themes, was later edited and published in the collection *Front* (1924), described as one of the first books on the Russian Civil Wars in Soviet literature.⁴⁹ There are nine chapters in early editions of *Front*. Chapter two, 'Sviiazhsk', does not appear in editions published after 1928, as it was removed for its positive depiction of Trotsky in civil war. Some of Reisner's articles were later amalgamated and published as one chapter. Her 'Pis'ma s fronta' published in *Izvestiia* on 31 August 1919 and 4 September 1919, for example, were merged and edited to form the chapter 'Astrakhan' in *Front*.⁵⁰

The so-called 'Letters from the (Eastern) Front' featured primarily on the second page of the paper and ranged from a quarter to just under half a page in size. The newspaper's front page during this period was largely reserved for a handful of regular male contributors and party members, including Iurii Mikhailovich Steklov, *Izvestiia*'s editor-in-chief between 1917 and 1925; Karl Radek, international communist activist and later Reisner's partner; and David Izrailevich Erde (Raikhshtein), journalist and Commissar in the National Secretariat of the Ukrainian People's Republic.

Following the Red Army's successful campaign on the Volga, Reisner embarked on the Volga Flotilla's campaign up the Kama River (heading east from Kazan), led by Raskol'nikov. She served as the fleet's political officer in charge of intelligence operations and also took part in raids.⁵¹ As well as participating in combat, a small but significant number of Bolshevik women were appointed political workers, whose task was to instruct Red Army soldiers on politics and 'to guarantee the loyalty of the professional soldiers (especially the military specialists) who staffed them'.⁵² Smele

⁴⁸ 'Kazan (Leto i osen' 1918 goda)', *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1922, No. 12, pp. 180–196; and 'Sviiazhsk', *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1923, No. 6–7, pp. 177–189. It unclear exactly when these articles were written.

⁴⁹ *Front* (Moscow: Krasnaia nov', 1924); Permiakova, Permiakova, 'Prezhde vsego – zhurnalist', p. 147.

⁵⁰ Reisner, 'Pis'ma s fronta', *Izvestiia*, 31 August 1919, No. 192, p.2; 4 September 1919, No. 195, p. 2.

⁵¹ Letter from Larisa Reisner to her parents. 1918. In Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), p. 514.

⁵² Smele, 'Military Commissars' in *Historical Dictionary of the "Russian" Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 746–747. 'Military specialists' refers to the 'officers and other specialists of the former Imperial Army who served, either voluntarily or under compulsion in the Red Army during the civil-war years'. See

further observes that ‘when, over the course of 1918, the Red Army became a mass conscript army, dominated by peasants, the military commissars (or *voenkomy*) assumed also a larger ideological and agitational role [...]’.⁵³ Thus, when Reisner was appointed to the role of political commissar in 1918, she would have enjoyed considerable prestige and responsibility.

In late 1918, Reisner left the Volga region to take up a position as a naval commissar in Moscow. While there, she continued writing for *Izvestiia* and other publications on topics including pieces marking the deaths of comrades, with whom she served at the front.⁵⁴ Reisner returned to the front in June 1919 with the Astrakhan-Caspian and Volga-Caspian Flotillas, the latter of which was under Raskol’nikov’s command.⁵⁵ She continued to publish accounts of her civil-war experiences in *Izvestiia*, which took her as far as Baku and the North Persian city of Enzeli (Bandar-e-Anzali), which was seized from the British by the Red Volga–Caspian Military Flotilla in May 1920.⁵⁶ Reisner left the front again in June 1920, spending a short time in Moscow before travelling to Petrograd. On 31 July 1920, she officially became a writer (*sotrudnik-literator*) in the

Smele, ‘Military Specialists’ in *Historical Dictionary of the “Russian” Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 752–754.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 746–747. PUR refers to the Political Administration of the Revvoensovet, the Revolutionary Military Council.

⁵⁴ See for example Reisner, ‘Rekviem’, *Izvestiia*, 20 December 1918, No. 279, p. 2; ‘Pamiati V. M. Al’fatera’, *Izvestiia*, 27 April 1919, No. 89, p. 1.

⁵⁵ In December 1918, he [Raskol’nikov] was made deputy commander of the 7th Red Army and chief commissar of the Baltic Fleet, in preparation for the planned invasion of Estonia, but was captured by the Royal Navy [...] on 26 December 1918. He was taken to London as a prisoner of war and confined in Brixton prison. On 27 May 1919 he was released, and he returned to Russia as the central figure in a prisoner exchange between Britain and Soviet Russia. He subsequently served as a member of the Revvoensovet of the Reds’ Astrakhan Army Group (June–14 August 1919) and commander of the Volga–Caspian Military Flotilla (31 July 1919–June 1920). In the latter capacity, he oversaw the audacious Enzeli operation that secured the capture of the White Caspian Flotilla from its British custodians in Persia’. See Smele, ‘Raskol’nikov (Il’in), Fedor Fedorovich (28 January 1892–12 September 1939)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the “Russian” Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 917–919 (p. 918).

⁵⁶ Smele, *The “Russian” Civil Wars*, p. 148. Reisner’s *Izvestiia* articles from this period included: ‘Pis’ma s vostochnogo fronta’, 4 September 1919, No. 195, p. 2, and ‘Pis’ma s fronta’, 16 November 1919, No. 257, p. 3.

Literary-Publishing Section of the Baltic Fleet's Political Department.⁵⁷ However, a letter dated 10 September 1920 from the editor-in-chief of the Literary-Publishing Section to the head of the Political Department of the Baltic Fleet asked that Reisner be dismissed from this position as she had not fulfilled her required duties.⁵⁸ This criticism does not appear to have dampened Reisner's prospects as a party journalist, however, and, in October, she was sent to Riga, where negotiations between the Soviet republic and Poland were taking place, again as a correspondent for *Izvestiia*. While there, she wrote at least two articles for the paper, including 'Putevye zametki' (Traveller's Notes) and '25 oktiabria v Rige' (25 October in Riga).⁵⁹

Themes in Reisner's frontline journalism

In terms of genre, Reisner's articles from the frontline display elements of the heroic, descriptive reportage typical of the *ocherk* at this time. The association of the *ocherk* with *publitsistika* is also evident. Zhirkov describes Reisner's series for *Izvestiia* as a 'diary of a political journalist' (*publitsisticheskii dnevnik*), a description that supports her literary and ideological aspirations and influences.⁶⁰ This diary/letter-like form also fits with the view that emerged among nineteenth-century Russian revolutionaries that it was necessary for women (and men) activists to renounce their private lives for the greater cause.⁶¹

Reisner's articles from this period have long been upheld as an example of reportage. Peter Monteath, in his article 'The Spanish Civil War and the Aesthetics of Reportage', notes that the term reportage was applied to a broad range of literary forms, including newspaper articles and certain books.⁶² Discussing the issue of impartiality and the ambiguous nature of journalism and the role of the journalist in the 1920s and 1930s, he argues:

⁵⁷ Report addressed to the head of the Baltic Fleet's Political Department, 10 September 1920. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 20, l. 1.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Reisner, 'Putevye zametki', *Izvestiia*, 12 November 1920, No. 254, p. 2; and '25 oktiabria v Rige', *Izvestiia*, 14 November 1920, No. 256, p. 1.

⁶⁰ Zhirkov, *Zhurnalistskaia dvukh Rossii, 1917–1920*, p. 173.

⁶¹ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, pp. 21–23.

⁶² Peter Monteath, 'The Spanish Civil War and the Aesthetics of Reportage' in *Literature and War*, ed. by David Bevan (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1990), pp. 69–86 (p. 69).

That an exponent of reportage [...] should have such political affiliations or sympathies was by no means unusual in the 1920s and 1930s. The outstanding example of political radicality of many exponents of the genre was of course the American reporter John Reed, who, in his famous book *Ten Days That Shook the World*, provided an account of the 1917 Russian revolution.⁶³

Monteath further observes that Theodor Balk, a Yugoslav writer and member of the German Communist Party, early on named Reisner as another great writer of reportage alongside Reed. Commenting on the content of works defined as reportage, Balk mused, ‘diary, biography, reports – everything is reportage’.⁶⁴ Thus, again the fluidity and broadness of contemporary literary genres and their manifestation in journalism is apparent here.

It is also possible to observe the influences of Reisner’s early encounters with Modernism (and specifically Acmeism) in her journalism from the frontlines. This is illustrated through her focus on actual events and clear descriptions of the landscape and scene around her. In her first article for *Izvestiia*, for example, she begins by setting the scene for the paper’s readers far from the frontline, comparing the sound of the night gong on the deck of her torpedo boat with the chimes of the Peter and Paul Fortress back in St Petersburg.⁶⁵ Her literary treatment of military topics produces a distinct account of the wars, in which gunfire is personified as ‘iron hiccups’ (*zheleznaiia ikota*), to give just one example.⁶⁶

The relationship, and sometimes tension, between Reisner’s personal experience and public persona is a common and recurring theme throughout her articles written during or about her time on the frontline. As supported by the hybrid genre of her journalism and early Modernist influences, Reisner’s narrative of her civil-war activities presented in her articles is carefully constructed in line with her desire to embody a particular revolutionary role, that of the ‘woman of the revolution’. In her critical account of

⁶³ Ibid., p. 70.

⁶⁴ Theodor Balk, ‘Egon Erwin Kisch and his Reportage. On the 50th Year of a Noted Revolutionary Reporter’, *International Literature*, 4 (1935) cited in Monteath, ‘The Spanish Civil War and the Aesthetics of Reportage’, p. 70.

⁶⁵ ‘Pis’ma s vostochnogo fronta (pis’mo vtoroe)’, *Izvestiia*, 16 November 1918, No. 250, p. 2.

⁶⁶ Reisner, ‘Sviiashsk,’ *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1923, No. 6–7, pp. 177–189.

Reisner, Nadezhda Mandelstam recalled her saying: '[w]e must create a type of Russian revolutionary woman [...] The French Revolution created its own type. We must do the same.'⁶⁷

To this effect, Mandelstam also argued that the purpose of Reisner's 'journeys back and forth across the battle fronts', and later her trips to Afghanistan and Germany, were part of her plan to become known exactly as that woman of the revolution.⁶⁸ Although Mandelstam's feelings toward Reisner were complicated, owing in part to Reisner's perceived failure to save the poet (and Reisner's former lover) Gumilev from execution in 1921, there is some truth in her account. Her seeming desire to embody the idea of the woman of the revolution fitted well with Bolshevik propaganda, which, drawing from French Revolutionary imagery, portrayed women as symbols of freedom, revolution and beauty.⁶⁹ Reisner was also no stranger to using mythology in her work, an influence stemming from her pre-revolutionary work and association with Modernist poets. In her *Avtobiograficheskii roman*, which she worked on during the civil wars, Reisner evoked Greek mythology through her choice of the name Ariadna for her protagonist.⁷⁰

Reisner's article 'Kazan', published in *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia* in 1922, illustrates her desire to create a particular heroic persona for herself. Although it was not published until shortly after Reisner's time at the front, the piece presents her account of the capture of Kazan by anti-Bolshevik forces in early August 1918 and the retreat of Red Army troops from the city.⁷¹ While the account was based on actual events, it was deliberately framed by Reisner to present a particular image of herself and the party. In the article, Reisner described how her husband, Raskol'nikov, was captured by the Whites, and how, disguised as a peasant woman, she went to survey the enemy camp, was caught, and subsequently escaped. Reading like an epic adventure story, she

⁶⁷ Mandelstam, *Hope Against Hope*, p. 108.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁶⁹ Eremeeva, 'Woman and Violence', p. 239.

⁷⁰ In the myth, Ariadna, the daughter of King Minos, assists Theseus in his quest to slay the Minotaur (her half-brother), who has been imprisoned in a labyrinth by her father. She then flees with Theseus aboard his ship to the island of Naxos. According to one version, Ariadna is abandoned by Theseus after falling asleep. She then meets Dionysos and the two wed, before ascending to Olympus as immortals.

⁷¹ Reisner, 'Kazan. (Leto i osen' 1918 goda),' *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1922, No. 12, pp. 180–196.

described how she was captured and interrogated, denying any knowledge of Raskol'nikov when questioned:

- And Raskol'nikov, do you know him?
- Ras-kol'-nikov? No, who's he?
- A major scoundrel (*krupnyi prokhvost*).
- Sir, it's impossible to know all the scoundrels. There are so many of them.

As illustrated by this extract, Reisner made light of the potentially fatal situation, presenting herself as fearless and witty in her article. Following her interrogation, she managed to escape through an unguarded door.

Yet, this episode has been described in various ways, both by Reisner and others. In her original article about the events at Kazan, Reisner described how, having escaped from the enemy camp, she was taken in by a kind peasant woman who comforted, fed and clothed her, and gave her three rubles. According to the article, she was then shown the way back to the Red Army camp by a peasant guide. However, in a letter to her parents, Reisner wrote that she remembered a White Guard by the name of Bul'gin (with whom she claimed to have previously travelled to Kazan) who lived nearby. She described how, having found the correct house, they gave her a cook's dress and five rubles. She then found her own way back to the Red Army camp.⁷²

An edited version of the article was published as the first chapter, 'Kazan', in the collection of Reisner's civil-war sketches, *Front*, in 1924. While many edits were minor, there were some significant changes. In her article, for example, Reisner described the officer who interrogated her as Japanese (*ofitser-iaponets*). A letter she wrote to her parents shortly after the events took place corroborated this account.⁷³ Trotsky, in his 1929 autobiography, *My Life*, similarly supported this version of events:

After the capture of Kazan by the Whites, she went into the enemy camp to reconnoitre, disguised as a peasant woman. But her appearance was too extraordinary, and she was

⁷² Letter from Larisa Reisner to her parents, 1918. Published in Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), pp. 512-513.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 512-513.

arrested. While she was being cross-examined by a Japanese intelligence officer, she took advantage of an interval to slip through the carelessly guarded door and disappear.⁷⁴

However, in *Front*, the same officer, for some unknown reason, was referred to as French or ‘foreign’.⁷⁵ A further notable edit applies to editions of *Front* published after 1928. In the article, ‘Kazan’, and early editions of the book, Reisner described receiving a telegram from Trotsky notifying her that Raskol’nikov had been taken prisoner. Like all Soviet literature published from the late 1920s onwards, however, the reference to Trotsky was removed from later editions of *Front*.

It is interesting to compare Reisner’s decision to disguise herself as a peasant woman, whether real or fictional, with the distant way she often referred to ordinary people in her journalism. In ‘Kazan’, for example, she described the people (*narod*, *massa*) fleeing the city: ‘[a]n old lady pulls a goat along by a rope. Others clutch their valuables (fur coats, samovars) and small children. Some are alone, walking in the pouring rain without hats or coats.’⁷⁶ Here Reisner presented herself as intellectually removed from the people. As illustrated by her disguise and descriptions, she felt both a pull of identification with the common people and an inability to be close to them. Reisner’s behaviour fits well with the tradition of women revolutionaries, who spent time working and living among ordinary people but were also upheld as political saints.⁷⁷ This tension is also echoed in Babel’s writing about the civil wars, where he adopted a specific persona to fit in with the soldiers he was stationed with (see Chapter Three).

In terms of register and tone, Reisner used the Russian pronoun *my* (we) rather than *oni* (they) throughout her *Izvestiia* articles. This served not only to highlight her direct participation in events, but also firmly associated her with the Bolshevik elite. As noted by Brooks, the use of ‘we’ was often used in early Bolshevik journalism to demonstrate the party’s power and self-awareness.⁷⁸

As Raskol’nikov’s wife and an increasingly well-connected political commissar in her own right, Reisner’s experience of the civil wars was far removed from that of the

⁷⁴ Trotsky, *My Life*, p. 426.

⁷⁵ Reisner, *Sobranie sochinenii*, Tom 1 (1928), pp. 28–29.

⁷⁶ Reisner, ‘Kazan. (Leto i osen’ 1918 goda),’ *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1922, No. 12, pp. 180–196.

⁷⁷ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, p. 26.

⁷⁸ Brooks, ‘*Pravda* and the language of power in Soviet Russia, 1917–1928’, p. 158.

ordinary people. In a letter to her parents from Sviiazhsk in 1918, she asked them to send her hat and autumn coat, remarking that she had left all of her belongings in Kazan and was, as a result, going around in an ‘unimaginable’ state (and freezing to death).⁷⁹ She described in a later letter from the front how she was spending her free time aboard a luxurious imperial-era boat with showers and clean linen.⁸⁰ Christopher Read points out that by 1920, Raskol’nikov and Reisner were attracting ‘unfavourable comment’ for their ‘supposedly luxurious lifestyle’. Read views this criticism as evidence of growing resentment aimed at the new ‘commissarocracy’, to which Reisner and Raskol’nikov belonged.⁸¹ This was the same ‘Red nobility’ that Tyrkova-Williams had referred to in her article ‘The Retreat in the South’.⁸² Tyrkova-Williams was similarly removed from the masses as a prominent member of the White movement and the wife of a journalist attached to the British Military Mission in southern Russia and presented this distance in her own journalism. However, unlike Reisner, she did not appear, consciously or unconsciously, to attempt to mask her privileged position.

Thus, the numerous retellings of Reisner’s experience in Kazan, as well as the way her articles were later edited or omitted from *Front*, illustrate how she manipulated her own image, but also how her narrative was influenced and then later edited by others to fit a specific agenda. Reisner’s private letters and descriptions of her life at the front, for example, were at odds with the way she, and the party in general, portrayed themselves in official propaganda. While one could argue that she was complicit in the creation of such narratives she is likely to have had less control over the publication of her articles in book form. Following her death, she could no longer control her image. As a result, she has been variously dismissed or appropriated for different purposes over the years.⁸³

Reisner’s position as a party journalist is clearly evident from a close reading of her work. A number of her articles from or about the civil-war period provided first-hand accounts of important historical events, which later became part of the Bolshevik wartime narrative. The article ‘Sviiazhsk’, published five years after the events took

⁷⁹ Letter from Reisner to her parents, 1918. Published in Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), pp. 512-513.

⁸⁰ Letter from Reisner to her parents, 1918. Published in Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), p. 514.

⁸¹ Read, *From Tsars to Soviets*, p. 145.

⁸² Tyrkova-Williams, ‘The Retreat in the South’, *The New Russia*, Vol. I, 19 February 1920 (London, 1920), pp. 88-89.

⁸³ Like a number of Soviet writers and personalities, Reisner was ‘resurrected’ in the 1960s during the Khrushchev thaw. This rehabilitation led to the republication of a number of her works and letters.

place, is a prime example.⁸⁴ While the article still contains indications of Reisner's literary style, it presents a far more military-focused account than her previous civil-war pieces. Whereas *Izvestiia* articles from the front are largely written in the present tense, her account of Sviiazhsk is told in the past tense. It is a reflection on the events, and people involved, written after the Red Army has secured its victory.

'Sviiazhsk' reads like a historical epic, with Trotsky as its hero. The battle fought by the 5th Army at Sviiazhsk has been described as the most important battle in the struggle to regain control of Kazan, which was a strategically vital staging post on the Volga, and Reisner's treatment of the episode reflects this.⁸⁵ She noted in the opening lines:

It was only after Sviiazhsk and Kazan that the Red Army took its current military and political form, which, through changes and improvements, became typical of the RSFSR.

As outlined above, Reisner was referring to changes in the structure of the Red Army that began with the Eastern Front in September 1918, namely the creation of the Revvoensovet. Although absent from the original article, the version which appeared in editions of *Front* up until 1928, included an opening passage which referred to the 'legend' (*legenda*) and 'fantastic epic' (*skazochnaia epopeia*) of 'Sviiazhsk'. Such descriptions demonstrate the importance that was later placed on episodes such as the recapture of Kazan by the Red Army in the Soviet narrative of the civil wars. The fact that this chapter was removed from editions of *Front* published after 1928 for its references to Trotsky only further emphasises the construction and suppression of original Soviet civil-war narratives.

Reisner's second article for *Izvestiia* similarly perpetuated the heroic Bolshevik myths of the civil wars through its description of historical events. The article, which was published on 24 November 1918 and corresponds with the chapter entitled 'Markin' in *Front*, recounted the death of Nikolai Grigor'evich Markin (1893–1918), commander of the Red ship *Vania-kommunist*, which was lost in action on the Kama river on 1 October 1918.⁸⁶ Reisner also wrote a poem, entitled 'Rekviem' (Requiem), to commemorate the loss, which was published in *Izvestiia* in December of that year, and

⁸⁴ It is unclear when 'Sviiazhsk' was written but it has a different tone and style to Reisner's early civil-war journalism, which suggests it was written around the time it was published in 1923.

⁸⁵ Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War*, p. 67.

⁸⁶ 'Pis'ma s vostochnogo fronta (Pis'mo tret'e),' *Izvestiia*, 24 November 1918, No. 257, p. 2.

indicates that she still viewed herself as a poet at this point.⁸⁷ The first identified article published by *Izvestiia* in memory of Markin was a piece by Trotsky, published on 6 October 1918.⁸⁸ In the 1960s, which saw the commemoration of the ‘heroes’ of the October Revolution and civil wars, a number of streets were renamed in honour of Markin and a memorial museum and monument to him were also established, the latter opening in 1967, the 50th anniversary of the revolution.⁸⁹

Further evidence of the manipulation of narrative to construct a specific image of the party, and of Reisner herself, can be found in Reisner’s representation of women in her journalism. There is a stark contrast between how Reisner presents her own experience of war with those of other women in her articles. When writing about her personal experience she portrays herself as independent, brave and resilient. As presented in her article ‘Kazan’, when she is caught while surveying an enemy camp, she does not wait to be rescued, instead finding a means to escape by herself. However, when writing about women in her articles, Reisner repeatedly drew on traditional wartime gender binaries, in which women (and children) were presented as passive victims and men as the perpetrators of violence.

The women Reisner documented in her journalism were often the wives of soldiers or sailors. They were frequently searching for their husbands and in tears. She recounted in her *Izvestiia* article from 16 November 1918, for example, how a young woman in tears is described by the surrounding crowd as a *matroska*, a slang word used to describe a sailor’s wife.⁹⁰ Despite the fact that Reisner did not present herself as a gendered victim of war, she appeared to use this narrative as a form of propaganda in her work by simultaneously alluding to the passivity of the women waiting for their Red Army husbands, fathers and sons, and the brutality of those fighting against them.⁹¹

The victimhood narrative was further exploited in the edited collection of Reisner’s articles published as *Front*. An additional passage was added to the chapter ‘Kazan-Sarapul’ (which was based on Reisner’s first article from the front for *Izvestiia*), for

⁸⁷ ‘Rekviem’, *Izvestiia*, 20 December 1918, No. 279, p. 2.

⁸⁸ Trotsky, ‘Pamiati Tov. M. G. Markina’, *Izvestiia*, 6 October 1918, No. 217, pp. 1–2.

⁸⁹ Smele, ‘Markin, Nikolai Grigor’evich (9 May 1893–1 October 1918)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the “Russian” Civil Wars*, Volume Two, pp. 714–715.

⁹⁰ Reisner, ‘Pis’ma s vostochnogo fronta (pis’mo vtoroe)’, *Izvestiia*, 16 November 1918, No. 250, p. 2.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

example, which simultaneously reiterated the victimhood narrative and attacked the ‘bourgeois’ anti-Bolsheviks who fled abroad during the civil wars: ‘The wives and children of those killed do not flee abroad, nor do they later publish memoirs describing the burning of old country estates with their Rembrandts and libraries [...]’⁹² The women and children described here are framed as ordinary people who accept and bear the sacrifices of war in support of the wider aims of the revolution. Thus, these examples illustrate how Reisner and her editors constructed different narratives that played on existing ideas of gender and war, as well as changing views of the civil wars.

Reception of Reisner’s frontline role and journalism

The reception to Reisner’s frontline role and journalism among her contemporaries reveals much about Bolshevik, and more generally Soviet, attitudes towards war and gender. While it is difficult to measure the public reception of her articles, it is likely that they had a limited initial reach. Although edited collections of her civil-war journalism were published in 1924 and 1928, her work fell into obscurity until the late 1950s (see Introduction). The reaction to her work and civil-war activities from fellow journalists, writers and party members was, however, substantial and provides an important source when examining the topic of women and journalism, particularly in the context of war.

Despite the significant number of women soldiers in the Red Army, the party’s attitude towards allowing women to fight was contradictory and inconsistent.⁹³ Even Kollontai, at the time one of the most prominent women in the Bolshevik party, did not fully support women’s equal participation in all military roles. While she actively advocated women’s involvement in the Red Army, both on and behind the frontlines, she believed that women were better suited to non-combat roles, namely political agitation, medical and other support and operational work.⁹⁴ Yet Kollontai’s attitude towards women soldiers was also inconsistent. In a later article published in 1927 on

⁹² Reisner, ‘Kazan-Sarapul’ in *Izbrannoe* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literature, 1980), pp. 42–49 (p. 45). The original article was published in *Izvestiia* on 16 November 1918 (see Appendix I).

⁹³ Joshua A. Sanborn, *Drafting the Russian Nation: Military Conscription, Total War, and Mass Politics, 1905–1925* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003), p. 156.

⁹⁴ Kollontai, ‘Krasnyi front i rabotnitsa,’ in *Revoliutsionnaia voina (sbornik pervyi)*, ed. by N. Podvoiskii and M. Pavlovich (Moscow: Izd. VTsIK, 1919), p. 103.

women fighters during the revolution and civil wars, she did not differentiate between the different roles women undertook in the Red Army:

They went wherever they were sent. To the front? They put on a soldier's cap and became fighters in the Red Army. If they put on red arm-bands, then they were hurrying off to the first-aid stations to help the Red front against Kerensky at Gatchina. They worked in army communications. They worked cheerfully, filled with the belief that something momentous was happening, and that we are all small cogs in the one class of revolution.⁹⁵

Clements argues that it was in fact through the role of the woman political worker that the 'Bolsheviks challenged most directly the accepted norms on female participation in warfare.'⁹⁶

Regardless of attitudes towards allowing women to fight in the Red Army, Russian women soldiers (and political workers) participating in the civil wars were routinely subject to prejudice and their experience was often edited to fit a particular narrative in popular culture and memory. Discussing life in the army before the revolution, Sanborn notes that 'misogyny was strong in both popular and elite military circles', with the widespread and popular use of 'pornographic curses', songs and jokes in everyday training and military life.⁹⁷ Bochkareva's first-hand account of the women's battalion in the First World War similarly draws attention to misogyny within the army.⁹⁸ Many commanders of the Red forces during the civil wars were former Imperial army officers, now termed *voenspetsy* (military specialists), and even 'Red Commanders' had often been non-commissioned officers in the tsarist army and had absorbed its male ethos.

Babel directly referred to the uncouth behaviour of Red Army soldiers in an article he wrote for the newspaper *Krasnyi kavalerist* in 1920. In the piece, entitled 'Ee den'' (Her Day), Babel compared the 'blasphemous', cursing, 'bawdy' male soldiers with the 'calm', caring, 'comforting' woman nurse in the camp:

⁹⁵ Kollontai, 'Women Fighters in the Days of the Great October Revolution' in *Alexandra Kollontai: Selected Articles and Speeches* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1984), pp. 126–130. The article was first published in *Zhenskii zhurnal*, 1927, No. 11, pp. 2–3.

⁹⁶ Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, p. 175.

⁹⁷ Sanborn, *Drafting the Russian Nation*, p. 160.

⁹⁸ Bochkareva, *Yashka*, pp. 193–194. See Chapter Two for more on the women's battalion.

The men are singing a bawdy song. The nurse quietly hums her own song – about dying for the Revolution, about better days to come. A few men begin singing along with her, and our song, our unceasing call to freedom, spills out into the rainy autumnal dusk.⁹⁹

In the same article, Babel made a further judgment about what he saw as the hierarchy of military support roles available to women, contrasting the ‘heroic’, ‘martyred’ nurse with the ‘camp girls’:

Nobody helps her, nobody puts straw down for her to sleep on, nobody fluffs up her pillow. These are our heroic nurses! Lift your hats and bow to them! Soldiers and commanders, honour your nurses! It is high time we distinguish between the camp girls who shame our army and the martyred nurses who ennoble it.¹⁰⁰

By presenting this comparison, Babel effectively normalised the military support role for women and presented the life of the soldier as overtly masculine and, by association, closed to women. This passage also raises issues of morality and expectations about how men and women were expected to behave. Women were required to display compassion and care for the men at the front, while simultaneously shaming them into ‘correct behaviour’.¹⁰¹ As Wood notes, ‘from a propaganda point of view the most important aspect of a women's military service was that women could be depicted as “even more self-sacrificing and cheerful” (*samootverzhennye i bodrye*) than many of the men.’¹⁰²

In an article published in January 1918, the American journalist Bessie Beatty drew attention to the prejudice against women in the Russian navy. As part of trip to Russia to cover the events of the Russian revolutions, Beatty visited a ship of the Baltic Fleet. The editorial note accompanying her article claimed:

Before Miss Beatty was permitted aboard, she had to overcome the almost insurmountable prejudice against allowing women on the vessels. The prejudice is due to the political

⁹⁹ Babel, ‘Ee den’ (Her Day) in Babel, *The Complete Works of Isaac Babel*, p. 374.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

¹⁰¹ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, p. 47.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 56.

intrigues which were carried on during the empire. She is the first woman to break the rule.¹⁰³

Women had been banned from stepping foot on Russian naval ships since the first months of the February Revolution, which, according to one sailor Beatty spoke to, was due to the fact that ‘women have played so much hell in politics...’ Speculating on his exact meaning, Beatty noted, ‘[i]t may be that he recalled certain brilliant gatherings aboard the czar’s yacht, wherein gold-braided uniforms and Paris frocks occupied themselves with a game more dangerous than than flirtation.’ Here she is likely referring to Tsarina Alexandra Fedorovna’s perceived influence over affairs of state and her association with the Russian mystic Grigorii Rasputin.

Beatty’s experience in Russia serves as yet another example of longstanding attitudes towards women and the military, in that it was historically viewed as bad luck to have a woman aboard a ship, not just in Russia but across much of the world. Her claim as the first woman to be permitted aboard a Baltic Fleet ship is particularly interesting in the context of Reisner’s association with the fleet later in 1918. The fact that Beatty was granted this ‘privilege’ could also be framed in the context of her status as a Western reporter.

In line with her mythical status, Reisner’s contemporaries, as well as later scholars, have interpreted her civil-war role in numerous ways. As Joshua S. Goldstein observes, several recent attempts to uncover the history of women combatants ‘mix well-documented cases with legends [...]’¹⁰⁴ Although Goldstein makes no mention of Reisner in his work, her frontline experience during the civil wars, and indeed her whole life, has been mythologised to the extent that it is almost impossible to untangle legend from reality. Trotsky, in his 1929 autobiography, described her as ‘an Olympian goddess’ and as ‘Pallas’ – evoking a virago-type figure, who shows ‘male’ boldness without fully challenging gender norms.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ ‘Bessie Beatty Aboard the Battleships of the Baltic (Part 1)’, *The Bulletin* (San Francisco), 5 January 1918.

¹⁰⁴ Joshua S. Goldstein, *War and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 59.

¹⁰⁵ Linda Grant De Pauw, *Battle Cries and Lullabies: Women in War from Prehistory to the Present* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), pp. 17–18.

This fine young woman flashed across the revolutionary sky like a burning meteor, blinding many. With her appearance of an Olympian goddess, she combined a subtle and ironical mind and the courage of a warrior.

But after coming unscathed through fire and water this Pallas of the revolution suddenly burned up with typhus in the peaceful surroundings of Moscow, before she was even thirty.¹⁰⁶

Another account of Reisner by her fellow comrade at the front, A. Kremlev, clearly demonstrated the juxtaposition between what he viewed as her ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ behaviour and characteristics.¹⁰⁷ On the one hand, he emphasised her bravery, leadership, and ability to mask her anxiety through humour for the sake of her comrades’ morale. Yet Kremlev noted that the latter characteristic only made her voice ‘more velvety’, contrasting her courage with her sensual, feminine voice. He drew further attention to her gender, setting her apart from the male soldiers she was with and highlighting her unique position as a woman combatant among men, by describing a moment when her comrades wanted to ‘kiss that marvellous woman’s hands, black as they were with the grime of the road’. There was also a sense among Reisner’s contemporaries that she had to ‘prove’ herself to be accepted as a woman among male soldiers and, equally, the wife of Raskol’nikov, something Radek argues she successfully did:

On the campaigns the sailors came to love her warmly and as one of themselves because her courage was combined with a naturalness and humanity; there was no falsity in the masses’ attitude towards her for it never entered anyone’s head that at the front she was not only a comrade-in-arms but the flotilla commander’s wife – she had married Raskolnikov in 1918.¹⁰⁸

Significantly, Kremlev also portrayed Reisner as both a leader and a mother figure, noting how she led a small group, including ‘a sailor lad (a boy!)’, and was later concerned for their welfare, putting them before her own needs: ‘Comrades, look after

¹⁰⁶ Trotsky, *My Life*, pp. 425–426.

¹⁰⁷ An extract from Kremlev’s account was re-printed by Karl Radek in his foreword in *Sobranie sochinenii*, Tom 1 (1928), pp. ix–x.

¹⁰⁸ Radek, ‘Larissa Reissner’ in *Hamburg at the Barricades*, p. 191.

my boys. Me? – no, I’m not tired!’¹⁰⁹ Thus, although Reisner was presented as one of the troops, she was also expected to adhere to particular gender norms and expectations by fulfilling the role of the revolutionary mother figure.¹¹⁰ Reisner’s male contemporaries also presented this self-sacrificing trait, which Kremlev alluded to, in other accounts of her frontline experience. Radek, for example, claimed that she obscured her military role in the civil wars out of modesty:

She serves at Sviiazhsk where the Red Army was forged in the battle against the Czechoslovaks. She takes part in the struggle of our Volga fleet. But she does not tell of this in her book *The Front*. There she relates the battles of the Red Army, passing modestly over her own role.¹¹¹

However, as episodes such as Reisner’s aforementioned description of her escape from the enemy camp indicate, her account of the civil wars was not as modest as Radek claimed in his introduction to the 1928 collection of her work.

The tensions highlighted in Trotsky and Kremlev’s comments are further echoed in Vishnevskii’s commissar character, which he modelled on Reisner. Although the commissar is presented as strong and self-sufficient, as demonstrated by a scene in which she shoots a man in the stomach who tries to rape her, her gender and position as the only woman among a battalion of men, is emphasised throughout the play (and film). In the film’s final scene, she dies surrounded by her male comrades and is elevated by the camera, as if to a higher world. Despite the fact that the commissar character is killed by enemy troops and not, in the case of Reisner, typhus, parallels can of course be drawn with Reisner’s death and the way she was later upheld as a type of political saint.

Such descriptions of Reisner reflect the mythology associated with historical Russian women warrior figures, the hagiography of women revolutionaries, and the French revolutionary imagery appropriated by the Bolsheviks. Delacroix’s 1830 depiction of ‘Liberté’ as both an allegorical goddess-figure and a woman of the people, for example, particularly mirrors the image that Reisner came to represent; she is at once both ordinary and extraordinary, ‘feminine’ and heroic.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 191.

¹¹⁰ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, p. 23.

¹¹¹ Radek, ‘Larissa Reissner’ in *Hamburg at the Barricades*, pp. 189–190.

However, it is interesting to note that the 2017 mini-series *Trotsky* focused only on the myths surrounding Reisner's sexuality and chose to diminish her literary and military roles. In the opening episode to the series, Reisner is shown to seduce Trotsky while he is engaged in his duties as War Commissar. Dressed in a strappy, 1920s style evening dress and alone with Trotsky in his train carriage, she recites a poem by Gumilev (her former lover) before removing her dress, supposedly enticing him away from his official war duties. Here, Reisner's gender and sexuality are emphasised. Despite her apparent authority she is presented as coquettish and removed from the seriousness of war. Such a portrayal of Reisner is a reflection of current Russian attitudes to the October Revolution and civil wars, and to gender, and serves to reinforce the traditional view that war is men's domain and women are expected to comfort or entertain. Reisner's position as a journalist and revolutionary, although alluded to in a caption in the opening scene, are all but erased.

In contrast to the male descriptions and interpretations of Reisner's wartime roles, Inber presented a much more balanced view. Writing in 1927, she observed that the revolution thrust into Reisner's hands both a pen and a rifle, because, at that time, Inber mused, 'to be a journalist was to be a soldier.'¹¹² As a result of her dual role, Inber noted that Reisner's early sketches described the fighting, and evoked the smoke of battles and the clicking of rifles. After Reisner left the front, she swapped fighting for 'peace', although, for Inber, her job was just as difficult. Despite the fact that Inber had suggested that, to some extent, men and women had distinct styles of journalism (see Chapter Three), her comments on Reisner's frontline roles and reporting indicate that she did not view Reisner's position through such a gendered lens. This further emphasises the fact that Reisner's male contemporaries understood her role in the civil wars in the context of entrenched (Russian and Western) beliefs about the place of women in war. In addition, Inber's understanding of journalism as a duty (in this case military) in the initial years of the civil wars, supports the lack of professional ethic in the press at this time.

An Official Correspondent

The years after Reisner's return from the front marked a change in her party role and, more broadly, the direction of journalism as an institution in Soviet Russia. In

¹¹² Inber, 'Chetyre zhenshchiny'.

Petrograd, she took an active role in the literary and social life of the city. By 1921, Reisner was officially contracted as a correspondent by *Pravda*. A permit dated 21 April 1921 requested that she be ‘given all the necessary help to allow her to fulfil her duties as a correspondent for the paper’.¹¹³ This shift coincided with the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) and a general move towards a more professional culture of journalism.¹¹⁴ With War Communism over, there was also less need for party activists to carry out multiple roles.

It was at this time that Raskol’nikov was appointed Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan. Reisner’s brother, Igor’, had worked at the embassy before Raskol’nikov and it is likely he played a role in his appointment.¹¹⁵ Reisner accompanied Raskol’nikov on his commission, as both a journalist and in an intelligence capacity. She produced journalistic sketches for *Pravda* about her time in Afghanistan, from the perspective of a Westernised Soviet woman, which focused particularly on the lives of Afghan women. Sending her parents copies of her first pieces from Afghanistan, Reisner expressed her preference for publishing her work as a long feuilleton in *Pravda* but conceded that she would settle for *Izvestiia* if, for some reason, it was not possible to publish in *Pravda*.¹¹⁶

Her articles later appeared in book form, first as a part collection, *Aziatskie povesti* (‘Tales of Asia’), and then as a complete collection under the title *Afganistan*, in 1925.¹¹⁷ Reisner also wrote three satirical sketches in 1922 about her time in Afghanistan. These were not published until many years after her death. One, ‘Prazdnik v Kabule’ (Festival in Kabul) was published in *Literaturnaia Rossiia* in 1963, and the other two, entitled ‘Persidskii posol’ and ‘Abdurakhman-bei, angorskii polpred’ were first published in *Izbrannoe*, a collection of Reisner’s works, in 1965.¹¹⁸ It is unclear why these articles were not published until several decades after they were written, but

¹¹³ Correspondent permit for *Pravda*, 21 April 1921. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 2, l. 1.

¹¹⁴ In March 1921, at the Tenth Party Congress, the New Economic Policy (NEP) was introduced, replacing War Communism and giving way to the privatisation of small-scale light industry and trade.

¹¹⁵ See Przhiborovskaia, *Larisa Reisner*, p. 375.

¹¹⁶ Letter from Larisa Reisner to her parents. 1921, in Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), pp. 519–520.

¹¹⁷ Reisner, *Aziatskie povesti* (Moscow: Ogonek, 1925); *Afganistan* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1925).

¹¹⁸ ‘Prazdnik v Kabule’, *Literaturnaia Rossiia*, No. 22, pp. 22–23. Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965) pp. 440–446.

parallels can also be drawn with some of Tyrkova-Williams's work that did not appear until after her death (see Chapter Two).

Reisner discussed her manuscript *Zapiski iz Afganistana* ('Notes from Afghanistan'), which formed part of her planned book *O Vostoke* ('About the East'), in a letter she sent to Alexandra Kollontai in 1922. The letter reveals much about her private life, including her increasingly acrimonious relationship with Raskol'nikov, and Reisner's attitude towards her own work. Reisner began by telling Kollontai that her 'domestic and party superior' (*'semeinoe i sluzhebnoe nachal'stvo'*), Raskol'nikov, was making her send 'countless' copies of her manuscript to various people in the Communist International (Comintern), for which Kollontai was herself working at that time. Reisner is believed to have worked as a Comintern agent while in Afghanistan and, later, in Germany (see below). We know for certain from this letter, and one sent to her parents around the same time, that she was sending the organisation 'letters and notes' about her observations, which she hoped would be turned into a book.¹¹⁹

However, in the self-deprecating manner that is also evident in letters she sent to her parents, Reisner told Kollontai that she imagined that the manuscripts were lying at the bottom of piles of papers on the desks of their secretaries. She wrote that she believed Kollontai, with her long-standing dedication to improving women's lives, to be the 'only person' who would be interested in her 'notes' on Afghan women, which she described as 'limited' and 'one sided' due to the fact that her movements were watched by a 'pack of spies' and she was allowed no contact with the Afghan people. Her articles were drawn instead from observing the women in the female section of the yard, which she was allowed to frequent.¹²⁰

As well as revealing the tension between journalism as a form of party work or as a career, Reisner's letter to Kollontai in 1922 also highlights the fact that she did not belong to the closely interconnected group of pre-revolutionary women party activists. The tone of the letter is warm but respectful. However, Reisner's own identity within the party was complicated. In a letter she wrote to her parents from Afghanistan in 1921, she referred to herself, albeit somewhat ironically, as an 'old party worker' (*staryi*

¹¹⁹ Letter from Reisner to her parents, 22 April 1922, in Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), pp. 520–521.

¹²⁰ Letter from Reisner to Kollontai, 1922. RGB, f. 245, karton 5, d. 7, ll. 1–4.

partiinyi rabotnik).¹²¹ Despite only becoming involved with the Bolsheviks in 1917, by 1921 Reisner clearly felt that she had earned her place in the party.

Reisner's links with the Comintern can be further observed in an article she wrote for the first issue of the *Communist Review* in May 1921. Published in London by the Communist Party of Great Britain, the first issue of the journal contained articles on 'The Class War in Germany' and 'Ireland and the Social Revolution', as well as a copy of a report from the Comintern Executive Committee. Later contributors included Radek and Clara Zetkin. Reisner's article for the first issue, entitled 'The Heroic Sailors of the Russian Revolution', gave a highly romanticised account of the role Bolshevik sailors played in the revolution and civil wars and draws on many of the articles (later collected in *Front*) that Reisner published in *Izvestiia* during the early civil-war years.¹²² The article described Reisner as a 'Member of the Political Board of the Baltic Fleet', a position she may have no longer held at the time of publication (see above). It is unclear exactly how Reisner was able to publish this article in the *Communist Review* but it is likely that Radek, in his capacity as a member of the Presidium of the Comintern and a contributor to the journal, played a role.

By the early 1920s, it was clear that Reisner was becoming increasingly popular as a journalist. While in Afghanistan, she received requests from *Petrogradskaia pravda* ('Petrograd Truth') to become a correspondent for the paper from Afghanistan. Communications between Russia and Afghanistan were extremely slow. Ivan Mikhailovich Maiskii, the Soviet diplomat, historian and politician who at the time served on the editorial board of *Petrogradskaia pravda*, sent Reisner two letters asking her to write for the paper. In the first, written no later than April 1923, Maiskii wrote that the newspaper would be very interested to receive correspondence from Afghanistan, particularly on the way of life, and the struggle between the 'old' and the 'new', as the Russian people knew very little about the country. Referring to the delay in transporting correspondence between Russia and Afghanistan, Maiskii stressed that it was important to write about topics that would not be out of date by the time they reached editors in Petrograd. He assured Reisner that she was considered a most suitable person for the role of correspondent and that, should she wish, she was welcome to write under a pseudonym. The desired article size was between 150 and 200

¹²¹ Letter from Larisa Reisner to her parents. 1921, in Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), pp. 519–520.

¹²² Reisner, 'The Heroic Sailors of the Russian Revolution', *Communist Review*, May 1921, Vol. 1, No. 1.

lines (increasing to 350 lines in certain cases) and correspondents would receive three US dollars per article in either Soviet or American currency. Maiskii added that, as she was not far from India, they would also accept articles on India.¹²³

Maiskii, in his capacity as editor of *Petrogradskaia pravda*, wrote a second letter to Reisner on 8 May 1923, inquiring whether she had received the first letter and again asking her again to consider becoming a correspondent for the paper. In addition, he asked Reisner whether she would be interested in publishing a book about Afghanistan as part of a 30-book series on Marxist political geography he had been commissioned to edit by the state publishing house Gosizdat. She would need to submit a four–five page manuscript, for which she would be paid 40 rubles in gold (i.e. not in Soviet inflationary currency) per *pechatnyi list* (approximately 16 printed pages).¹²⁴ A quarter of the total sum would be paid upon her signing the contract with Gosizdat. The manuscript was required by 1 October 1923, at the very latest.¹²⁵ Reisner's collection of sketches from Afghanistan was published as the collection *Afghanistan* by Gosizdat in 1925. There is no evidence of Reisner being employed as a correspondent for *Petrogradskaia pravda* until August 1923, when she became the paper's Berlin correspondent, by which point she had left Afghanistan and separated from Raskol'nikov.¹²⁶

As with Tyrkova-Williams's work, the notion of producing articles as a type of 'moral duty' was emphasised by Maiskii in his letters to Reisner. In this context, he informed her that she had a 'moral' duty to write about Afghanistan for the Soviet people. Once again, this example highlights a possible tension between journalism as a form of party work or a professional career. On the one hand Reisner is called upon to fulfil a moral, Soviet obligation, yet on the other she is offered an official position as a correspondent, with a contract and paid book deal. Although the two were by no means exclusive, there is an underlying sense that moral duty and loyalty are more important than financial gain in terms of determining the subject matter and types of articles produced.

¹²³ Ivan Mikhailovich Maiskii, *Izbrannaia perepiska s rossiiskimi korrespondentami*. Volume 1. 1900–1934. (Moscow: Nauka, 2005), pp. 208–209.

¹²⁴ See Robert A. Maguire, *Red Virgin Soil: Soviet Literature in the 1920s* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 13.

¹²⁵ Letter to Reisner from *Petrogradskaia pravda*, 1923. RGB, f. 245, karton 7, d. 31, l. 2.

¹²⁶ Correspondent permit for *Petrogradskaia pravda*, 10 August 1923. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 2, l. 2.

After separating from Raskol'nikov, Reisner returned briefly to Moscow before travelling to Hamburg in the autumn of 1923 to report on the workers' uprisings in the city as a special correspondent for *Izvestiia* and to undertake work for the Comintern.¹²⁷ She was given a fake passport for her journey, assuming the name Magdalina Mikhailovna Kraevskaia, as well as a fictional child, two-year-old Alis.¹²⁸ According to the passport, Reisner was travelling to Germany as a diplomatic employee. While in Germany, she wrote a number of factual reportage pieces about the people and poverty she encountered during her stay in Hamburg and other parts of the country. The first of these articles were published in *Izvestiia* (No. 40) and the Marxist journal *Zhizn'* ('Life'; No. 1) in 1924, before appearing in book-form as *Gamburg na barrikadakh* ('Hamburg at the Barricades') in 1924.¹²⁹ Radek, who became Reisner's partner in the years before her death, was instrumental in realising her trip to Germany. A document written by Radek and included with Reisner's fake passport confirms that she 'spent time between the middle of October 1923 and January 1924 carrying out clandestine work abroad'.¹³⁰

Reisner's activities between 1921 and 1924 demonstrate the beginning of the shift in her personal career and the wider shift towards a more professional culture in the early Soviet press. By this point, she was officially contracted as a correspondent for *Pravda* and was in demand by the editor of *Petrogradskaia pravda* to write articles on her experience of life in Afghanistan. She subsequently became the latter paper's correspondent in Berlin, as well as taking on a special assignment from *Izvestiia* to report on the Hamburg Uprising. The degree of organisation required to bring about Reisner's undercover trip to Germany and the personal involvement of Karl Radek indicates that she enjoyed a trusted position within the party. However, Reisner's transition from journalism as a form of party work to journalism as a career was neither instant nor smooth. While she was in demand from editors and publishers, she still viewed her journalism as a form of party activism, as her association with the

¹²⁷ Raskol'nikov returned to Moscow in December 1923 and was appointed editor in chief of *Molodaia gvardiia* ('The Young Guard'), the literary journal *Krasnaia nov'* ('Red Virgin Soil') and the publishing house *Moskovskii rabochii* ('Moscow Worker'). See *Makers of the Russian Revolution*, pp. 202–208.

¹²⁸ Fake foreign passport issued to Reisner under the name M. M. Kraevskaia, September 1923. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 3, l. 1.

¹²⁹ *Gamburg na barrikadakh* (1924).

¹³⁰ Document signed by Karl Radek relating to Reisner's trips to Germany in 1923/4. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 3, l. 3.

Comintern indicates. As the following section reveals, Reisner's reluctance to conform to increasingly 'professional' norms in Soviet journalism continued after she returned to Russia from her assignment in Germany. As a result, she experienced significant criticism of her journalism and character and was involved in a serious dispute with the then editor of *Izvestiia*, Iurii Mikhailovich Steklov, in 1925.

Professional Criticism and Disputes, 1924–1926

After returning to Russia in 1924, Reisner continued travelling and writing sketches, becoming a special correspondent for *Izvestiia* in May that year.¹³¹ She also held a correspondent position with *Pravda*, from at least August 1924, as well as *Krasnaia gazeta*.¹³² Although now working professionally as a journalist, Reisner also combined this role with other aspects of party work and involvement. In July 1924, she attended the International Conference of Women Communists, which she wrote about in an article published in *Pravda* on 15 July 1924.¹³³ Her dual role as an attendee and a journalist at an event concerning women can be compared with Tyrkova-Williams's pre-revolutionary participation at the 1908 First All-Russian Women's Congress and the 1910 All-Russian Congress for the Struggle Against the Traffic in Women and its Causes, about which she also wrote articles (see Chapter One).

In a return to heroic, Soviet themes, Reisner travelled to the Urals to write about industrialisation in the region. Letters issued by representatives of regional Executive Committees in the Urals between May and December 1924 requested that Reisner was to be given access to factories and all necessary assistance to complete her assignment.¹³⁴ Her collection, *Ugol', zhelezo i zhivye liudi* ('Coal, Iron and Living People'), which documents this trip, was published in 1925.¹³⁵ During 1924, Reisner also signed contracts with the publishers *Novaia Moskva*, *Zaria Vostoka* and the Leningrad department of the State publishing house to publish her collections of sketches about Germany, 'Hamburg at the Barricades'.¹³⁶ She returned to Germany in May 1925 for medical treatment for her poor health, which stemmed from a previous

¹³¹ Correspondent permit for *Izvestiia*, 1924. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 2, ll. 3–4.

¹³² Correspondent permits for *Pravda*, 1924. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 2, ll. 6–7.

¹³³ Reisner, 'Na mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii kommunistok', *Pravda*, 15 July 1924, No. 158.

¹³⁴ Documents allowing Reisner to travel to the Urals, 1924. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 4, ll. 1–8.

¹³⁵ Larisa Reisner, *Ugol', zhelezo i zhivye liudi* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1925).

¹³⁶ Publishing agreements, 1924. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 27, ll. 1–3.

bout of tropical malaria. However, while in Germany, she also found time to produce a series of sketches that were subsequently published as the book *V strane Gindenburga. Ocherki sovremenoï Germanii* (In Hindenburg's Country: Essays on Modern Germany) in 1926.¹³⁷ The fact that Reisner combined her professional work, political activism and personal travel further demonstrates how the everyday was present in her journalism.

In accordance with her status as a party member and correspondent with *Pravda*, Reisner was given certain privileges during this period. A permit dated February 1924 permitted her to live in any city in the RSFSR for a period of three months, while another, issued in April 1924, allowed her to carry a Browning revolver until October of that year.¹³⁸ The latter permit listed Reisner's address as 3 Granovskii Street, an eighteenth-century building that housed members of the Soviet party and military elite.¹³⁹ These privileges, combined with Reisner's prestigious address, demonstrate her status in the party at this time.

Yet, despite Reisner's seeming success as a journalist and writer during this period and her apparent privileged status as a member of the party elite, she was in conflict with *Izvestiia* editors about her status with the publication and their refusal to give her an advance to spend time in a sanatorium for her poor health. In January 1925, Reisner wrote to the editorial staff of *Izvestiia* asking to become a permanent employee at the paper for a period of no less than one year. She noted that she had already agreed this orally and requested that as a permanent employee her main role would be to report from industrial centres across the USSR on the everyday life of workers. As one of her conditions, Reisner asked for a salary of 125 rubles per month (excluding travel expenses, which were to be paid by the newspaper). She also requested to be allowed to go on five assignments per year while working as a journalist, arguing that she was unsuited to desk work and far better at producing travel sketches and articles about everyday life (*zhivye ocherki*). According to Reisner's terms, she would provide *Izvestiia* with no less than six printed pages in the course of the year.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Larisa Reisner, *V strane Gindenburga. Ocherki sovremenoï Germanii* (Moscow, 1926).

¹³⁸ Permit allowing Reisner to live in any Soviet city or village for a period of three months, 1924. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 5, l. 1; Permit allowing Reisner to carry a weapon, April 1924. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 6, l. 1.

¹³⁹ Permit allowing Reisner to carry a weapon, April 1924. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 6, l. 1.

¹⁴⁰ Letter from Reisner requesting permanent staff status at *Izvestiia*, January 1925. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 29, ll. 1–2.

Reisner does not appear to have been granted the salary and exact conditions she demanded in January 1925, however. According to her pay book, in February and March 1925 she received a basic monthly salary of 100 rubles and 50 kopecks for her work as a special correspondent with *Izvestiia*. She received her pay in bi-monthly instalments and one ruble of her monthly salary went to the *profsoiuz* (labour union).¹⁴¹ While inflation and limited records make it difficult to compare Reisner's earnings with those of other journalists working for the same or similar publications, we do know that the poet Sergei Esenin was paid 150 rubles in August 1925 for his position as a permanent staff member at the literary journal *Krasnaia nov'* ('Red Virgin Soil').¹⁴²

In April 1925, Reisner wrote to *Izvestiia's* party cell to complain about the way she was being treated by Steklov, the newspaper's editor, and to defend herself against accusations that she was the paper's 'worst' employee and was not fulfilling her requirements (*normy*).¹⁴³ She argued that it was difficult to meet her required quota of 700 lines per month when the editor was cutting 800 lines of her work. Reisner remarked that her feuilletons did not contain any excess words or 'fluff' (*voda*), but were artistic creations, and that other papers, including *Pravda*, did not have such quotas. Furthermore, she raised what she saw as a difference in the way party and non-party journalists were treated by the paper, arguing that one Comrade Rikhter did not produce a single line for months while he/she was travelling on an assignment for *Izvestiia*. The 'Comrade Rikhter' Reisner referred to is likely to be the journalist and travel writer Zinaida Rikhter (see Chapter Three), who was a correspondent for *Izvestiia* during this period. Between 1923 and 1924, Rikhter travelled around the Caucasus and published her travel sketches in *Izvestiia*. Reisner's decision to name the journalist could also denote a level of personal and professional rivalry between the two colleagues.

In the same letter, Reisner also raised the issue of her request to receive an advance in her pay and royalties so that, on her doctor's orders, she could go to Hamburg to be treated at the city's Tropical Institute. According to her letter of complaint, she asked Steklov for an advance on her next two months' salary and 100 rubles from the royalties she would earn for the collection of German sketches. Reisner noted that her request for

¹⁴¹ Reisner's pay book from *Izvestiia*, 1925. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 7, ll. 1–27.

¹⁴² Esenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 6, p. 225.

¹⁴³ Letter from Reisner to *Izvestiia's* party cell, April 1925. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 31, l. 1.

an advance was refused and her status as a permanent employee was revoked. In addition, Reisner claimed that Steklov also refused to give her the necessary paperwork to obtain a passport to travel overseas.

It is unclear whether Reisner received a reply to her complaint. However, Ivan Ivanovich Skvortsov-Stepanov, the first Commissar of Finance of the RSFSR, replaced Steklov as editor of *Izvestiia* in May 1925. Following Skvortsov-Stepanov's appointment, Reisner received a 'charming' (*ocharovatel'noe*) letter from *Izvestiia*, which she described in a separate letter to her parents. According to Reisner, the letter from *Izvestiia* indicated that they were considering sending her on an assignment to China. Reisner, evidently relieved that Steklov was no longer editor, expressed her admiration for Skvortsov-Stepanov in the aforementioned letter she wrote to her parents from Germany in 1925.¹⁴⁴

The archival documents and letters examined in this section demonstrate the challenges Reisner faced as journalism became more professionalised during the 1920s. The NEP-era brought greater freedom to travel but the relative professionalization of journalism meant that Reisner was reliant on editors and party officials for travel and work permits, as well as her salary. There is also evidence that Reisner clashed with editors over the style and content of her articles. She saw her feuilletons as 'artistic' creations and, as her letter to *Izvestiia* editors in January 1925 explains, she worked best when travelling and writing about 'living' subjects and not sat behind a desk. However, the insistence on line quotas by *Izvestiia* suggests that the paper's editors viewed journalistic work as something much more rigid and controlled, precursing the crude 'success indicators' applied across Soviet industry under Stalin. Thus, although Reisner was sought after by some publishers and newspaper editors, these letters reveal that her position as a journalist in 1925 was not free from difficulties. They also reveal the perceived or real differences in the way party and non-party journalists were treated by editors and the way in which *Izvestiia*, one of the two main Soviet newspapers, managed and organised its staff. This in turn supports the thesis presented in this chapter that by the mid-1920s, journalism was perceived as a profession, albeit one that was tightly controlled.

While these documents highlight a more complex side of Reisner's role as a journalist, accounts of her life do not draw attention to the professional problems she

¹⁴⁴ Letter from Larisa Reisner to her parents. 1925, in Larisa Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), p. 555.

faced in the last years of her life. Cathy Porter's biography of Reisner, for example, mentions none of the difficulties she faced with *Izvestiia*. Porter instead romanticises Reisner's life and work, presenting her as untarnished and popular. Przhiborovskaia mentions her dispute with Steklov but omits many of the details, notably the fact that Reisner was refused an advance to go to Germany for treatment at the Tropical Institute for her recurring malaria attacks. Her decision to play down Reisner's conflicts with *Izvestiia* reflects the fact she began her research on the book in the Soviet period. By revealing the challenges Reisner faced in her professional life, this thesis provides a more nuanced account of both her life and the development and history of Soviet journalism as a whole.

Conclusions

In the same way that Reisner was later celebrated by Soviet biographers, many of her contemporaries similarly poured praise on her literary and party work after her death in 1926. In the first weeks after her death, three commemorative articles were published in *Zhurnalist*.¹⁴⁵ In her 1927 article on women journalists, Inber observed of Reisner, 'as always happens, death deepened and sharpened Reisner's qualities, which, when she was alive, were wonderful, but after death became majestic.'¹⁴⁶ These comments further illustrate Reisner's emergence as a political saint-type figure in the years immediately after her death.

However, there were disagreements over the style (and quality) of her writing and whether she was first and foremost a journalist, a writer or a party activist. Despite being remembered in death as a talented, self-sacrificing, brave 'woman of the revolution', Reisner's journalism was subject to considerable criticism while she was alive. Lev Sosnovskii reflected on such criticism in his piece 'In Memory of Larisa Reisner', which was originally published in Moscow in 1926:

Today as we remember Larisa Mikhailovna we must be absolutely frank. We have been unfair to her and I am one of those who has been unfair to her. She travelled her whole

¹⁴⁵ See A. Tarasov-Rodionov, 'Larisa Reisner', pp. 12–14, and Shklovskii, 'Bessmyslenneishaia smert', pp. 14–15, *Zhurnalist*, February 1926, No. 2; and L. Sosnovskii, 'Pamiati Larisy Reisner', *Zhurnalist*, March 1926, No. 3, pp. 13–15.

¹⁴⁶ Inber, 'Chetyre zhenshchiny'.

road among us as if passing through a whole succession of barriers where she was silently checked.

In our party circles which had come through the underground organisation frayed, ragged and unversed in the elementary conventions of civilised life, the figure of a thoroughly beautiful person who was refined from head to foot, in appearance, words and deeds, was alien.¹⁴⁷

According to Sosnovskii, he and many of his contemporaries felt that her writing was too elegant, too emotional and too romantic. In fact, he conceded, much of this criticism stemmed from jealousy of her talent. While no evidence of criticism against Reisner's journalism before her death was uncovered, we know she experienced some difficulties with editors, which may account in part for the unfairness Sosnovskii described.

Nevertheless, Sosnovskii proceeded to rehabilitate Reisner's reputation and talent. The result is a sycophantic piece, in which he laments the loss to Russian and world literature, declaring of Reisner, 'there was no better journalist among us'. In fact, he argued that Reisner's work completed shortly before her death (specifically on the Decembrists) indicated that she 'was no longer a columnist or a newsman' but 'a great artist and a great creator'.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, Reisner also saw herself as an artist, as is evident from the letter she sent to *Izvestiia* in April 1925.

These descriptions, as well as Reisner's work and experience itself, reflect the tension between, and transition towards, journalism solely as party work and journalism as a profession during the first years of the revolution. Such tensions were particularly apparent for those who, like Reisner, joined the party in the period between the February Revolution and 1921. This was a period of upheaval, chaos, and revolutionary fervour. While contributing to Bolshevik publications continued as a form of party work throughout 1917 and into the first years of the revolution, the increase in the number of Bolshevik newspapers opened up opportunities for new figures. As the writer Margarita

¹⁴⁷ Lev Sosnovskii, 'In Memory of Larisa Reisner' in *Hamburg at the Barricades*, pp. 204–209 (p. 204). This article was originally published in *Zhurnal'ist* in 1926 (see above).

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 205; p. 206.

Iamshchikova's account of working for *Soldatskaia pravda* in 1917 demonstrates, this included those new to the party, regardless of their level of press experience.¹⁴⁹

Reisner certainly had limited party and press experience when she became a correspondent for *Izvestiia* during the civil wars. While she had literary and journalistic ambitions, as evident from her pre-October Revolution publications and work in 1916–1917 for *Rudin*, *Letopis'* and *Novaia zhizn'*, her entry into the Bolshevik press stemmed as much from her party contacts and desire to immerse herself in party work, as it did from her literary background. These different driving forces can be observed in the style and content of her work.

After 1921 and the end of the main civil-war years, Reisner's focus shifted more towards journalism and literature as a profession. However, while the NEP years saw a substantial transformation in the organisation and function of the press in the form of a more professionalised culture of journalism, Reisner did not immediately embrace these changes. Caught between the veteran women revolutionaries and those who joined the party after the civil war, she increasingly saw journalism as a profession but continued to use her writing as a form of party activism. Her work for the Comintern in the early 1920s particularly illustrates this. However, while Reisner enjoyed the privileges of the party elite and was sought after by newspaper editors and literary publishers, she also experienced professional challenges and difficulties as the institution of journalism became more rigid.

Lastly, as put forward in this thesis, this case study demonstrates how the public and private were interconnected in Reisner's journalism and press activities, from her diary-like 'Letters from the Front' for *Izvestiia* during the civil wars, to her observations from Afghanistan and Germany, private letters, and conflicts with editors. By analysing sources pertaining to her work and life from a gender perspective and viewing the public and private spheres as a continuum, it is possible to establish a more nuanced account of Reisner's life and writings, and to better understand the gender dynamics within the Bolshevik party at the time.

¹⁴⁹ Altaev, *Pamiatnye vstrechi*, pp. 340–362.

Conclusion

The overarching aim of this thesis is to understand the extent to which Russian women from different political backgrounds used journalism, and the press more broadly, as a means of documenting and attempting to shape the events of the October Revolution and civil wars. It seeks also to situate their work and experiences within the wider fields of journalism history, gender and women's history, and studies of the Russian revolutionary period. In order to do this, the present study has examined the rationale underpinning women's journalism and press activities during these years, the style and content of their journalism, and the practical aspects and reception of their work through a comparative case study approach. Beginning with an overview of the pre-revolutionary context informing women's journalism, including a detailed study of Tyrkova-Williams's early life and career, the chapters in this thesis have addressed the work and experiences of women journalists in the early Soviet press, as well as those affiliated with opposition groups.

Focusing specifically on case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner, this research project set out to examine and compare these two figures across Bartlett and Vavrus's three axes of case study comparison: horizontal (directly comparing their work and experience), vertical (comparing and situating their work and experiences within their immediate circles, the Russian press more broadly, and the international press) and transversal (comparing their work and experiences across a longer timeframe within the history of women and the press). While it is evident that they were both exceptional as women journalists and public figures, the value of studying and comparing their press activities is considerable. In the absence of comparative scholarship that specifically addresses women journalists during the civil-war period, these cases studies, and the thesis more broadly, help to address this imbalance and widen the narrative to offer new perspectives on Bolshevik and opposition press organs and their agendas, as well as the activities of individual journalists.

Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner: A Direct Comparison

A direct, horizontal comparison of Tyrkova-Williams's and Reisner's experiences and work reveals a number of common themes, but also some significant differences. Firstly, although both women were members of political parties, the Kadets and

Bolsheviks, respectively, and their journalistic output during the revolution and civil wars was directly linked to the conflicts, there are differences in the way that they viewed the role of the journalist and journalism more widely during the period addressed in this thesis. For Tyrkova-Williams, journalism provided a means of fulfilling her ‘moral duty’ to overthrow the establishment of Bolshevik rule and to garner support from the Allies in order to achieve this goal. In 1951, towards the end of her life, she reflected on the attempts by members of the Kadets to resist Bolshevik rule in an article published in *The Russian Review*:

The Cadets tried to organize the population for a fight against Bolshevism. Many of them joined the White Armies. In Moscow they carried on an underground struggle against the Soviet rule and many, both men and women, paid for this with their lives in the cellars of the Cheka. Others went into exile and stubbornly tried to explain to the public opinion of the free world what a threat to Christian civilization the Soviet regime represented. Hardly anyone listened to them.¹

Although somewhat romanticised due to the time that had elapsed between the events described and the publications of this piece, Tyrkova-Williams’s description of Kadet activities during the civil-war period emphasises her understanding of journalism as a moral, Christian duty. Yet, she laments that they had limited success in engaging the public. This failure only further adds to Tyrkova-Williams’s conceptualisation of the civil wars as a type of religious crusade in which those who did not support the efforts of her circle to oust the Bolsheviks were seen to side with evil.

For Reisner, journalism served a different purpose during these years. As Nadezhda Mandelstam later observed, at the time of the October Revolution, Reisner ‘found herself in the camp of the victors’.² Her father, Mikhail Andreevich, had long held ties with the Bolsheviks and Larisa herself slipped relatively easily into party work. While Tyrkova-Williams sought to impress an anti-Bolshevik agenda, including advocating for Allied military intervention on behalf of the Whites, on the Russian émigré committee and international public, Reisner documented her experiences of the civil wars for the Soviet government newspaper *Izvestiia* as a form of propaganda, but she

¹ Tyrkova-Williams, ‘Russian Liberalism’, *The Russian Review*, 10:1 (1951), pp. 3–14 (p. 14).

² Mandelstam, *Hope Against Hope*, p. 108.

also viewed journalism as a means of achieving professional, literary and public advancement.

Reisner's literary ambitions are particularly evident from the hybrid genre of her articles and her inclusion of Modernist influences, as well as the fact that her journalism was later edited and published in book form. While Tyrkova-Williams shared this passion for literature and incorporated elements of her literary style in her writing, she largely separated journalism and literature during the civil-war period, as is clear from the way she viewed her work on Pushkin. Tyrkova-Williams understood her literary work (which included all non-political writing) as a type of reward or pleasure that could only be addressed once her political duty was completed, whereas Reisner viewed her journalistic articles as 'artistic creations'.³ Nevertheless, Reisner continued to write about 'Soviet themes', such as industrialisation, right up until her death and, as is evident from her fake passport and permits and letters granting her freedom of movement and local party support, her work was facilitated by the party. In addition, there is evidence that editors put pressure on her to write about particular topics (such as the situation of women in Afghanistan) by stressing their moral importance to the Soviet people.

The October Revolution clearly created new opportunities, as well as challenges for both journalists. Tyrkova-Williams was initially forced to adapt (once again) to working 'underground', but the conflicts also presented her with opportunities to publish her work in English for British and American publications, and led her to report from the site of conflict while in southern Russia in 1919. While the main driving force behind Tyrkova-Williams's press activities during these years was political activism and not the desire to further her journalism career, the October Revolution and civil wars opened up professional opportunities for her that were not as easily obtainable for Western women journalists. She was framed as an expert on the situation in Russia in the British and American press but was not confined to the 'women's angle' that many American women reporters, such as Beatty and Bryant, were expected to adopt. Thus, somewhat paradoxically given her lack of interest in purely pursuing a journalism career, as a foreigner Tyrkova-Williams achieved a greater level of gender equality in her journalism than Western women journalists often experienced during this period. She also took on new organisational roles, including most prominently with the RLC.

³ Letter from Reisner to *Izvestiia's* party cell, April 1925. RGB, f. 245, karton 9, d. 31, l. 1.

Although she had prior experience of establishing and running newspapers, the nature of the RLC and other émigré organisations was such that she had to adapt to communicating in additional languages (English and French) and targeting a much broader, international readership.

Reisner, on the other hand, gained recognition as a journalist through her early articles from the frontline for *Izvestiia* and was subsequently dubbed one of the first (if not *the* first) Soviet women journalists. While her entry into party journalism and her multiple roles as a journalist, political commissar and combatant during the civil-war period demonstrate a continuation of the pre-revolutionary culture and ethic that characterised the party press, a change in the nature and direction of her journalism career can be observed from the early 1920s. No longer required in a military capacity, Reisner's attention began to shift more towards journalism and literature. This shift coincided with the beginning of the NEP and a greater emphasis on journalism as a profession. Yet, although her role as a journalist became more professionalised following her involvement in the civil wars, this professionalisation brought its own challenges, including problems with editors and dissatisfaction over her status within various publications.

Despite their differences, in terms of the rationale underpinning their journalistic activities, both Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner sought to present a carefully constructed view of the revolution and civil wars in accordance with their political affiliations and the changing circumstances of the conflicts. Tyrkova-Williams initially focused heavily on the topics of military intervention and trade. However, as the Whites found themselves in an increasingly hopeless situation and scores of refugees fled the country, she turned to more humanitarian concerns. Reisner's initial civil-war articles described the theatre of war from the perspective of the Red Army. Her later journalism written about the civil wars but published slightly later adhered more to heroic Soviet narratives of the conflicts. This is further evident from the fact that when published as an edited collection, some of her civil-war articles were edited to fit the current and accepted narratives of events.

Given their proximity to events and their respective political associations, it is also evident that aspects of their personal experiences had a significant bearing on their published journalism. For example, the fact that Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner belonged to the White and Red 'nobility', respectively, undoubtedly shaped their journalistic output during this period, including the types of newspapers they published

in and the content of their articles. For Tyrkova-Williams, her position on the Kadet Party's Central Committee particularly influenced her experience, and thus her journalism, in southern Russia. As the friend and political colleague of former Russian ministers, politicians, journalists and their families, she experienced, first-hand, many of the events and discussions she wrote about in her articles. Her relationship with Harold Williams, in his capacity as a well-known journalist in Britain and association with the British Military Mission in the south of Russia, and the political and cultural circles they developed in London and the US similarly influenced her journalism.

Reisner, as a member of the Bolshevik elite, was able to write for the main government newspapers *Izvestiia* and *Pravda* and also enjoyed a host of privileges that facilitated her journalistic activities, including the right to travel and settle (albeit temporarily) across Russia. However, it is clear from comparing the public journalism of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner with their private letters and diaries that both journalists, in particular Reisner, omitted or embellished aspects of their personal experiences to present a particular narrative of themselves and events through their work. In Reisner's case, some details included in her journalism were later changed or removed from the edited collections of her work due to shifts in the political climate, notably the fall from favour of figures such as Trotsky and Raskol'nikov.

Both journalists on occasion also drew on the victimhood narrative in their work when referring to women and vulnerable people, often as a propaganda tool. Tyrkova-Williams in particular deliberately wrote about women and children for specific readerships (such as that of *The Englishwoman*) and purposes, notably to raise funds for Russian refugees displaced by the civil wars. While neither woman presented themselves as a victim, examining their journalism and personal papers reveals how contemporary ideas about gender shaped their lives and work. It also demonstrates how their public and private experiences were linked. Tyrkova-Williams, for example, brought aspects of her private experience as a woman into the public journalistic sphere when describing the 'plight' of her friends and wives of former ministers in southern Russia, and the difficulties of obtaining food during the conflicts.⁴ Reisner, in accordance with the view among revolutionaries that there should be no separation

⁴ Tyrkova-Williams, 'How People Trek in Southern Russia', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 3 May 1920, Vol XII, No. 138, p. 7; Tyrkova-Williams, 'The Come Back of Russia', *The Evening Telegraph and Post*, 2 July 1918, p. 2.

between public and private life, wrote her initial civil-war articles in a diary/letter-like form. Nevertheless, her private letters to her family reveal aspects of her personal life not present in her public journalism. The episode in which she disguised herself as a peasant woman to enter an enemy camp is particularly notable in that she deliberately chose to present herself as a non-threatening, gendered figure for her own gain and proceeded to describe the events in a variety of ways both publically and privately.⁵ Thus, the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner highlight the value of studying women's journalism from a gender perspective as a way of understanding the intersection of public and private experiences of the conflicts.

The practical aspects of Tyrkova-Williams's and Reisner's journalism, including their remuneration, contracts and relationships with editors, must also be taken into consideration when conducting a direct comparison of these two case studies. Both women were not afraid to challenge editors when they felt an injustice had been committed or, in Tyrkova-Williams's case, they disapproved of their choice of contributors and content of articles on the conflicts in Russia. However, while Tyrkova-Williams's decision to contact newspaper editors was driven by a sense of moral duty and steadfast desire to inform the public of the political agenda she subscribed to, such as her desire to promote Allied military intervention on behalf of the anti-Bolshevik Whites, Reisner's reasons for voicing her dissatisfaction were linked to her own professional development as a journalist, including her status, pay and contractual obligations at *Izvestiia*, and personal issues, namely her health and financial circumstances. The different factors informing Tyrkova-Williams's and Reisner's actions support their understanding of journalism and the role of the journalist, as well as the ways Bolshevik and opposition journalism developed and operated in the years after the October Revolution. While Tyrkova-Williams continued to view journalism as a form of political and social activism, the increasing professionalisation of Soviet journalism led Reisner to take a different, more pragmatic and self-serving approach to her position as a journalist.

This is further evident from examining Tyrkova-Williams's and Reisner's professional status and remuneration for their journalism. The nature of Tyrkova-Williams's press activities during the civil-war years was such that she published in a

⁵ Reisner, 'Kazan. (Leto i osen' 1918 goda),' *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1922, No. 12, pp. 180–196; Letter from Reisner to her parents, 1918. Published in Reisner, *Izbrannoe* (1965), pp. 512–513.

variety of newspapers and journals, both commercial and non-commercial, across different countries (namely Russia, the US, Britain and France) and viewed journalism as a public duty rather than a profession. As such, it is difficult to assess how official her associations with different publications were and the extent to which she was paid for her journalism. We know that she received some kind of correspondent status from the *Monitor* to travel to southern Russia in 1919 but, as a non-American citizen, it does not appear that she received any official accreditation as a war correspondent. This is particularly interesting to note when observing the difficulties Peggy Hull experienced in her fight to become the first accredited American woman war correspondent in 1918. Given that Tyrkova-Williams published at least 25 articles in the *Monitor* between 1918 and 1920, it is likely that she derived a significant part of her income during this period from the newspaper.

We also know that Tyrkova-Williams received some money from her work for the RLC, as well as from the publication of her books, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk* and *Hosts of Darkness*. Williams's journalism would have additionally contributed to the family's finances. Nevertheless, Tyrkova-Williams was often worried about money during the civil war years.⁶ It is likely that the couple found themselves in a particularly difficult financial situation after returning from Russia in 1920, as Williams was unemployed for a period before landing work with *The Times*, first as a lead writer and, in 1922, as the paper's foreign editor.

Although Reisner wrote a series of articles for *Izvestiia* during the initial civil-war years, it does not appear that she officially became a contracted newspaper correspondent until 1921 (for *Pravda*). By the mid-1920s, she was receiving a regular salary as a special correspondent with *Izvestiia*. Reisner also lived in a building that housed members of the party and military elite. However, she did not receive permanent staff status at *Izvestiia* straight away, an issue that was a point of contention in the year before her death.

There is a clear distinction between the way Tyrkova-Williams's and Reisner's journalism and civil-war activities have been viewed. Although some (both at the time and many decades later) have linked Tyrkova-Williams's work to her husband's position as a journalist in Britain and claimed she followed her husband to the south of

⁶ Letter from Tyrkova-Williams to Williams, 26 July 1919, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, pp. 337–338.

Russia (see Introduction), it is clear that she secured her own work wherever she went. As such, the connected nature of the Williamses' journalistic and political activities appears to speak more for the closeness of their relationship and mutual interests than any indication of dependence on either side. This closeness is further evident from reading their (often daily) correspondence when they were separated for long periods of time by their work and during the civil wars. In 1921, in a letter to Williams, Tyrkova-Williams described them as 'right and left hands', a fitting description for a couple who often worked together but were just as capable of operating individually.⁷ On a practical level, however, it seems that Williams's roles with British newspapers, particularly his position as foreign editor of *The Times*, enabled Tyrkova-Williams to focus on her political and charitable work in the mid- to late-1920s without worrying too much about money. A short biography accompanying the Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams Papers in the Bakhmeteff Archive states that after Harold Williams' death, Tyrkova-Williams was 'obliged once again to earn her living as a writer'.⁸

Reisner's civil-war journalism and roles have received considerably more attention, both positive and negative. The reasons for this are largely connected to her military role (and by association contemporary attitudes towards war and gender), her active desire to promote herself as a 'woman of the revolution' and her untimely death while at the height of her journalism career. Reisner's immortalisation in popular culture, which began immediately after her death, has further contributed to continuing interest in her today.

Ultimately, despite a number of important parallels in terms of their work and experience, the different journalistic environments in which they were operating played a major role in shaping the content and reach of their articles during this period. Tyrkova-Williams's reputation as a longstanding Kadet politician and journalist, her experience of using journalism as activism in pre-revolutionary Russia, and the fragmented nature of the White movement and its various press structures, arguably allowed her more journalistic freedom than Reisner. She was able to publish her articles in Russian, émigré and international publications, and recycled and adapted the content and tone of her work according to her audience. On the other hand, Reisner's journalism

⁷ Letter of 4 June 1921, *Nasledie Ariadny Vladimirovny Tyrkovoï*, p. 352.

⁸ Description of the Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams Papers, Bakhmeteff Archive, http://www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/inside/projects/findingaids/scans/pdfs/ldpd_bak_4078328.pdf undated; accessed 3 April 2015.

and literary career, as well as her image, was tied to the revolution and civil wars. This, coupled with the more centralised nature of Bolshevik journalism, arguably meant that she had limited control over where and what she could publish.

Gender, Journalism and War in Revolutionary Russia: Expanding the Narrative

The value of examining the case studies of Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner is further enhanced when comparing them within the context of their immediate circles, as well as the press in Russia and in the West during this period. This approach not only facilitates a more balanced and nuanced examination of these two figures, but it also contributes to scholarship on gender, journalism and war in revolutionary Russia. Specifically, it sheds light on the ways in which notions of gender influenced the roles and journalism of women (and men) in the press, and offers fresh perspectives on the activities of organisations such as the RLC and the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists. In addition, it also enables us to assess how typical Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner were as women journalists and journalists more broadly.

When comparing Tyrkova-Williams to other women opposition journalists, it is clear that she was unique. Firstly, with the exception of Panina and Kuskova, very few other women contributed to opposition press activities throughout the civil-war period in any regular capacity and new figures do not appear to have been drawn to this type of work following the October Revolution in the way that a new generation of women entered the Bolshevik press at this time. The reasons for this can be explained in part by the fact that the White movement (including its different press organs) was geographically and ideologically fragmented, as well as the fact that its leadership largely emerged from the patriarchal institutions of the Imperial army and the Kadet Party. Given that press work was conceived as a form of political activism during this period, it is not surprising that so few women carried out this type of role during the civil wars. Thus, studying women's involvement (or lack of) in this sphere emphasises the gender dynamics within the movement and also brings to the forefront the few women who managed to carry out this type of work. This in turn broadens the narrative of the White movement's activities as detailed by its male leaders and later scholars.

As one of the only women contributing to Russian émigré publications at this time, and certainly one of the few women involved in the practical aspects of such work,

Tyrkova-Williams's experience provides a fresh perspective on the activities of groups such as the RLC. Indeed, this thesis has demonstrated the extent to which Tyrkova-Williams was responsible for the running of this organisation, from hosting committee meetings at her home, and editing and contributing to its publications, to undertaking and preserving much of its correspondence. Examining Tyrkova-Williams as a case study also enables us to draw parallels between her work and experience and that of Bolshevik women journalists in the years after the October Revolution. Women, including Mariia Ul'ianova and Iamshchikova, were similarly responsible for many of the practical aspects of newspaper work through their positions as editorial secretaries.

Studying Tyrkova-Williams's journalism and central position in the RLC is also valuable for understanding the wider attitudes of the Kadets towards the role of journalism during this period and the ways in which they adapted their publications for an international readership. For example, it is interesting to note that the organisation was keen to assert its impartiality and reliability to a Western readership despite being anything but. A detailed study of Tyrkova-Williams's press activities similarly highlights some of the key topics and methods employed by a member of the Kadet Party and RLC. It also reveals tensions within these groups and the wider Russian émigré community relating to issues such as the types of newspapers and journals to publish (notably Tyrkova-Williams's disapproval of Miliukov's newspaper *Rassvet*) and disputes over the topic of Allied intervention (as illustrated by her disagreement with Polovtsova).

Although Tyrkova-Williams was an exceptional figure, her journalism and personal papers contribute to our understanding of the broader experiences of women in the civil war period. As a woman journalist, she observed and wrote about situations directly affecting women (such as the difficulties women faced to find food for their families and the inflation of 'women's' goods) and we know from her personal papers that she too experienced some of the same hardships.

While they still constituted a minority (as demonstrated by statistics from the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists and the First All-Russian Congress of Soviet Journalists), there were considerably more women engaged in Bolshevik press activities during the early years of the revolution and civil wars than were operating in the anti-Bolshevik camps. Compared to women Union and Congress members, Reisner was typical of those who entered party journalism at the time of the October Revolution. Like many of

these women, she was caught between the culture of pre-revolutionary party journalism and the emerging Soviet press. On the one hand, she represented the lack of professional culture in early Bolshevik journalism in that she primarily gained access to this sphere as a result of her party contacts and revolutionary zeal, and, like many others, devoted the first years of the revolution to carrying out party work in a range of capacities. On the other hand, she actively sought to develop her career as a journalist and writer in line with a move towards a more professional culture of journalism. Although Reisner's interest in journalism emerged before the revolution, as demonstrated by her involvement in *Rudin*, *Letopis'*, and *Novaia zhizn'*, it was the revolution and civil wars that really brought her to the forefront as a journalist and writer. By the time of her death she was an official and well-known journalist. The shift towards a more professional culture of journalism allowed her to forge a career in this sphere, yet she was not expected to undergo the ideological training that many of those entering the press after 1921 were required to do. As such, she is representative of the group of those who joined the party between the October Revolution and 1921.⁹

The case study of Reisner, as well as the broader study of women in early Soviet journalism organisations, is also valuable for understanding attitudes towards gender within the context of war. As this research has highlighted, Reisner's wartime roles, including her journalism, have been framed in such a way as to emphasise her femininity when carrying out traditionally masculine roles. Reisner's absence from scholarship on the history of women war reporters also reveals how research has focused on the narratives of Western women journalists. As a party journalist and activist, Reisner does not fit the stereotypical image of a woman war correspondent. Yet, her case emphasises the complex nature of war reporting, with its issues of attachment and genre fluidity, and is an important example when analysing how the frontline roles of women journalists have historically been viewed. By uncovering the narratives of Reisner, Tyrkova-Williams and other Russian women journalists reporting on war, this research has the potential to widen and challenge aspects of international scholarship on women war reporters. This includes women's entry into war reporting, the types of articles they produced (and were asked to produce), their relationships with editors, and the impact of their affiliations with political groups.

⁹ Clements, *Bolshevik Women*, pp. 14–15.

Reisner's status as one of the most celebrated women journalists of the early Soviet period additionally raises questions about what was valued in the role of a journalist and how these criteria evolved in the first years of the revolution. In 1918, as set down by the Moscow Union of Soviet Journalists, journalists were expected to recognise and actively support the Soviet government. The profiles of the Union's women members, as well as the Congress, support this requirement, with almost all being party members and/or the relatives of prominent Bolshevik figures. Although not a member of either organisation, Reisner's background adheres to this understanding of the journalist during this early period. In the course of the 1920s, however, the concept of the journalist evolved in line with moves towards a more professionalised press. Writing in the late 1920s, Inber and Krylova agreed that in addition to Reisner, there was only a handful of other well-known women journalists, namely Shaginian, Rikhter, Shkapskaia and, according to Krylova, Inber. They specifically referred to their distinct literary styles and the fact that much of their journalism emerged from their travels in and outside of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Krylova and Inber claimed that women brought particular 'feminine' characteristics and 'ways of seeing' that set them apart from their male colleagues.

The fact that so few women journalists are described as 'known' also highlights women's lack of visibility in this sphere. Yet, as this research illustrates, women's roles in the press were varied and central to its functioning during this period. The lack of visibility of women's press roles, both at the time and in existing scholarship, also relates to some of the specific challenges women working in the press faced. In line with other areas of the party, the institution of journalism became even more patriarchal after the civil wars, a fact that in part explains the absence of women's roles in scholarship. Longstanding women party members who had filled the vacuum of editorial roles immediately after the revolution moved into other areas of party work and the new generation of women journalists were not given the opportunity to take on leadership roles in the press. This is clear from the fact that none of the five 'celebrated' women journalists held organisational roles in this sphere. On the contrary, studying Reisner's experience reveals the difficulties she encountered when dealing with male editors over professional and personal issues. A lack of support in balancing work and family life, as well as harassment in the workplace were also cited as specific problems for women by the late 1920s. With regards to the latter issue, the advice given to

women by Krylova to brush off any unwanted advances demonstrates both the endemic nature and acceptance of the issue.

Lastly, the bibliographies of Tyrkova-Williams's and Reisner's journalism produced during or about the civil wars (see Appendices I and II) illustrate how active women journalists were during these years and provide a valuable reference for other scholars researching a range of topics, including women's journalism and public roles, and the work of Russian émigré organisations. I believe the bibliography of Tyrkova-Williams's articles in particular, alongside the rest of the research presented in this thesis, challenges existing scholarship on her activities during this period. Rather than simply relying on her husband, it demonstrates the extent to which she established and maintained a professional relationship with a large American newspaper (the *Monitor*), as well as the breadth of publications she contributed to during the first years of the revolution and civil wars.

Women and the History of Journalism: The Longer View

On a broader, transversal level, I believe this research project also has important consequences for scholarship on the history of women and journalism. As set out in the Introduction to this project, the historical development of journalism in Russia, and particularly women's involvement in it, differed from that of much of the West and these differences, as well as the specific climate of the revolutions and civil wars, had a significant impact on Russian women's journalistic roles and experiences during the initial years of the October Revolution. Specifically, this includes the close relationship between journalism and activism, the dual roles carried out by a handful of women journalists, and the ability of some, such as Tyrkova-Williams, to publish articles on so-called 'hard' topics in Western newspapers at a time when few women had the opportunity to do so. The reasons for women's entry into Bolshevik journalism, notably as a means for opposition journalists and literary writers to continue their careers, at the time of the October Revolution are also specific to Russia and must be considered when assessing the development of women's journalism. However, it is also clear that there are many important parallels to be drawn both between and across cultural, geographical and historical divides. It is possible, for example, to observe similarities in the backgrounds of many women journalists and the gender dynamics of the newspaper office, including the attitudes of male colleagues to women journalists and the

patriarchal structure of newspaper production. In addition, it is clear that many in early Soviet Russia, as well as the West, believed that women brought a distinct feminine style and tone to journalism.

Situating this research within a longer timeframe also supports a greater understanding of some of the changes and continuities to the field of journalism over the last century. While modern feminist scholarship on war has challenged and abandoned many early dichotomies relating to men and women's relationship with war, the woman war reporter remains a controversial figure to this day. Although, as Chambers *et al.* argue, women war correspondents 'no longer suffer the same degree of prejudice or barriers confronted by women trying to cover the First and Second World Wars', they continue to be judged and defined by 'still-lingering stereotypes of women's conventional roles in journalism and the wider society.'¹⁰ To a lesser degree, these stereotypes also continue to exist beyond the site of war for women journalists. Discussing the situation concerning women in journalism today in Britain and the US, Chambers *et al.* observe:

Women journalists present a paradox. Their presence as professional writers and presenters of news is now commonplace, yet they continue to be marked as 'other', as 'different' from their male colleagues. In print news, official rhetoric proclaims that a journalist's gender is irrelevant. However, while maleness is rendered neutral and male journalists are treated largely as professionals, women journalists are signified as gendered: their work routinely defined by their femininity.¹¹

Although the work and roles of Tyrkova-Williams, Reisner and other women journalists were certainly judged in many cases along gendered lines, there are several examples of where their gender was not (at least officially) emphasised, either by editors or themselves. Thus, their experiences represent both a break and continuity with the historical trends.

This thesis also supports a greater understanding of how the specific position of women journalists in Russia has changed over the last 100 years. With the exception of Svitch's broad discussion of gender in the history of Russian journalism, very little

¹⁰ *Women and Journalism*, ed. by Chambers *et al.*, p. 198.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

scholarship currently exists on women journalists during the Soviet period beyond the late 1920s, a gap that presents further research opportunities.¹² Svitich highlights some of the more prominent women *publitsisty* of the 1960s and 70s, such as Tat'iana Tess (who also reported on the Second World War for *Izvestiia*), but notes that even in the later Soviet period, journalism was still viewed as a predominantly masculine profession with women only constituting approximately a third of journalists in Soviet Russia in the 1970s. She further argues that women journalists were most successful when focussing on the topics considered to more traditionally 'female', such as culture and social issues.¹³ This focus on a specific style of women's journalism reflects a wider shift towards more traditional gender roles in Soviet society from the late 1920s and resonates more with pre-revolutionary women's journalism and the situation in the West during this time rather than that of the revolutionary period.

Key trends identified in the revolutionary period can also be applied and compared with the situation in Russia today. In a study of the professional roles of Russian journalists, from the perspective of 30 practitioners working in St Petersburg at the end of the 1990s, Svetlana Pasti argues that two professional roles representing two sub-groups can be observed within contemporary journalism: 'the old generation (practitioners of the Soviet era) and the new generation (who have joined the profession since 1990)'.¹⁴ She describes these groups and their attitudes towards journalism as follows:

Whereas the old generation continues to hold a cultivated view of journalism as an important societal task in natural collaboration with those in authority, the new generation is orientated towards the contemporary role of providing entertainment and perceives journalism rather as a PR role for the benefit of influential groups and people in politics and business. Despite their polarities, both generations of journalism accept the political function of journalism as a propaganda machine for the power elite during elections and other important events.¹⁵

¹² Svitich, *Professiia: zhurnalists. Uchebnoe posobie*, pp. 81–86.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁴ Svetlana Pasti, 'Two Generations of Contemporary Russian Journalists', *European Journal of Communication*, 20:1 (2005), pp. 89–115 (p. 89).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

The emergence of two professional subcultures within journalism following a period of immense upheaval and transition can be compared to the situation facing journalists and journalism in Soviet Russia in the years immediately following the October Revolution. On the one hand, there were the longstanding party members who continued to contribute to press activities as a form of party work. Yet on the other hand, a new generation of journalists emerged that viewed journalism not only as a form of party activism, but also as a form of artistic expression and, increasingly, a profession. Despite the fact that they were much fewer in number than their male colleagues, the research presented in this thesis on early Soviet women journalists supports these trends.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, more women have entered journalism. Pasti and Jukka Pietiläinen argue that this shift is due in part to the fact that journalism is no longer perceived as a ‘masculine occupation and a worthy business’.¹⁶ Pasti and Pietiläinen identify education as another factor that has influenced the current gender balance among Russian journalists today, observing that the greater emphasis on higher journalism education and training has led to a decrease in the number of men entering the profession. In addition, they argue that low wages have also discouraged men from pursuing a career in journalism.¹⁷ This in turn is connected to gendered notions of men and women’s roles in society.

Nadezhda Azhgikhina, in her 2007 overview of post-Soviet journalism, similarly observed that ‘journalism is becoming a women’s profession’ and that wages are disproportionately low for the level of responsibility required.¹⁸ She further highlighted the dangers and challenges associated with the profession, noting:

Journalists face poverty and lack of respect on the one hand and the dangers of the profession on the other. Since 1992, more than 250 journalists have been killed, the

¹⁶ See Svetlana Pasti and Jukka Pietiläinen, ‘Journalists in the Russian Regions: How Different Generations View their Professional Roles’ in *Media, Culture and Society in Putin’s Russia*, ed. by Stephen White (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 109–132 (p. 116).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 116–118.

¹⁸ Nadezhda Azhgikhina, ‘journalists, post-Soviet’, in *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Russian Culture*, ed. by Tatiana Smorodinskaya, Karen Evans-Romaine and Helena Goscilo (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 283–284 (p. 284).

majority not in Chechnia and other sites of war, but in the midst of regular investigations.¹⁹

The close relationship between the media and government in Russia has led to some journalists risking their jobs and even lives in order to expose and oppose corruption and government policies through their journalism. Parallels can also be drawn here between the current situation facing Russian journalists and the environment in which opposition journalists found themselves in after the October Revolution. In both cases, journalists have been forced to leave the country or faced the threat of arrest or death for publicly expressing their views.

Nevertheless, activism and investigative journalism continue to exist in Russia. With regards to women journalists, it appears that they have continued to play a major role in highlighting the plight of women who would otherwise be overlooked. In recent years, this has included covering the topic of forced marriage and the murders of women human rights campaigners, particularly in politically sensitive regions such as the North Caucasus.²⁰ Yet, while women journalists such as Tyrkova-Williams and Reisner described the suffering of women in the civil wars in part as a propaganda tool to garner support for their political agendas, contemporary reporting on women's issues serves a slightly different purpose, namely to expose and bring to the forefront marginalised groups and suppressed topics, and to draw attention to abuses of power at the hands of government institutions.

While no means unique to Russia, sexual harassment is also still a commonplace issue for Russian women journalists 100 years on. In the wake of the #MeToo movement that took off on social media in late 2017 as an attempt to demonstrate the widespread prevalence of sexual assault and harassment, a number of Russian women journalists have come forward with allegations of sexual misconduct while working in their profession.²¹ While some women journalists are beginning to speak publicly of

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 284.

²⁰ Irina Borogan, 'The women risking everything to report from Russia's frontlines', 6 October 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/06/the-women-risking-everything-report-russias-frontlines-politkovskaya> [accessed 13 August 2018].

²¹ See for example an article from 4 April 2018 published by *Radio Free Europe* concerning allegations that a number of women journalists working in Russia had been sexually harassed. Regina Gimalova and Tony Wesolowsky, "'Sleep With Me Or No Interview": Young Russian Reporter Says Film Director

their experiences of sexual harassment, attitudes in the newspaper office towards the issue do not appear to have changed significantly from the situation described by Krylova in her 1929 article for *Zhurnalists*, with one woman journalist recently noting that when she confided in colleagues about an incident, they ‘largely brushed off the whole thing with a laugh’.²²

Thus, this study contributes to a more informed and nuanced understanding of some of the challenges and changes experienced by Russian women journalists not only in the civil-war period, but also throughout the last century. Lastly, Natalia Novikova and Marianna Muravyeva have emphasised the importance of ‘not reducing Russian women’s history and women’s experiences to the West/East paradigm.’²³ By examining and connecting the topic of Russian women journalists to the broader field of (women’s) journalism history, this thesis contributes to widening the narrative of women journalists in the early twentieth century to include and integrate the complex notions of journalism, and the roles and experiences of Russian women.

Gave Her An Ultimatum’ <<https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-metoo-sexual-harassment-journalists-/29145665.html> [accessed 13 August 2018].

²² Ibid.

²³ Marianna Muravyeva and Natalia Novikova, ‘Introduction’ in *Women’s History in Russia: (Re)Establishing the Field*, ed. by Natalia Novikova and Marianna Muravyeva (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), p. xxiv.

Appendix I: Bibliography of Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams's Published Journalism, 1917–1921

This bibliography includes all known articles by Tyrkova-Williams published between October 1917 and December 1921. It is the first time that a bibliography of her journalism from this period has been compiled. Articles are listed chronologically for each publication.

The Christian Science Monitor (Monitor)

The *Monitor* was established in 1908 in Boston, Massachusetts, by Mary Baker Eddy, the 87-year-old founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist. Although it was not intended to be a religious publication, the *Monitor* has contained a daily religious article since it was founded. Tyrkova-Williams contributed to the paper between 1918 and 1920.

- ‘Mr Kerensky and Russian Freedom’, 22 August 1918, Vol. X, No. 228, p. 7.
- ‘Soviet Methods of Maintaining Power’, 13 September 1918, Vol. X, No. 247, p. 3.
- ‘Appeal to Allies to Redeem Russia’, 17 October 1918, Vol. X, No. 276, p. 5.
- ‘Russia’s Claim to Active Allied Help’, 15 November 1918, Vol. X, No. 301, p. 6.
- ‘Degradation of Russian Officers’, (Part I), 22 November 1918, Vol. X, No. 307, p. 3.
- ‘Degradation of Russian Officers’, (Part II), 23 November 1918, Vol. X, No. 308, p. 3.
- ‘Russia Under Heel of the Bolsheviki’, 10 December 1918, Vol. XI, No. 14, p. 8.
- ‘Russia and Road to Regeneration’, 18 December 1918, Vol. XI, No. 21, p. 9.
- ‘Russian Menace and Coming Peace’, (Part I), 9 January 1919, Vol. XI, No. 40, p. 7.
- ‘Russian Menace and Coming Peace’, (Part II), 10 January 1919, Vol. XI, No. 41, p. 7.
- ‘Moving Plea for Russian Children’, 20 January 1919, Vol. XI, No. 49, p. 3.
- ‘Russia Isolated from Outer World’, 24 January 1919, Vol. XI, No. 53, p. 3.
- ‘Cooperation in Russia Doomed’, 3 March 1919, Vol. XI, No. 85, p. 6.

- ‘Allied Attitude Toward Russians’ (Part I), 29 March 1919, Vol. XI, No. 108, p. 8.
- ‘Allied Attitude Toward Russians’ (Part II), 31 March 1919, Vol. XI, No. 109, p. 7.
- ‘Is Soviet Russia in Need of Food’, 7 June 1919, Vol. XI, No. 168, p. 11.
- ‘Bolshevism After Two Years’ Test’, (Part I), 13 August 1919, Vol. XI, No. 225, p. 6.
- ‘Bolshevism After Two Years’ Test’, (Part II), 14 August 1919, Vol. XI, No. 226, p. 6.
- ‘Cossacks Throw Off the Red Yoke’, 26 August 1919, Vol. XI, No. 236, p. 8.
- ‘Russia’s Hopes in Liberating Armies’, 6 October 1919, Vol. XI, No. 271, p. 6.
- ‘Ruined State of Soviet Russia’, 9 October 1919, Vol. XI, No. 274, p. 6.
- ‘Non-Bolshevist Russia Still Rich’, 11 October 1919, Vol. XI, No. 276, p. 1.
- ‘Some Paradoxes of Warring Russia’, 14 November 1919, Vol. XI, No. 305, p. 9.
- ‘Russian Conditions in Liberated Area’, 20 December 1919, Vol. XII, No. 23, p. 7.
- ‘How People Trek in Southern Russia’, 3 May 1920, Vol. XII, No. 138, p. 7.

The Englishwoman

The Englishwoman was an English-language magazine established to ‘promote the enfranchisement of women’. It was published in London between 1909 and 1921. Tyrkova-Williams published a two-part article in the magazine on the Russian women’s battalion in early 1919. It is appears from drafts that she originally wrote the article in Russian in 1918. The original Russian version was published in 1972, a decade after Tyrkova-Williams’s death, in the US-based émigré publication *Russkaia mysl’*.

- ‘The Women’s Battalion’, (Part I), January 1919, No. 121, Vol. XL, pp. 4–8.
- ‘The Women’s Battalion’, (Part II), February 1919, No. 122, Vol. XLI, pp. 60–64.

The Evening Telegraph and Post

Based in Dundee, *The Evening Telegraph and Post* claimed in 1918 to be ‘the most widely circulated evening paper in Scotland out of Edinburgh or Glasgow’. Tyrkova-Williams published one article in the paper shortly after arriving in Britain in 1918.

- ‘The Come-Back of Russia’, 2 July 1918, No. 12,980 (Tele.)/5822 (Post), p. 2.

Nash vek (previously Rech’)

After *Rech’* (‘Speech’), the Kadet Party’s main press organ, was closed by the Bolsheviks immediately after the October Revolution, the paper re-appeared under the titles *Nasha rech’* (‘Our Speech’), *Svobodnaia rech’* (‘Free Speech’), *Vek* (‘Century’), *Novaia rech’* (‘New Speech’), and *Nash vek* (‘Our Century’). The longest running of these titles was *Nash vek*, which was issued between December (November O.S.) 1917 and August 1918. Tyrkova-Williams was a regular contributor to the paper between December and March.

- ‘Nochnoe’, 7 (19) December 1917, No. 7, pp. 1–2.
- ‘Triasina’, 9 (21) December 1917, No. 9, p. 1.
- ‘Gor’kaia nelepost’’, 12 (25) December 1917, No. 11, pp. 1–2.
- ‘Bol’shaia sovest’’, 11 (24) January 1918, No. 6 (31), p. 2.
- ‘F.F. Kokoshkin’, 12 (25) January 1918, No. 7 (32), p. 2.
- ‘Nebytie’, 19 January (1 February) 1918, No.12 (38), p. 1.
- ‘V Kremle (s natury)’, 7 (20) February 1918, No. 29 (54), p. 1.
- ‘Dusha i telo’, 11 (24) February 1918, No. 33 (57), p. 1.
- ‘Bezmolvnaia Rus’’, 25 February (10 March) 1918, No. 45 (69), pp. 1–2.

The New Russia

The New Russia, the first of the English-language journals published by the Russian Liberation Committee, appeared between February and December 1920. It was succeeded by *Russian Life* (see below).

- ‘The Retreat in the South’, 19 February 1920, Vol. 1, pp. 88-89.
- ‘The Children in the Crimea. An Appeal’, 11 November 1920, Vol. 3, pp. 352–353.

Obshchee delo

The émigré newspaper *Obshchee delo* ('The Common Cause') was published in Paris between September 1918 and June 1922, and again between 1928 and 1934, under the editorship of Vladimir L'vovich Burtsev. Burtsev had originally founded the newspaper in September 1917 in Petrograd but was arrested after the October Revolution and subsequently fled Russia.

- 'Pis'mo iz Rossii', 10 December 1919, No. 62, p. 3.
- 'Ne Nansen spaset bezhentshev! Pis'mo v redaktsiiu', 17 November 1920, No. 487, p. 1.

Russian Life

Russian Life was a monthly review and the second of the Russian Liberation Committee's English-language journals (see *The New Russia*). It ran from August 1921 until March 1922. Tyrkova-Williams was an editor of the journal from August 1921.

- 'In Memoriam. Alexander Blok, (1880-1921)', September–October 1921 No. 2-3, pp. 70–71.
- 'The High Commissioner for the Refugees. An Open Letter to the Russian Press Abroad', November 1921, No. 4, p. ii.
- 'A.V. Krivoshein', November 1921, No. 4 (signed A.T), p. iii.

Sibirskaiia rech'

Sibirskaiia rech' ('Siberian Speech') was the local party organ of the Kadet Party in Omsk, Siberia. It was edited by V. A. Zhdaretskii, a lawyer and the leader of the Omsk Kadet city committee.

- 'Soiuzniki i Rossii', (Part I), 3 September 1919, No. 191, p. 2.
- 'Soiuzniki i Rossii', (Part II), 5 September 1919, No. 193, p. 2.

Struggling Russia

Struggling Russia was an anti-Bolshevik weekly magazine 'devoted to Russian problems'. It was published in New York by the Russian Information Bureau in the

United States between 1919 and 1920. A number of Tyrkova-Williams's articles for the magazine were reprinted from other publications, including the *Monitor*.

- ‘Why Soviet Russia is Starving’, 14 June 1919, Vol. 1, Nos. 13–14, pp. 179–182.
- ‘Why Soviet Russia is Starving’, 21 June 1919, Vol. 1, No. 15, pp. 202–205.
- ‘Why Soviet Russia is Starving’, 28 June 1919, Vol. 1, No. 16, pp. 219–221.
- ‘Why Soviet Russia is Starving’, 5 July 1919, Vol. 1, No. 17, pp. 237–239.
- ‘Some Paradoxes of Warring Russia’, 27 December 1919, Vol. 1, No. 41, pp. 653–655.
- ‘Two Letters from Rostov-on-the-Don’, 17 January 1920, Vol. 1, No. 44, pp. 710–712.

Svobodnaia rech'

Affiliated with the Kadet Party, *Svobodnaia rech'* ('Free Speech') was published in Rostov in 1919, and in Novorossiisk in 1920. Tyrkova-Williams was first listed as a contributor to the paper in August 1919. She was one of only two listed women contributors out of 25 (the other was Mariia Ancharova).

- ‘Rossiia i soiuzniki’, (Part I), 27 September 1919, No. 209, p. 1.
- ‘Rossiia i soiuzniki’, (Part II), 29 September 1919, No. 210, p.1.
- ‘Pamiati E. N. Trubetskogo’, 26 January 1920, No. 281, p. 2.
- ‘Sviataia rus''’, 20 February 1920, No. 287, p. 2.

Appendix II: Bibliography of Larisa Reisner's Published Civil-War Journalism

This bibliography includes all known articles by Reisner published during or about the civil wars. Articles are listed chronologically for each publication.

Izvestiia

Izvestiia ('News') was founded in March 1917 in Petrograd as an organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Following the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks took control of the paper from the Mensheviks and Socialists-Revolutionaries and its main offices were moved to Moscow. It remained the official organ of the Soviet government until 1991.

- '1-e maia v Kronshtadte', 12 May 1918, No. 93, p. 2.
- 'Pis'ma s vostochnogo fronta (pis'mo vtoroe)', 16 November 1918, No. 250, p. 2.
- 'Pis'ma s vostochnogo fronta (pis'mo tret'e)', 24 November 1918, No. 257, p. 2.
- 'O diatlakh i chizhikakh', 17 December 1918, No. 276, p. 2.
- 'Rekviem', 20 December 1918, No. 279, p. 2.
- 'Pis'ma s fronta (piatoe pis'mo)', 25 January 1919, No. 17, p. 2.
- 'Pamiati V.M. Al'tfatera', 27 April 1919, No. 89, p. 1.
- 'Pis'ma s fronta,' 31 August 1919, No. 192, p. 2.
- 'Pis'ma s fronta,' 4 September 1919, No. 195, p. 2.
- 'Pis'ma s fronta,' 16 November 1919, No. 257, p. 3.
- 'Putevye zametki', 12 November 1920, No. 254, p. 2.
- '25 oktiabria v Rige', 14 November 1920, No. 256, p. 1.

Krasnaia gazeta

Krasnaia gazeta ('The Red Gazette') was a Petrograd-based daily newspaper. It was in circulation between 1918 and 1939.

- 'O Peterburge', 24 July 1920, No. 162, pp. 2–3.
- 'Chem oni zhili', 3 September 1920, No. 195, p. 3.

Proletarskaia revoliutsiia

Proletarskaia revoliutsiia ('Proletarian Revolution') was a Soviet historical journal published in Moscow between 1921 and 1941. It contained research articles, documents and memoirs primarily relating to the October Revolution and civil wars.

- 'Kazan (Leto i osen' 1918 goda)', 1922, No. 12, pp. 180–196.
- 'Sviiazhsk', 1923, No. 6-7; 18–19, pp. 177-189.

The Communist Review

The Communist Review was first published in London in May 1921 by the Communist Party of Great Britain.

- 'The Heroic Sailors of the Russian Revolution', May 1921, Vol. 1, No. 1.

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Tyrkova-Vil'iams, Ariadna Vladimirovna (f. 10230)

Moskovskii politicheskii Krasnyi Krest (f. 8419)

Otdel propagandy osobogo soveshchaniia pri glavnokomanduiushchem
vooruzhennymi silami na iuge Rossii (f. 440)

Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva (RGALI)

Reisner, Larisa Mikhailovna, 1895–1926 (f. 1693)

Moskovskii soiuz sovetskikh zhurnalistov, 1918–1919 (f. 1600)

Otdel rukopisei, Rossiiskaia gosudarstvennaia biblioteka (RGB)

Reisner, Larisa Mikhailovna, 1895–1926 (f. 245).

New York

Bakhtmeteff Archive, Butler Library, Columbia University

BAR Ms Coll. Tyrkova-Williams: Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams
Papers, 1897–1961

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Bor'ba (Petrograd).

Communist Review (London).

Derevenskaia bednota (Petrograd).

Iskra (Leipzig, Geneva, Munich and London).

Izvestiia (Petrograd and Moscow).

Kommunisticheskii trud (Moscow).

Krasnaia gazeta (Petrograd/Leningrad).
Krasnaia nov' (Moscow).
Krasnaia pechat' (Moscow).
Krasnaia zvezda (Petrograd).
Letopis' (St Petersburg).
Molodaia Gvardiia (Moscow).
Nash vek (Petrograd).
Novaia zhizn' (St Petersburg; 1905).
Novaia zhizn' (Petrograd and Moscow).
Novoe russkoe slovo (New York).
Obshchee delo (Paris).
Osvobozhdenie (Stuttgart and Paris).
Pomoshch'
Pravda (Petrograd and Moscow).
Proletarskaia revoliutsiia (Moscow).
Rabotnitsa (St Petersburg and Moscow).
Rassvet (London).
Rech' (St Petersburg).
Russian Life (London).
Ruskaia mysl' (Paris).
Russkie Vedomosti (Moscow).
Segodnia (Riga).
Sibirskaia rech' (Omsk).
Soiuz zhenshchin (St Petersburg).
Sovetskaia pechat' (Moscow).
Struggling Russia (New York).
Svobodnaia rech' (Rostov-on-Don and Novorossiisk).
The Bulletin (San Francisco).
The Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA).
The Englishwoman (London).
The Evening Star (Washington, DC).
The Evening Telegraph and Post (Dundee).
The New Russia (London).
The New York Tribune (New York).

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