



### From West to East: International Women's Day, the First Decade

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**ABSTRACT**

The year 2010 was the centennial of Clara Zetkin's proposal for an annual women's holiday, which became known as International Women's Day, and 2011 was the centennial of its first celebrations. The first ten years of the holiday's existence were a particularly tumultuous time in world history, with the advent of World War I, revolutionary upheavals in some of the major combatant countries, and the demise of the German, Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian empires. During this time, International Women's Day celebrations quickly gained great popularity, and in 1917 sparked the February Russian Revolution. This article focuses on the development of the holiday from its U.S. and Western European origins and goal of women's suffrage, to its role in empowering Russian women to spark a revolution, and its re-branding as a Soviet communist celebration. Special attention is paid to the roles of two prominent international socialist women leaders, Zetkin and Alexandra Kollontai, in shaping the holiday's evolution.

**KEYWORDS:** feminism, International Women's Day, revolution, Russia, women's suffrage

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### The Origins of the Holiday

The year 2010 marked the centennial of the proclamation of the first International Women's Day. On Friday, 26 August 1910, at the Second International Conference of Socialist Women, held at the Folkets hus (The People's House) in Copenhagen, "Peace and women's suffrage, no more and no less," proclaimed the banner hanging in the Copenhagen conference hall. Clara Zetkin (1857–1933), the most prominent socialist woman of the time, Käthe Duncker (1871–1953)<sup>1</sup> "and other comrades," introduced a resolution calling for the establishment of "a special Women's Day," whose primary purpose would be "to promote Women's Suffrage propaganda." The resolution, while endorsing the fight for women's suffrage, connected the fight for the female vote with

socialism, but did not restrict the holiday to working class women. It carefully balanced fidelity to class and international socialism with an appeal to all women:

That in agreement with the class-conscious political and trade union organizations of the proletariat in their countries, the socialist women of all countries every year arrange a Women's Day serving the primary purpose of agitation for women's suffrage. The claim must be elucidated in its interconnections with the whole woman question in accordance with the socialist approach. Women's Day must have an international character and be painstakingly prepared.<sup>2</sup>

The Women's Day proposal was approved unanimously by the conference delegates, including three of the nineteen women elected to the Finnish parliament, the first in the world to include women.<sup>3</sup> Zetkin and Duncker's resolution and the special day's goal seem very straightforward. Yet one hundred years after the women's socialist holiday was first celebrated, information about its origins, early history, and chief goals remains clouded and incomplete. The holiday's early links to feminism and suffrage, to socialism and communism, indeed any political connection, have often been clouded in a haze of candy and flowers. But the first decades of International Women's Day celebration were far from sweet, and marked by war, revolution, civil war, and counter-revolution. Examining the holiday's early years sheds light on the complex interactions between feminists and socialists, and the significant role of events in Russia in shaping the shifting meaning of the first global women's celebration.

For a holiday now celebrated in over one hundred countries, much about its history still remains unclear. Most scholars agree that the holiday began in the United States, and ascribe its origins to various demonstrations by New York City women garment and textile workers. Activist historian Joyce Stevens traces the holiday back to several labor marches in New York City in the early years of the twentieth century. Others date the first women workers' demonstrations back to 1857.<sup>4</sup> The French researchers Liliane Kandel and Françoise Picq argue that the 1857 strikes were a Cold War concoction. In response to escalating Cold War tensions, a new narrative about the holiday was necessary to detach it from its post-1917 identification with the Soviet Union. Connecting its origins to a demonstration in the United States, and dating this to 1857, the year of Clara Zetkin's birth, honored the holiday's initiator and moved it sufficiently back in time to decouple it from the Soviet Union.<sup>5</sup>

The US can credibly be considered the first locus of women's day celebrations. Renée Côte dates the first "Woman's Day" to 3 May 1908 in Chicago. As described by the newspaper the *Socialist Woman*, an audience of 1,500 women "applauded the demands for economic and political equality of women, on the day dedicated to the female workers' causes."<sup>6</sup> These celebrations were marked by the centrality of suffrage as a chief, if not the main demand. Socialists did not shy away from supporting votes for women. Indeed, the historian Temma Kaplan cites the US Socialist Party as the prime mover in both establishing a Women's Day and connecting it to suffrage. In 1908 the US socialists established a Women's National Committee to Campaign for the Suffrage with the mandate to organize demonstrations. From the beginning, the holiday was celebrated by both feminists and socialists, often working together. Speakers

at the holiday rallies in New York City on 23 February 1909 included the socialist and suffragist Leonora O'Reilly (1870–1927) and the feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935). Thus, although the United States is one of the few countries in which today the holiday is largely ignored, it was the birthplace of International Women's Day.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to its year of origin, the way in which the holiday's final date was established is also the subject of conflicting stories. Kaplan makes a connection to the ultimate date of the holiday, noting that on 8 March 1908, Branch Number 3 of the New York City Social Democratic Women's Society held a mass meeting. But the date of the celebration was not firm. In 1909, US socialists had established a National Woman's Day, designated for the last Sunday in February.<sup>8</sup> The US labor historian Philip Foner, among others, claims that 8 March was designated at the 1910 Copenhagen congress, as a result of a US women workers' demonstration. In his version, Clara Zetkin moved "that the day of the demonstration of the American working women (March 8) become an International Women's Day, and that March 8 each year be dedicated to fighting for equal rights for all women in all countries."<sup>9</sup>

There is nothing in Zetkin's resolution about setting 8 March as the date of the holiday.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the first celebrations of International Women's Day were not held on that date. Two dates in March held special significance for European radicals. In Germany and Denmark, the first International Women's Day rallies were held on 19 March 1911, marking the date in 1848 that the Prussian king Frederick William IV sought to quell an armed revolt by promising never realized reforms, including granting German women the vote.<sup>11</sup> The first day of the Paris Commune's rule was 18 March 1871. Forty years later, in the initial European celebration of International Women's Day, Viennese women "marched around the Ringstrasse, carrying banners including red flags commemorating the martyrs of the Paris Commune."<sup>12</sup> The marchers made a special stop at the flower market, demonstrating in support of women's suffrage. Kaplan cites the Austrian feminist Adelheid Popp's account of about "300 women's demonstrations" on 18 March throughout the Habsburg Empire. The Russian socialist activist Alexandra Kollontai (1872–1952) described the holiday in Germany and Austria as "one seething, trembling sea of women. Meetings were organized everywhere—in the small towns and even in the villages halls were packed so full that they had to ask male workers to give up their places for the women."<sup>13</sup> The date of 8 March was still not adopted everywhere before World War I. The first International Women's Day celebration in Paris took place on 9 March 1914, "in co-ordination with German socialist women." The French-Russian Bolshevik Inessa Armand, spoke, and Clara Zetkin sent a telegram.<sup>14</sup>

The initial goals of the holiday as proposed by Zetkin in 1910 were the same as those for the US Women's Day and the chief goals of the feminist movement of the time. In proposing International Women's Day, Zetkin's resolution did not mention revolution, or equal rights in general, but rather focused specifically on a particular right, the right to vote. Such a focus addressed two problems for the socialist women's movement: the antipathy of European male socialists to women's suffrage, and the appeal of the feminist movement to working-class women. Many of Zetkin's male comrades opposed female suffrage, claiming that women voters would be more conservative than men. Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919), the two most prominent

women leaders, faced ridicule from within their own ranks. Socialist men were far from immune to male chauvinism and sexist stereotypes. In a 1910 letter to August Bebel (1840–1913), the Austrian socialist leader Victor Adler (1852–1918) referred to “the two hysterical females Rosa and Clara.”<sup>15</sup>

The holiday sought to offset the appeal of the feminist campaign for suffrage to working-class women. Rosa Luxemburg is often portrayed as uninterested in the suffrage struggle. But Luxemburg, like Zetkin, supported the female vote, envisioning it as a significant result of the proletarian struggle, “an inescapable consequence and logical outcome of the movement that today millions of working women cry with class-conscious defiance: Give us women’s suffrage!”<sup>16</sup> The socialist women’s outreach extended beyond female factory workers. In the week before their 1911 celebration, German socialist women issued a new journal titled *The Vote for Women*, with articles such as “What has the housewife got to do with politics?”<sup>17</sup>

The origins of International Women’s Day owed much to events in the United States and Western Europe and most of the research and writing about the early history of the day has focused on these areas. But these were not the only influences on the creation and subsequent development of the holiday. In the first decade of its celebration, conditions farther north and east of the heart of the large socialist women’s movement in Germany affected how the celebration was subsequently framed. Specifically, the factors influencing the evolving meaning of the holiday are critically connected to events in Russia.

## The Russian Connection

The Russian Empire, the largest entity in the world, played a major role in European politics, as part of key strategic alliances. At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, this multi-national empire was in the midst of major upheavals, which threatened the very existence of the tsarist autocracy. Opposition movements ranged across the left political spectrum, from liberals to socialists. Women were prominent among radicals and revolutionaries, and particularly known for violent actions. Sofia Perovskaia planned the successful assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881; Vera Zasulich seriously wounded the widely despised St. Petersburg Governor Trepov in 1878.<sup>18</sup>

Political feminism was relatively recent in the tsarist state, but Russian feminists sent delegations to the major international women’s conferences. Within the empire, as a result of nationalist uprisings connected to the 1905 Revolution, the Finns were the first national entity in the world to give women complete suffrage.<sup>19</sup>

Many Russian socialists were forced to escape their country’s police and live in exile in Western Europe. German socialists looked with admiration to their Russian comrades. Zetkin, the foremost leader of international socialist women, was greatly influenced by the revolutionary movement in the tsarist empire. Zetkin’s first husband and the father of her two sons was the Russian Jewish exile Osip Zetkin. Clara had identified with the Russian land and its people, as her biographer Karen Honeycutt notes, “since her first contact with Russian narodnik students and Marxist revolu-

tionaries in Leipzig."<sup>20</sup> August Bebel, author of the key work *Woman and Socialism*, wrote to the most prominent female Russian socialist activist Alexandra Kollontai that her country's women were "the vanguard of the International Women's Socialist movement."<sup>21</sup>

Defying opposition from many of her comrades, Kollontai had organized and participated with a women workers' delegation at the feminist-led All-Russian Women's Congress, held on 10–16 December 1908 in St. Petersburg. In the process, she saw the strong appeal to women workers of suffrage and other women's rights issues. Forced to flee the tsarist police before the end of the Congress, the then Menshevik Kollontai immediately linked up with Zetkin, settling in Berlin. From her exile, Kollontai cited a report by Zetkin, editor of the German socialist women's journal, *Die Gleichheit* (Equality), claiming that the 1908 Russian Congress "had important significance for the entire international socialist movement."<sup>22</sup> The German Socialist Party was considered the "jewel of the International." Zetkin had done what for Kollontai, escaping from Russian repression, could only be a dream. With over 82,000 women members, the Germans represented the largest and most prominent group of women socialists in Europe. At the beginning of World War I, female Socialist Party membership grew to almost 175,000 members, 16.1 percent of the total party membership. The circulation of *Die Gleichheit* reached 124,000.<sup>23</sup>

As was common for women from privileged backgrounds, Kollontai, the daughter of a general, was fluent in several languages, and so was able to join immediately in agitating among women workers in Germany. Kollontai had attended the first International Socialist Women's Congress in Stuttgart in 1907, and, representing the St. Petersburg textile workers union, was the only Russian delegate to the 1910 Copenhagen Socialist Women's Congress. At a Danish Socialist Party reception at the end of the Congress, Kollontai "particularly impressed her comrades by giving a short talk in German, then translating it into English and French."<sup>24</sup>

International Women's Day celebrations illustrated the tension within the socialist movement in the face of the growing militancy of women workers and socialist leaders' fear of feminism as a competing organizing force. The celebrations also underlined how the oft-portrayed impermeable barrier between feminists and socialists was indeed quite permeable. In the US and in Russia, among other countries, feminists who considered themselves socialists also celebrated International Women's Day and planned actions around it. This key element is invisible or downplayed in many subsequent accounts of the origins of the holiday.<sup>25</sup>

Clara Zetkin viewed suffrage as a democratic reform advantageous to the proletariat. In naming the holiday, Zetkin used the word women, and not women workers, acknowledging that women were a separate group to be organized. Giving a socialist slant to the main feminist cause of the time, she proclaimed: "The vote for women will unite our strength in the struggle for socialism."<sup>26</sup> Kollontai was prominent in the global socialist women's movement, serving on its governing body, the International Socialist Women's Secretariat, and contributing to the main publication of the international socialist women's movement, Zetkin's *Die Gleichheit*. Encouraging recognition of the holiday in her homeland, Kollontai penned an article on International Women's Day for the Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda* (Truth) in 1913.<sup>27</sup>

The commemoration of International Women's Day in Russia sparked conflict as activists across the feminist-socialist spectrum claimed the holiday. Feminists emphasized the cross-class organizing of women and socialists viewed the day as a way to mobilize working-class women to join with their brothers in the revolutionary struggle.<sup>28</sup> In Russia, International Women's Day was first celebrated on 17 February 1913.<sup>29</sup> The eighth of March had become the de facto date for the holiday in most countries. Following the Julian calendar, Russia was thirteen days behind the Western world, so 8 March would have equaled 23 February. However, the organizers of the 1913 celebration, fearing police interference, set their commemoration earlier, to 17 February.<sup>30</sup> Underlining the importance of the holiday, special issues of both the Bolshevik *Pravda* and the Menshevik *Luch* (Ray) appeared. The six-page *Pravda* contained articles about women workers, the significance of the socialist movement and of the holiday. Pictures of such female socialist luminaries as Zetkin, Karl Marx's daughter, Eleanor, and the revolutionary terrorist and early Marxist, Vera Zasulich, adorned the paper. In all, celebrations took place in five cities—St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Samara, and Tbilisi.<sup>31</sup>

The Kiev celebration drew 150 people, but the main celebrations were in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Although the celebrations had been organized by the social democrats, the speakers represented a range of perspectives, from the non-party left, to representatives of feminist and socialist organizations. The Moscow festivities, held at the Third Women's Club, drew a large crowd. The independent socialist Ekaterina Kuskova (1869–1958) spoke, emphasizing the role of women workers in the socialist movement and the importance of International Women's Day. As the usual factional conflict erupted, the young worker Masha Platonova nervously chaired the meeting.<sup>32</sup>

The biggest celebration was in St. Petersburg. Organized by a group of female textile workers and activists such as Konkordia Samoilo (1876–1921) and Praskovia Kudelli (1859–1944), who were part of a special holiday committee established by the Bolshevik-controlled Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, the event, as in Moscow, featured speakers from a wide range of perspectives.<sup>33</sup> The main meeting of the day was held in the Great Hall of the Kalashnikov Exchange. The police were there in full force. Both mounted and regular patrols were stationed at the entrance. Inside, the police occupied the first two rows. Exactly at one o'clock, they closed the doors of the hall, refusing to allow even those with tickets to enter. Despite this, over 1,000 people managed to crowd into the hall before the official starting time.<sup>34</sup>

Those attending were exposed to both feminist and socialist perspectives, and talks that addressed the concerns of a wide range of women. The Menshevik physician Margarita Margulies-Aitova spoke about the political oppression of women and the need for women workers to fight together with other women for suffrage. Maria Ianchevskaia emphasized that the initiative for the assembly came from women workers, likening their movement to a "tributary, flowing into the great river of the proletarian movement and giving it strength." The Bolshevik Anna Gurevich focused on prostitution, its relationship to the economic situation, and the number of servants who became streetwalkers. The Menshevik Elena Kuvshinskaia, a member of the workers group at the 1908 Russian Women's Congress, spoke of the growth of the female proletariat, the development of capitalism in Russia, and the change from an essentially

peasant-oriented to a worker-oriented socialist movement. Peasants were not ignored; T. Kartacheva, a clerk, described the difficult life of rural women.<sup>35</sup>

The International Women's Day commemoration served also as a way to encourage women workers to move into the public sphere by speaking at the celebration. The textile worker Aleksandra N. Grigoreva-Alekseeva, for example, gave her first talk at the event. She recounted that: "With great difficulty I overcame my nervousness, put down my notebook and began to tell about the lives of women textile workers, which I knew very well from my own experience ... In the hall, an approving buzz could be heard."<sup>36</sup> The speech brought Grigoreva-Alekseeva unwanted attention; that night, the police arrested her.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the police actions, Anna Ulianova-Elizarova (1864–1935), Vladimir Lenin's older sister, a revolutionary in her own right, pronounced herself pleased with the celebration, claiming it "played a vast, decisive role in the women workers movement," by recruiting many new activists: "From that day their [women workers'] enrollment in unions, clubs, and educational societies, their participation in illegal work grew by leaps and bounds."<sup>38</sup>

As contemporary accounts of this 1913 celebration make clear, many Russian feminists and socialists cooperated as well as conflicted in commemorating the socialist women's holiday. In 1913, Russian feminists successfully lobbied the Duma (Russian Parliament), which could not enact women's suffrage, to designate International Women's Day a holiday.<sup>39</sup> In 1914, the feminist Women's Progressive Party organized a Women's Day meeting in St. Petersburg.<sup>40</sup> The same year, in Moscow, the League for Women's Equal Rights was able to win approval for a celebration.<sup>41</sup> But while feminists emphasized the holiday's original demand for women's suffrage, party-affiliated socialists more and more focused on using the holiday to organize women workers, underlining their differences with the feminists and playing down the suffrage demand.

The growing conflict over the nature and meaning of the holiday can be seen in the 1914 celebrations. The Women's Progressive Party meeting in St. Petersburg featured lectures on women's suffrage and participation in local government which, according to Choi Chatterjee, the chief historian of the Russian women's holiday, was "in strict contradistinction to socialist goals."<sup>42</sup> The feminist physician Maria Pokrovskaiia (1852–1922)<sup>43</sup> presented the radical feminist position most forcefully. International Women's Day salvoes going back and forth between *Pravda* and Pokrovskaiia's *Zhenskii vestnik* (The women's herald) contested the priorities of class and sex. *Pravda* charged that the feminists sought to divert proletarian women from their real struggle. Pokrovskaiia, whose publication paid particular attention to the plight of working women, rejoined that feminists did not deny the class interests of proletarian women but insisted on attention to their sexual oppression. All men benefited from male privilege; all women must join together to fight it. But whereas socialist feminists like Margulies spoke at the Women's Progressive Party's celebration and emphasized women joining in the battle for women's political rights, Pokrovskaiia wanted to go further, battling male privilege and advocating a complete critique of patriarchal relations: "As we expected, the women workers' day did not protest at all against the subordinate position of wives in relation to husbands. They spoke primarily of the enslavement of the proletarian woman by capital, and only in passing mentioned the *Domostroi*."<sup>44</sup>

Celebrations of International Women's Day were held, despite police harassment, every year after 1913. The socialists bore the brunt of police interference. In 1914, socialist organizers decided to commemorate the holiday "in the European style," with several large open meetings in the major workers' sections of St. Petersburg, and with the first issue of the Bolshevik journal addressed specifically to proletarian women, *Rabotnitsa* (The woman worker). However, a few days before the planned celebration all the members of the Russian editorial board of the journal, with the exception of Ulianova-Elizarova, were arrested, and the majority of the articles designated for the initial issue confiscated by the police.<sup>45</sup>

The Bolshevik women took great pains to distinguish themselves from feminists. The police generally failed to grasp the difference. On the way to prison, one officer asked Konkordia Samoiloova: "Why, Madame, did you try to gather all our women together? Are you, like those foreign 'suffragettes' as they are called, desirous of throwing bombs at the government?"<sup>46</sup> Plans for several meetings were also blocked by the authorities. The socialists requested ten meetings; the authorities granted one. On 23 February/8 March 1914, extra detachments of police were on the streets of St. Petersburg. A large crowd gathered at one of the legal meetings. Instead of five speakers there were only two, as the police had arrested the other speakers and forbidden substitutions. Many of those present, disappointed and angry, spilled out into the streets, singing revolutionary songs. The police eventually dispersed them, after a considerable number of arrests.<sup>47</sup> In Moscow, the League for Women's Equal Rights was able to win approval for a celebration, but according to Bolshevik accounts—hardly the most reliable—women workers, whose celebrations had not been approved, were not welcomed.<sup>48</sup>

The appearance in 1914 of two journals specifically for women workers further indicated a softening of the social democrats' opposition to separate organizing among women. The Menshevik effort, *Golos rabotnitsy* (Voice of the woman worker), lasted for only two issues.<sup>49</sup> *Rabotnitsa*, which owed its origins in part to the popularity of the special women's page inaugurated by *Pravda* in 1913, proved more successful. But the portrayal of the proletariat in *Rabotnitsa* underlined the trope of female inadequacy. Its first issue, which appeared despite the arrests of its editorial board in March 1914, contained a lead article by Nadezhda Krupskaya (1869–1939), secretary to the Bolshevik Central Committee and Lenin's wife, explaining the *raison d'être* of the journal. Though acknowledging the heightened activism of women workers, which she ascribed to the successful socialist campaign for sickness insurance, Krupskaya persisted in referring to most women workers as "backward." Women were the problem; they needed to be organized, to be as active as were their male comrades.<sup>50</sup>

By Krupskaya's definition, "Solidarity between male and female workers, a common cause, common goals, a common path to those goals. This is the resolution of the 'woman question' among workers." Women workers "backwardness" consisted also in failing to distinguish between class and gender interests. Concluding with a plea for solidarity within the proletariat, she emphasized the distinction between socialists and feminists. Women workers had to "become more conscious and organize." They had to understand the distinction between the socialist and feminist approaches to women's rights, for the "struggle for women's rights with the opponents of those



rights—men—this is the resolution of the ‘woman question’ among the bourgeoisie.”<sup>51</sup> For Krupskaja, the “woman question” was to be answered by better organization of the female proletariat, certainly not, as the feminists advocated, by addressing the persistence of patriarchal practices among male workers. As Chatterjee notes, Krupskaja’s metaphors “are those of a sleeping beauty resuscitated with the socialist kiss of life and admitted to the bosom of her proletarian family.”<sup>52</sup>

Among her comrades, Krupskaja also faced opposition. Some diehards grumbled: “What do we need a separate women’s journal for when we have no money?” In the end, factors outside the Bolsheviks’ control ended *Rabotnitsa*’s pre-Revolutionary run. Along with other workers’ publications, *Rabotnitsa* became a casualty of the outbreak of World War I.<sup>53</sup>

The war divided the socialist movement, as nationalist passions overwhelmed internationalist theories. All over Europe—in Germany, France, Austria, Russia—the socialist leadership and the rank and file supported their governments.<sup>54</sup> The small anti-war group among the European socialists encompassed most of the leading women, such as Zetkin, Luxemburg, Angelica Balabanova, and Kollontai, and a relatively large proportion of Russian male socialists, including Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and the Menshevik Pavel Akselrod. Zetkin organized an anti-war international women’s conference in Berne, Switzerland, held on 26–28 March 1915. Twenty-eight delegates from eight countries braved the hostilities and made their way to the conference. Kollontai could not attend, as she was blocked by the French authorities from crossing through France to get to Berne.<sup>55</sup> The conference called for an end to the war, condemned military atrocities, and the power of the armaments industry, and passed a “resolution of sympathy” with the International Congress of Women at the Hague, declaring that “great as may be the differences of principle which separate Socialist from non-Socialist points of view, the organised Socialist and Labour women of the different countries welcome any movement which makes for peace.”<sup>56</sup>

In 1915 and 1916, the war did not prevent International Women’s Day commemorations in the combatant countries. Despite a government ban, Russian women marked International Women’s Day with small meetings and celebrations.<sup>57</sup> By 1917, the war was going very badly for Russia on both the battlefield and the home front. Russian casualties, both military and civilian, at over three million dead and almost five million wounded, were the largest of any of the combatants.<sup>58</sup> Domestically, food was in short supply, inflation was rampant, and protests, in the form of strikes and bread riots, grew.<sup>59</sup>

## The Russian Revolutions of 1917

Six years after the initial celebrations, the socialist women’s holiday sparked the toppling of the largest empire in the world. In 1917, there were a number of Russian commemorations of International Women’s Day on 23 February. The organized demonstrations surprised tsarist officials and involved women from different classes. Some events reflected coordination between radical students and workers. Bolshevik worker Anna Kostina, for example, remembered that a list of speakers for International

Women's Day meetings had already been prepared. Requests to address these gatherings were funneled through the apartment of T.G. Tolmacheva, a Bestuzhev women's higher education courses' student.<sup>60</sup>

The demonstrations displeased many social-democratic leaders. To these leaders, the women who marched were "ill-behaved," meaning that they did not listen to the orders of male party leaders. Accounts by party leaders in the Vyborg district, a Bolshevik stronghold, emphasize the female planners' insubordination. On 22 February, for example, when a group of women workers met to plan the celebration, V.N. Kaiurov of the Bolshevik Petrograd Committee instructed them to avoid strikes or other isolated actions. Recalling the February 1917 events in 1923, Kaiurov wrote: "I myself had just the night before urged the women workers to show restraint and discipline, yet suddenly here was a strike. There seemed to be no purpose in it and no reason for it."<sup>61</sup> According to Trotsky and other observers, on 23 February 1917, "despite all directives, the women textile workers in several factories went on strike."<sup>62</sup>

There is no evidence that male socialist leaders expected women to be the catalyst for revolution. Trotsky, in his history of the Revolution, asserted that no major demonstrations had been planned by any socialist organizations for the women's holiday. Rather, it was to be marked "in a general manner: by meetings, speeches, leaflets."<sup>63</sup> Early Soviet histories emphasized the unplanned nature of the February Revolution; 1930s versions, by contrast, played up the role of the Bolsheviks. Some contemporary historians emphasize the "socialist preparation" for the February uprising; others maintain that the International Women's Day demonstrations burst spontaneously from below.<sup>64</sup> Either way, the role of women is dismissed quickly as historians move on to the "real actors" in the Revolution, generally male workers or male organizers. There is little exploration of the reasons why women workers took to the streets and persisted in efforts to draw in male workers and soldiers.<sup>65</sup>

The Petersburg *Mezhraionnyi* (Inter-District) Committee, an amalgam of Bolshevik conciliators, Menshevik internationalists and supporters of Trotsky and Plekhanov, whose goal was reuniting the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, produced the sole extant International Women's Day leaflet, which was widely distributed. The lack of other leaflets may be a further indication that women workers were not a high priority, or it could have resulted simply from the technical problems of revolutionary groups. Bolshevik activist Alexander Shliapnikov claimed later that the Bolsheviks failed to produce an International Women's Day leaflet because their illegal press was broken.<sup>66</sup>

Most historians who cite the *Mezhraionnyi* leaflet do not go beyond its initial slogans: "Down with the Autocracy! Long Live the Provisional Revolutionary Government! Down with the war! Long Live the Democratic Republic! Long live the international solidarity of the proletariat! Long live the united RSDLP [Russian Social Democratic Labor Party]!" The *Mezhraionnyi* leaflet departed sharply from the original intent of the women's holiday, focusing on class only, and omitting any mention of suffrage. The holiday's name, International Women's Day, morphed into "*Zhenskii rabochii den*" (Woman Workers' Day) or the "*Zhenskoe 'pervogo maia*" (Woman's "May Day").<sup>67</sup>

Beyond these slogans, the leaflet underscored concerns about the revolutionary aptitude of the female proletariat and the feminist threat to class unity. Women workers were still suspect, as "backward" elements of the proletariat susceptible to

feminist siren songs of sex solidarity. Demonstrating distrust and condescension, the leaflet urged women workers to follow the lead of their proletarian brothers. Proletarian women had "only recently become part of the family of workers," and "often still are afraid, and don't know, what [to demand] and how to make demands." The bosses exploited the "darkness and timidity" of women workers. Exhibiting ongoing anxiety about the loyalties and potential power of women workers, the leaflet urged them to "hold fast in solidarity with your male comrades and join *with them* in common struggle with the government and factory owners." The women, then, would join in the conflict already initiated by the male workers. In actuality, even if there was "socialist preparation," the assumptions that the "backward" women would follow the lead of the male-dominated party and its agenda were belied by the spontaneous actions of the women workers, who took the lead in confronting factory bosses and tsarist soldiers.<sup>68</sup>

On the first day of the February Revolution, women put into practice their revolutionary lessons more thoroughly than did their male comrades. Seizing the initiative in the factories and in the streets, they demonstrated class solidarity by persuading their proletarian brothers to lay down their tools and join them.<sup>69</sup> Often it was the women who were bold, and the men hesitant. I. Gordienko, a worker at the New Lessner Factory, recalled that on the morning of 23 February, he and others heard women's voices shouting: "Come on out! Quit working! Join us!"<sup>70</sup> When the workers failed to respond quickly enough, the women threw snowballs and pieces of metal at the factory windows. Soon after, 7,500 male workers left the factory. At the Aivaz Machine Factory, women workers called a meeting at which they linked women's inequality and the demand for bread, asking the male workers to join them. Drowning out the voices of some moderate men, the women shouted "Let's go home!" and all workers abandoned the factory.<sup>71</sup> The same was true of the disruption of transport, which began on 23 February and further demonstrated the anger and frustration of the masses. Here again groups of women took the lead, stopping trolleybuses, forcing passengers to leave, and smashing windows. The women on the streets were soon joined by the women conductors who had taken on this previously male work during the war, and who now joined the general strike.<sup>72</sup>

By 8 March the country had undergone an enormous upheaval. The February Revolution, sparked by the International Women's Day demonstrations in the imperial capital of Petrograd (as St. Petersburg had been renamed in 1914), had culminated in the abdication of the tsar, the end of the 900-year-old Russian autocracy, and the creation of two dueling governments: the Provisional Government, formed largely from moderate and liberal members of the Duma, and the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, led by members of the Social Democratic and Socialist Revolutionary parties from February to October 1917.

Women had played a significant role in hastening the fall of the Romanovs, but those newly in power hesitated to give them the right to vote. Both governments met in the former home of the Duma, the Tauride Palace. The Soviets, showing an initial cautiousness, issued a general statement supporting a constituent assembly elected on the basis of universal suffrage, without clarifying whether eligible voters included women.<sup>73</sup> Soon after, the clarification came. On 9 March, the Executive Committee of

the Petrograd Soviet published a statement supporting women's suffrage in the upcoming Constituent Assembly elections.<sup>74</sup>

The Provisional Government proved more resistant. Its 3 March 1917 program made no mention of the issue. The feminist physician Maria Pokrovskaiia approached government ministers, but to no avail. Another opportunity presented itself when Minister of Justice Alexander Kerensky (1881–1970), the only socialist in the Provisional Government, made his first official visit to Moscow on 7 March. At a meeting of the Moscow Committee of Public Organizations, Maria Chekhova (1866–1937),<sup>75</sup> the Moscow League for Women's Equal Rights delegate, questioned Kerensky about the Provisional Government's commitment to grant women voting rights. The minister stated his support of equal rights: "I am a partisan of complete equality of rights for women and will defend it within the Government." The government had acted immediately on some issues, abolishing the Jewish quotas, lifting restrictions on Finnish autonomy, and freeing political prisoners. At the same meeting Kerensky announced his intention to sign an order abolishing the death penalty, but neither he nor any of the other new ministers were willing to use the power of the new government to implement women's equal rights.<sup>76</sup>

The thirteen-day difference between Russia's traditional calendar and the Western calendar provided the possibility of celebrating International Women's Day again, this time in a newly revolutionary country. Showing that the holiday was significant to feminists as well as socialists, Chekhova raised the issue of Kerensky's response and the Provisional Government's policy at the League's meeting on 8 March commemorating International Women's Day. Those present voted to have Chekhova send a follow-up telegram to Kerensky on that day, stating in respectful but firm language that they would continue to demand full female suffrage and that the League stood ready to mobilize the necessary "womanpower" to accomplish that goal for the Constituent Assembly elections. Interviewed on 11 March, Kerensky stated that women's suffrage would have to wait until the Constituent Assembly, that this was too vast a change to undertake immediately.<sup>77</sup>

Coincidentally, Kollontai returned to Russia with a group of other political exiles on 19 March. Having switched factions from Menshevik to Bolshevik, she brought with her Lenin's instructions to Petrograd Party leaders. Dissatisfied with the cooperation between the social democratic factions, Lenin counseled a more steadfast and separatist line. For Kollontai this was to be true in relation to the autonomous feminist movement as well: that very day, her birthday, she joined the 40,000-strong feminist-led suffrage march in Petrograd. Taking her message of non-cooperation to the steps of the Tauride Palace, she claims she was unceremoniously pushed away and not allowed to speak, as the revolutionary heroine Vera Figner (1852–1942) looked on and did not come to her aid.<sup>78</sup>

The feminist demonstration in Petrograd on 19 March successfully won votes for women.<sup>79</sup> With the electoral law of 20 July 1917, Russia became the first major power to give women the right to vote. The primary feminist goal was achieved in Russia before the Bolshevik October Revolution. In November 1917 women voted for the first time in national elections, despite the chaos of the October coup, world war, and incipient civil war. The ensuing Constituent Assembly included 10 women among the total of

767 deputies. Kollontai, one of the ten, sat in the balcony with Lenin for the Assembly's initial session on 5 January 1918. She watched as Bolshevik sailors, led by her lover Pavel Dybenko, dispersed the Assembly on its first day.<sup>80</sup>

## Women and World Revolution

Having successfully seized power, Lenin and his comrades touted Soviet Russia as the center of revolutionary hopes for the world. The Bolshevik leaders specifically appealed to women by immediately issuing a series of decrees aimed at guaranteeing them full equality with men. As commissar of Social Welfare in the first Bolshevik government and in 1920 head of the *Zhenotdel* (Women's Section of the Communist Party), Alexandra Kollontai gained greater global prominence as the most visible female Bolshevik. A prolific writer and speaker, Kollontai seized the opportunity to shape further the ways in which the socialist women's holiday should be celebrated. Most notably in her 1920 pamphlet *Mezhdunarodnyi den' rabotnits* (International Women Workers' Day), Kollontai presented a positive, idealized image of the woman worker and the significance of the proletarian woman's holiday. Her reference to proletarian women's backwardness was only in the positive context of their transformation: "Even the politically backward woman worker thought to herself: 'This is our day, the festival for working women', and she hurried to the meetings and demonstrations."<sup>81</sup>

Gone was the emphasis on suffrage. Feminist influence on the holiday's creation and feminist participation in subsequent commemorations was not mentioned. Feminists had made great strides by 1920. Beginning with Russia, women had won either full or partial voting rights in all the major combatant powers except France. But in most countries, women still had not gained suffrage.<sup>82</sup> In terms of International Women's Day, for Kollontai and her allies, the chief struggle was to recruit women for the revolution: "If the task of 'International Working Women's Day' was earlier in the face of the supremacy of the bourgeois parliaments to fight for the right of women to vote, the working class now has a new task, to organize working women around the fighting slogans of the Third International."<sup>83</sup> Women workers would be equal partners with men in spreading the revolution around the globe. In Kollontai's words again: "Women workers of all countries! We welcome Soviet power! Away with inequalities suffered by men and women workers! We will fight with the workers for the triumph of world communism!"<sup>84</sup>

In 1920, ten years after Zetkin proposed the creation of the socialist women's holiday, Kollontai was codifying the Soviet version of the origins and meaning of International Women's Day. The process of re-naming and re-conceptualizing the socialist women's holiday continued the next year. Although weakened within the Party as a result of her advocating against Leninist authoritarianism as a leader of the Workers' Opposition,<sup>85</sup> Kollontai was able to maintain her work with women. She and Lenin agreed on the importance of women's liberation, although he was infuriated by her pamphlet on the Workers' Opposition and its appearance as the Bolsheviks were battling rebellious sailors in the Kronstadt revolt.<sup>86</sup>

In Soviet Russia, Kollontai was joined by Zetkin, who had fled to Moscow after the 1919 German revolution had failed and her comrades Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht had been murdered.<sup>87</sup> The relationship between Kollontai and Zetkin was complex. Comrades at the time of the creation of International Women's Day, in their opposition to the war and support for the Bolshevik Revolution, initially Kollontai's star rose as Zetkin's fell. Zetkin lost her editorship of *Die Gleichheit* in May 1917 when Kollontai was back in Russia, working closely with Lenin before and after the Bolsheviks won power. But by 1921, with her Workers' Opposition involvement, Kollontai had incurred Lenin's wrath, narrowly avoided expulsion from the Communist Party, and in early 1922 lost her position as director of the Party's *Zhenotdel*. In contrast, Zetkin gained further prominence in April 1921, when she became editor of the journal *Die kommunistische Fraueninternationale* (The Communist women's international), which she led for four years.<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, their shifting positions in relation to the overwhelmingly male socialist leaders did not prevent Kollontai and Zetkin from presiding over the Second International Conference of Communist Women, held on 9–15 June, 1921, in sweltering conditions in Moscow. The Conference met prior to the Third Congress of the Communist International (Comintern), to prepare resolutions on women to be considered by the Congress.<sup>89</sup> Ten years after the first celebrations of International Women's Day, the Conference leaders sought to strengthen the connections between the holiday and the Russian revolutions. A resolution by the Bulgarian delegate Anna Mai, proposing the official designation of 8 March as the International Communist Women's Day, in honor of the women workers whose demonstrations on 8 March 1917 sparked the Russian Revolution, was unanimously approved.<sup>90</sup>

Previous characterizations of women workers by many socialist activists as backward were replaced with positive images of equality. Although in practice many in the Soviet leadership and in the Communist Party rank and file retained their prejudices about the Russian "baba," or backward peasant woman, the trope of the ideal proletarian woman as a capable and equal comrade came to the fore, as the Party made women's liberation a key part of its policies and propaganda.<sup>91</sup> This interpretation of International Women's Day effaced the role of feminists in fighting for women's rights and made Lenin and the Soviet Union the true champions of female emancipation. The causes of the workers and women were one. Linking International Women's Day specifically to Soviet women's liberation policies, Lenin boasted that "at countless gatherings of women in all the countries of the world, there will be messages of greeting for Soviet Russia which has begun the incredibly arduous but grand, truly grand work of emancipation."<sup>92</sup>

Soviet Russia's progressive policies contrasted to those in the birthplace of International Women's Day. In the United States, at the same time, the Red Scare was in full fury. Native-born socialists, such as Eugene V. Debs, five-time Socialist Party presidential candidate, were jailed under the Espionage Act of 1917.<sup>93</sup> Many foreign-born radicals, such as Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, were deported. Writing in a 1919 pamphlet about International Women's Day, Lenin, citing the United States in particular, excoriated "the capitalist gang [that] will rage and act the wild beast against the workers' revolution."<sup>94</sup>

The US, home of the first socialist-inspired women's day, was also the birthplace of another major women's holiday, which became a counter to International Women's Day. Mothers' Day was originally proposed in 1870 to promote pacifism by Julia Ward Howe, the author of the popular pro-Union US Civil War song "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Revived and reshaped in 1908 by the Methodist religious teacher Anna Jarvis, Mothers' Day was celebrated in US churches and Sunday schools the next year. In its emphasis on women's reproductive and domestic roles, it sharply contrasted with the socialist vision of equal and empowered women in all spheres of life. A joint resolution of the US Congress on 8 May 1914, endorsed by President Woodrow Wilson, proclaimed the second Sunday of May to be Mothers' Day. On that day all government buildings and private citizens were to display the national flag "as a public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country."<sup>95</sup>

By 1921, the center of gravity of International Women's Day had decisively shifted to the east. In the United States, although left groups continued to celebrate the socialist women's holiday, Mothers' Day held sway. In Germany, before World War I home of the largest socialist women's movement, whose leaders had proposed the first international women's holiday, the 1919 communist revolution had been crushed, and a "German" Mothers' Day gained prominence, especially on the right. As part of its aspirations to be the new and true revolutionary center, Soviet Russia in 1921 laid claim to a re-named and re-defined International Communist Women's Day. The holiday's growing popularity was noted ironically by its weary chief initiator. Writing to her son Kostia on 7 March 1928, Clara Zetkin remarked on the many demands on her time, declaring "I never should have invented International Women's Day in 1910."<sup>96</sup>

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## ◆ Notes

1. Ruth Kirsch, *Käthe Duncker: Aus ihrem Leben* (Käthe Duncker: From her life) (Berlin: Dietz Verlag Berlin, 1982), 6, 197.

2. Annelies Laschitz, "On the History of International Women's Day," *Women of the Whole World* 1 (1974): 14–17, 16. I am indebted to Kristen Ghodsee for this source.

3. Second International Conference of Socialist Women, <http://www.archive.org/details/International> (accessed 8 December 2010), 21.

4. For an example of the 1857 origins story, see "International Women's Day," on the United Nations Cyber School Bus site, [http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/womensday/pages/how\\_content\\_1.asp](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/womensday/pages/how_content_1.asp) (accessed 13 April 2011). The historian Rosalyn Baxandall claims to have seen an article about an 1857 women workers' demonstration in the *New York Herald*, but no longer has a copy of the newspaper. The *New York Times* archive for 8 March 1857 and dates immediately before and after has nothing about a women workers' demonstration.

5. See Liliane Kandel and Françoise Picq, "Le mythe des origins à propos de la journée internationale des femmes" (The myth of the origins of International Women's Day), *La Revue d'En Face* (The journal of the opposite side) 12 (Fall 1982): 67–80, 67–68; Françoise Picq, "Journée internationale des femmes: A la poursuite d'un mythe" (International Women's Day: Tracking a myth), *Travail, Genre et Société* (Work, gender and society) 3 (March 2000): 161–168, 161–162; Temma Kaplan, "On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day," *Feminist Studies* 11 (Spring 1985): 163–172, 163.

6. On the Chicago Woman's Day, see Renée Côté, Sylvie Dupont, et al., *La Journée internationale des femmes ou les vrais dates des mystérieuses origins du 8 de mars jusqu'ici embrouillés, truquées, oubliées: la clef des énigmes. La vérité historique* (International Women's Day or the true dates of the mysterious origins of March 8 up to now confused, faked, forgotten: The key to the enigmas. The real history) (Montreal: Editions du Remue-Ménage, 1984), as cited at <http://www.mmm2010.info/our-action/le-8-mars-2013-journee-internationale-des-femmes-a-la-recherche-de-la-memoire-perdue.html> (accessed December 16, 2010); the quote is on p. 1.

7. Joyce Stevens, *A History of International Women's Day in Words and Pictures* (Sydney, Australia: IWD Press, 1985), 6; Kaplan, "On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day," 165–166.

8. Kaplan, "On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day," 165–166.

9. Philip Foner, *Women and the American Labor Movement: From the First Trade Unions to the Present* (New York: Free Press, 1982), 154. See also Charles Sowerwine, "Socialism, Feminism, and the Socialist Women's Movement from the French Revolution to World War II," in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal, Susan Mosher Stuard, and Merry E. Wiesner (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 357–387, 371 ("At Zetkin's suggestion, the 1910 International Socialist Congress designated March 8 each year for International Women's Day").

10. The wildest right-wing speculation connects 8 March to the Jewish holiday of Purim (Jewish holidays are based on the lunar calendar and their Western calendar dates vary). For an example of the conspiracy theory, which alleges that the Jewish Clara Zetkin deliberately set the holiday to coincide with Purim, see Valery Melnikov, "Orthodox and Jews Will Not Celebrate 8 March This Year," *Radiotserkov* (Church radio), 6 March 2001. Zetkin was not of Jewish origin or religious in any way.

11. Stevens, *A History of International Women's Day*, 7; Kaplan, "On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day," 167.

12. Kaplan, "On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day," 167.



13. Ibid.; see also Kandel and Picq, "Le mythe des origines à propos de la journée internationale des femmes," 68; Alexandra Kollontai, *International Women's Day*, trans. Alix Holt (Highland Park: Sun Press, 1975). Originally published in 1920. See <http://www.marxists.org/archive/Kollontai/1920/womens-day.htm> (accessed 23 January 2007), 3.

14. Charles Sowerwine, *Sisters or Citizens? Women and Socialism in France since 1876* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 139.

15. Karen Honeycutt, "A Left-Wing Socialist and Feminist in Wilhelmian Germany" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1975), 440, fn. 278. On the interaction between socialist women and men, see Gary P. Steenson, *Not One Man! Not One Penny! German Social Democracy, 1863–1914* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1981). On Zetkin's position on women's suffrage, see Susan Zimmermann, "Klara Zetkin Goes International: How the 'Female International' of Socialist Women Related to Power and Inequality in the Inter-state and Domestic Order" (paper presented at the Conference of the International Federation for Research in Women's History, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 26 August 2010). See also Richard J. Evans, *Comrades and Sisters: Feminism, Socialism, and Pacifism in Europe, 1870–1945* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), passim, and *Proletarians and Politics: Socialism, Protest, and the Working Class in Germany Before the First World War* (New York: Wheatsheaf, 1990), 93–123.

16. Rosa Luxemburg, "Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle," <http://www.marxists.org/archive/draper/1976/women/4-luxemburg.html> (accessed 12 December 2010), 2–4, 2.

17. Kollontai, *International Women's Day*, 2–3 (title translations from German are taken from Kollontai's text).

18. For more on the subject of Russian women revolutionaries, see Robert McNeal, "Women in the Russian Radical Movement," *Journal of Social History* 5, no. 2 (1971–1972): 143–163; Barbara Alpern Engel, *Mothers and Daughters: Women of the Intelligentsia in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and *Five Sisters: Women Against the Tsar*, ed. Barbara Alpern Engel and Clifford Rosenthal (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1975).

19. My definition of full women's suffrage in this context is the unrestricted right to vote and the right to run for and hold elective office in a national entity. Although individual Western U.S. territories and states granted women universal suffrage, starting with the Wyoming (1869) and Utah (1870) Territories, US women as a whole did not win suffrage until 1920. New Zealand women gained suffrage in 1893, but did not win rights to elective office until 1919. Women of all races won the right to vote and run for office in South Australia in 1894, and Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania soon after, but the federal constitution of 1902 denied suffrage to aboriginal women and men. Aborigines did not win federal suffrage in Australia until 1962. Finland remained part of the Russian Empire until 1917. *Suffrage and Beyond: International Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Caroline Daley and Melanie Nolan (New York: New York University Press, 1994) is particularly helpful on the suffrage movements in Australia and New Zealand. Daley and Nolan include Finland, but not Russia, in their "Chronological List of Women's Suffrage Dates" (349–352). For more details about the Finnish struggle as connected to events in the Russian Empire, see Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild, "Women's Suffrage and Revolution in the Russian Empire, 1905–1917," *Aspasia* 1 (2007): 1–35, 3–5, reprinted in Karen Offen, ed., *Globalizing Feminisms, 1789–1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 257–274, 258–260, and *Equality and Revolution: Women's Rights in the Russian Empire, 1905–1917* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), 83–87.

20. Honeycutt, "A Left-Wing Socialist and Feminist in Wilhelmian Germany," 44.

21. Richard Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 253–254. The first US English translation of Bebel's 1879 *Die Frau und der Sozialismus* was published in 1904. See August Bebel, *Woman*

*under Socialism*, trans. from the original German of the 33d ed. Daniel De Leon (New York: New York Labor News Press, 1904). An authorized translation appeared in 1910. See August Bebel, *Woman and Socialism*, Jubilee 50th ed., authorized translation by Meta L. Stern (New York: Socialist Literature, 1910).

22. A. Mikhailova [Kollontai], "Zhenshchina-rabotnitsa na pervom feministkom kongresse v Rossii" (The woman worker at the first feminist congress in Russia), *Golos sotsial-demokrata* (Voice of the social democrat) 12 (1909): 6–7, 6. Kollontai fled first to Germany, and while there she wrote for *Die Gleichheit*. The journal, at first the organ of the German socialist women's movement, later became the official publication of the international socialist women's movement. Printed from 1890 to 1925 in Stuttgart, it was edited by Zetkin from 1892 to 1917. See Alexandra Kollontai, *Iz moei zhizni i raboty: vospominaniia i dnevniki* (From my life and work: Reminiscences and diaries) (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1974), 115, 380 fn. 46. For more information on the German socialist women's movement, see Werner Thönnessen, *The Emancipation of Women: The Rise and Decline of the Women's Movement in German Social Democracy, 1863–1933*, trans. Joris de Bres (London: Pluto Press, 1973); Jean Quataert, *Reluctant Feminists in German Social Democracy, 1885–1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Honeycutt, "A Left-Wing Socialist and Feminist in Wilhelmian Germany"; Gilbert Badia, *Clara Zetkin, Féministe sans frontières* (Clara Zetkin: Feminist Without Borders) (Paris: Les Éditions Ouvrières, 1993). On the interaction between Zetkin and feminists, see Karen Offen, *European Feminisms* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), esp. 456, fn. 55, 57.

23. For the early membership figures, see Beatrice Farnsworth, *Aleksandra Kollontai: Socialism, Feminism, and the Bolshevik Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 40. For the eve of World War I figures, see Sowerwine, "Socialism, Feminism, and the Socialist Women's Movement," 372.

24. Barbara Evans Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist: The Life of Aleksandra Kollontai* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 64–66; the quote is on p. 66.

25. See, for example, the description earlier in this article of the 23 February 1909 rally in New York City, at which one of the most prominent US feminists, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, shared the stage with socialist women activists such as Leonora O'Reilly.

26. Kollontai, *International Women's Day*, 2.

27. Stites, *Women's Liberation Movement*, 253; Philip S. Foner, *Women and the American Labor Movement* (New York: Free Press, 1979); Clara Zetkin, *Clara Zetkin, Selected Writings*, ed. Philip S. Foner (New York: International Publishers, 1984). The fullest study of the celebration of International Women's Day in Russia and the Soviet Union is Choi Chatterjee's *Celebrating Women: Gender, Festival Culture, and Bolshevik Ideology, 1910–1939* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002).

28. Ralph Carter Elwood, *Inessa Armand: Revolutionary and Feminist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 105; Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 168, fn. 38.

29. On the 1913 celebration, see Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 21–29. In her article, Kaplan claims that Alexandra Kollontai led the 1913 International Women's Day celebrations in Russia. As has already been discussed, Kollontai fled Russia in 1908, returning only in March 1917. See Kaplan, "On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day," 169.

30. Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 21–29; Sofia Serditova, *Bol'sheviki v bor'be za zhenskie proletarskie massy* (The Bolsheviks in the struggle for the proletarian women masses) (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1959), 88.

31. On the special issues, see Kollontai, *Iz moei zhizni*, 124; on *Pravda*, see Alexandra N. Grigor'eva-Alekseeva, "'Vpervye v Rossii'" (The first in Russia), in *Zhenshchiny v revoliutsii* (Women in the revolution), ed. Alexandra V. Artiukhina (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1959), 93–111, 96. On the extent of the celebrations, see Ekaterina Boch-

kareva and Serafima Liubimova. *Svetlyi put': kommunisticheskaia partiia Sovetskogo soiuz — boret'sya za svobodu, ravnopravie i schast'e zhenshchiny* (The bright path: The Communist Party of the Soviet Union—fighter for freedom, equal rights and the happiness of women) (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1967), 43. For an overview of International Women's Day in Russia before 1917, see Ruthchild, *Equality and Revolution*, 186–190.

32. M. Tikhomirova, "Zhenskii klub" (Women's Club), in Artiukhina, ed., *Zhenshchiny v revoliutsii*, 114–115; Serditova, *Bolsheviki*, 89; Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 28.

33. Konkordia Nikolaevna Samoilova was secretary of the editorial staff of *Pravda* from November 1912, and pushed for the inclusion of more articles for women. One of the organizers and a member of the first editorial collective of *Rabotnitsa*, she was arrested and jailed for this, returning to Petrograd only after the February Revolution, when she again became part of the editorial board of *Rabotnitsa*. After the Revolution she continued her active work, helped organize the First All-Russian Congress of Working and Peasant Women, lectured widely and wrote innumerable articles. In 1921, while plying the Volga in an "agitational steamship," Samoilova contracted cholera and died. Sources: Z.A. Evteeva, ed., *Vysshie zhenskie (Bestuzhevskie) kursy: Bibliograficheskii ukazatel'* (Higher Women's Bestuzhev courses: Bibliography) (Moscow: Kniga, 1966), 161; S.I. Strievskaiia, "Uchastie Bestuzhevok v revoliutsionnom dvizhenii" (The participation of Bestuzhev students in the revolutionary movement), in *Sankt-Peterburgskie vysshie zhenskie (Bestuzhevskie) Kursy (1878–1918 gg.)* (The St. Petersburg Higher Women's Bestuzhev courses [1878–1918]), ed. S.N. Valk (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta, 1965), 30–73, 47; Valentina Vavilina and Alexandra Artiukhina, ed., *Vsegda s vami: Sbornik posviashchennyi piatidesiatiletiu zhurnala "Rabotnitsa"* (Forever with us: Collection dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the journal "The woman worker") (Moscow: Pravda, 1964), 50–51; Serditova, *Bolsheviki*, 84.

34. Ruthchild, *Equality and Revolution*, 186.

35. On the police behavior, see Grigor'eva-Alekseeva, "Vperoye v Rossii," 97. On the celebration as a whole, see *ibid.*, 97–98; Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 21–28; Ruthchild, *Equality and Revolution*, 186–189. Margarita Nikolaevna Margulies-Aitova was a physician who, after her activity with the Women's Political Club, helped establish a club for working women, gave a series of lectures at an evening school for adult workers founded by Praskov'ia Ariian, and in 1911 helped found a clinic called Pomoshch' materiam (Mothers' Aid), which provided medical examinations for newborns and distributed sterilized milk and broth to needy mothers. In addition to her research and political activities, Margulies also penned a number of articles. See Praskov'ia B. Arian, ed., *Pervyi zhenskii kalendar' na 1914 god* (The first women's calendar for 1914), 323.

36. Anna Il'inichna Ulianova-Elizarova was part of the revolutionary movement since 1886, a member of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) since 1898, from 1900 to 1905 part of the *Iskra* organization, from 1904 to 1906 treasurer of the St. Petersburg Bolshevik Committee. From 1912 to 1914, she worked on *Pravda* (Truth), *Prosveshchenie* (Enlightenment), and was part of *Rabotnitsa's* first editorial collective. In 1917, she served as the secretary of the editorial board of *Pravda* and from 1918 to 1921 worked in the Commissariat of Education. She helped found the Lenin Institute. Sources: Vladimir I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress, 1970), vol. 37, 631; Vavilina and Artiukhina, *Vsegda s vami*, 44–46. Alexandra Nikolaevna Grigor'eva-Alekseeva (b. 1888): an activist in the textile workers union, after the October Revolution she was decorated with the Order of the Red Banner for her work in the Bolshevik underground. Sources: Artiukhina, *Zhenshchiny v revoliutsii*, 93; Serditova, *Bolsheviki*, 88.

37. Grigor'eva-Alekseeva, "Vperoye v Rossii," 98. For other accounts of the day, see "Zhenskii den'" (Women's day), *Zhenskoe delo* (Woman's cause) (1 March 1913): 1–2; "Pervyi zhenskii den' russkikh rabotnits'" (The first women's day of Russian women workers), *Zhenskii vestnik*

(The woman's herald) (March 1913): 86–87. Soviet accounts of International Women's Day celebrations emphasized the Bolsheviks' leadership role to the exclusion of everyone else.

38. Bochkareva and Liubimova, *Svetlyi put'*, 43.

39. Elwood, *Inessa Armand*, 105; Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 168, fn. 38.

40. Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 35 and 172, fn. 81.

41. *Ibid.*, 34.

42. *Ibid.*, 35 and 172, fn. 81.

43. Maria Pokrovskaia was a prominent Russian feminist, pioneering woman physician, author of pamphlets on urban health and poverty, publisher of *Zhenskii vestnik*, founder of one of the first women's political parties in the world, the *Zhenskaia progressionaia partiia* (Women's Progressive Party) in 1906. Pokrovskaia remained in Russia after the revolution, working as a factory doctor.

44. The *Domostroi* was a late medieval (1566) treatise on household management, supposedly written by the monk Silvestre during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, in which, among other things, the author advocated permissible ways of beating women. See Carolyn Johnston Pouncy, ed. and trans., *The Domostroi: Rules for Russian Households in the Time of Ivan the Terrible* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). Pokrovskaia's comments are from her article "Kak rabochie ponimaiut feminism" (How workers understand feminism), *Zhenskii vestnik* (March 1913): 67–68.

45. K. Samoilova, "V ob'edinenii—zalog pobedy" (In unity—the guarantee of victory), in Artiukhina, ed., *Zhenshchiny v revoliutsii*, 104–107; Vavilina and Artiukhina, *Vsegda s vami*, 45.

46. Stites, *Women's Liberation Movements*, 256.

47. Bochkareva and Liubimova, *Svetlyi put'*, 44–45; Serditova, *Bolsheviki*, 96–99.

48. See Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 34, for information on the feminist celebration of International Women's Day. Serditova, *Bolsheviki*, 112, 122–123.

49. Bochkareva and Liubimova, *Svetlyi put'*, 43.

50. The quotes from *Rabotnitsa* are in Vavilina and Artiukhina, *Vsegda s vami*, 32–33.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 24.

53. On *Rabotnitsa's* appeal, see S. Stal', "Istoriia zhurnala 'Rabotnitsa'" (The history of the journal "Woman worker"), in Artiukhina, *Zhenshchiny v revoliutsii*, 108–111; on Bolshevik grumbling, see Vavilina and Artiukhina, *Vsegda s vami*, 45. On the history of the pre-war *Rabotnitsa*, see Vavilina and Artiukhina, *Vsegda s vami*, 36, and Stal', "Istoriia zhurnala," 111. For an overall discussion of International Women's Day and *Rabotnitsa*, see Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 29–35; Stites, *Women's Liberation Movements*, 253–254; and Linda Edmondson, *Feminism in Russia, 1900–1917* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), 153.

54. On the split in the socialist movement, see Sowerwine, *Sisters or Citizens?*, 143–144.

55. Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist*, 89–91.

56. The quote is from "Bravo, Our Women! International Conference Held," *Labour Leader*, 8 April 1915, 7, cited in John S. Partington, "The International Women's Secretary in Wartime: Clara Zetkin and Britain, 1912–1915" (paper presented at the Conference of the International Federation for Research in Women's History, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 26 August 2010), 19. For a fuller description of the 1915 *International Congress of Women*, see Jane Addams, Emily G. Balch, and Alice Hamilton, *Women at the Hague: the International Congress of Women and Its Results*, Intro. Harriet Hyman Alonso (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

57. Serditova, *Bolsheviki*, 112, 122–123.

58. Boris Uralnis, *Wars and Population* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971), 62–65, 85.

59. Alfred G. Meyer, "The Impact of World War I on Russian Women's Lives," in *Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation*, ed. Barbara Evans Clements, Barbara Alp-

ern Engel, and Christine D. Worobec (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 208–224, 215.

60. E.N. Burdzhhalov, *Vtoraia Russkaia revoliutsiia: Vosstanie v Petrograde* (The second Russian Revolution: The uprising in Petrograd) (Moscow: Nauka, 1967), 119. For more on Russian women's activism in February and March 1917, see Ruthchild, *Equality and Revolution*, 218–232.

61. V.N. Kaiurov, "Shest' dnei fevral'skoi revoliutsii" (The six days of the February Revolution), *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia* (Proletarian revolution), 1, 13 (1923): 158, as cited in D.A. Longley, "The *Mezhraionka*, the Bolsheviks and International Women's Day: In Response to Michael Melançon," *Soviet Studies* 41, no. 4 (October 1989): 625–645, 632.

62. Leon Trotsky, *Istoriia russkoi revoliutsii. Tom I. Fevral'skaia revoliutsiia*. (The history of the Russian Revolution. Volume 1. The February Revolution) (Berlin: Granit, 1931), 126.

63. Leon Trotsky, *The Russian Revolution*, ed. F.W. Dupee (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959), 97.

64. For one example of the ongoing debate, see Michael Melançon, "Who Wrote What and When? Proclamations of the February Revolution in Petrograd, 23 February–1 March 1917," *Soviet Studies* 40, no. 3 (July 1988): 479–500; James D. White, "The February Revolution and the Bolshevik Vyborg District Committee (In Response to Michael Melançon)," *Soviet Studies* 41, no. 4 (October 1989): 602–624; Longley, "Mezhraionka, the Bolsheviks and International Women's Day," 625–645; Michael Melançon, "International Women's Day, the Finland Station Proclamation, and the February Revolution: A Reply to Longley and White," *Soviet Studies* 42 no. 3 (July 1990): 583–589; and Melançon, *The Socialist Revolutionaries*, especially 226–243. For another perspective, see Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *The February Revolution: Petrograd, 1917* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1981), 215–231.

65. See for example, Alexander Rabinowitch, *Prelude to Revolution: The Petrograd Bolsheviks and the July 1917 Uprising* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), who cites International Women's Day as a time when "disturbances broke out among long lines of housewives waiting for bread" (25). See also Marc Ferro, *The Russian Revolution of February 1917*, trans. J.L. Richards (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1972), who writes that "the parties and the trade-unions were trying to organize a demonstration for February 23, called Workers Day, an organizing committee had been put together under the aegis of the Unitarians" (36). Richard Pipes in his *Russian Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990) is the only established scholar to link the International Women's Day demonstration with demands for equal rights for women in the one paragraph he devotes to the 23 February demonstrations (274–275). For another example, see Diane Koenker and William G. Rosenberg, who in their *Strikes and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) cite Leopold Haimson's work to argue that: "The demonstrations of angry women on February 23, International Women's Day, gave a vital impetus to unfolding events ... But the real force for change came from thousands of Vyborg metalworkers" (96). Rex Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) provides a similar interpretation: "Once the women started the demonstrations, workers at the metal-working factories eagerly took them up, with more overtly political slogans and goals" (32). Christopher Read, *From Tsar to Soviets: the Russian People and Their Revolution, 1917–21* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), calls International Women's Day "one of Russia's most widely celebrated socialist festivals," but then minimizes its significance in February, writing only that: "Tens of thousands of working people, men and women, poured into the streets" (43). Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *The February Revolution*, does note the role of women in the initial stage of the Revolution, but then moves on (215–231). See also the debate about the spontaneity of the 23 February demonstrations among Melançon, Longley, and White cited above. The Soviet historian E.N. Burdzhhalov does acknowledge in more detail the role of women ("It was the

women who initiated action in most cases, primarily working women from the textile mills"). See E.N. Burdzhakov, *Russia's Second Revolution: The February 1917 Uprising in Petrograd*, ed. and trans. Donald J. Raleigh (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 106 for the quote, and 104–122 for the first day of the Revolution. For an excellent critique of this approach and a much more nuanced approach to the role of the woman worker in 1917, see Jane McDermid and Anna Hillyar, *Midwives of the Revolution: Female Bolsheviks and Women Workers in 1917* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999).

66. Michael Melançon accepts Shliapnikov's claim, arguing that it was not indifference but lack of "printing capacity [*tekhnika*]" that foiled the production of more leaflets. See Melançon "Who Wrote What and When?" 480.

67. The leaflet is in Longley, "Mezhraionka, the Bolsheviks and International Women's Day," Appendix F ("Pечатnyi listok Peterburgskogo Mezhdunarodnogo Komiteta posviashchennyi Mezhdunarodnomu dnu rabotnits—23 fevralia 1917g") (The leaflet of the Petersburg Inter-regional committee dedicated to International Women Workers' Day—February 23, 1917). Hasegawa disputes Shliapnikov's claim, arguing that it was not lack of a printing press, but the Russian Bureau of the Bolshevik Central Committee's policies directing activists "not to divert unnecessary energy for this relatively insignificant occasion" (See Hasegawa, *February Revolution*, 216). Lenin voiced concerns about the "backwardness" of women in a conversation with Clara Zetkin, in which he compared women with "little worms": "The backwardness of women, their lack of understanding for the revolutionary ideals of the man, decrease his joy and determination in fighting. They are like little worms, which unseen, slowly but surely rot and corrode." From Clara Zetkin, "Reminiscences of Lenin," in *The Family in the USSR*, ed. Rudolf Schlesinger (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1949), 78, cited in Thomas G. Schrand, "Socialism in One Gender: Masculine Values in the Stalin Revolution," in *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture*, ed. Barbara Evans Clements, Rebecca Friedman, and Dan Healey (Houndsmills and New York: Palgrave, 2002), 194–209, 206 fn. 5.

68. The quotes are from the leaflet reproduced in Longley, "Mezhraionka, the Bolsheviks and International Women's Day," Appendix F (emphasis added—RR). Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, discusses "The Two Stories of the February Revolution," the title of her Chapter Two, on pages 37–58.

69. Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 47.

70. *Ibid.*, 47; Hasegawa, *February Revolution*, 219.

71. Hasegawa, *February Revolution*, 220–221.

72. Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 49.

73. "The First Declaration of the Provisional Government," in *The Russian Provisional Government, 1917*, ed. Robert Browder and Alexander Kerensky (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), vol. 1, 158; "To the People of Petrograd and Russia from the Soviet of Workers' Deputies," vol. 1, 78, *Izvestiia Petrogradskogo Soveta rabochikh i soldatskikh deputatov*, (News of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies) 1 (February 28, 1917): 2.

74. Robert Drumm, "Bolshevik and Feminist Attempts to Organize Women, 1917" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the New England Slavic Association, Storrs, CT, April 1976), 10.

75. Maria Chekhova was a leading socialist feminist. Independent of any political party, Chekhova was a founder of the Women's Equal Rights Union in 1905, and editor of its journal *Soiuz zhenshchin* (Union of women), 1907–1909. After the demise of the Union and the journal, she joined the Liga ravnopraviia zhenshchin (League for Women's Equal Rights) in 1909, and continued her public feminist activism until the Bolshevik Revolution. She remained in Russia, wrote her never-published memoirs, and died in 1937.

76. For the First Declaration of the Provisional Government and its statement on suffrage, which supports universal, direct, equal, and secret suffrage, but does not specifically mention women's suffrage, see Browder and Kerensky, *Russian Provisional Government 1917*, vol. 1, 158. For Kerensky's commitment to the principle of women's rights, see *ibid.*, 173. The interview is cited in Dale Ross, "The Role of the Women of Petrograd in War, Revolution and Counter-Revolution, 1914–1921" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 1974), 168–169. Chekhova's description of the Kerensky episode is in Tsentral'nyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv Moskvyy (Central State Historical Archive of Moscow) (TsIAM), fond 2251, opis 2, delo 247, 1–4. For actions abolishing the death penalty, see Browder and Kerensky, *Russian Provisional Government 1917*, vol. 1, 176, and for other early actions of the Provisional Government, see also 161–167.

77. Chekhova's archive includes the text of the telegram as well as her perspective on the interaction. See TsIAM, fond 2251, opis 2, delo 247, 1–4.

78. Alexandra Kollontai, "Avtobiograficheskii ocherk" (Autobiographical essay), *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia* (Proletarian revolution) 3 (1921): 261–302, 295.

79. See the rubric "The Source" in this volume for Olga Zakuta's description of the demonstration of 19 March 1917 in revolutionary Petrograd.

80. On the elections, see L.G. Protasov, *Vserossiiskoe uchreditel'noe sobranie: Istoriia rozhdeniia i gibeli* (The All-Russian Constituent Assembly: The history of its birth and death) (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1997). On the first and only session of the Constituent Assembly, see Mark Vishniak, *Vserossiiskoe uchreditel'noe sobranie* (The All-Russian Constituent Assembly) (Paris: Sovremennye Zapiski, 1932), 98–116. For more on women and the elections of 1917, see Ruthchild, *Equality and Revolution*, 232–238.

81. Alexandra Kollontai, *Mezhdunarodnyi den' rabotnits* (International women workers' day) (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1920). See <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1920/womens-day.htm> (accessed 22 December 2010). The "politically backward" quote is on p. 4.

82. Progress on women's suffrage has extended through most of the twentieth century and beyond. German and Austrian women won the vote in 1918; British women won limited suffrage in 1918; US women won full suffrage in 1920. French women did not gain the vote until 1945; in China and India women gained suffrage in 1949; in Switzerland the vote was extended to women in 1971; Kuwaiti women won the vote in 2005. See Daley and Nolan, *Suffrage and Beyond*, 349–352, and [http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage/a/intl\\_timeline\\_3.htm](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage/a/intl_timeline_3.htm) (accessed 25 June 2011).

83. Kollontai, *Mezhdunarodnyi den' rabotnits*, 8.

84. *Ibid.*

85. The Workers' Opposition, led by Kollontai and Alexander Shliapnikov, protested increasing authoritarianism in the Party and advocated for the leading role of trade unions in directing the economy. The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party in 1921 charged the group with factionalism, and its leaders narrowly avoided being expelled from the Party. In 1923 Kollontai was appointed ambassador to Norway, becoming the first female ambassador in the world. This enabled the Soviet leaders to score a propaganda coup and also remove her as an opposition force inside Soviet Russia. For more on the workers' opposition, see Robert V. Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), *passim*. For Kollontai and the Workers Opposition, see Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist*, 178–204. Beatrice Farnsworth devotes considerable attention to the role of Bolshevik women and the relationship between Zetkin and Kollontai. See her *Aleksandra Kollontai*, 234–285.

86. Farnsworth, *Aleksandra Kollontai*, 234–235.

87. The Bolsheviks expected their revolution to be the first of many, but the uprisings in other countries were short-lived, and the reaction gained force. In Germany, Zetkin's comrades and friends Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were brutally murdered in 1919 on the orders of the Social Democratic Chancellor Ebert and elements of the military seeking to prevent a Bolshevik-style revolution. Zetkin found refuge in the Soviet Union, where she became a staunch supporter of the Bolsheviks. See Honeycutt, "A Left-Wing Socialist and Feminist," 460; and Badia, *Clara Zetkin*, 302. On Zetkin's state when she arrived in Moscow in the fall of 1920, see Angelica Balabanoff, *My Life as a Rebel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 288.

88. Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist*, 215–221; Farnsworth, *Aleksandra Kollontai*, 265–266.

89. For more on Kollontai's role in the Comintern Congress, see Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist*, 204–209. On Kollontai and Zetkin's relationship, see Farnsworth, *Aleksandra Kollontai*, 249–266. On Zetkin's uncritical support of the Bolsheviks during this time, see Balabanoff, *My Life as a Rebel*, 288–290.

90. Côté, Dupont, et al, *La Journée internationale des femmes*, 164. The authors reproduce the first page of "Der Internationale Kommunistische Frauentag," *Die Kommunistische Fraueninternationale*, January/February 1922, 1. On the sweltering heat, see Klara Zetkin, *Vospominaniia o Lenine* (Memories of Lenin), [http://www.hrono.info/libris/lib\\_c/cetkinlenin.php](http://www.hrono.info/libris/lib_c/cetkinlenin.php) (accessed 20 March 2011): "The Third World Congress of our International and the Second International Congress of Communist Women brought me in 1921 for the second time to Moscow, where I remained for a rather long time. What a difficult time! Difficult not only because the meeting took place in the second half of June and the first half of July, when Moscow's shining gold church domes were bathed in hot sunlight, but because of the atmosphere that ruled among the parties in the Comintern." On the Bulgarian delegate's resolution and the Congress, see Siegfried Scholze, *Der Internationale Frauentag einst und heute: geschichtlicher Abriss und weltweite Tradition vom Entstehen bis zur Gegenwart* (International Women's Day then and now: Historical summary and worldwide tradition from its emergence to the present (Berlin: Trafo-Verl. Weist, 2001), 49.

91. For an insightful examination of Soviet leaders' complex attitudes toward women and gender, see Elizabeth A. Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade: Gender Politics in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997). Beatrice Farnsworth cites recently opened archival material to show how Kollontai employed gendered survival strategies in her dealings with Stalin. See Beatrice Farnsworth, "Conversing with Stalin, Surviving the Terror: The Diaries of Aleksandra Kollontai and the Internal Life of Politics," *Slavic Review* 69, no. 4 (Winter 2010): 944–970.

92. V.I. Lenin, *Soviet Power and the Status of Women. International Women's Day* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), 13.

93. Debs' ten-year sentence was commuted by President Warren G. Harding in 1921. See Nick Salvatore, *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 327–330.

94. Lenin, *Soviet Power and the Status of Women*, 13. Mari Jo Buhle provides an example of how International Women's Day was re-framed by communists in the United States to de-emphasize the suffragists' role and make "Lenin the prophet of women's emancipation." See Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism, 1870–1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 321.

95. Susan Tracy Rice, compiler, and Robert Haven Schauffler, ed., *Mothers' Day. Its History, Origin, Celebration, Spirit, and Significance as Related in Prose and Verse* (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1915). The text of the proclamation is on p. 3; the history of its origins and first celebrations is on pp. 5–6.

96. Laschitz, "On the History of International Women's Day," 14.