

YEKATERINA KOSHOLAP*

CADET LADIES**

WOMEN OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY
AS A POLITICAL PHENOMENON

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Abstract: The article is devoted to the phenomenon of women in the Constitutional Democratic Party from its very foundation up to the preparation of the organization for the elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1917. The author seeks to reconstruct a socio-cultural portrait of «cadet ladies», to find out the factors that could have influenced their entry into the party and to characterize their activities in the organization. Special attention is paid to the position in the party hierarchy that women could occupy, as well as to the opportunities for advancement in it. Cadet ladies were mainly responsible for maintaining the organization's welfare, housekeeping, logistics, events and charitable institutions, but at the same time were actively involved in key decision-making, although they did not have the same political rights as men. Moreover, women gained the right to vote after the February Revolution, the number of Cadet ladies in key party positions increased dramatically, which confirms their importance to constitutional democrats. Characteristic features of the socio-cultural portrait of the women of the People's Freedom Party are also highlighted. Cadet ladies grew up in post-reform Russia, when social and economic changes in the country and society had a huge impact on the process of women's emancipation. The opportunity to receive a quality education, acquire a profession and work, to choose a spouse out of mutual respect and similarity of views — all these served as factors for acquiring the subjectivity that later allowed the cadet ladies to become the political phenomenon discussed in this article.

Keywords: Cadet Ladies, Constitutional-Democratic Party, People's Freedom Party, Liberal Opposition, Russian Revolution of 1905–1907, February Revolution, Political Parties, Women's History.

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The Constitutional-Democratic party was one of the most influential organizations in the political life of the last days of the Russian Empire. Meanwhile, this rather well known and explored party had an under-represented, which was nevertheless important — the female members, who played a significant role in the whole cause of the liberal opposition. Women of the Constitutional-Democratic party or, as some might call them, cadet ladies

*Yekaterina Kosholap, BA Student at the National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow, Russia), ekosholap@yandex.ru, ORCID: 0009-0005-0009-3846.

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are a subject that is quite misrepresented in the scientific field since some researchers tend to focus more attention on the female members of the radical — left organizations. This leaves a certain lacuna that needs to be filled for a better understanding of the Russian liberal movement and the political history of Russia in general.

There are a limited number of works focusing specifically on the women of the Constitutional Democratic Party. However, researchers have published studies examining individual cadet ladies such as A. V. Tyrkova-Williams and Countess S. V. Panina. N. I. Kanischeva has written an introductory article about A. V. Tyrkova-Williams in *Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova's Legacy: Diaries. Letters* (Kanishcheva, ed., 2012: 3–13). I. V. Narsky and A. M. Karabanova have also analyzed her political career in their works *Russia and the Liberation Movement at the turn of the XIX–XX centuries. Through the Eyes of a Liberal Conservative* (Narskiy, 1992: 73–79) and *A. V. Tyrkova as a Woman Leader of the Cadet Party: Features of Socialisation and Political Career* (Karabanova, 2005: 1–11) respectively. The biography and activism of S. V. Panina have been considered in *Citizen Countess: Sofia Panina and the Fate of Revolutionary Russia* by A. Lindenmeyer (Lindenmeyr, 2019) and in standalone articles such as “*To Awaken Good Feelings*” (*Countess S. V. Panina*) by V. M. Shevyrin (Shevyrin, 2007: 218–239) and *Sofia Vladimirovna Panina: Czechoslovak period of life (1924–1938)* by E. P. Serapionova (Serapionova, 2019: 172–192). Additionally, certain articles have been dedicated to other cadet ladies' work such as N. A. Struve's participation in the liberal opposition in N. B. Haylova's study *Nina and Pyotr Struve: Formula of Happiness without Rivalry* (Khaylova, 2017) A. S. Milyukova's activities have been covered in a relevant article by N. A. Rodionova titled *Creating Good: A. S. Milyukova in the Family and Society* (Rodionova, 2013: 227–236).

“Cadet ladies” is a new term. The phenomenon investigated in this paper has yet to attain an official name in modern historiography. It is sometimes referred to as “women of the Constitutional Democratic Party/Party of People's Freedom” or by *kadetki*, which, poorly translates into other languages, or describe the group under study as

women of the Constitutional Democratic Party/Party of People's Freedom. The members of the studied group name themselves or the group they belonged to. However, in her memoirs, A. V. Tyrkova mentions their group, calling them “cadet ladies” (Tyrkova-Williams, 2007: 299).

Moreover, in many sources of personal origin (diaries, memoirs, correspondence) party members refer to them as “ladies.” The term “cadet ladies” emphasizes not only the political orientation of the group under study, but also the attitude of the male members of the party towards them. These women were comrades, but above all they were “ladies”, which had both positive and negative aspects.

In order to more fully comprehend the phenomenon of cadet ladies, two aspects must be analyzed—firstly, the social structure of the Constitutional-Democratic party and, secondly, the womens’ status in the late Russian Empire, since most of the cadet ladies grew up and developed in this exact period. Taking these into consideration will give more dimension to the portrait of the female half of the party.

It is not possible to trace the exact social composition of the People’s Freedom Party due to the absence of a clear and regulated system of registration of its members. According to the research made by professor V. V. Shelokhaev, the Constitutional-Democratic party was “a highly complex and changeable social organism” (Shelokhaev, 2015: 122). Nevertheless, some features that can be called characteristic for the members of the organization can be highlighted.

The Constitutional-Democratic Party based its support mainly on the literate urban population, primarily composed of individuals in their 30s and 40s. Its members would come from a variety of backgrounds, including aristocrats, educated professionals, and members of the middle class who were frustrated with the political system of the empire or the state of the country in general. The party was led by members of the elite and intelligentsia who had experience in public service, often through work in city councils, *zemstvos* or charitable organizations (ibid.: 124-129).

Additionally, the Constitutional Democratic Party also included members of the middle class who were drawn to the party because of their dissatisfaction with the general state of the country and the legal system in particular (ibid.: 124). Research by professor F. A. Seleznev suggests that the party had the least support from the bourgeoisie in industrial areas and was mostly supported in mining districts, where local activists were often representatives of basic sectors of the economy. The involvement of entrepreneurs in the Constitutional-Democratic Party would depend on their background, experience, education and connections with the intelligentsia (Seleznev, 2006: 108).

However, as stated before, the gender factor is of equal importance in this research. Researcher N. L. Pushkareva particularly emphasizes the role

of the “gender aspect” in the amount of power that could be allocated to an individual or a group (Pushkaryova, 2014: 6). Hence, it is important to pay attention to the general situation of women in post-reform Russia.

The future cadet ladies were in a sense a product of the new society that shaped in the aftermath of the reforms of Alexander II. The latter half of the nineteenth century was characterized by a profound upheaval in the system of social norms and values that had governed Russian society for centuries. This transition had a particular influence on the status and role of women, as the economic climate of the era resulted in a decline in the financial stability of aristocratic families. This left many young women in a precarious situation, unable to rely on the traditional mechanism of marriage to secure their future prospects. Consequently, women were increasingly compelled to enter the workforce in order to support themselves. The shift in economic circumstances thus had a profound impact on the traditionally prescribed gender roles of women in Russian society. Women were no longer restricted to the domestic sphere, under the protection and guidance of a male figure, be it a father or a husband. Instead, a younger generation, driven by the ideals of *nihilism*, began to reject the traditional way of life, and women in particular began to aspire to independence and education. As a result, the image of women in Russian society began to transform. Women were now perceived not merely as domestic creatures, mothers, and wives, but also as equals and companions in a more expansive sense. This paradigm shift represented a significant change in Russian society’s attitude towards women, which ultimately proved to have major ramifications for the political landscape of the empire.

An understanding of these two phenomena — liberal opposition and women’s emancipation, and their importance for the 19th century Russian Empire is crucial for the following study of cadet ladies. Another thing worth bearing in mind is that it is impossible to fully restore the lists of all the women of the People’s Freedom Party due to the absence of a clear record of the organization’s members. Nevertheless, based on the data collected from party’s documentation it is possible to compose a clear portrait of a female member of the People’s Freedom Party. This portrait includes several characteristics — age, ancestry, education, family status and the professional activities of the cadet ladies.

Female members of Constitutional Democratic Party may be categorized into two main age groups. The first, the notional “sixtiers,” were born during the reign of Emperor Alexander II and grew up alongside the early achievements of the Reform Era. At the time of joining the party, these

women ranged in age approximately from 35 to 45. A. V. Tyrkova was 36 years old, S. V. Panina — 46 years old, A. S. Petrunkevich — 55 years old, A. S. Milyukova and N. Ye. Vernadskaya — 44 and 45 years old respectively. The second group included younger ladies, most often female students and graduates of educational institutions, who were just starting their independent lives. E. M. Chelnokova, the daughter of a well-known member of the Constitutional Democratic Party, M. V. Chelnokov, was 21 years old when she joined the organization. The sisters of the poet Ilya Ehrenburg, Eugenia and Maria, were 23 and 26 years old respectively.

The social origins of cadet ladies do not stand out from the general picture of the party's composition described earlier. Most of them belonged to the intelligentsia and nobility or the petty and middle bourgeoisie. Most of these women would today be referred to as middle-class since their upbringing guaranteed them certain opportunities but could not provide a stable upper-class life.

In the ranks of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, there were notable women who hailed from the upper ranks of Russian nobility. A. S. Petrunkevich, nee Mal'tsova, belonged to the one of the wealthiest the most respected families in the empire. She was raised at the court of czar Alexander II and later married into another rich and noble family of Counts Panin. Her daughter from this marriage, countess S. V. Panina was an heiress to the vast fortune and the title of her family. Countess V. N. Bobrinskaya was born in the old noble house of L'vov and later married Count A. A. Bobrinsky. These women, endowed with great wealth and a strong position in society, were able to engage in charity without the necessity of seeking work to support themselves. A. S. Petrunkevich was involved in the organization and support of local peasant schools (Lecture Notes by N. Ye. Vernadskaya..., n. d.), meanwhile, her daughter S. V. Panina was a well-known philanthropist and a founder of the People House on Ligovskaya side in Saint Petersburg (Shevyrin, 2007: 221–223). Countess V. N. Bobrinskaya also was a prominent benefactor, supporting working-class women, common people's education and poverty alleviation in Moscow (Osorgin, 2009: 882).

In the records of the People's Freedom Party, no instances of female members originating from the peasantry can be found. This absence can be attributed to low levels of peasant participation in the Constitutional-Democratic Party overall, as well as the relative political "silence" of peasant women, who often lacked the necessary education and autonomy to partake in the political affairs of Russian society at a significant level.

Education was an essential factor in the recruitment of female members to the Constitutional-Democratic Party. This can be attributed in part to the growing trend in society towards providing girls with more practical knowledge that they could apply during their search for work. The establishment of women's gymnasiums throughout the Russian Empire during this time provided a new avenue for girls to receive secondary education. The curriculum at these institutions mirrored that of male gymnasiums, allowing students to qualify for positions on the labor market. This change in educational opportunities for women marked a significant societal shift away from traditional gender roles, as they were now seen not as solely dedicated wives, mothers, and housewives, but also independent individuals capable of sustaining themselves financially.

The advent of Higher Courses for Women functioned as a viable supplement to the academic education available to women at the time. Simultaneously, the idea that women should pursue studies in a structured and formalized fashion was gaining traction among society. Women were thereby given the opportunity to develop a range of skills and specializations through a comprehensive curriculum that rivaled university programs in quality (Khoroshilova & Ponomareva, 2011: 555). Not only did these courses serve as pathways for self-actualization, but they also facilitated the emergence of women as involved members of student communities, encouraging their participation in civic and political activities. Women's political involvement and activism during this period, in part facilitated by these courses, ultimately led them into taking part in politics on a larger scale, joining parties and pursuing careers as politicians. These courses, therefore, also functioned as a "preparatory school" for civic consciousness, allowing students to develop valuable perspectives on politics and social issues and, to acquire new knowledge and social connections. The involvement of female students in politics grew so widespread that many students feared the possibility of the government shutting down the courses (Stites, Shkol'nikov & Shnyrova, 2004: 241–244). It is also noteworthy that many cadet ladies met their future husbands precisely through various political groups and coteries. For example, N. Ye. Vernadskaya met her future husband V. I. Vernadsky in a group of "laurists," a revolutionary socialist circle aimed at educating the masses and studying traditional folk culture (Grevs, 1921: 150).

A significant number of women among the Constitutional-Democratic Party members were university students. Index cards of the party's members indicate that some women would state their association with the student body as occupation. The lifestyle of female university students was relatively

more independent compared to women in other settings, and this increased autonomy provided them with access to important political networks, namely the student body, which was highly politically engaged. This dynamic may have contributed to the incorporation of liberal opposition ideas amongst future cadet ladies to the extent that they eventually joined the party. I. G. Ehrenburg recalled the life of his family in 1905 as follows:

Students came to visit the sisters, but, in my opinion, they were false students¹ — they were peacefully drinking tea, talking about Ibsen's plays, dancing; real students were supposed to throw Cossacks off their horses, and then throw the Tsar off the throne (Erenburg, 1990: 60).

Cadet ladies generally possessed a higher level of education or aspired to pursue it. A. S. Milyukova, a student of V. O. Klyuchevsky, conducted research on the social status of women before Peter the Great (Milyukov, 1991: 99–101). A. V. Tyrkova pursued higher mathematics courses (Kanishcheva, ed., 2012: 4–5), while A. S. Petrunkevich was in the midst of preparing to begin her studies despite already being a widow and mother (Petrunkevich, 1934: 159). N. Ye. Vernadskaya received her education in political economy and folk art (Lecture Notes by N. Ye. Vernadskaya..., n. d.).

In the post-reform Russian Empire women, increasingly forced to earn income, sought employment in a range of occupations, including jobs that permitted them to draw upon their level of education. The majority of cadet ladies were city-dwellers, which allowed them access to a variety of professions, some of which required niche skill sets or a more advanced education.

Teaching was the profession readily accessible to most women, particularly at the primary and secondary levels, and did not require advanced training beyond graduation from a grammar school (with one additional year of study). However, women were not allowed to teach at university levels until 1911 and, therefore, pursued their passion for pedagogy through other professions. These included teaching arts and crafts, being employed as governesses, functioning as private tutors, or managing educational institutions. It is worth noting that many women pursued careers in education not just for financial security, but also with the intention of benefitting society (Yusupova, 2021: 75).

¹It is important to acknowledge that I. G. Ehrenburg himself held left-radical views, and therefore he could perceive the ideas of the constitutional democrats as a “fake” form of protest against the authorities.

It is unsurprising that a substantial number of the cadet ladies were associated with educational work. Women with teaching backgrounds, including classroom educators, home teachers, music tutors, and managers of educational institutions, joined the party. Before her marriage, N. A. Struve had built a reputation as an excellent teacher of natural sciences, having, worked in gymnasiums and given private lessons (Khaylova, 2017: 260–261). Similarly, A. S. Milyukova pursued part-time teaching, particularly in the field of music, prior to her marriage (Milyukov, 1991: 99–100). A. S. Alferova, founder and head of Alferova Women’s Gymnasium (List of Candidates for the Vowels..., n. d.), as well as the Gnesin sisters, founders of the prestigious music academy (Registration Cards of Members... with the Letter A to Ya, n. d.), must also be mentioned. Even A. N. Savin, husband of music teacher E. F. Gnesina, became a People’s Freedom Party member and closely followed its activities, though he is not recorded as an “official cadet” (Savin, 2015: 30). It is possible that E. F. Gnesina and her sister failed to consider their affiliation with the party as a fully committed membership. Furthermore, E. M. Tidebel, the first female music critics in Russia, is another example of the cadet ladies and their association with the musical field (Kubitskaya, ed., 2006: 539).

By the end of the 19th century, women were able to pursue careers previously unavailable to them, such as medicine. It is important to note that women were involved in health care as early as the second half of the 18th century, especially in obstetrics or physician’s assistance, which was practiced among all social groups. The demand for such medical professionals was especially high in the provinces, where female doctors could provide additional assistance in areas such as gynecology, childbirth, and children’s diseases, as well as basic care for the local population. Despite attempts by the state to limit the scope of medical practice for women doctors to gynecology, obstetrics, and pediatrics, the high demand in society led to the opening of the St. Petersburg Women’s Medical Institute in 1897, and women were granted the right to practice medicine in the public service in 1898 (Ponomareva, 2017: 223–229). In the Constitutional-Democratic Party, numerous doctors were women, including A. N. Shabanova, the first female pediatrician in Russia, and other medical professionals such as midwives, dentists, and masseuses.

The low representation of working women in the Constitutional Democratic Party was probably due to several factors, including their marital status and household responsibilities, as well as constraints on their ability to work and earn. Their role in the household required them to both manage the

home and care for children, which may have interfered with their ability to participate in party activities. In addition, many women in the party identified themselves through their husband's profession, simply filling in the appropriate column on their party ticket with the wording "wife of magister" or "wife of a doctor" or leaving the "occupation" section on their party ticket blank (Registration Cards of Members... with the Letter A to Ya, n. d.). However, the most important determinant of women's involvement in party activities were their social connections, as many of them entered the party through their spouses. Examples of these couples included P. N. Milyukov and A. S. Milyukova, A. A. Kizevetter and E. Ya. Kizevetter, and M. I. Rostovtsev and S. M. Rostovtseva, among others. This tendency was noted among both prominent figures and ordinary members of the party. It is not uncommon to find "pairs" in party documentation — a husband's index card and a wife's index card. For example, Moscow cook A. N. Voskresensky and his wife E. N. Voskresenskaya, doctor V. Ya. Gold and his wife L. V. Gold, accountant N. A. Yezhov and his wife N. A. Yezhova — joined the Party together. However, it is inaccurate to assume that they were solely guided by their spouses in this decision. In early 20th-century Russia, the prevailing attitudes toward marital hierarchy changed — marriages were no longer based solely on financial reasons, but instead centered on shared values and views. Each couple held similar ideals, which resulted in wives becoming their husbands' comrades and companions over time.

Among the women who later joined People's freedom party, plenty were interested in liberal ideas before they married. Moreover, the similarity of political views was considered the key to a happy married life. If the spouses did not agree on this issue, it could jeopardize the marriage. A. A. Borman, A. V. Tyrkova's son from her first marriage, analyzing his parents' divorce, suggests that it was largely caused by differences in views (Borman, 1964: 29–35). As party members, cadet ladies could express their own opinions, sometimes differing from those of their spouses. A. S. Milyukova even openly disagreed with her husband's views on the women's question at party conventions. A. V. Tyrkova recalled that in this matter, the Milyukovs often disagreed, and once "there was an open fight between them in Moscow, which ended in a draw" (Tyrkova-Williams, 2007: 225–226). Furthermore, before marrying, the cadet ladies were mature, educated women with jobs and political views. While married life may have imposed obligations on them to oversee the household, it is likely that many maintained their own identity and independence from their spouses. As such, while they and their

husbands may have sometimes operated as a single “political organism,” they were each distinct entities with unique perspectives and opinions.

Some women’s involvement in the Constitutional Democratic Party stemmed from their close relationships, independent of their marital status. Factors like family ties, friendships, and shared group affiliation all facilitated party membership. Examples of this include sisters E. G. and M. G. Ehrenburg, Eugenia and Elena Gnesina (along with Eugenia’s husband A. N. Savin), mother and daughter E. K. and E. M. Chelnokov, wife of a Moscow Justice of the Peace, O. I. Ternovets and her daughters, as well as the teachers A. N. and V. N. Ternovets. These familial and social bonds proved instrumental in promoting participation in the party, with women coming from diverse backgrounds and sharing various bonds.

In examining the makeup of the female membership of the Constitutional Democratic Party, one must take into account both the lack of complete information on all its members, as well as a certain “invisibility” of its ordinary women. We are aware of the likes of A. V. Tyrkova, N. A. Struve, A. S. Milyukova, and S. V. Panina for their political achievements. It is difficult to trace the everyday members of the party completely, though generalizations can be drawn from available data to construct a profile of the cadet lady.

A typical woman in the People’s Freedom Party received secondary education at a gymnasium, boarding school, or at home and aspired to higher education. Most women’s careers ended when they married, since their duties as wives, housewives, and mothers prevented them from working. Still, those that pursued a profession often chose one requiring mental labor, such as medicine, pedagogy, or cultural work. Charity remained accessible to women who did not need to earn their own living and sought to fulfill themselves.

Two categories of women in the People’s Freedom Party can be distinguished: married women who joined the liberal opposition alongside their husbands, and unmarried women.

Women of the first type were typically unemployed and had similar political views to their husbands, leading them to join the party. Despite this, they may have also had their own independent judgments as we can clearly see in the example of A. S. Milyukova and P. N. Milyukov.

The second “type” comprises unmarried women, widows and those who have gone through divorce. They either had financial resources or earned their own livings. They were also part of a collective, often joining the Constitutional-Democratic Party in association with family or social groups

Social activism was important for the cadet ladies — many of them joined the liberal opposition after their experience of working in charity organizations, social activism or participation in communities with a corresponding orientation. It can be assumed that contact with “ordinary” people or vulnerable groups was the deciding factor for women joining the People’s Freedom Party. N. A. Struve (Khaylova, 2017: 259–263) and S. V. Panina (Shevyrin, 2007: 218–239) were involved in the education of workers, A. V. Tyrkova grew up observing the life of peasants on her family estate in Vergezha and her relatives’ attempts to help them (Borman, 1964: 14–15); A. S. Petrunkevich grew up in the family of the famous philanthropist and patron of the arts S. I. Maltsov and was involved in the establishment of zemstvo schools (Agaeiev, 2017: 194–196); N. Ye. Vernadskaya was involved in public education (Materials on the Activities of N. Ye. Vernadskaya in Cultural..., 1886–1910).

The position of cadet ladies in the party hierarchy and the role they played in the organization itself would change with the political situation in the country and the position of women in it.

Until 1905, the liberals were in a semi-legal position — many future members of the Constitutional Democratic Party were forced to go abroad, while those who remained on the territory of the Russian Empire had to carry out their activities in secret, without openly expressing their views. This predicament of the liberal opposition opened up a wide range of opportunities for women to actively participate in its cause.

The journal *Osvobozhdenie* (Liberation), published by P. B. Struve, played a significant role in uniting the Russian liberal opposition, leading to the formation of the Constitutional Democratic Party’s future program and contributing to the formation of a circle of like-minded people (Solov’ev, 2021: 155). A key role in *Osvobozhdenie* was played by future cadet ladies, including N. A. Struve, who was responsible for sending out announcements about the beginning of the journal’s publication and organizing its distribution, which was illegal in Russia. N. A. Struve also believed she shared responsibility for the success and functioning of the journal with her husband. Even before the publication of the first issue of the journal, she wrote to P. B. Struve:

Yesterday I had a long and very interesting conversation with Dmitri Ivanovich (prince D. I. Shakhovskoy — author’s remark) and deeply felt what a huge responsibility will fall on both of us (Shatsillo, 1985: 76–77)

The involvement of N. A. Struve in the work of the editorial board is notable as it was crucial to the success of *Osvobozhdenie*. The significance

of her roles is emphasized by the fact that she was reported to be followed by the renowned police officer E. Azef during her stay in Vienna (Shatsillo, 1985: 89). Without proper logistical organization, *Osvobozhdenie* would not have been able to fulfill its role in consolidating Russian liberalism. N. A. Struve was in charge of sending out announcements about the beginning of the journal's publication, organizing the process of sending and transporting the publication, which was illegal in Russia, liaising with correspondents and secondary addressees, and keeping the editorial office's accounts. At certain moments, she had to assume the role of chief editor of the main printed organ of the Russian liberal opposition (Khaylova, 2017: 259–263).

Yu. G. Toporkova (Gubareva) also played an important role in the work of the Liberation editorial board. Arrested in the case of the "People's Right Party," she was exiled to Vologda and fled abroad, where she was recommended by Prince P. D. Dolgorukov to the Struve family as an experienced and hard-working person. Yu. G. Toporkova became the secretary of the editorial board of the journal and helped the Struve family organize the publishing house (Solov'ev, 2021: 167).

It is important to note that, at the time, the liberal opposition actively recruited women to smuggle illegal literature. Several women, including A. V. Tyrkova, were arrested for attempting to import copies of *Osvobozhdenie* into the Russian Empire (Tyrkova-Williams, 2007: 167–168). The illegal nature of the activities of the liberal opposition was one of the mechanisms of political activism that women could afford.

The First Russian Revolution and the October Manifesto were a milestone in the history of Russian politics. In particular, numerous figures of the liberal opposition had the opportunity to consolidate and form their own party. The revolution brought new ideas, rights and opportunities - the very fact that the People's Freedom party was formed speaks for this. However, the emergence of Russian parliamentarism concerned only men. Women remained without voting rights.

Nevertheless, cadet ladies from the very foundation of the party began to play a substantial role in its life. They actively participated in the organization of the election campaign for the First Duma, agitated the population, were engaged in the arrangement of the economic part, supervised the work of charity canteens on behalf of the party. In this, invisible but no less important side of the party, the cadet ladies occupied high positions. In fact, it can be argued that this side was the women's side. As A. V. Tyrkova noted:

All the menial job in the elections was taken up mainly by women. They handed out and distributed party literature, collected money, went round the flats, organized rallies. They were full of the enthusiasm that gives political work beauty and political figures, especially the aspiring ones, strength (Tyrkova-Williams, 2007: 241)

However, it is erroneous to assume that the cadet ladies were exclusively engaged in such “menial jobs.” They also took part in the management of the party and in making the most crucial decisions. When the first Central Committee of the People’s Freedom Party was formed in 1906, E. D. Kuskova was elected into it, but later she refused to take up her post because of political disagreements with the party top. Subsequently, at the third congress, “in view of the strong growth of the party since the previous congress” the Central Committee was enlarged with ten more members, including A. V. Tyrkova, making her the first woman to be elected to the Central Committee of the party in history (Shelokhayeva, ed., 1997: Vol. 1, 354). After the February Revolution, Countess S. V. Panina was also elected to the Central Committee.

Although A. V. Tyrkova did not have the right to be elected as a Duma deputy, she attended the meetings as a listener and participated in the discussions of the issues raised between the main session as a member of the Central Committee. Thus, although she could not “visibly” influence the direction of the agenda discussed in the Duma, A. V. Tyrkova’s opinion still had weight in determining the party’s position (Tyrkova-Williams, 2007: 271–272).

The daily life of the party can be seen as characterized by the focus of prominent women on organization, logistics, charitable activities, publicity, and finances. L. I. Zhizhelenko, a member of the St. Petersburg Committee of the Party, was elected its treasurer in 1909 (Shelokhayeva, ed., 1997: Vol. 2, 614). In the same year, M. A. Krasnoselskaya was appointed secretary of the metropolitan Committee (ibid.: Vol. 2, 614).

An important aspect of the party’s activities was the creation and maintenance of charitable initiatives. Charity was traditionally considered the prerogative of women, and it is not surprising that cadet ladies were involved in this sphere. Even during the election campaign of 1906, the issue of public activities of the Party of People’s Freedom was considered equal to other spheres of political interaction. The St. Petersburg committee of the party established a separate Food Commission, which involved up “to 30 party members, mostly ladies” (ibid.: Vol. 1, 354). The Food Commission’s main

priority was to raise funds and open charitable canteens in the capital and its vicinity. According to a report by committee member D. S. Zernov, the Food Commission managed to collect 2500 rubles and open four canteens, each of which had the capacity to serve 250–300 people. The canteens were named after women of the Constitutional Democratic Party. Mrs. Schneider ran an establishment in the village of Murzinka, on the Shlisselburg road, while E. A. Lomshakova and Mrs. Gessen operated on the Vyborg side. E. V. Lavrova managed a canteen in the area of the Putilovsky factory, and S. A. Kareeva was responsible for a canteen in the area of Galernaya harbor (Shelokhayeva, ed., 1997: Vol. 1, 59).

The press was an important mechanism of interaction with society and political influence for the Constitutional Democratic Party, and the cadet ladies were also involved in its work. A. V. Tyrkova was responsible for the functioning of the party press and collaborated with publications such as “Rech,” “Rus,” “Birzhevye Vedomosti,” “Russkie Vedomosti,” and “Sbornik.” She also covered the meetings of the State Duma as a Duma correspondent. Indeed, she was the face of the party in the world of the press—A. V. Tyrkova was approached by the French publishers of the magazine “European” for help in financing, in return offering to assist in the publication of the magazine *Osvobzhdienie* (Letter from P. Sherna to A. V. Tyrkova..., n. d.). Countess V. N. Bobrinskaya was also involved in the affairs of the party press, working as a member of the Bureau of Foreign Press (*ibid.*: Vol. 1, 195).

Nevertheless, the women of the People’s Freedom Party often had to deal with the relatively dismissive attitude of their comrades to the issue of their rights. The inclusion of a clause on women’s suffrage in the party program became the subject of heated discussions in the midst of preparations for the elections to the First Duma. The main argument of the opponents of this introduction was the unpreparedness of Russian women for politics, as well as the possibility of losing votes among the population. Only thanks to the active and stiff resistance of A. S. Milyukova and A. V. Tyrkova, who refused to accept such judgements as valid, was the clause on women’s rights introduced (Tyrkova-Williams, 2007: 225–229).

The role of women in the People’s Freedom Party, while initially considered a pressing political issue, was later met with skepticism by some members. In 1912, for example, V. D. Nabokov spoke against the introduction of a bill on universal suffrage at a Central Committee meeting. In response, A. V. Tyrkova assembled several cadet ladies including A. S. Milyukova and L. I. Zhizhenko, as well as women’s rights activists. Together, they compiled a set of arguments in favor of women’s suffrage to be used in

future discussions (Kanishcheva, ed., 2012: 134–135). This incident displays the camaraderie among the female members of the People's Freedom Party and reinforces their independence in political decision-making.

Shortly after the February Revolution, when Russia adopted new electoral legislation, the women of the Constitutional Democratic Party had the opportunity to “master” new political frontiers. During this period when the People's Freedom Party was formed, several new members were admitted to the Central Committee of the party, including Countess S. V. Panina who had officially joined the Constitutional Democrats (Protocols of the Central Committee..., 1998: 370). Later, Yu. G. Toporkova (Gubareva) was noted among the lists of candidates for co-option to the Central Committee (*ibid.*: 361).

Countess S. V. Panina was also elected to the Petrograd City Duma and was later appointed to the second coalition government where she served as a comrade of the Minister of State Welfare. Moreover, after the collapse of this government and the establishment of the third coalition government in September 1917, Countess S. V. Panina held the position of comrade minister of public education (Serapionova, 2019: 176–177).

As the People's Freedom Party prepared for the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the party leadership planned a campaign to agitate the population and attract the moods of the masses to the side of the constitutional democrats. For this purpose, special commissions were created, including the literary and agitation commissions. The literary commission was tasked with creating “popular-scientific and agitating party literature by ordering leaflets and small brochures,” while the agitation commission had the task of distributing “party literature in the peasantry, reading lectures, holding popular conversations, etc.” A. V. Tyrkova was a member of the literary commission, while M. A. Krasnosel'skaya was a member of the agitation commission. O. A. Zernova was also one of the secretaries of the All-Russian Agitation Commission (Protocols of the Central Committee..., 1998: 365–404).

During discussions of party candidates for the forthcoming Constituent Assembly, the possibility of including Countess S. V. Panina, who was not initially included in the list, was also considered. However, A. V. Tyrkova was included among the candidates of the Constitutional Democrats, which made her the only woman representing the People's Freedom Party (Shelohayeva, ed., 1997: Vol. 2, 727).

In addition to the Constituent Assembly, the Constitutional Democrats were active in running for city councils. From the spring of 1917, women

could also be elected as councilors and make decisions concerning city administration. The People's Freedom Party also had female candidates for city dumas in both Moscow and Petrograd (List of Candidates for the Vowels..., n. d.).

When examining the political activities of women in the Constitutional Democratic Party, it is important to consider the legal restrictions that regulated the activities of "cadet ladies." Prior to the February Revolution, women did not have the right to vote, which significantly limited their potential career opportunities. However, following the February Revolution, there was an increase in the involvement of women in the work of the highest party bodies and representative institutions, indicating the potential of the female half of the Constitutional Democratic Party, which remained untapped due to legal restraints. Despite these restraints, cadet ladies actively participated in party work and could even influence key decisions. This can be seen in the example of the discussions on the inclusion of the women's question in the party program in 1906.

In general, the cadet ladies undertook "invisible" aspects of party activity. Organizing committee work, negotiating between party members, securing meetings and events, managing charities and maintaining records comprised the responsibilities of the women of the Constitutional Democratic Party. Though often overlooked, their input which is an inseparable part of the life of the political entity.

Despite legal restrictions, cadet ladies occupied significant positions in the party hierarchy. O. A. Zernova served as the secretary of the Moscow Party Committee, M. A. Krasnosel'skaya served as the secretary of the St. Petersburg Committee, and O. N. Klirikova filled the same position in the Yaroslavl Committee. L. I. Zhizhilenko was the treasurer of the capital's party cell. In fact, the most important and largest committees of the Party of the People's Freedom were under the charge of the party's female half.

It is also important to note that not all cadet ladies' political activity was limited to the party work. Many women of the Constitutional Democratic Party were well known for their participation in the women's rights movement. A. S. Milyukova and A. V. Tyrkova represented their party in the Union of Equal Rights. O. N. Klirikova also participated in this organization, holding, and financing of the Union's congresses, gave speeches, and wrote articles on women's equality. A. N. Shabanova was much better known for her activists in the women's movement rather than in the Constitutional Democratic Party. However, she was also invited by

A. V. Tyrkova to discuss arguments in favor of women's suffrage in 1912 (Kanishcheva, ed., 2012: 134–135).

In conclusion, the role of the cadet ladies in the Constitutional Democratic Party was significant, despite the legal restrictions women faced at the time. The organization of party activities is a crucial factor in the success of any political entity and can be considered a contributing factor to the success of the People's Freedom Party. However, it is important to note that the cadet ladies were not simply auxiliary figures in the Constitutional Democratic Party but played a critical role in all aspects of political activity. Despite their limited opportunities, women in the People's Freedom Party exerted considerable influence in a variety of spheres. The women of the Constitutional Democratic Party were equal participants in the liberal opposition and their environment, which consisted primarily of family members and relatives, allowed them to maintain a high level of independence in their judgments and actions.

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ЕКАТЕРИНА КОШОЛАП

СТУДЕНТКА

НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКИЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ «ВЫСШАЯ ШКОЛА ЭКОНОМИКИ» (МОСКВА);
ORCID: 0009-0005-0009-3846

КАДЕТСКИЕ ДАМЫ

ЖЕНЩИНЫ КОНСТИТУЦИОННО-ДЕМОКРАТИЧЕСКОЙ ПАРТИИ КАК ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЙ ФЕНОМЕН

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Аннотация: Статья посвящена феномену женщин в Конституционно-демократической партии с момента ее основания и до подготовки организации к выборам в Учредительное собрание в 1917 году. Автор стремится воссоздать социокультурный портрет кадетских дам, выяснить факторы, которые могли повлиять на их вступление в партию, и охарактеризовать их деятельность в организации. Особое внимание уделяется тому, какое место в партийной иерархии могли занимать женщины, а также возможностям продвижения в ней. Кадетские дамы в основном отвечали за быт, хозяйственное обеспечение, материально-техническое снабжение, проведение мероприятий и благотворительных акций организации, но в то же время активно участвовали в принятии ключевых решений, хотя и не обладали теми же политическими правами, что и мужчины. Более того, с предоставлением этих прав женщинам после Февральской революции количество кадетских дам на ключевых партийных постах резко возросло, что подтверждает их

значимость для конституционных демократов. Также выделяются характерные черты социокультурного портрета женщин Партии народной свободы. Кадетские дамы росли в пореформенной России, когда социально-экономические изменения в стране и обществе оказали огромное влияние на процесс женской эмансипации. Возможность получить качественное образование, освоить профессию и работать, выбрать супруга на основе взаимного уважения и сходства взглядов послужила фактором обретения субъектности, которая, в свою очередь, впоследствии позволила кадетским дамам стать тем политическим феноменом, о котором идет речь в данной статье.

Ключевые слова: кадетские дамы, Конституционно-демократическая партия, Партия народной свободы, либеральная оппозиция, Русская революция 1905–1907 гг., Февральская революция, политические партии, женская история.

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