GENDERING SOVIET DISSENT: HOW AND WHY THE WOMAN QUESTION WAS EXCLUDED FROM THE AGENDA OF SOVIET DISSIDENTS (1964 – 1982).

By

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Abstract

This thesis is devoted to the phenomenon of Soviet dissent during the years when Leonid Brezhnev was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1964 – 1982). This thesis aspires to contribute to the historiography of Soviet dissent by considering it as a complex and diversified phenomenon, by analyzing the gender dimension of Soviet liberal dissent and by placing the activities of dissenters in the wider context of the Cold War competition.

In this thesis I focused on Soviet liberal dissent and explored the questions why the so-called "woman question" was excluded from the agenda of Soviet dissidents, why women are excluded from the historiography of Soviet dissent and how the Cold War competition between the Soviet Union and the United States of America affected these issues. Based on research in the Open Society Archives in Budapest, I argued in my thesis that the Cold War and the situation at the international arena had and still have a profound impact on Soviet history, and particularly, on the history of Soviet oppositional movements. Moreover, I argue that the fact that almost all Soviet dissidents ignored the woman question was preconditioned by both the domestic situation in the Soviet Union and the global situation in the international arena, and that these two structural levels should be considered together. More broadly, I also tried to explore how the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union affected the ways, in which the history of the USSR and state socialism is constructed in contemporary historiography, and to challenge the approach that blurs more than seventy years of Soviet history into ahistorical sameness and replaces it with the image of Stalin's totalitarian rule.

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Introduction

This thesis analyses the phenomenon of Soviet dissent in the Soviet Union during the years of Leonid Brezhnev (1964 – 1982), the so-called Era of stagnation. Scholars widely agree on the significance of Soviet dissent for the development of the human rights movement in the USSR and the liberalization (and even dissolution) of the Soviet Union. The work of the people who tried to attract attention to the violation of human rights in the Soviet Union challenged Soviet authorities' monopoly on the truth and provided alternatives for the development of the country. However, the main body of historiography considers the phenomenon of Soviet dissent almost exclusively as liberal dissent, and the activities of liberal dissidents are surrounded by myths about the "heroic dissidents"[1] that for a long time impeded critical historical analysis. This thesis aspires to move forward towards a re-thinking of Soviet dissent by considering it as a complex and diversified phenomenon; it does so by analyzing the gender dimension of Soviet liberal dissent and by placing the activities of dissenters in the wider context of the Cold War competition.

Despite the fact that women actively participated in the Soviet dissident movement, they are mostly excluded from the mainstream narrative about heroic Soviet dissent. This situation is not unique: as Shana Penn pointed out in her 2005 book *Solidarity's Secret: the women who defeated communism in Poland,* women are also excluded from the historiography about Poland's Solidarity, although, as the author convincingly shows, they were active participants in the movement.[2] But according to historian Francisca de Haan, "the question is not only who or what were excluded, but what worldview was constructed as a result."[3] The exclusion of women from the main body of historiography of Soviet dissent and the exclusion of the so-called woman

[1] Ann Komaromi, "The Material Existence of Samizdat," *Slavic Review* 63/3 (2004): 597, 599-600.
[2] Shana Penn, *Solidarity's Secret: the women who defeated communism in Poland* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2005).
[3] Francisca de Haan, "Eugenie Cotton, Pak-Den-ai and Claudia Jones: Rethinking Transnational Feminism and International Politics," to be published in *Journal of Women's History* 25/4 (2013).

question[4] from the activities of the majority of Soviet dissidents reflects not only a misogynist attitude towards women that existed and still exists in the Russian and Western societies, but also important and manifold legacies of the Cold War and, especially, of the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

In this thesis I claim, first of all, that, because of the Cold War competition and subsequent dissolution of the USSR, the phenomenon of Soviet dissent (and all oppositional activities in the Soviet Union) was reduced in the main body of historiography to Soviet liberal dissent with a focus on human rights (understood by liberal dissidents mainly as civil and political rights). Liberal dissidents were constructed in the Western mass media and Western research as male liberal oppositionists who shared Western values, which excluded not only women, but also all other types of oppositionists from the historical narratives. Secondly, I claim that the fact that almost all Soviet dissidents ignored the woman question was preconditioned by both the domestic situation in the Soviet Union and the global situation in the international arena, and that these two structural levels should be considered together in order to answer the main research questions of this thesis.

This thesis aspires to contribute to the history of Soviet dissent and Soviet oppositional movements in general, and to approach this phenomenon from a gender perspective, which was never thoroughly done before. In this work, firstly, I explore women's multiple roles in the Soviet dissident movement, and, broadly speaking, consider the interplay between men's and women's roles within liberal dissent, and contribute to the discussion about women's exclusion from historical narratives about Soviet dissent. Moreover, in this work I consider the reasons why Soviet dissidents almost unanimously ignored the woman question. Secondly, this thesis aspires to take into account global factors and especially the Cold War and to explore how the

[4] The term "woman question" is usually connected with the discussions in the second half of the 19th century about the role and place of women in the family and society. However, the term was actively used before and after the Great October Revolution of 1917 in Russia (for example, see Alexandra Kollontai "The Social Basis of the Woman Question") and during the Brezhnev years in the Soviet mass media to discuss women's place in Soviet society and family and women's problems. Therefore I believe that it is appropriate use the term "the woman question" for the goals of this thesis.

competition between the Eastern and Western Blocs affected Soviet oppositional activities and, particularly, Soviet liberal dissent. Thirdly, I believe that this work is a step towards the "normalization" of Soviet history. The foundation of the international Memorial to the victims of communism, opened in Washington in 2007 and dedicated "to commemorate the more than 100 million victims of communism" suggests that Cold War thinking still greatly affects the way how communism and the Soviet Union are constructed in today's world.[5] By asking normal historical questions about the allegedly "abnormal" Soviet society I want to challenge the narrative that replaces more that 70 years of Soviet history with the image of Stalin's totalitarian state, the "Evil Empire."

It is also important to highlight that it is the transnational perspective that made my analysis possible. By now, gender has not yet been incorporated fully in the international history because of the dominant focus in that field on national histories. So, I believe that my thesis is also a step towards more complex understanding of the Cold War history. Therefore this thesis, broadly defined, is devoted to the phenomenon of Soviet dissent; narrowly defined, it explores the gender dimension of Soviet liberal dissent during the years of Leonid Brezhnev and studies the impact of the Cold War competition between the Soviet Union and the United States on the activities and image of Soviet dissidents.

Therefore the research questions for this thesis are:

- Why did Soviet dissidents almost entirely ignore the so-called woman question?
- Why are women excluded from the historical narratives about Soviet dissent?
- How did the Cold War competition between the Soviet Union and the United States of America affect the phenomenon of Soviet dissent?

In order to answer the research questions the work is structured as followed. In the introduction I locate the main research questions for this thesis. Subsequently I discuss the body of literature that is of crucial importance for the research. The principal fields include the history

[5] "About the Foundation," Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, http://www.victimsofcommunism.org/about/, accessed 12.02.2013.

of the Cold War and détente, the gender order in the Soviet Union and the historiography of Soviet dissent and dissidents (the main characteristics of the above mentioned fields will be discussed further in the chapter). Finally I will elaborate on the methodology and sources that I used for my research.

Following the introduction, in the first chapter I will discuss the major theoretical problems significant for this thesis. I will consider the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the New Cold War historiography as one of the most important factors that affected the way in which Soviet history is written today. Further in the first chapter I will also consider the debates about the gender order in the Soviet Union (I believe they were and are an important part of the Cold War and post-Cold War gender competition) and the phenomenon of Soviet dissent.

In the second chapter I will provide the historical background necessary for my work. First, I will consider the origins, course and consequences of the period of détente, which is an important international context that helps to understand the domestic situation in the Soviet Union and the phenomenon of Soviet dissent. Second, I will provide information about the domestic situation in the Soviet Union during the years of Leonid Brezhnev, the so-called Era of Stagnation, and, finally, I will elaborate on the gender order in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev years and on the re-opening of the woman question. I claim in this chapter that the re-opening of the woman question in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev years was connected not only with the domestic situation in the country, but also with the international context.

Chapter three is devoted specifically to the phenomenon of Soviet dissent. First, I will consider the histories of Soviet dissent and claim that the main body of historiography constructed Soviet dissent almost exclusively as liberal dissent. Then I will analyze some documents of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, one of the best-known Soviet dissident groups, founded in 1976, to show how Soviet liberal dissidents considered women's rights and problems. Subsequently, I will analyze the emergence of the feminist samizdat magazine *Женщина и Россия* [Woman and Russia] published in 1979 and, finally, will consider the

representation of the Soviet dissidents in Soviet and Western printed mass media. The articles in Western mass media on Soviet dissent were among the first accounts of this phenomenon and I believe that they greatly affected the way in which dissidents were constructed in the historiography. I claim that the absence of women in the narratives about the heroic Soviet dissent in the mass media was an important factor contributing women's exclusion from the historical narratives.

In the fourth chapter I will consider the domestic factors for excluding the woman question from the Soviet dissidents' agenda. Among the most important factors I include the patriarchal structure of the Soviet family and society and the misogynist attitude of male dissidents, the influential ideological assumption that the woman question had been "solved" in the Soviet Union, and therefore the gender equality problem did not exist (although the Brezhnev years witnessed a revived attention of the Soviet authorities towards the woman question), and women's relatively advanced position in Soviet society.

Finally, in the chapter fiveI will discuss the external factors for excluding the woman question from the Soviet dissidents' agenda. First of all, I will elaborate on the Cold War competition at the "gender battlefield" and claim that the fact that the Soviet Union was at the forefront of the promotion of women's rights internationally[6] was an important factor that excluded the woman question from dissidents' activities. Secondly, I will elaborate on the relations between the West and Soviet dissidents (and especially liberal dissidents) to demonstrate how these relations affected the topics that were constructed as the main focus of Soviet dissidents.

Cold War historiography

[6] I follow and support the argument made by Francisca de Haan and Yana Knopova; see Yana Knopova, *The Soviet Union and the international domain of women's rights and struggles: a theoretical framework and a case study of the Soviet Women's Committee (1941-1991),* CEU Gender Studies Department master theses; 2011/21 (Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2011); Francisca De Haan, "Continuing Cold War Paradigms in Western Historiography of Transnational Women's Organisations: the case of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF)," *Women's History Review* 19/4 (2010).

According to the realist paradigm that dominated in the field of International Relations and Cold War history since the end of the Second World War, security is the main element of interstate relations, and military resources are the foremost bases of power.[7] Therefore the main body of literature devoted to the Cold War explores the arms race, military, economic and space competition, expansion, et cetera.[8] From the 1980s onward, historians have started to study cultural dimensions of the Cold War. However, even in the post-Cold War histories "superpower summitry and the nuclear arms race are particularly privileged."[9]

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War preconditioned the emergence of the so-called New Cold War History that "in its essence [is] multiarchival in research and multipolar in analyses, and, in the cases of some of its best practitioners, multicultural in its ability to understand different and sometimes opposing mindsets."[10] Even though not all myths and "naïve impressions" regarding the Cold War were overcome within the field of New Cold War History, some historians recently acknowledged the importance of alternative dimensions of the Cold War such as gender and race that can challenge the mainstream narrative about the Cold War.[11]

At the same time, research on the gender dimension of the Cold War still occupies a marginal position in the Cold War historiography although, as Francisca de Haan puts it, "[g]ender was one of the key components in the Cold War discourse."[12] Researches devoted to the gender dimension of the Cold War include Susan E Reid's articles that explores the famous "kitchen debates,"[13] Susan Bridger's chapter on Valentina Tereshkova space flight in the book

[7] Jan Zielonka, "Europe's security: a great confusion,"*International Affairs* 67/1 (1991): 127-137.
[8] David S. Painter, *The Cold War: An International History* (London: Routledge, 1999); John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War: 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).
[9] Barbara J. Falk, "Resistance and Dissent in Central and Eastern Europe: An Emerging Historiography," East European Politics and Societies, 25/2 (2011): 330.
[10] Odd Arne Westad, "Introduction: Reviewing the Cold War" in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory,* (ed.) Odd Arne Westad (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 5.
[11] For instance, see Melvyn P. Leffler, "The Cold War: What do "We Now Know?" *American Historical Review* 104/2 (1999).
[12] Francisca de Haan, "Women as the "Motor of Modern Life, Women's work in Europe west and eat since 1945" in *Women and Gender in Postwar Europe, From Cold War to European Union* in (eds.) Joanna Regulska and Bonnie G. Smith (London: Routledge, 2012), 88.
[13] Susan E. Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review* 61/2 (2002).

Women in the Khrushchev Era[14] and Francisca de Haan's article "Continuing Cold War Paradigms in Western Historiography of Transnational Women's Organizations: the case of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF)."[15]

The gender Order in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev years

The gender order and the woman questionin the Soviet Union is another field that is of great relevance for this thesis. A substantial body of literature discusses the role of the Revolution in Russian women's lives and its impact on the gender order in the country,[16] the role of collectivization and industrialization,[17] the problems of Soviet working women and their participation in political life.[18]

However, Melanie Ilič states that little has been written about the gender order and Soviet women in the Khrushchev years, despite the fact that this period is of crucial importance for understanding the development of the gender order in the Soviet Union.[19] While Melanie Ilič's observation is correct, even less attention has been devoted to gender aspects of the Brezhnev years of "stagnation." There is no monograph or volume entirely devoted to this issue. This situation can be explained,at least partially,by the fact that Gorbachev's label for this period, namely the Era of Stagnation, made it less attractive for historians than the turbulent times of the Revolution, Stalin's collectivization, industrialization and terror, Khrushchev's "Thaw" and voluntarism and Gorbachev's Perestroika and Glasnost.[20] Recently historians have started to re-evaluate the Brezhnev era and new volumes on this period have emerged.[21] However, the gender

[14] Susan Bridger, "The Cold War and the Cosmos: Valentina Tereshkova and the First Woman's Space Flight" in *Women in the Khrushchev Era,* (ed.) Melanie Ilič (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
[15] de Haan, "Continuing Cold War Paradigms."
[16] Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social life, 1917-1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Barbara Evans Clements, *Bolshevik Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[17] Goldman, *Women at the Gates*; Melanie Ilič, *Women in the Stalin Era* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
[18] Michael Paul Sacks, *Women's Work in Soviet Russia: Continuity in the Midst of Change* (Westport: Praeger, 1976); Gail W. Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society: Equality, Development and Social changes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
[19] Melanie Ilič, "Introduction" in *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, (eds.) Melanie Ilič, Susan E. Reid and Lynne Attwood (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 1.
[20] Edwin Bacon, "Reconsidering Brezhnev" in *Brezhnev Reconsidered,* (eds.) E. Bacon, M. Sandle (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2002.), 1-2.
[21] For example, Bacon, Sandle, *Brezhnev Reconsidered*.

dimension is not yet a part of this re-evaluation. At the same time, some accounts of the roles and places of women in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev years can be found in works devoted to women in the Soviet Union. For instance Mary Buckley in her 1989 book *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union* provides detailed information on this issue.[22]

Historiography of Soviet Dissent and Dissidence

The phenomenon of Soviet dissent has been widely studied and a substantial amount of literature is devoted to this subject in both Western and Russian historiography.[23] However, it is important to point out that in the West the interest in Soviet dissent was largely determined by the logic of the Cold War ideological struggle. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and the Prague spring of 1968 significantly increased the interest in this phenomenon in the West, but the first accounts about dissent came not from academic circles, but from journalists and émigrés.[24] First and foremost, dissidents in their writings were constructed as a power that could weaken the Soviet state. The end of the Cold War and the emergence of the New Cold War historiography challenged the "totalitarian" approach of Sovietology;[25] however, Cold War legacies still greatly influence the ways in which the history of Soviet dissent is written. Moreover, the number of research devoted to this issue decreased significantly after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

One should also highlight that former dissidents wrote the majority of works published on this issue in the Russian language which, on the one hand, provided historians with "first hand" accounts but, on the other hand, meant that the Cold War discourses about the Soviet Union as the "Evil Empire," generated in the countries of the Western Bloc, are usually reflected

[22] Mary Buckley, *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989).*
[23] For Western accounts see Abraham Rothberg, *The heirs of Stalin: dissidence and the Soviet regime, 1953-1970* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972); Rudolf L. Tökés, *Dissent in the USSR: Politics, Ideology, and People* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), Marshall S. Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); For Russian accounts see Людмила Алексеева, *История инакомыслия в СССР: новейший период.* М.: РИЦ «Зацепа». – 2001. [Ludmila Alekseeva, *History of Dissent in the USSR: the newest period* (Moscow: Zatsepa, 2001)]; Andrei Sakharov, *Memoirs* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992); Elena Bonner, *Alone Together* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988).
[24] Falk, "Resistance and Dissent in Central and Eastern Europe," 324.
[25] Sovietology is a study of the Soviet Union; the term emerged in the United States during the years of the Cold War and often associates with a focus on the Soviet Union as a totalitarian state.

in their works. Although recently new works that challenge such a simplistic approach have emerged,[26] far more research on this topic is needed.

The gender dimension of Soviet dissent was thoroughly considered neither in the Soviet Union/Russia, nor in the West. As Maria Bucur puts it, "[d]issent under communism is one of the themes of major interest in historical research where scholars have retained a significant blind spot toward gender."[27] Despite the fact that in September 1979 the underground samizdat almanac Женщина и Россия [Woman in Russia] was published in the Soviet Union,[28] only few studies responded to this event. One of the few examples is Ruth Fisher's 1989 article that describes the "short-lived phenomenon" of an "independent" Soviet women's movement.[29] Svetlana Chuikina's chapter on women's roles within the dissidents' movements in the USSR is another example of research in this area.[30] The questions why the majority of Soviet dissidents did not discuss women's issues and why women are often exuded from the mainstream narrative about heroic Soviet dissent were never thoroughly explored.

However, there are some works devoted to the gender dimension of dissent under state socialism. In the 2008 article "Gendering Dissent: Of Bodies and Minds, Survival and Opposition Under Communism," devoted to abortion in socialist Romania Maria Bucur-Deckard noted that dissent "is coded masculine, [which] reflects a misogynist view of political activism" and claimed that women's decision to abort the fetus sometimes can be seen as an act of dissent.[31] In her view, the private sphere is overlooked in the works of many scholars in spite of the fact that there are different forms of opposition that are not less significant than political

[26] For example, see Sergei Oushakine, "The terrifying mimicry of samizdat," *Public Culture* 13/2 (2001).
[27] Maria Bucur, "An Archipelago of Stories: Gender History in Eastern Europe," American Historical Review 13/5 (2008): 1387.
[28] Tatiana Mamonova (ed.) *Woman and Russia: First Feminist Samizdat* (London: Sheba Feminist Publishers, 1980).
[29] Ruth Fisher, "Women and Dissent in the USSR: the Leningrad Feminists," *Canadian Woman Studies* 10/4 (1989): 63.
[30] Светлана Чуйкина, "Участие женщин в диссидентском движении (1956-1986)," *Гендерное измерение социальной и политической активности в переходный период (*Спб:Центр независимых социальных исследований, 1996), 61-81 [Svetlana Chuikina, "Women's participation in the dissident movement (1956-1986)," *Gender dimension of the social and political activity during the years of transition* (St. Petersburg: Centre of independent studies, 1996), 61-81], http://www.a-z.ru/women/texts/chuikinr.htm# accessed 12.03.2013.
[31] "Beyond Little Vera: Women's Bodies, Women's Welfare in Russia and Central/Eastern Europe,"*Women East-West*, Association for Women in Slavic Studies 91 (2007), 6.

activism.[32] Roxana Cazan in her 2011 article "Constructing Spaces of Dissent in Communist Romania" uses Bucur-Deckard argument to analyze the representation of abortion as an act of dissent in writings and films.[33]

In her stunning book *Solidarity's Secret: the women who defeated communism in Poland* Shana Penn challenges the mainstream narrative about Polish dissent, which claims that women did not participate in the Solidarity movement at the same level as men, and reveals forgotten heroines and unknown stories of the Polish underground.[34] She not only provides detailed information on women's multiple and influential roles in the opposition, but also asks why women were forgotten and why they themselves "did not want to look at their struggle through the prism of gender."[35] Padraic Kenney's article "The gender of resistance in communist Poland" is also devoted to the opposition to state socialism in Poland. The author explores not only women's role in the Solidarity movement, but also analyses the image of women in Polish culture that reaffirmed a misogynist interpretation of dissent and women's exclusion from the historical narratives.[36]

Methodology and sources

To prove the main arguments of this thesis, I base my analysis on a variety of sources. The most important primary sources I used are memoirs written by Soviet dissidents, samizdat materials that emerged in the Soviet Union mainly during the Brezhnev years, and articles in Soviet and Western media sources devoted to the phenomenon of Soviet dissent.

In this thesis I focus on memoirs and autobiographies for two purposes. First, I use them to provide information about women's roles and places within the dissident movement. For example, Soviet dissident Revolt Pimenov in his work quite often mentioned the fact that it was always women who were retyping materials for further circulation, translating different texts

[32] Maria Bucur-Deckard, "Gendering Dissent: Of Bodies and Minds, Survival and Opposition Under Communism," *Oxford Slavonic Papers,* 7/9 (2008).
[33] Roxana Cazan, "Constructing Spaces of Dissent in Communist Romania: Ruined Bodies and Clandestine Spaces in Cristian Mungiu's 4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days and Gabriela Adamesteanu's "A Few Days in the Hospital,"*Women's Studies Quarterly*, 39/3, 4 (2011).
[34] Penn, *Solidarity's Secret*.
[35]Ibid xiv.
[36]Padraic Kenney, "The gender of resistance in communist Poland,"*The American Historical Review* 104/2 (1999).

from other languages and offering catering.[37] Secondly, memoirs and autobiographies provide information about the discourses that existed within dissident circles, including discourses on gender. For instance, famous Soviet historian and dissident Lyudmila Alekseeva claimed that the Russian Revolution gave her parents opportunities that did not exist before: children from impoverished families got higher education; her father studied economics and her mother, mathematics.[38] She claims that her mother was equal to her father; therefore the official discourses about women's equality in the USSR (together with Soviet realities) affected her way of thinking about women in the Soviet society and her activity as a dissident.

Samizdat materials is another type of primary sources that I use in this thesis.[39] A close examination of the research published about it in the Soviet Union/Russia[40] and abroad[41] shows that according to the master narrative "the largest category of Samizdat was political materials"[42] and correspondingly such materials were considered to be the most important part of the samizdat culture. Nonetheless, according to Ann Komaromi, samizdat was an extremely complex phenomenon that included all kinds of materials - from literary works to pornography.[43]

Articles in the Soviet and Western media devoted to the phenomenon of Soviet dissent are the third group of primary sources I explore, in this case,to examine how Soviet dissidents were constructed in mass media. As Susan E. Reid pointes out, all the accounts created by Western journalists deserve thorough critical analysis because they tend to be politically overloaded and "ideologically overdetermined" and to consider the Soviet Union "as the

[37] Револьт Пименов, *Воспоминания* (Москва: Панорама, 1996) [Revolt Pimenov, *Memoirs* (Moscow: Panorama, 1996)], 50, 53, 76.
[38] Ludmilla Alexeyeva and Paul Goldberg, *The thaw generation: coming of age in the post-Stalin era* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990), 9.
[39] The term samizdat usually refers to the hand reproduction of censored materials and to transmission of these materials from one reader to another.
[40] Б.Иванов, *Самиздат:по материалам конференции "30 лет независимой печати, 1950-80 годы*,"Санкт-Петербург, 25-27 апреля 1992 г, Мемориал, 1993 [B.Ivanov (ed.), *Samizdat: materials of the Conference '30 years of independent publishing, 1950-80'*, St. Petersburg, April 25-27 1992 (St. Petersburg, 1993)].
[41] George Saunders (ed.), *Samizdat: voices of the Soviet opposition* (New York, N. Y.: Monad Press, 1974); Gordon Johnston, "What is the history of samizdat?," *Social History* 24/2 (1999).
[42] Johnston, "What is the history of samizdat?," 115.
[43] Ann Komaromi, "The Material Existence of Soviet Samizdat," *Slavic Review* 63/3 (2004): 606.

communist 'other,' as well as being unapologetically patriarchal."[44] In the same way, accounts of the Soviet journalists should be considered critically. The Western media sources I used in this research include the American *International Herald Tribune, New York Times, Christian Science Monitor* and *Liberty Tribune,* and the British *Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*. The Soviet media sources include such editions as the monthly magazine *Молодой Коммунист* [Young Communist], the monthly literary magazine *Новый Мир* [New World], the weekly cultural and political newspaper *Литературная Газета* [Literary Newspaper], and two of the most widespread Soviet daily newspapers, *Известия* [News] and *Правда* [Truth]. All the media sources that were used for this research are deposited in the Open Society Archive in Budapest (OSA).

In my analysis of samizdat materials and media sources, first and foremost, I used the materials of the Open Society Archive in Budapest, founded in 1995 to collect, preserve and make accessible a wide range of materials. The archival documents in the OSA are divided into three groups: Communism and Cold War related materials, Human rights fond and materials of the Soros Foundation network.[45] The OSA materials are of great importance for my thesis: the archives possess one of the biggest collections of samizdat in the world. However, one should point out that I used only a small part of the documents I found. In this thesis I focus on the materials related to the history of Communism and the Cold War, which are based mainly on the records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute (the so-called Soviet Red Archives: 2644 archival boxes that cover the period from 1953 to 1994).[46] It is important to note that the process of archival institutes' collecting materials in the archives is never neutral.[47] In the case of the Soviet Red Archives, this process was complicated by the unstandardized nature

[44] Reid, "Cold War in the kitchen," 215.
[45] "About Us," http://www.osaarchivum.org, accessed 12.11.2012.
[46] Open Society Archives, HU OSA 300-80, http://osaarchivum.org/db/fa/300-80.htm, accessed 12.05.2013.
[47] See Antoinette Burton, "Introduction" in *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005).

of samizdat reproduction[48] and by the fact that Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty functioned (especially from 1949, when RFE was founded in New York as an anti-communist organization, to the 1970s) as a weapon in the ideological fight with communism.[49] Therefore there is a need to take into account the selection of material deposited in the OSA, especially in the Red Archives collection.

Based on the materials discussed above and the materials that are considered in the theoretical chapter, this thesis aspires to take a step forward towards a more critical and comprehensive historical account of Soviet dissent and to contribute to the women's and gender history of the Soviet Union.

[48] Olga Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives: The Past and the Present of Samizdat Material," *Poetics Today* 29/4 (2008): 695.
[49] Falk, "Resistance and Dissent in Central and Eastern Europe," 326.

Chapter 1 - Theoretical chapter

This chapter will discuss the theoretical aspects of this thesis. In the first subchapter I will elaborate on the importance of the emergence of the New Cold War historiography and especially on the phenomenon of triumphalism, which, I believe, has greatly affected the way in which Soviet history is written (1.1). The second subchapter will explore the notion of the Soviet gender order and the debates regarding the extent to which the woman question was solved in the Soviet Union (1.2); there I support the argument made by Francisca de Haan that after the end of the Cold War the critique of the "hazardous" position of Soviet women significantly intensified.[50] In the third subchapter the concept of dissent and different definitions and classifications of this phenomenon will be analyzed (1.3).

1.1 The Cold War and the New Cold War History

Historian Robert McMahon defines the Cold War as "the all-encompassing struggle for global power and influence between the United States, the Soviet Union and their respective allies."[51] Numerous works on Cold War history provide a significant amount of materials and perspectives but not necessarily create a full account of this complex phenomenon.

Melvyn P. Leffler, one of the leading critical Cold War historians, elaborated the following definition of this phenomenon:

> "[t]he Cold War was a complex phenomenon characterized by a rivalry between two powerful states with universalizing ideologies and conflicting systems of political economy. The rivalry led to the division of Germany and Europe, competition on the periphery, and a strategic arms race. Also the belligerents refrained from engaging in direct hostilities with one another, they displayed little incentive to negotiate disputes except on their own terms."[52]

Although this definition describes the Cold War as a complex system, the author narrows down the immediate results of the beginning of the Cold War to the arms race, the division of Europe and the competition for domination in the so-called Third World countries[53] - the

[50] de Haan, "Women as the "Motor of Modern Life,"98.
[51] Robert McMahon, *The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 106.
[52] Melvyn P. Leffler, "Bringing it together: the Parts and the Whole" in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory,* (ed.) Odd Arne Westad (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 56.
[53] I understand that the concept of "Third World" was criticized and share the critic; however I use it in this thesis for the reason of limited space.

countries that did not belong to the communist or the capitalist Bloc.[54] Neither the results, nor the long-term consequences of the dissolution of the Soviet Union are reflected in the definition, although they are of great importance for the understanding of the Cold War. Moreover, I believe that the importance of the Cold War and of its culmination for the everyday life of people in the Soviet Union (as well as in the United States and all over the world) should not be underestimated. Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov in their 1996 book *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War* point to the fact that international tensions had a significant impact on their youth, they claim that "[u]nfazed, [they] would watch [their] first girlfriends assembling Kalashnikov machine guns."[55] I believe that, in fact, the impact of the Cold War on Soviet everyday life goes much further that their observation because it affected not only habits and everyday rituals but also, and even more importantly, the way how people thought about the world (or even worlds) around them.

The end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union have drastically changed the whole system of international relations, affected the lives of millions of people all over the world and influenced a radical turn in the historiography of the Cold War. The new history of the Cold War allowed historians to re-evaluate the competition between the two superpowers and to develop alternative views on the essence of the rivalry. As the American historian John Lewis Gaddis puts it, during the Cold War historians were working within the event they were trying to explore;[56] moreover, most of them belonged to the one of the parties of the conflict, which made it difficult for them to be critical.[57] The end of the Cold War provided historians with access to new sources (mostly in the former state socialist countries) that helped to offer new perspectives, new dimensions and new approaches to Cold War history. But the question whether this helped to establish a clear and adequate picture of the Cold War is still

[54] B. R. Tomlinson, "What Was the Third World?," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38/2 (2003): 309.
[55] Vladislav Zubok, Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), x.
[56] John Lewis Gaddis, "On Starting All Over Again: a Naïve Approach to the Study of the Cold War" in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory,* (ed.) Odd Arne Westad (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 27.
[57] Moreover, the end of the Cold War caused a radical transformation of all spheres of life, which is a recent and on-going process, so the emergence of the clear and unambiguous picture of the Cold War is a rather long-term goal.

frequently asked. Melvyn P. Leffler in his article 1999 "The Cold War: What Do 'We Now Know'?" argues that "the new evidence and the new writings do not leave us with a clear and unambiguous view of the Cold War."[58] For instance, the question how "triumphalism" affected scholars' historical narratives is of great significance.[59]

Many scholars have stated that the winners write history,[60] and this statement proved to be correct regarding the Cold War. The collapse of the Soviet Union left the United States as the de facto winner of the Cold War, which meant the triumph of liberal democracy and capitalism over state socialism. Francis Fukuyama's 1992 book *The End of History and the Last Man* is an outstanding example of such triumphalist thinking. Fukuyama relies on Democratic Peace Theory, which claims that democracies usually do not enter into armed conflicts with each other and praises the dissolution of the Soviet Union as the beginning of a new conflict free era.[61] His book reveals the widespread rhetoric about the evil character of the Soviet Union (the "focus of evil in the modern world" according to American president Ronald Reagan who used this phrase for the first time in 1983)[62] letting him to conclude that with the dissolution of the USSR, a new era of democracy and justice was about to come.[63] More than twenty years away from the alleged "universal values'" victory over socialism, we know that liberal democracy and capitalism did not bring about a stable and conflict free global society, but in the early 1990s Fukuyama's book was utterly influential. Even though Fukuyama was criticized extensively for his approach and two decades later he revised his considerations regarding the future of humanity, his book is a clear (but of course not the only) example of Western triumphalist thinking at the end of the Cold War.[64]

[58] Leffler, "The Cold War," 501.
[59] Geir Lundestad, "How (Not) to Study the Origins of the Cold War," in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory*, (ed.) Odd Arne Westad (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 66.
[60] For instance, see Mark Sandle, "Brezhnev and Developed Socialism: The ideology of *Zastoi*" in *Brezhnev Reconsidered* (eds.) E. Bacon, M. Sandle (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 160.
[61] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin Books, c1992).
[62] Ronald Reagan (1811-2004), "President Reagan's Speech Before the National Association of Evangelicals," March 8, 1983, http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganEvilEmpire1983.html, accessed 12.01.2013.
[63] Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*.
[64] In fact, this book is rather an extreme example, but the example that exemplify how exactly the collapse of the Soviet Union was considered from the Western perspective.

Indeed, triumphalism is a far more influential factor than it generally acknowledged. Although Leffler in his brilliant and critical 1999 article "The Cold War: What Do 'We Now Know'?" analyses the triumphalism embedded in the works of many authors, he did not entirely escape the same trap either. At the very end of his article, Leffler claims that "the Soviet Union and its minions did murder tens of millions of people, crush the human spirit, thwart economic progress, and stifle the evolution of civil society."[65] This sentence indicates that lack of critical approach that still makes historians see the Cold War in terms of an opposition between good and evil. This is not to deny that millions of people were killed in the socialist countries, economic development was not successful and human rights were violated, but rather to suggest that the countries of the Western Bloc during the Cold War pursued policies quite similar to the Soviet's (it is enough to remember the Vietnam War that was waged almost 20 years). Moreover, today's world "liberated" from the threat of communism did manage to overcome neither the lack of economic and human rights, nor military problems. It seems to me that the Cold War confrontation and the dissolution of the Soviet Union as the major antagonist of liberalism and capitalism have influenced the historical narratives about the Soviet Union and state socialism more than most historians think.

Francisca de Haan pointed out in her 2010 article about the Cold War paradigms in Western historiography of transnational women's organizations that "the impact of the American anti-Communist witch-hunt was profound and long-lasting on many levels, including the historiography of women's movements and feminisms."[66] I will argue that the American witch-hunt seriously affected the Cold War historiography, history of the Soviet Union, and, particularly, history of Soviet dissent.

Although some critical scholars challenge the well-established narratives about the Cold War, the main body of historiography still describes it as a fight for ideological and geopolitical supremacy, arms and space race and economic competition. Therefore, as Gaddis pointed out,

[65] Ibid 523.
[66] de Haan, "Continuing Cold War Paradigms," 549.

category in this case still shapes the content.[67] Joan Scott in her influential 1986 article "Gender: a Useful Category of Historical Analysis" (which is "one of the most important and influential articles ever published in this journal")[68] states that there is a need to study not only the past itself, but also connections and interactions between past and present because notions, categories and concepts do not have a pre-given and fixed meaning, they also have their histories.[69] Cold War history is not an exception to this rule, and all the main concepts used in the research, including the notion of the Cold War and of Soviet dissent, should be critically analysed.

To argue for the inclusion of cultural, racial or gender dimensions of the Cold War is not to say that they are more important than the ideological, geopolitical or military, but rather to suggest that single factor explanations inevitably lead to oversimplification and that only convergence and synthesis of various dimensions can provide a relatively full picture. The Cold War generated an extremely complex system and insofar as all elements of this system were working as parts of the whole, each aspect requires a multiple explanation.

1.2 Gender order in the Soviet Union

Scholars use the term gender order to define the social organization of gender relations at all levels of society, the gender patterns in a society. R.W. Connell distinguishes three elements that are of crucial significance for the gender order: labor, power and cathexis. The division of work between the sexes is determined by such factors as the separation of childcare and housework, discrimination and unequal payments; power refers to control and hierarchies, and cathexis signifies "sexual social relationships" between sexes.[70]

One should highlight that it is impossible to consider the gender order in the Soviet Union in general; instead we should discuss different configurations that existed at different stages of Soviet history. It can be argued that the Soviet Union experienced several gender

[67] Gaddis, "On Starting All Over Again," 27.
[68] "Introduction." *The American Historical Review*, 113/5 (2008): 1344-1345.
[69] Joan W. Scott, "Gender: a Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review*, 91/5 (1986):1053.
[70] R. W. Connell, *Gender and Power: society, the person, and sexual politics* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996, c1987), 20.

quakes. For example, the Great October Revolution of 1917 radically changed the traditional patriarchal structure of Russian society and initiated women's emancipation all over the country. The Great Patriotic War (or the Second World War), industrialization and collectivization, the Thaw, the period of Stagnation, and Perestroika led to further changes in women's position in the Soviet and Russian society. However, the development was not always progressive and every gender quake in the Soviet Union was followed by a relative "normalization" of the gender order, by setback.

In addition, although each gender quake in the Soviet Union induced new opportunities for some women, the positive changes were divided unevenly. For example, in the first years of the Soviet State lower-class women were in aprivileged position compared to women from the formerly privileged classes. Moreover, women from urban areas received far more social support, such as childcare or medical services, than peasant women.[71] Therefore it is of great importance to be aware that not only gender, but also class, ethnicity, family status and many other factors affected women's role and position in the Soviet society.

The Cold War confrontation between the Eastern and Western Blocs, and the collapse of the Soviet Union promoted severe debates regarding the extent of women's liberation under state socialism, and particularly in the Soviet Union. After the Great October Revolution of 1917 Soviet women got legal equality in public and family life spheres, access to education and the possibility and obligation to work outside the home. However, as many authors have mentioned, de jure equality did not bring de facto equality between Soviet men and women: men tended to occupy the majority of the high-skilled positions, were over-represented at administrative and political levels and usually were not responsible for households and child rearing. Women worked outside of the home and remained responsible for households and family matters, creating their "double burden."

[71] Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society*, 13, 105, 106, 138, 295.

Some scholars believe that the "lack" of the emancipation of Soviet women was caused by the scarcity of resources that were available to the Soviet leadership and by the strong patriarchal tradition. For instance, Elizabeth Wood states that the progressive communist gender policies that were introduced in post-revolutionary Russia were not successful because they were imposed from above on a society with extremely patriarchal attitude towards women, in which women were seen as backward and conservative; that influenced the extent to which the majority of Soviet people were interested in women's emancipation.[72]

However, such an approach towards socialist gender policies is rare. Far more authors claim that women were just used by the Soviet government. For example, Jacqueline Heinen suggested in 1990 that none of the policies introduced in the Soviet Union had significantly changed the gender order in that country. According to her, women were responsible for family and household and, therefore, even legal changes and the high level of women's education and training had not produced a substantialtransformation of the gender order. She also stated that women in Russia "often express[ed] a desire to retreat back to the family."[73] In a similar vein, Barbara Einhorn in her well-known 1993 book *Cinderella Goes To Market* wrote that for Eastern European women "the right to work was degraded by state compulsion into an obligation to be endured."[74] Similarly, Barbara Alpern Engelstates states that the necessity to restore the economy during Stalin's post-Second World War industrialization drive made active women's participation in paid labor necessary for the state and that even the official language of that time reflected the fact that themobilization of women had nothing to do with women's emancipation.[75] According to this view, women usually took the lowest paid and most physically laborious positions, the labor was sharply segregated by sex and therefore the state used

[72] Elizabeth A. Wood, *The baba and the comrade: gender and politics in revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).
[73] Heinen, Jacqueline, "Women in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe," *Studies in Political Economy*, 33: 40.
[74] Einhorn, *Cinderella goes to market*, 114.
[75] Barbara Alpern Engel, *Women in Russia*, 1700-2000 (New-York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 173.

women's cheap labor in its own interests.[76] Indeed, Soviet economics needed women's participation in the wage labor, it can be even said that the Soviet Union could not survive without women's free or low-paid labor. However, it is important to highlight that the Soviet Union was not the only state in world history that lived through hard times, but it was the first to introduce women's equality at the governmental level. I believe that the role of ideology behind women's emancipation in the Soviet Union should not be underestimated.[77] Moreover, such historical events as, for instance, industrialization provided unprecedented opportunities for women's social mobility. Such slogans as "Girls, take the will! Girls, go to aviation!" belongs to this period of time.[78]

Many Russian scholars also claim that socialism was not successful in solving the woman question and achieving gender equality.[79] For example, Olga Voronina stated in 1994 that the Soviet gender equality was "one of the most refined social mystifications that came into being in the society of so-called actually existing socialism."[80] However, other scholars assert that together with the myth that the woman question was solved in the USSR, there is a parallel myth in Western historiography aimed at "exposing the "truth" of the awful misogyny that lay behind Soviet assertions of having attained gender parity."[81] It is difficult not to agree with Jill Massino and Shana Penn that "people's everyday lives and relationships to the state in these countries [Eastern and Central European countries under state socialism] were more complex than Cold War scholars of gender have claimed."[82]

[76] See, for example, Anastasia Posadskaya, "Women as the Objects and Motive Force of Change in Our Time" in *Women in Russia: A New Era in Russian Feminism,* (ed.) Anastasia Posadskaya (London: Verso, 1994), 9.
[77] Women's emancipation was one of the official goals of state socialism in Russia after the Great October Revolution of 1917 and I believe that it was still important during the Brezhnev years. I will come back to this issue in the next chapters of this thesis.
[78] Engel, *Women in Russia, 175.*
[79] Anastasia Posadskaya, "Introduction" in *Women in Russia: A New Era in Russian Feminism,* (ed.) Anastasia Posadskaya (London: Verso, 1994), 3.
[80] Olga Voronina, "The Mythology of Women's Emancipation in the USSR as the Foundation for a Policy of Discrimination," Yelena Mezentseva, "Equal Opportunities or Protectionist Measures? The Choice Facing Women" in *Women in Russia: A New Era in Russian Feminism,* (ed.) Anastasia Posadskaya (London: Verso, 1994), 37.
[81] Choi Chatterjee, "Ideology, Gender and Propaganda in the Soviet Union: A Historical Survey," *Left History* 6/2 (1999): 16.
[82] Jill Massino and Shana Penn, "Gender Politics and Everyday Life in State Socialist Eastern and Central Europe" in *Gender Politics and Everyday Life in State Socialist Eastern and Central Europe,* (eds.) J.Massino and S.Penn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 3.

According to Anastasia Posadskaya, by the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union the number of women who worked outside the household was one of the highest in the world, even though she pointed out the fact that the percentage was fluctuating depending on economic development.[83] Despite the fact that the high rates of female employment did not necessarily mean women's emancipation (women's responsibility for household and privileged position of men was never challenged) and that women were overburdened, there is no denial that Soviet women became far more independent due to their obligation to work.

Heinen's, Einhorn's and some other above cited works are examples of the highly negative attitude towards women's position in the Soviet society that was formed during the years of the Cold War and especially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The Cold War was conducted not only at the battlefields of the so-called Third Word, or during high-level political meetings. Culture, ideology and gender were very important dimensions of the competition between Western and Eastern Blocs. The desire of the countries of the Western Bloc to downgrade the achievements of the Soviet Union in the field of women's emancipation led to the fact that in the main body of historiography of Soviet women all the negative aspects are overemphasized while positive are silenced or hardly mentioned. I believe that the de facto victory of the United States in the Cold War seriously affected the way in which the history of the Soviet Union is written, and downplayed all the Soviet achievements in the sphere of women's rights.

It is important to highlight that women's emancipation was not the ultimate and only goal of the Soviet authorities at any taken period of time. Some periods can be characterized by Soviet leaders' desire to emancipate women, other by an orientation on "traditional family values." However, whatever were the real goals of the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), their policies brought about significant positive changes in women's lives.[84]

[83] Posadskaya, "Women as the Objects and Motive Force of Change in Our Time," 9.
[84] For a sophisticated discussion see Francisca de Haan, "Women as the "Motor of Modern Life."

1.3 Dissidence and dissent in the Soviet Union

According to the Etymological Dictionary, the word dissent originates from the Latin *dissentire,* which means to "differ in sentiments, disagree, be at odds, contradict, quarrel."[85]The dictionary of a prominent Russian linguist Dmitri Ushakov, which was published in the Soviet Union between 1935 and 1940, defined dissidents as people who belonged to a church that was different from the one that dominated in the country.[86] The term dissident was applied for the first time to the political realm (in the narrow sense) in the late 1960s to describe Soviet people disagreed with the official Soviet ideology.[87]

In the Russian language the word *inakomislyashii* (which literally means one who thinks differently) corresponds to English word dissident. As Ludmila Alekseeva points out, there was no such word as dissident in the Russian language till the time when some translator at a radio station (Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe) used it to replace a cumbersome word *inakomislyashii*.[88] From that time the English equivalent was actively used by Western mass media and entered, firstly, the lexicon of "those who thought differently" and later even the language of the Soviet press (where *inakomislyashie*were defined as "so-called dissidents" - to highlight their connections with the West) and became symbolic for the particular kind of opposition not only in the Soviet Union but also all over Central Eastern Europe.

It is important to elaborate here how different scholars define the terms dissent and dissident, and to understand how and by which criteria different types of dissent (and especially of Soviet dissent) are classified. It is argued in this chapter that the majority of definitions and classifications of Soviet dissent are of a restricted character, do not reveal the complexity of the oppositional activity in the Soviet Union, were elaborated by Western scholars who were

[85] Etymology Dictionary Online, s.v. "Dissent," http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=dissent&searchmode=none, accessed December 12, 2012.
[86] Dmitry Ushakov' Dictionary Online, s.v. "Dissident," http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/ushakov/789118, accessed February 7, 2013.
[87] Harvey Fireside, "The Conceptualization of Dissent: Soviet Behaviour in Comparative Perspective," *Universal Human Rights* 2/1 (1980): 32.
[88] Alexeyeva and Goldberg, *The thaw generation*, 6.

influenced by the dominant anti-Soviet discourse, and exclude many types of oppositional activities from the mainstream historical narrative.

In his article "The Conceptualization of Dissent: Soviet Behaviour in Comparative Perspective" Harvey Fireside claims that the Soviet dissident (or dissenter – these two notions were used by many historians as interchangeable) was a person who disagreed with the official ideology.[89] The author claims that, although Soviet dissidents were involved in illegal activity, such as creation and dissemination of uncensored literature, "their material existence continues in its accustomed way, unless it is disrupted by police repression" and therefore the act of dissent was of negative character because it did not mean movement towardsalternative modes of life.[90] Therefore, he claims that dissent in the Soviet Union was not connected with any particular activity but rather with the act of independent thinking of even feeling.

Interestingly, the Fireside's definition is broad and narrow at the same time. It is broad because it does not imply any particular kind of activity; according to the author, Soviet dissidence is characterized by a way of thinking. However, such a statement implies that dissidents were the only group of the Soviet society that was capable of an "adequate" understanding of reality. Similarly, Frederick C. Barghoorn claims that the majority of the Soviet population was intoxicated by Soviet propaganda, indifferent to human rights issues, and not able to "think differently."[91]Andrei Amalrik, one of the prominent Soviet dissidents, points to the sharp contradictions between dissidents and the rest of populations, he writes that "[t]o the majority of the people, the very word "freedom" [was] synonymous with disorder […] As for respecting the rights of an individual as such, the idea simply arouse[d] bewilderment."[92]

[89] Fireside, "The Conceptualization of Dissent," 32.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Frederick C. Barghoorn, "The post-Khrushchev Campaign to Suppress Dissent: Perspectives and Techniques of Repression" in *Dissent in the USSR: Politics, Ideology, and People,* (ed.) Rudolf L.Tökés (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 45, 50.
[92] Andrei Amalrik, *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (New-York: Harper & Row, 1970), 37-38; http://www2.stetson.edu/~psteeves/classes/amalrik1.html, accessed 12.05.2013.

However, according to Vladimir Shlapentokh (and some other scholars agree)[93] "conformity in public deeds, opposition in private views' was a norm" in a Soviet society,[94] and therefore the majority of Soviet citizens can be considered dissidents.

The narrowness of Fireside's definition is expressed in the claim that dissent is a disagreement with Soviet ideology. Ideology is defined by Mary Buckley as "a political believe system which is composed of interrelated ideas […which] offer a theoretical explanation of reality and defend a preferred political order, either past, present or future."[95] If one accepts this definition of ideology, then it is clear that not all Soviet dissidents' critique was aimed against Soviet ideology. In fact, some dissidents believed that Stalin distorted the ideas of communism and that there was a need to come back to the genuine principles of Marx and Lenin.[96] Moreover, such a definition automatically excludes from the concept of dissent all kinds of activities that were not strictly connected with the ideological realm such as worker's strikes or women's writings about abortions.

Rudolf Tökés in his article "Varieties of Soviet Dissent: An Overview" defined dissent as

> "a culturally conditioned political reform movement seeking to ameliorate and ultimately to eliminate the perceived illegitimacy of the posttotalitarian Communist-party leadership's authoritarian rule into authoritative domination through (1) structural, administrative, and political reforms; (2) ideological purification ant cultural modernization; and (3) the replacement of scientifically unverifiable normative referents with empirical (nonideological) criteria as political guidelines and developmental success indicators."[97]

He also pointed to the features, which according to him, were unifying for Soviet dissent: the striving for political democracy, nationality rights, socialist equality and human rights. Specific groups' foci were defined as religious rights, artistic freedoms and economic

[93] Борис Фирсов, *Разномыслие в СССР и России (1945-2008)*, (Санкт-Петербург: Издательство Европейского университета в Санкт-Петербурге, 2009) [Boris Firsov, Dissent in the USSR and Russia (1945-2008), (St.Petersburg: European University in St.Petersburg, 2009)]; Bacon, E; Sandle, M. (ed.), *Brezhnev Reconsidered*.
[94] Vladimir Shlapentokh, *Soviet Intellectuals and Political Power: the post-Stalin era* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), 80; "Two Levels of Public Opinion: The Soviet Case," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 49 (1985): 448.
[95] Buckley, *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union*, 5.
[96] Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective*, 158.
[97] Rudolf L. Tökés, "Varieties of Soviet Dissent" in *Dissent in the USSR: Politics, Ideology, and People*, (ed.) Rudolf L. Tökés (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 18.

issues.[98] In Tökés' definition too, dissent refers only to political reforms and opposition to the CPSU. Moreover, the hierarchy of dissidents' values (what is common for every group and what is specific) is constructed in accordance with the Western researchers' attitudes and does not reflect the complexity of Soviet oppositional activities. However, Tökés' definition affected the works of many historians working within this field.

Tökés also claimed that many historians working on the concepts of opposition and dissent did not distinguish between "within system" and "system rejective" forms of opposition. While the former aimed at reformation of the system, the later rather strived for its dissolution.[99] He also pointed to the crucial differences between dissent and opposition, which, according to him,were of great importance for the definition of Soviet dissent. In his view, oppositionists "must have 'the will to power' and must be prepared to act" while dissenters had "no direct designs on power."[100] Gayle Durham Hollander supported this approach and suggested that opposition indicated a political group that not only disagreed with the ruling class, but also wanted to replace it, while dissent not necessarily implied such desire.[101] In 1975 Tökés elaborated on this view and pointed out that in fact opposition is a wider category and that dissent can be considered as a "type of within system opposition loyal to some aspects of the status quo […] and critical of others."[102]

Brzezinski and Huntington in their 1963 book *Political Power: USA/USSR* distinguished between orthodox and unorthodox dissent. While orthodox dissent involved "efforts to lift ideological controls on the grounds that their removal will actually benefit both society and the political system,"[103] unorthodox dissent involved "primarily the intellectual rejection of the

[98] Ibid 14.
[99] Ibid 17-18.
[100] Rudolf L. Tökés "Dissent: The Politics for Change in the USSR," in *Soviet Politics and Society in the 1970s* (eds.) Henry W. Morton and R. (New York: The Free Press, 1974), 10.
[101] Gayle Durham Hollander, "Political Communication and Dissent in the Soviet Union" in *Dissent in the USSR: Politics, Ideology, and People,* (ed.) Rudolf L. Tökés (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 236.
[102] Tökés, "Varieties of Soviet Dissent," 17.
[103] Zbigniew K. Brzezinski and Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Power: USA/USSR* (New York: Viking Press, 1963), 104.

system" and strove "to provide an ideological alternative to the system."[104] Using this classification, Angelo de Guttadauro defined Soviet dissent as a non-monolithic movement, which encompassed both features and experienced a gradual transformation from orthodox to non-orthodox dissent. He considered dissidents' activity triggered by Synavsky-Daniel[105] trial as the transformation of the Soviet elites' desire from claims for artistic freedom to a challenge of socialist reality.[106] However, I claim that Soviet dissent was mainly "orthodox" and its members strived for changes within the system rather that for change of the system itself. For instance, one of the Soviet dissidents, Pavel Litvinov, during his defense in 1968, stated that his protest "was against illegality and injustice but not against the political system."[107] Accordingly, Alfred Friendly Jr. states that "the majority of 'those who think differently' in the Soviet Union did not set out to reshape their own society."[108]

A prominent Lithuanian political scientist and dissident Aleksandr Shtromas who defined dissent as "the refusal to assent to an established or imposed set of ideas" also pointed to the fact that dissent can be "extrastructural" and "intrastructural" (which by and large corresponds to Tökés' "within the system" and "system rejective" and Brzezinski and Huntington's orthodox and unorthodox opposition).[109] However, Shtromas fairly points out that the borders between the two types were often blurred and that the same dissidents could be classified differently because their attitude to system was subject to change. Nevertheless, it is important to add, that not only dissidents' attitude but also the researcher's perspective is of crucial importance. Thus, different scholars can interpret the same events as examples of "orthodox" or "unorthodox" dissent.

Ludmila Alekseeva, one of the active and recognized participants of the Soviet dissident movement, in her 1983 book *History of dissent in the USSR* (that is one of the first Russian

[104] Ibid 117,104.
[105] Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel were the Soviet writers, trialled in 1966 for smuggling and publication of their works abroad.
[106] Angelo de Guttadauro, "The Metamorphosis of Soviet Dissent," *Parameters* 7/1 (1977): 29.
[107] Sergius Yakobson and Robert V. Allen, *Aspects of Intellectual Ferment and Dissent in the Soviet Union* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1968), 35.
[108] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 6.
[109] A.Y. Shtromas, "Dissent and Political Change in the Soviet Union," *Studies in Comparative Communism* VXII (1979): 212, 237.

accounts on the history of Soviet dissent) claims that dissent was a coherent phenomenon because of the shared focus on human rights and non-violent methods of resistance.[110] In her work, she repeats the master narrative, which suggests that dissidents were the only part of the Soviet society that resisted to the regime and restricts dissent to the activity of the particular groups, connected exclusively with the advocacy of human rights. Even though she included national and religious dissent in her book, Alexeeva claims that the movement for human rights (Liberal or Democratic movement) is the most important part of Soviet dissent.[111] It is significant to stress that even in the cases when the author considers not only liberal dissent, but also other forms of opposition in the Soviet Union, they are defined as supplementary.

American scholar Walter Parchomenko differentiates between dissidents and nonconformists, even though he mentions that the boundaries between two groups are often slippery. The former, according to him, did not strive to influence policy by open criticism but rather performed lifestyles that did not conform to official norms and expectations.[112] In his 2008 book, Boris Firsov similarly differentiates between different forms of Soviet opposition, between *Инакомыслие* [dissent as a fight against communist rule, fight for human rights] and *Разномыслие* [broad concept that includes different varieties of oppositional activities].[113] On the one hand, such an approach opens the discussion about other forms of opposition in the Soviet Union (and acknowledges that dissidents were not the only "thinking" part of the Soviet population), but on the other hand it reaffirms the mainstream narrative about Soviet dissent as a specific heroic activity (that is surrounded by numerous myths, including the myth about heroic males).

Maria Bucur-Deckard in her article "Gendering Dissent: Of Bodies and Minds, Survival and Opposition under Communism,"devoted to the abortions in the socialist Romania, argues

[110] Людмила Алексеева, *История инакомыслия в СССР: Новейший период* (М.: РИЦ «Зацепа», 2001), 110 [Liudmila Alekseeva, *History of Soviet dissent: The recent period* (Moscow: RITS Zatsepa, 2001), 110, http://library.khpg.org/files/docs/1314780425.pdf, accessed 15.04.2013.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Walter Parchomenko, *Soviet images of dissidents and nonconformists* (New York: Praeger, 1986), 3.
[113] Борис Фирсов, *Разномыслие в СССР 1940-е – 1960-е годы. История, теория, практики*.

that the term dissent is coded masculine and mirrors a "misogynist view of political activism."[114] She suggests that such a restricted understanding of dissent excludes the private sphere from narratives about opposition to the regime. Her interpretation provides a framework to study the gender dimension of dissent and helps to broaden the boundaries of the concept in a number of ways.

The most widespread classification divides Soviet dissidents into three groups. For instance, Shatz outlines three groups of those who "more or less [had] their programs": those who wanted to return to "pure" Marxism- Leninism, those who relied on religious and moral values, and those who strived for the incorporation of Western-style liberal practices.[115] Accordingly, Andrei Amalrik in his 1969 article "Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984?" defines three groups of dissent: genuine Marxism-Leninism, Christian Ideology and Liberal Ideology.[116] Such classifications, as well as all others, cannot be considered sufficient because they define dissent merely in terms of political opposition and do not encompass all oppositional activities in the Soviet Union. At the same time, these classifications created a framework for the majority of the researches devoted to the phenomenon of Soviet dissent.

It is beyond the goals of this thesis to provide an adequate classification of Soviet dissent and to elaborate an all-encompassing definition of this phenomenon. Much more research is needed to challenge the master narrative about it. However, it is of great importance to stress once more that the most of definitions and classifications of dissent do not reveal the extremely complex character of this phenomenon and reflect a misogynist perception of oppositional activity and dissent. In this research I will use Svetlana Chuikina's definition of dissent as "the combination of nonconformity in thoughts and deeds" [*инакомыслие* and *инакодействие*] without any particular political orientation. According to Chuikina, dissent was "a complex of thoughts and deeds, which did not conform to the norms and values of the Soviet society and

[114] Maria Bucur-Deckard, "Gendering Dissent: Of Bodies and Minds, Survival and Opposition Under Communism," *Oxford Slavonic Papers,* 7/9 (2008).
[115] Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective*, 158.
[116] Amalrik, "Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984*?"*;http://www2.stetson.edu/~psteeves/classes/amalrik1.html, accessed 12.05.2013.

was aimed at the modification or disruption of the Soviet system."[117] I believe that this definition makes it possible to include all forms of oppositional activities, including those neglected in mainstream narratives (Soviet dissent was not a coherent monolithic movement, on the contrary, its diversity was one of its main features), but also to challenge these narratives, which, on the one hand, were created and reinforced by the Cold War ideological struggle and, on the other hand, exclude women from the history of Soviet dissent and undermine the role of the Soviet Union as a pioneer in the sphere of women's rights.

For the goals of this research I will also use the widespread classification of Soviet dissent that differentiates between Socialists, Slavophils and Liberals, and will focus in this thesis on Soviet liberal dissidents.[118] I define liberal dissidents as the group of Soviet dissidents that was especially active in the Soviet Union from 1966 to 1982 and focused their work at drawing global public opinion to the violations of human rights in the Soviet Union in the hope of challenging the Soviet authorities and to induce liberalization in the country.

In my research I focus on liberal dissent for several reasons. First of all, this group is considered to be the most important and influential (sometimes even only) group among Soviet dissidents: in my work I will try to challenge this narrative and to show how during the course of the Cold War the complex phenomenon of Soviet opposition in historiography was replaced by heroic liberal dissidents, who were constructed as men oriented towards Western liberal values. Secondly, in this thesis I will explore the questions why Soviet dissidents almost unanimously ignored women's rights and problems and why women are excluded from the historical narratives about heroic Soviet dissent. I will argue that it was the Western approach towards dissidents that became dominant in the historiography of Soviet dissent (especially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union) and excluded women from the historical narratives. I will also

[117] Светлана Чуйкина, "Участие женщин в диссидентском движении."
[118] Therefore, in my work I consider mostly the "traditional," or mainstream forms of opposition such as strikes, open debates or political activism, leaving behind the "non-conformist" forms of opposition, such as alternative lifestyles or abortions. I understand the importance of these "non-conformist" forms of opposition and limitations of my approach. However, I believe that for the goals of this research it is more fruitful to focus on the mainstream forms of political opposition.

argue that it was the Western influence that affected the exclusion of the woman question from the agenda of Soviet dissidents as an issue of secondary importance. Soviet liberal dissidents developed an extensive network of connections with various institutions in the countries of the Western Bloc (and especially in the USA) and therefore the correlations important for this research are easily traceable.

The main body of historiography of Soviet dissent constructed the master narrative that implies the superiority of capitalist democracy over state socialism. In this perspective, dissent is considered as a power that could challenge the Soviet Union and as a heroic struggle for universal human rights (dissidents are often referred to as a small but most courageous portion of society).[119] In the next chapter I will provide historical background for the period, when Soviet liberal dissent has emerged and became an important part of Soviet oppositional movements.

[119] Tanya E. Lozansky, "The Role of Dissent in the Soviet Union since 1953," *The Concord Review* (1989): 3.

Chapter 2 - Historical background: why was the woman question re-opened in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev years?

In this chapter I will provide historical background for the period when Leonid Brezhnev was in power (from 1964 to 1982) and will connect the domestic situation in the Soviet Union during this time (particularly, the re-emergence of open discussion regarding the role and place of women in the family and society) with the situation in the international arena, more precisely, with the relations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America. It is of great importance to elaborate on the global situation of the time and to provide information about the Soviet Union in order to understand the environment in which Soviet opposition existed. However, not all events and facts related to the Cold War and the domestic situation in the Soviet Union of that time are included in his chapter, but only those that are of particular relevance for the topic of this thesis.

The historical background presented in the chapter covers the period of détente, by which historians mean the easing of the geopolitical tensions between the Soviet Union and the Unites States of America (2.1). It also includes a subchapter devoted to Brezhnev's domestic policies (2.2), and a subchapter devoted to the gender order in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev years (2.3). In my view, the re-opening of the woman question in Soviet society during the Brezhnev years was connected with both the domestic situation in the country and the global situation. The gender battlefield was an important element of the Cold War. During the Brezhnev years the Soviet Union strived to reaffirm its image as a pioneer in the field of women's rights, gained after the Great October Revolution of 1917. The influence of Western discourses, which claimed that Soviet women were not liberated, but enslaved by the Communist Party, and of the women's liberation movement in the United States made the Soviet authorities to intensify their efforts in this area. The quite difficult position of and complaints from Soviet women, together with the introduction of the concept of "non-antagonistic contradictions" allowed official acknowledgement of the fact that the woman question had not been solved in the Soviet Union.

2.1 The period of détente: origins, spirit, and consequences

The relations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America were complicated since the February Revolution of 1917. However, many historians claim that the situation at the international arena and the relationships between the Russian Empire, the United States of America and other European states were complex and tense already from the middle of the nineteenth century.[120] By the end of the Second World War, tensions between the former allies led to significant deterioration of relations between the forming Eastern and Western Blocs that the mainstream historiography identifies as the beginning of the Cold War.[121] The opposition between the USSR and the United States and between the two competing systems, capitalism and socialism, was at the core of the Cold War, even though the Cold War affected one way or another every country of the world. Eric Hobsbawm in his 1994 book *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* suggests that the Cold War "utterly dominated the international scene in the second half of the Short Twentieth Century."[122] He claims that even though one cannot define the Cold War as a homogenous historical period, it had a single pattern: "the constant confrontation of the two superpowers which emerged from the Second World War."[123]

The chronology and periodization of the Cold War is an extremely puzzling issue. The Cold war is often dated from 1947 to 1991 (its beginning is usually connected with the American Government's adoption of the doctrine of Containment to stop the spread of communism and its end is usually connected with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991), even though recently critical scholars have challenged the origins and periodization of this phenomenon. Historians define different stages of the Cold War and the boundaries between phases are often slippery, but usually five main periods are distinguished: the beginning of the Cold War or the initial stage

[120] John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States: an interpretative history* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990), 57.
[121] Most Cold War historians point out that the Cold War started after the end of the Second World War. For example, see John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin, 2005); Painter, *The Cold War*.
[122] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph Ltd, 1994), 226.
[123] Ibid.

(1947-1953), Crisis and escalation or the age of Brinkmanship (1953-1962), Détente (1962-1979), the Second Cold War (1979-1985) and the Final Years (1985-1991).[124] Historically, the period of détente coincides with the years when Leonid Brezhnev was the General Secretary of the Central Committee (CC) of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), so in order to analyse the phenomenon of Soviet dissent during Brezhnev's years it is necessary to elaborate on these period of the Cold War.

Détente is usually referred to an easing of the geopolitical confrontation between the Soviet Union and the Unites States of America; it was the time of summit diplomacy and arms limitations. Jussi M. Hanhimaki describes it as the least researched and "rather ill-defined and murky period in the longer history of the Cold War."[125] Influential historian Vladislav Zubok in his 2008 article states that it "was a vital stage in global history of the 20th century, when the rise of Soviet communism stopped and the collapse of the Soviet bloc began."[126] The Cuban missile crisis of 1962, when the fear of "mutually assured destruction" became stronger than ever before of after, showed the necessity for cooperation in order to avoid nuclear war, and triggered a rapprochement between the Eastern and Western Blocs.

The explanations of the origins of détente range from describing it as a product of balance of power considerations to the result of American, Soviet and European leaders' concerns about domestic upheavals.[127] Many historians relate the end of détente with the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan in 1979,[128] which let the United States to introduce a resolution condemning the Soviet military action at the United Nations General Assembly in January 1980. Subsequently, in protest to the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, 57 states boycotted the Twenty-Second Summer Olympic Games in Moscow. Ratification of the new Strategic Arms Limitations

[124] John Lamberton Harper, *The Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Painter, *The Cold War;* Akira Irye, "Historicizing the Cold War," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War,* (eds.) Richard H. Immerman, Petra Goedde (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[125] Jussi M. Hanhimaki, "Detente: a three-way discussion, Conservative Goals, Revolutionary Outcomes: the Paradox of Détente," *Cold War History* 8/4 (2008): 504.
[126] Vladislav Zubok, "The Soviet Union and détente of the 1970s," *Cold War History* 8/4 (2008): 427.
[127] Noam Kochavi, "Researching détente: new opportunities, contested legacy," *Cold War History* 8/4 (2008): 420.
[128] Hanhimaki, "Conservative goals, revolutionary outcomes," 504; Geoffrey Warner, "The Cold War in retrospect," *International Affairs* 87/1 (2011): 182.

Treaty (SALT 2) between the United Stated and the Soviet Union was postponed (and this treaty was never ratified).[129] The period of détente ended and the period of the Second Cold War began.

While the origins of détente and the intentions of the USSR and the USA to start cooperation are debated among historians, there is no denying that security issues were of primary importance for both countries. Zubok points out that there were two main reasons for the Soviet Union to support détente: security and economic motives. On the one hand, memories about the Second World War and the Cuban missile crisis made the majority of Soviet officials to aspire for cooperation. On the other hand, they understood that the economic development of the Soviet Union could not proceed without the transfer of Western technologies.[130] From the American side an adherence to détente was motivated by security reasons (as Richard Nixon, President of the United States, put it, "we seek peace as an end in itself"),[131] by the weakening of the position of the United States in Europe, and by the failure of the War in Vietnam.[132]

Historians see the wide range of diplomatic negotiations and meetings at different institutional levels as one of the main characteristics and manifestations of the period of détente. They consider Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty and the Biological Weapons Convention signed in 1972, negotiations and agreements on Germany (both Germanys accepted each other's sovereignty in 1972, and in 1973 both the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany became the members of the UN), and the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 as détente's most important events. However, it is of great importance to mention that this period witnessed not only successful cooperation in the sphere of arms limitation, but also competition between the superpowers for the so-called Third World[133] and confrontation in the Middle East and Far East.

[129] Petr Cherkasov, "The Twilight of the Brezhnev Era," *Russian Politics and Law* 43/6 (2005): 86.
[130] Zubok, "The Soviet Union and Détente," 427.
[131] Hanhimaki, "Conservative goals, revolutionary outcomes," 509.
[132] I bid 504.
[133] Mark Webber, "'Out of Area' Operations: the Third World" in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*,(eds.) E.Bacon and M. Sandle (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 111.

The summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which was held in July 1975 in Helsinki and united all European countries but Albania, the Soviet Union, the United States of America and Canada, is one of the most important events in the international arena of the period of détente. The preparatory talks for the conference lasted from 22 November 1972 until 8 June 1973. The agreement about the text of the final document was reached on 21 July 1975 and the leaders of 35 states signed the Final Act on 1 August at the Helsinki summit.[134] According to Harold Molineu, the Helsinki Final Act was a "manifestation of both the concept and substance of détente," and an attempt to identify the role of human rights in the relations between the Eastern and Western Blocs.[135]

The Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States of the Final Act contains the 10 principles (which are known as "the Decalogue") which include not only references to the participating states' sovereignty, equality and inviolability of their frontiers, but also to human rights and fundamental freedoms. The first part (or Basket) of the Act is devoted to political and security issues, Basket two to economic issues, Basket three to humanitarian matters, and Basket four to the follow-up to the Conference.[136]

The Humanitarian dimension of the Helsinki Final Act is one of the most controversial and discussed aspects of the document. Principle seven of the Decalogue states:

> "participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief […] They will promote and encourage the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms, all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person and are essential for his free and full development."[137]

This principle made human rights issues a matter of international relations and created a strong link between security and human rights. The Third basket of the Final Act is entirely devoted to humanitarian issues (including cultural and educational matters) and contains

[134] Richard Davy, "Helsinki myths: setting the record straight on the Final Act of the CSCE, 1975," *Cold War History* 9/1 (2009): 2.
[135] Harold Molineu, "Negotiating Human Rights: The Helsinki Agreement," *World Affairs* 141/1 (1978): 24.
[136] The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Aug. 1, 1975, 14 I.L.M. 1292 (Helsinki Declaration), http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/osce/basics/finact75.htm, accessed 23.02.2013.
[137] Ibid.

references to such matters as freedom of movement, reunification of families and freedom of dissemination of information,[138] which in the context of the Cold War were of particular importance for the West and of particular concern for the Soviet Union.

For a long time, the Helsinki Final Act was seen as a victory of Soviet diplomacy because the document acknowledged the division of Europe into two Blocs and recognized the post-war division of frontiers.[139] However, as Hobsbawm demonstrated, the governments of the United Stated and of the Soviet Union accepted the division of the world already after the end of the Second World War,[140] and the passive reaction of the countries of the Western Bloc to the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 confirmed that Eastern Europe was regarded as a sphere of Soviet domination. Some scholars claim that, in fact, the Final Act accelerated the dissolution of the Soviet Union.[141] They argue that Soviet officials seriously underestimated the importance of the Third basket of the document and that the Helsinki agreements encouraged dissident activity far more than Moscow excepted (and not only in the Eastern European countries, but also in the Soviet Union itself).[142] For example, the Moscow Helsinki Group was founded on May 12, 1976 to monitor the violation of human rights in the Soviet Union.[143] At the same time, it is important to note that the Soviet Constitution and other international treaties already guaranteed all the rights included in the Helsinki Final Act.[144] Still, the mere fact that the Soviet Union signed the Final Act provided not only Soviet dissidents, but also the countries of the Western Bloc with another instrument of pressure on the Soviet officials. Moreover, since then, the countries of the Western Bloc actively used the notion of human rights as a tool in the ideological struggle with the Soviet Union. The concept of human rights had changed significantly from 1948, when the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, to

[138] Ibid.
[139] Thomas A. Schwartz, "Legacies of Détente: a Three-way Discussion," *Cold War History* 8/4 (2008): 514.
[140] Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, 226.
[141] Ibid 519.
[142] Davy, "Helsinki myths," 2.
[143] Official website of the Moscow Helsinki Group, History, http://www.mhg.ru/english/18E4796, accessed 23.02.2013.
[144] Mike Bowker, "Brezhnev and Superpower Relations" in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*,(eds.) E. Bacon and M. Sandle (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 97.

1975, when the Final Helsinki Act was signed. As Nira Yuval-Davis pointed out, while the concept of human rights in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 incorporated not only civil and political, but also social, economic and cultural rights and gender equality, in subsequent international conventions "human rights discourse, dominated by the West, came to emphasize almost exclusively civil and political rights."[145] I argue that Soviet liberal dissidents adopted the concept of human rights developed and promoted by Western capitalist countries and prioritized in their work civil and political rights that led to the exclusion of women's rights and problems from their agenda.

As I showed in the first chapter, the gender dimension of the period of détente is still under-researched. While such famous events as theInternational Youth festival in Moscow of 1956, the Kitchen debates (1959) and Valentina Tereshkova's space flight (1963) gained importance in the historiography of the Cold War of Khrushchev's years, there are no such symbolic events showing the importance of the gender battlefield of the Cold War during Brezhnev's years. However, it does not mean that the gender dimension was less important during the period of détente than during the period of Krushchev's Brinkmanship (especially in light of the fact that during that time Second Wave feminism flourished in Western countries and, particularly, in the United States). Barbara Evans Clements in her 2012 book *A history of women in Russia: from earliest times to the present* highlights the importance of Second Wave feminism for Soviet gender policies and states that "to support research into Western feminist thought, a few libraries established special collections, accessible only to approved people."[146] Thus, even though the wider Soviet public did not know a lot about women's liberation movement in the United States or about Second Wave feminism, this information was known and taken into account by Soviet officials.

[145] Nira Yuval-Davis, "Human/Women's Rights and Feminist Transversal Politics" in *Transnational Feminisms: Women's Global Activism and Human Rights*(eds.)Myra Ferree Marx and Aili Mari Tripp (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 290.
[146] Barbara Evans Clements, *A history of women in Russia: from earliest times to the present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 260.

According to Helen Laville, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, which was established already in 1946 under the UN Commission on Human Rights, became an "important [Cold War] battleground" [147] and the significance of this battleground should not be underestimated. The period of détente witnessed a number of important gender events: the introduction of International Women's Year (1975) and the organization of the Conference of International Women's Year held in 1975 in Mexico City - "the first historic world conference of governments on the subject of women," which "fixed the status of women's questions on the United Nations (UN) agenda forever;" [148] the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985) that stimulated the process that led to the emergence of a global women's movement,[149] and the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (DEDAW, 1967) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979). Moreover, during the period of détente the connections between "political issues" and "women's concerns," which had been ignored for a long time at the international level, were finally acknowledged[150] due to the constant pressure from the Soviet Union and Third World countries.

As Francisca de Haan pointed out in her 2010 article, it was the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) that with Soviet support initiated the 1975 UN International Women's Year and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, "the most important UN 'women's treaty' to date."[151] However, Cold War discourses almost eliminated the WIDF from the historiography of women's international movements because for a long time the WIDF was considered to be a Soviet marionette. The Cold War logic deprived the USSR from its status as pioneer of women's rights. Moreover, the constant Western claims that Soviet women were not emancipated reinforced the exclusion of

[147] Helen Laville, *Cold War Women: the International Activities of American Women Organizations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002). 113.
[148] Virginia R. Allan, Margaret E. Galey, and Mildred E. Persinger, "World Conference of International Women's Year" in *Women, politics, and the United Nations*, ed. Anne Winslow (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995), 29.
[149] Peggy Antrobus, "A decade for Women: UN conferences, 1975-85," *The Global Women's Movement: Origins, issues and strategies* (Dhaka: University Press Ltd, 2004), 37.
[150] Ibid 44.
[151] de Haan, "Continuing Cold War Paradigms," 548.

Soviet women from the historiography of Soviet dissent (according to this logic Soviet women were not emancipated and therefore they could not be politically active and could not be dissidents).

The consequences of détente (as well as all other periods and elements of the Cold War) are a source of severe debate among historians.[152] For instance, John Lewis Gaddis in his 2005 book *The Cold War* stated that détente meant a retreat from the fight with the Soviet Union and contributed to the continuation of the Cold War.[153] However, Jussi M. Hanhimaki suggested that, even though the period of détente did not generate the end of the Cold War, by bringing about the rapprochement of the East and West, it fundamentally changed the Cold War international system. Therefore, he claimed that, although the goals of détente were conservative, its outcomes were revolutionary. Détente made constant interaction between the East and West not only possible, but also irreversible and made the notion of human security an important part of the international (and especially European) security system.[154] Moreover, according to Hanhimaki, even though détente was not the reason why the dissident movement emerged, it "gave the various groups important tools to advance their cause and undermine the totalitarian control."[155]

Détente is an important and controversial part of not only the Cold War history, but also of the global history of the twentieth century. It significantly changed the international relations between the two competing Blocs and greatly affected the domestic situation in the Soviet Union. In the following subchapter, Brezhnev's domestic policies and their connections with the global situation will be considered.

2.2 Leonid Brezhnev's years: the Era of stagnation or the Golden Age of the Soviet history?

Leonid Brezhnev came to power in 1964 and remained General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU until his death in 1982. The eighteen years of his rule are often referred

[152] Kochavi, "Researching détente," 420-421.
[153] Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 195–197.
[154] Hanhimaki, "Conservative goals, revolutionary outcomes," 504.
[155] Ibid 509.

to as the Era of stagnation.[156]

Mikhail Gorbachev coined the term "Era of stagnation" and claimed that Brezhnev's "in essence fierce neo-Stalinist line" promoted grave economic decline triggered by unsuccessful and insufficient economic reforms, and caused brutal suppression of the dissidents in the USSR. Moreover, in his criticism of his predecessor's policies, Gorbachev pointed to the increase of the arms race, unsuccessful politics in Central and Eastern Europe, and the ill-starred invasion in Afghanistan.[157] However, despite the fact that all the failures of Brezhnev's polices should be taken into account, as Mark Sandle mentioned, "[a]n awareness of the problems in reading history as written by its 'winners' should perhaps makes us wary of extending notions of 'stagnation'."[158] The problem of the history written by "winners" in the case of the Era of stagnation is closely connected with the triumphalism that emerged in the Cold War historiography after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The United States of America that de facto had won the Cold War then also dictated the Cold War historiography, and the legacies of this "victory" are still a challenge for historians to overcome. The same mechanism that led to the creation of a one-sided image of the Soviet Union let Gorbachev to write his own history and to portray the Brezhnev years as a period of stagnation.

The Brezhnev years are one of the least researched periods of Soviet history. This can be explained by the fact that the Era of stagnation was often seen by historians as less important and less interesting than swift revolutionary changes, Stalin's hazardous regime, the liberating Khrushchev era or Gorbachev's democratic reforms. Only recently scholars started to re-evaluate this period and concluded that, besides stagnation, the Brezhnev era also brought about unprecedented stability, a rise of living standards, and consolidation of the USSR as a stable and responsible superpower at the international scene.[159] Moreover, public poll opinions conducted

[156] Bacon, "Reconsidering Brezhnev,"1-2.
[157] МихаилГорбачев, *Жизнь и Реформы, 1* (Москва: Новости, 1995) [Mikhail Gorbachev, *Life and Reforms, vol. 1* (Moscow: News, 1995)], 210.
[158] Sandle, "Brezhnev and Developed Socialism," 160.
[159] Bacon, "Reconsidering Brezhnev,"19; Ian D. Thatcher, "Brezhnev as Leader" in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*,(eds.) E. Bacon and M. Sandle (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 28.

in Russia in 1994, 1999 and 2000 suggest that Russian people see Brezhnev's period as the most positive of Russia's twentieth-century history.[160] That is not to claim that Brezhnev's years were the golden age of the Soviet Union, but rather to question the notion of the Era of stagnation that exists in Western and Russian historiography and to assert that more detailed investigation is needed to understand the complexity of this period of Soviet history.

In my view, there are different explanations why the term stagnation became symbolic for this period of Soviet history. First of all, such an approach helped to justify the necessity of Gorbachev's radical reforms. Gorbachev made a set of decisions that led to (or accelerated) the dissolution of the Soviet Union and fundamental transformations of the social, political, cultural and economic situation in the country. While in the West Gorbachev is highly popularand often portrayed as a hero, in Russia he has a more ambivalent status. His unpopular and extremely harsh for the Soviet population reforms, together with the subsequent disappointment in Western capitalist democracy,[161] made his role very controversial. Gorbachev had to justify his reforms and he used the discourses about the stagnating Soviet system to prove that his reforms were the only possible option. Second, the Brezhnev years indeed can be characterized by an absence of profound and needed reforms of the economic and financial sectors. Zubok points out that Brezhnev's successful role of peacemaker at the international arena was in sharp contrast with his quite conservative domestic policies and that détente for the Soviet administration substituted economic, political, social and financial reforms within the country.[162]

In the sphere of international relations, Brezhnev followed Nikita Khrushchev's concept of "peaceful coexistence" that was introduced at the CPSU Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 and had legitimated negotiations and compromises with the countries of the Western Bloc. The so-called Brezhnev Doctrine was another important element of the Soviet external politics of that time and a significant component of détente. The Brezhnev Doctrine reflected the change of the

[160] Bacon, "Reconsidering Brezhnev,"1-2.
[161] For example, each interview conducted by Tatiana Mamonova shows disappointment in the reforms introduced after the collapse of the Soviet Union; Tatyana Mamonova, Chandra Niles Folsom, *Women's glasnost vs. naglost: stopping Russian backlash* (Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1994).
[162] Zubok, "The Soviet Union and détente," 438.

situation in the international arena: it was elaborated when the Soviet Union was acknowledged internationally as a superpower equal to the United States of America.[163] The Doctrine was introduced for the first time in 1968, in the article "Sovereignty and the International Obligations of Socialist Countries" in *Правда* [Truth], one of the main daily Soviet newspapers.[164] Subsequently at the Fifth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party in November 1968, Brezhnev stated: "When internal and external forces which are hostile to Socialism try to turn the development of any Socialist country towards the restoration of a capitalist regime […] it becomes not only a problem of the people concerned, but a common problem and concern of all Socialist countries."[165] Therefore the doctrine affirmed the right of the Soviet Union to military interventions in the Warsaw Pact countries and post-factum justified the 1960 Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia. The Western countries' acceptance of the Brezhnev Doctrine was one of the most significant elements of détente.

While promoting and supporting détente, Brezhnev and his administration hoped that the rapprochement with the Western Bloc and transfer of technologies would stimulate the Soviet economy. However, a partial opening of the trade did not stimulate the Soviet economy significantly, but rather increased the autonomy of Eastern European countries. At the same time, while the Soviet economic situation was unstable, economic and technical help and arms assistance the SU provided to socialist and developing countries was growing (for the period from 1955 to 1968 such assistance constituted 4.5 billion dollars, and it increased to 35.4 billion dollars for the period from 1966 to 1975).[166] The end of détente in the last years of the Brezhnev Era and the intensification of the arms race caused the growth of expenditures on the military and defense sector. However, Brezhnev's administration did not undertake the necessary steps to

[163] Bowker, "Brezhnev and Superpower Relations," 90.
[164] S. Kovalev, "Sovereignty and the International Obligations of Socialist Countries," cited in *The Prague Spring 1968: A National Security Archive Documents Reader*, (ed.) Jaromír Navrátil, (Budapest: CEU Press, 1998), 502.
[165] Leonid Brezhnev, "Speech to Congress of Polish Communist Party, 12 Nov.1968" in *The Yale Book of Quotations*, (ed.) Fred R. Shapiro (Yale: Yale University Press, 2006), 103.
[166] Cherkasov, "The Twilight of the Brezhnev Era," 85.

modernize the Soviet industry.[167] Because of the crisis in the agricultural sector the government had to buy food abroad, which led to a significant reduction of the country's gold and currency reserves, and the Soviet economic became highly dependent on oil and gas.[168] As Hobsbawm remarked, "it was the interaction of Soviet-type economics with the capitalist world economy from the 1960s on which made socialism vulnerable."[169]

Most historians consider the economic situation in the Soviet Union by the end of Brezhnev's years to be one of the weakest sides of his rule. In 1985 Gorbachev claimed that he inherited a "pre-crisis situation"[170] and that Brezhnev and his environment had not introduced urgently needed structural reforms. However, some scholars do not agree with this judgment. For example, Mark Harrison suggests that, even though the economic situation in the Soviet Union at that time was really difficult, it was not fatal and the collapse of the system was not inevitable.[171] This does not mean that the economic situation in the Soviet Union at the time was not problematic, but rather that Gorbachev perhaps exaggerated the difficulties to explain the necessity of his radical and painful reforms.

Nevertheless, Brezhnev's domestic policies, influenced by the international situation, directly affected the Soviet citizens. By the end of Brezhnev's years many types of products were in shortage and even coupons for meat and butter were introduced in some cities; the shadow economy became an important part of the life of ordinary citizens.[172]

At the same time, by the end of the 1960s the majority of the Soviet population completed a high school program, the urban population increased significantly, and the average family standard of living increased. During that time "the principle of a separate if small apartment and the idea of a 'style of life' became a reality for many families."[173] Moreover, in

[167] Ibid 88.
[168] Ibid 89.
[169] Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*, 251.
[170] Mark Harrison, "Economic Growth and Slowdown" in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*,(eds.) E. Bacon and M. Sandle (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 38.
[171] Ibid 63.
[172] Cherkasov, "The Twilight of the Brezhnev Era," 92.
[173] Boris Dubin, "Face of an Epoch: the Brezhnev Period Variously Assessed," *Russian Politics and Law* 42/3 (2004): 8.

the beginning of his rule, Brezhnev and his government introduced agricultural reform and expansion of wages and social benefits: the five-day working week became the norm, the pension age was lowered and the pensions raised, prices for many consumer goods were reduced.[174] By the end of Brezhnev's years, the difficult economic situation did not allow to achieve further significant improvements of the living standard of the population, but Gorbachev's subsequent years proved to be unstable and difficult, which made people miss the time when stability was the norm.

Some researchers point out that Brezhnev not only was not successful in promoting structural economic reforms, but also conducted conservative and even repressive policies.[175] For instance, in 1965 in his speech to celebrate the anniversary of the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War he made an attempt to rehabilitate Stalin (whose personality cult was condemned during Khrushchev's relative liberalization);[176] in 1966 the notorious trial of Soviet dissidents Daniel and Siniavsky (which stimulated the consolidation of liberal dissent) and the intensification of censorship were widely discussed abroad as re-Stalinization of Soviet life.[177] But as Edwin Bacon mentions in his chapter in the 2002 book *Reconsidering Brezhnev,* "there were other aspects of life […] which did not fit the totalitarian model,"[178] and it would be ahistorical to equate Brezhnev's rule with Stalin's years.

By the end of Brezhnev's years the Soviet system had reached a significant level of stability, the living standards had improved and the Soviet position as an international superpower was consolidated. However, during Brezhnev's years the one-party dictatorship was retained and human rights violations continued, the situation of the Soviet economy was complicated and in the international arena invasions in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and in Afghanistan in 1979, and significant deterioration of the relations with the People's Republic of

[174] Thatcher, "Brezhnev as Leader," p.29.
[175] Boris Dubin, "Face of an Epoch,"10.
[176] Ibid 7.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Bacon, "Reconsidering Brezhnev," 15.

China were factors that seriously destabilized not only the system of international relations, but also the domestic situation in the Soviet Union.

2.3 The Gender Order in the Soviet Union during Brezhnev's years: re-opening of the woman question

In this subchapter I will elaborate on the transformations of the gender order in the Soviet Union and the particular configuration of the gender order during the Brezhnev years. It is of great importance to analyze the transformations of the gender order in the Soviet Union because it shows how life of Russian women has changed after the Great October Revolution of 1917. The analysis of the gender order during the Brezhnev years shows that both the domestic situation in the country and the situation at the international arena stimulated the re-opening of the woman question in the Soviet Union. However, this poses the question why Soviet dissidents almost unanimously ignored the woman question while it was openly discussed in Soviet mass media.

2.3.1 Transformations of the gender order in the Soviet Union: from 1917 to 1964

Women's emancipation was one of the official goals of state socialism in Russia after the Great October Revolution of 1917. In the Soviet Union Marxist theory informed political ideology and seriously affected all the introduced policies.[179] Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov in their 1996 work *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War* argue that ideology was of great significance for Soviet policies during the whole of Soviet history.[180] However, Leffler states that "ideology alone does not dictate policy."[181] Therefore the main postulates of Marxism regarding women's liberation should be considered, but a more careful and complex understanding of the relations between ideology and policies should be developed.

Friedrich Engels considered the abolition of private property as the major pre-condition for women's emancipation. Women's subsequent incorporation into wage labor and socialization

[179] Alena Heitlinger, *Women and State Socialism: Sex inequality in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia* (The Macmillan Press LTD: London, 1979), 15.
[180] Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, 12.
[181] Leffler, "The Cold War," 523.

of the housework and upbringing of children would lead to women's independence from the household, gradually free them from the patriarchal family and bring about equality in all spheres of life.[182] Inspired by Marx and Engels' works, Soviet politicians made labor the principal duty of all citizens. According to Stalin (1936), "it is not property status, not national origin, not sex, nor office, but personal ability and personal labor that determine the position of every citizen in society."[183] According to Clara Zetkin, German Marxist and advocate for women's rights, "the prerequisite for [women's] economic independence is work…Once women have attained their economic independence from men, there is no reason why they should remain socially dependent upon them."[184] Labor outside the household, together with the abolition of private property and significant legal changes, were among the main sources of women's emancipation in the Soviet Union after the Revolution.

Significant changes in legislation also stimulated the transformation of the position and role of women in Russian society. According to the first Soviet Constitution of 1918, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) recognized "the equal rights of all citizens, irrespective of their racial or national connections,"[185] moreover, "[t]he right to vote and to be elected to the soviets is enjoyed by the […] citizens of both sexes, irrespective of religion, nationality, domicile, etc."[186] The new Family code of 1918 significantly changed the Russian family: women received equal rights with men, both spouses could choose their surnames, children born out of wedlock were granted with the same rights as children born in wedlock, divorce became easily obtainable, working women became entitled to paid maternity leave, and

[182] Friederich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (London: Penguin Books, 1986).
[183] Iosif Stalin (1878-1953), "On the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R.," 1936, http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/subject/women/conts.htm, accessed 14.01.2013.
[184] Clara Zetkin (1857-1933), quoted in Francisca de Haan, "Women as the 'Motor of Modern Life': Women's work in Europe west and east since 1945" in (eds.) Joanna Regulska and Bonnie G. Smith, *Women and gender in postwar Europe: from Cold War to European Union* (London; New York: Routledge, 2012), 87.
[185] *Constitution of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic* adopted by the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, July 10, 1918, Chapter 5, Article 2, 22, http://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/government/constitution/1918/article2.htm, accessed 12.02.2013.
[186] Ibid, Chapter 13, article 4, 64, http://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/government/constitution/1918/article4.htm, accessed 12.02.2013

coeducation became the norm.[187] Moreover, in order to mobilize women to support the party and to inform them about their new rights and opportunities, in 1919 a Women's Bureau (*Zhenotdel*) was formed. Inessa Armand was the first head of the *Zhenotlel*. Aleksandra Kollontai, a prominent Soviet feminist and politician, replaced her in 1920.[188] The *Zhenotdel* strived to establish such services as childcare and communal dinning centers to foster women's emancipation and to train delegates in political organizing.[189] Moreover, the *Zhenotdel* actively participated in the campaign to combat illiteracy; according to Barbara Engel "its activists played a leading role in combatting female illiteracy."[190]

But despite all the achievements of the Soviet state, many factors restricted women's emancipation. First of all, the First World War and the fierce civil war (1917-1922) not only disintegrated the Russian economy, but also caused the death of more than three million people.[191] Therefore the state could not provide women with all the communal services that were necessary for their emancipation. Insufficient economic development andthe global political climate, which forced the Soviet leaders to invest a significant amount of resources in the military and defense sector, restricted the promotion of women's emancipation in the country during the entire Soviet history. Secondly, the misogynist and disparaging attitude of many male Party members, workers and peasants towards women and the woman question seriously affected all the initiatives the Soviet leadership introduced in the field of women's emancipation.[192] It was not an easy task to challenge the old patterns of the gender order inherited from the Russian Empire.

Josef Stalin's collectivization and industrialization launched in the 1930s brought about new transformations of the Soviet gender order. During that time the authorities significantly changed their attitude toward women's emancipation. According to the statements of the Soviet

[187] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 142.
[188] Clements, *A history of women in Russia*, 196.
[189] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 143.
[190] Ibid 156.
[191] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 144.
[192] Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society*, 227.

officials, women's position in the Soviet society was so advanced that there was no need for a special women's department, and in 1930 the *Zhenotdel* was abolished.[193] At the same time, the necessity to restore and industrialize the Soviet economy made women's active participation in the paid labor necessary. Barbara Alpern Engel even claims that the official language reflected the fact that the mobilization of women had nothing to do with women's emancipation.[194] But even though women usually took underpaid and physically laborious positions, these years provided unprecedented opportunities for social mobility. By the end of the 1930s, 71 percent of women from sixteen to fifty-nine were engaged in paid labor, and some of them managed to take the positions in areas that were unattainable to women before.[195]

The standard of living in the 1930s was very low and the government invested extensively in heavy industry. High expenditures on heavy industry meant a decline in the quality and quantity of consumer goods; a shortage of communal institutions, such as canteens and kindergartens, was accompanied by lack housing.[196] For women, responsible for households and child rearing, everyday life was especially difficult. At the same time, in the 1930s new concept of the socialist family was introduced, which implied that the bearing and rearing of children was women's major responsibility to society.[197] According to Stalin, the fact that a Soviet woman had equal rights with a man did "not free her from the great and honorable duty which nature has given her: she is a mother, she gives life. This is certainly not a private affair, but one of great social significance."[198] Furthermore, according to the new family law of 1936, abortion was criminalized, and in the same year contraceptives were withdrawn from sale.[199] The 1936 and 1944 marriage laws made divorces more expensive and less attainable.[200]

[193] Clements, *A history of women in Russia*, 202.
[194] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 173.
[195] Barbara Evans Clements, "Later Developments: Thrends in Soviet Women's History, 1930 to the Present" in *Russia's women: Accomodation, Resistance, Transformation*, (eds.) Barbara Evans Clements, Barbara Alpern Engel and Christine D. Worobec (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 270.
[196] Clements, "Later Developments," 268.
[197] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 177.
[198] Iosif Stalin (1878-1953), quoted in Engel, *Women in Russia*, 177.
[199] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 180.
[200] Clements, "Later Developments," 268.

The Second World War was another one important stage of the history of the Soviet Union and, particularly, in the history of the Soviet gender order. The War caused the death of 27 millions of Soviet citizens[201] and women had to take many responsibilities that were considered to be male before. For example, women made up 8 per cent of the Soviet military forces (even though most military women were in the medical corps, transport or in clerical positions). By the end of the war, women outnumbered men in industry and the agricultural sector.[202] Although during the post-war years some women had to step back from their positions, the Great Patriotic war significantly changed the Soviet gender order by providing new opportunities for social mobility.

Nikita Khrushchev's years became the period of internal tranquility and economic growth in the Soviet Union. The standards of living increased, so did the urban population (although until the late 1960th the majority of Soviet people lived in rural areas);[203] new massive building projects were implemented.[204] In his famous 1956 "Secret Speech," Khrushchev pointed out that there were few women who held leading posts in all kinds of CommunistParty branches and industrial and agricultural enterprises[205] and opened up the possibility to discuss women's lives, their roles in the society and within the Party (even though the woman question was not declared unresolved).[206]

In 1956 Soviet officials acknowledged that domestic duties seriously impeded women's productivity at work and that their "double burden" negatively affected the demographic situation in the country. This problem should be solved by the improvement of communal services such as childcare institutions and dining facilities. Mechanization of everyday live (kitchen and laundry equipment and other labor-saving devices) and the improvement of living

[201] Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Unionfrom the beginning to the end* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 166.
[202] Clements, "Later Developments," 271.
[203] Susan Bridger, "Soviet Rural Women: Employment and Family Life" in *Russian Peasant Women*, (eds.) Beatrice Farnsworth and Lynne Viola (New-York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 272.
[204] Clements, "Later Developments," 273.
[205] Nikita Khrushchev, *Speech to 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U.*, 24-25 Feb. 1956, http://www.marxists.org/archive/khrushchev/1956/02/24.htm, accessed 12.12.2012.
[206] Buckley, *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union*, 146.

standards were seen as part of the solution. However gender relations at home and women's responsibility for *byt* (everyday life) were not questioned at all.[207]

Some important legal decisions were also introduced during Khrushchev's years. For example, some restrictive social policies were revised. Abortion was de-criminalized in 1955, in the late 1950s the procedure for divorce was simplified and longer maternity leaves were introduced.[208] By providing or improving social policies the government hoped to make motherhood more attractive to women. Moreover, *Zhensovety* were introduced, that is women's councils, which can be seen as reincarnation of the *Zhenotdel* that was abolished under Stalin in 1930.[209] Women's representation in administrative positions increased, for example, by 1962 "women constituted 27% of the elected representatives at the highest level of legislative decision-making."[210]

Overall, despite the strong traditional gender stereotypes that existed in the Soviet society and all the difficulties, the Soviet Union provided multiple opportunities for women to change their lives and even to acquire new identities. The Great October Revolution, industrialization, collectivization, the Great Patriotic War and Khrushchev's Thaw led to significant contradictory changes in the Soviet gender order, but the importance of women's emancipation and the necessity of their participation in paid work and in politics was never seriously challenged.

2.3.2 Gender order in the Soviet Union during Brezhnev's years

Melanie Ilič rightly pointed out that little has been written about the gender order, gender relations and Soviet women in the Khrushchev years, although this period is of crucial importance for an understanding of the development of the gender order in the Soviet Union.[211] Even less has been written about the gender order in the Soviet Union in Brezhnev's time. I claim that the changes in the ideological framework that happened during Brezhnev's years allowed to re-open the woman question that was silenced in the Soviet Union since the 1930s.

[207] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 236-239.
[208] Clements, *A history of women in Russia*, 254.
[209] Ibid 255.
[210] Ilič, "Introduction," 8.
[211] Ilič, "Introduction," 1.

The question why the Brezhnev era witnessed the final re-emergence of the woman question in the public sphere is worth considering here.

In my view, first of all, Brezhnev's policy regarding women was a logical continuation of Khrushchev's policy. Despite the fact that Soviet ideology had changed significantly by 1964 (in comparison to 1917), when Brezhnev came to power, women's equality still was an important dimension of the socialist project. Women were seen as de jure emancipated, but it was acknowledged during Brezhnev's years that some problems impeded women's de facto equality.

Secondly, as many researchers have shown, the Soviet economy needed women.[212] Since the end of the Second World War women were integrated in the Soviet economy and were an important part of it. Since the Soviet authorities acknowledged the connection between women's double burden and their productivity at the work place, reforms were needed in order to improve the economic situation. Moreover, the sharp drop of the birth rates and continued debates about the "demographic crisis" in the European part of Russia, well discussed during the Brezhnev years, made politicians think about the reasons why women preferred to have small families.[213] At the same time, the Brezhnev era led off debates about an alleged crisis of masculinity and loss of femininity. Soviet experts of that time claimed that women's emancipation caused men's loss of the breadwinner status that created serious psychological problems for men.[214]

The authorities could not encourage women to leave their paid employment in order to solve the demographic problem: the Soviet economy depended on women's labor and the ideological connection between women's wage labor and women's equality was still strong. Therefore the leadership introduced new forms of legal protection and financial benefits for mothers. For instance, even though according to the 1965 and 1968 laws the divorce procedure was simplified and fees were reduced,[215] in 1968 it became impossible to divorce from a pregnant woman or a woman with a baby under the age of one without her consent. Also women

[212] Lapidus, *Women in the Soviet Society*, p.196.
[213] Sarah Ashwin, "Introduction: Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia" in *Gender, state, and society in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia,* (ed.) Sarah Ashwin (London: Routledge, 2002), 16.
[214] Buckley, *Women and Ideology*, 183.
[215] Clements, *A History of Women in Russia*, 259.

could get additional 6 months of unpaid leave, and received payment for every child born. At the same time, abortions were legal and affordable (even though the conditions in the hospitals were far from good).[216]The 1968 new family law also introduced a procedure of paternity suit; the definition of rape proposed in this law included force sexual intercourse between spouses, some restricted means of birth control became available.[217]

Another one reason why women's problems acquired the Soviet authorities'attention during Brezhnev's time was the international situation of that period. The previous achievements of the Soviet Union in the field of women's equality made this sphere of particular importance for the Soviet Union. The growth of the women's movement in the West also stimulated positive changes in Soviet women's policies. Olga Lipovskaya pointed out in 1994 that the 1970s was the time of Second Wave feminism in the countries of Western bloc, but in the Soviet Union people did not knew about that.[218] However, Clements mentions that more then half of feminist activists she interviewed in Moscow in 1990 "reported that research into Western feminism in the Brezhnev years had awakened them to the pervasiveness of sexism in the Soviet Union."[219] It is possible that the majority of the Soviet population for different reasons did not know or were not interested to learn about women's liberation in the Western countries, but it would be highly unlikely that the Soviet authorities did not notice the transformation of the gender order in the West and that it did not have impact on Soviet gender policies. Moreover, I believe that changes in the countries of the Western Bloc made the Soviet Union, as a pioneer of women's emancipation, to intensify its support for women's rights worldwide.

At the domestic level, the re-opening of the woman question in the Soviet Union became possible also because of significant changes in Soviet ideology. The concept of Developed Socialism defined by Brezhnev as "a stage in the maturing of the new society when the restricting of all social relations on the collectivist principles inherent in socialism is

[216] Ibid 245.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Olga Lipovskaya, "The Mythology of Womanhood in Contemporary 'Soviet' Culture" in *Women in Russia: a new Era in Russian Feminism*, (ed.) Anastasiya Posadskaya (London : Verso, 1994), 124.
[219] Clements, *A History of Women in Russia*, 206.

completed,"[220] became the ideological core of his years. This concept replaced Khrushchev's optimistic claims regarding the construction of communism in the USSR by 1980, asserted the leading role of the Soviet Union among other socialist countries, and allowed to re-introduce the notion of non-antagonistic contradictions in Soviet ideological thinking.[221]

The concept of non-antagonistic contradictions was initially developed in the Soviet Union in the 1930s to deal with social problems that did not challenge the structure of the Soviet society because they could be resolved without attaining their peak (Marx and Engels believed that for a contradiction to be solved it should reach its peak and then it can be solved through revolutionary changes).[222] The concept of non-antagonistic contradictions is considered to be one of the few innovations that Soviet philosophers made to complement and develop Marx's theory. It was aimed at proving that the "socialist system is capable of gradual and peaceful resolution of its internal conflicts as it moved toward communism."[223] Soviet philosophers and policy makers used this concept extensively during the whole of Soviet history, but its dynamic development during the Brezhnev years made it possible to discuss openly some acute contemporary problems. According to this concept, non-class differences (differences between such groups of people as women, youth, students) did not contain antagonist contradictions and therefore the woman question could be seen as a "no-antagonistic contradiction."[224]

Although,as one has seen, Brezhnev's time is often referred to as an Era of stagnation, Brezhnev went further than Khrushchev in developing policies that positively affected women's lives (as I discussed it above, Soviet legislation was changed significantly).[225] Moreover, although Brezhnev prioritized the development of heavy industry and defense needs, during his reign more resources than before were re-directed to the production of consumer goods. Barbara Engel claims that by the middle of the 1970s half of the Soviet population had a refrigerator and

[220] Mark Sandle, "Brezhnev and Developed Socialism,"168.
[221] Buckley, *Women and ideology in the Soviet Union*, 180.
[222] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 227-228.
[223] Thomas Weston, "The Concept of Non-Antagonistic contradiction in Soviet Philosophy," *Science and Society* 72/4 (2008): 427.
[224] Buckley, *Women and Ideology*, 162.
[225] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 242.

two-thirds possessed a washing machine,which facilitated the life of Soviet women. The quantity of kindergartens and nurseries increased and almost half of the Soviet children could attend them.[226]

However, the patriarchal structure of the Soviet family was still far from being dismantled. The majority of husbands did not want to take part in managing the household: it was still considered to be women's responsibility (and many women started to complain about that). According to the data of the survey conducted in Moscow in 1965 "50 percent of women who declared themselves unhappily married were dissatisfied with the division of labor in their household."[227]

The standard of living of the average family was better than ever before in the Soviet Union, but women started to express openly their dissatisfaction. Much more women were educated by then (by 1975 52% of Soviet women got secondary or high education) and they did not want to tolerate their double burdens and difficult life conditions.[228] Moreover, it is possible that the rapprochement of the countries of the Eastern and Western Blocs and the expansion of contacts between them, which happened at the time,[229] made the weaknesses of the Soviet economy and differences in living standard between the Soviet Union and its competitor more visible for the Soviet citizens. Together with the unfulfilled promises of Khrushchev, who had claimed that by 1980 the Soviet Union would reach the stage of Communism,[230] it made Soviet women openly complain about their difficult life.[231]

For example, in 1969 the novella "A Week Like Any Other" written by Natalya Baranskaya was published in one of the most popular Soviet magazines, Новый Мир [New World], which portrayed all everyday difficulties of average Soviet women. But even though it

[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid 243.
[228] Ibid 244.
[229] Clements, *A history of Women in Russia,* 258.
[230] At the 22nd Congress of the CPSU in 1961 Khrushchev stated that "[t]he current generation of Soviet people will live under communism."
[231] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 243.

describes the life of ordinary Soviet women as very hard, the novella starts with the words "I love my work. I value my independence." The novella's heroine, Olga Voronkova, does not want to quit her job and devote her life to managing the household and bringing up her children. What she does wantis more support from the government and from her husband, an equal division of domestic duties.

The so-called Brezhnev's Era of stagnation allowed to re-open finally the woman question and to make women's problems part of open public discussion. But despite the fact that during Brezhnev's years women's issues and problems were openly discussed in the Soviet Society (and even the novel about hardships of women's lives emerged in the one of the most popular official magazines of the country), Soviet dissidents were not involved in this discussion. Even the first feminist Samizdat emerged only in 1979, 10 years after the publication of Baranskaya's novel and 15 years after Brezhnev came to power. The question why Soviet dissidents almost unanimously ignored the woman question will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 3 - Soviet dissidents: a history of Soviet dissent and of women's exclusion from the historical narratives

In this chapter I will analyze the phenomenon of Soviet dissent, and Soviet liberal dissent in particular. In order to answer the questions why Soviet dissidents often ignored the woman question and how women became excluded from the historiography of heroic Soviet dissent, I will trace back the history of the Soviet oppositional movements. Therefore this chapter will provide historical background of the phenomenon of Soviet dissent, asking whether Soviet dissidents can be seen as descendants of the tsarist intelligentsia and/or rather as the products of the Soviet era (3.1). In order to answer the first question, I will focus on the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, which often considered being one of the most important dissident groups in the Soviet Union (3.1). By analyzing some of its documents, I will show how Soviet liberal dissidents were writing about women and "women's issues." I argue that, although in some of their documents Soviet liberal dissidents did write about women, they mostly focused on women's rights as civil and political rights. Subsequently, I will analyze the emergence of the feminist samizdat almanac *Женщина и Россия* [Woman and Russia] that appeared in the Soviet Union in 1979, to show how the majority of Soviet dissidents reacted to that and how the editors of almanac were constructed in the Western mass media (3.2). To answer my second question, I will explore the representation of Soviet dissidents in the Soviet and Western newspapers (3.3). I argue that Western mass media played an important role in the process of constructing Soviet dissent as liberal dissent, and that the image constructed in the Soviet newspapers only reinforced such an interpretation. Moreover, I will show that in both Soviet and Western newspapers dissidents were defined as male, which contributed to excluding female dissidents from the later historical narratives.

3.1 Soviet dissidents: A history of the movement

As I argued in chapter one of this thesis, it would be wrong to assume that Soviet dissent was a coherent movement. As I mentioned, I rely on a historian Svetlana Chuikina's definition

of dissent as "the combination of nonconformity in thoughts and deeds" [*инакомыслие* and *инакодействие*] without any particular political orientation. According to Chuikina, dissent is "a complex of thoughts and deeds, which did not conform to the norms and values of the Soviet society and was aimed at the modification or disruption of the Soviet system."[232] Such an approach, which considers Soviet dissent as a phenomenon that had distinctive features intrinsic to all groups of dissidents (without equating it with any particular dissident group), makes it possible to trace back the roots of this phenomenon and to consider the main factors that led to the exclusion of the woman question from the dissidents' agenda.

3.1.1 Soviet dissent:a new milestone in the history of Russian oppositional movements or a product of the Soviet epoch?

Many historians claim that dissidents played a prominent role in the process of democratization/dissolution of the Soviet Union. For example, historian Tatiana Lozansky writes that "[e]ven though they always have remained a tiny group […] they contributed significantly to the present policies of openness (glasnost)"[233] and portrays Soviet dissidents as the most heroic and courageous segment of Soviet society.[234] The roots of that complex phenomenon, which, according to different evaluations, accelerated major changes in the Soviet society or caused the collapse of the Soviet Union, will be analyzed hereafter.

In order to analyze dissidents' activity it is necessary to understand how the movement was formed and which factors influenced it. Therefore, the question whether Soviet dissidents were the spiritual descendants and followers of the tsarist intelligentsia or the product of the Soviet era is of great importance for the goal of this work. Usually Soviet dissent is considered as part of the long-lasting struggle between the Russian intelligentsia and various state

[232] Чуйкина, "Участие женщин в диссидентском движении."
[233] Lozansky, "The Role of Dissent in the Soviet Union since 1953,"1-2.
[234] Ibid 3.

institutions of power;[235] some historians even claim that the similarities between the dissidents and the intelligentsia were "real and undeniable."[236]

Marshall Shatz in his 1980 book *Soviet dissent in historical perspective* states that Soviet dissent was in many respects similar to the opposition that emerged in the Russian Empire during the years of Peter the Great, the first Russian Emperor, who ruled from 1682 to 1725.[237] According to Shatz, the tsarist and Soviet regimes were similar in many ways: in both cases the emergence of opposition was rooted in the state's particular policies - which were connected with the desire to generate an educated elite, but to preserve authoritarian control - and the concept of individual sovereignty was similarly important for the tsarist intelligentsia and Soviet dissidents. Moreover, Shatz points out that there is no agreement between scholars on what the tsarist intelligentsia and what Soviet dissent was.[238]

But Shatz not only highlights the similarities between these two types of Russian oppositional activity, he also claims that the West always induced resistance and opposition in Russia. He states that in the Russian Empire the intelligentsia emerged "to develop a new set of standards shaped by Western education and culture"[239] and that all individuals who could act and think independently "came from the Western-educated mobility;"[240] moreover, according to him, Soviet dissidents emerged only because of the Western influence. Similarly, Jay Bergman in a 1992 article states that both the tsarist intelligentsia and Soviet dissidents can be characterized by their adherence to Western values.[241]

Serguei Oushakine in his 2001 article "The Terrifying Mimicry of Samizdat" challenges this notion of the origins of Soviet dissent. In his view, an approach that equates dissent with the intelligentsia is simply ahistorical. Dissent and dissidents in the Soviet Union, he argues, were the products of a particular period of time, their "public performance was largely framed by

[235] Oushakine, "The Terrifying Mimicry of Samizdat," 196.
[236] Jay Bergman, "Soviet Dissidents on the Russian Intelligentsia, 1956-1985: The Search for a Usable Past," *Russian Review*, 51/1 (1992): 17.
[237] Shatz, *Soviet dissent in historical perspective*, 15.
[238] Ibid 17.
[239] Ibid 15.
[240] Ibid 9.
[241] Bergman, "Soviet Dissidents on the Russian Intelligentsia," 17.

existing public discourses on Soviet law and civic and human rights" and even their methods and their dependence on the regime were actually Soviet.[242]

Veniamin Ioffe, who was a prominent Soviet historian and dissident, claims that his moral values were shaped "under the influence of the moral tendencies of the Russian intelligentsia, of Russian classical culture."[243] In 1964 the Moscow dissidents organized a Ryleev Club (named after one of the participants of the Decembrist uprising of 1825), which two years later published an underground magazine *Русскоеслово*[Russian Word], reviving the radical magazine that was published for the first time in Russia in the second half of nineteenth century.[244] However, others, such as Ludmila Alekseeva, one of the prominent members of Soviet liberal dissent, states in her book on the history of Soviet dissent that there was no continuation between the Russian liberal-democratic tradition and Soviet human rights defenders.[245]

It seems to me that, in fact, Soviet dissidents were the spiritual descendants of the Russian intelligentsia and the product of the Soviet epoch at the same time. Indeed, there are some similarities between the two types of oppositional activity (many dissidents themselves pointed to the connection between their thinking and the ideas of the intelligentsia)[246] and that Western influence greatly affected both the tsarist intelligentsia and Soviet dissidents. However, it is clear thatthe Soviet realities and ideology played an immense role for the formation of Soviet dissenters' views. Therefore, in order to understand why women were excluded from the historical narratives about Soviet dissent and why women's problems were not part of dissidents' agenda, it is equally important to analyze the influence of the Soviet realities and ideology and the impact of the Cold War competition.

[242] Oushakine, "The Terrifying Mimicry of Samizdat," 196.
[243] Philip Boobbyer, "Truth-telling, Conscience and Dissent in Late Soviet Russia: Evidence from Oral Histories," *European History Quarterly* 30/4 (2000): 558.
[244] Bergman, "Soviet Dissidents on the Russian Intelligentsia," 21.
[245] Людмила Алексеева, *История инакомыслия в СССР*.
[246] Bergman, "Soviet Dissidents on the Russian Intelligentsia," 17.

3.1.2 The phenomenon of Soviet dissent from a historical perspective

In this subchapter I will consider the history of Soviet dissent (and especially Soviet liberal dissent) and will try to challenge the mainstream narrative that claims that liberal dissent that emerged in the late 1960 was the only/the only mature/the only real form of Soviet opposition. Many scholars see Stalin's death and Khrushchev's Secret speech, delivered at the 20th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) on 25 February 1956, as an important threshold in the history of the Russian oppositional movement that led to the germination of dissent in the Soviet Union.[247] Some authors believe that dissent in the Soviet Union emerged not as a result of Khrushchev's liberalization, but as a result of Brezhnev's subsequent "freeze" (meaning the termination of liberal reforms in the Soviet Union and of the condemnation of Stalin's policies and his cult of personality).[248] Such approaches imply that, firstly, there was no political opposition in the Soviet Union before Stalin's death, and, secondly, that liberal dissent (and the human rights movement) was the only "mature" form of Soviet resistance. Not only the majority of Western scholars, but also many Soviet dissidents adopted this view, which denies that opposition always existed in the USSR, "ranging from open rebellion to more quiet forms of everyday resistance and disobedience to the rulers and the system."[249]

The 1922 OGPU (Joint State Political Directorate or secret police in the Soviet Union from 1922 to 1934) report *About Anti-Soviet Groupings among the Intelligentsia* already stated that there were "anti-Soviet activities in professional organizations, universities, scientific societies, administrative conferences, and in trusts, cooperatives, and trade organizations."[250] During Stalin's years there was strong opposition to collectivization in the rural areas,[251] there

[247] Shatz, *Soviet dissent in historical perspective,*93.
[248] YuliaVishnevskaya, "Dissidents in the Brezhnev Era," 1981, Red Archives, Box 294.
[249] Erik Kulavig, *Dissent in the Years of Khrushchev: Nine Stories about Disobedient Russians* (New-York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 1.
[250] OGPU Report *About Anti-Soviet Groupings among the Intelligentsia,* cited in Paul R. Gregory, "The Ship of Philosophers: How the Early USSR Dealt with Dissident Intellectuals," *The Independent Review* 13/4 (2009): 487.
[251] Tracy McDonald, "A Peasant Rebellion in Stalin's Russia: The Pitelinskii Uprising, Riazan 1930," *Journal of Social History* 35/1 (2001): 125.

are also some examples of workers' strikes and open protest letters during that period.[252] By the time when Khrushchev delivered his famous Secret speech in 1956, many different types of oppositional activity already existed in the Soviet Union (such as students' and intellectuals' discussion groups) and were known in the West.[253] Moreover, there are examples of public unrest during the Khrushchev years in Kemerovo in 1955, in Karaganda in 1959 and in Novosibirsk in 1962, which were caused by poor living and work conditions.[254] However, as well as workers' open letters of the1930s, these protests were often ignored by dissidents (many of them believed that the first human rights demonstration in the USSR happened in 1965)[255] and by historians, or labeled as the "emergence of public opinion," but not as dissent.[256] For instance, Shatz claims that peasants' revolts and workers' strikes in the Russian context were unable to generate serious changes in the society, and therefore cannot be seen as real opposition to the regime.[257] In my view, the majority of Soviet liberal dissidents of Brezhnev's years, as well as Western researchers, in opposing the Soviet regime or writing about dissent, narrowly focused on political freedoms and rights, and excluded or deemed of lesser importance such rights as the right to work, to equal pay, to an adequate standard of living or to gender equality (even though these are integral parts of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).[258]

In addition to a narrow focus on civil and political rights, the absence of historical accounts about early and other forms of Soviet opposition can be explainedby the fact that not all information about the Soviet Union was attainable for Western researchers. Also, and importantly, the types of oppositional activity described above were usually aimed *not* against socialism as a system, but rather against the bureaucracy, the low living standards, and shortage

[252] Sarah Davies, "Us against Them: Social Identity in Soviet Russia, 1934-1941," *Russian Review* 56/1 (1997): 81, 83.
[253] Kulavig, *Dissent in the Years of Khrushchev*, 29.
[254] Ibid 123.
[255] Vishnevskaya, "Dissidents in the Brezhnev Era," 4.
[256] Lozansky, "The Role of Dissent in the Soviet Union since 1953," 5.
[257] Shatz, *Soviet dissent in historical perspective*, 9.
[258] "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" adopted on December 10, 1948, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf, accessed 25.04.2013.

of food and lack of political resources.[259] Therefore, in the context of the Cold War Western scholars did not embrace these problems, because the West associated itself with "freedom," and argued that it was the key element missing under communism (and freedom was defined, then, as political and individual freedom).

According to the mainstream historical narrative, Soviet dissent germinated in the first post-Stalin years. The same narrative claims that the opposition and dissent of that era were concentrated exclusively in the field of literature and arts. Vladimir Pomerantsev's article "On sincerity in literature" (1953), Ilia Erenburg's novel *The thaw* (1954), Vladimir Dudintsev's novel *Not by bread alone* (1956), Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957) and Andrei Solzhenitsyn's *One day in the life of Ivan Denisovich* (1962) are usually regarded as the main dissidents' achievements of the Khrushchev years. All these authors were severely criticized in Soviet magazines and newspapers, and some of them were subjected to state persecution.

Although the majority of the early post-Stalin Soviet dissidents did not try to challenge state socialism as a system, but rather to change and to improve it, the Soviet government was seriously alarmed by their disobedience. The Soviet officials realized that open debates regarding the canon of socialist realism not only questioned the paradigms of Soviet art, but also potentially threated the Party's monopoly to power. However, many Western researchers agree on the fact that post-Stalin dissent was limited to moral claims, did not question the authorities' right to power, did not have the capability to change the society, and, therefore, was not mature enough.[260]

It is interesting to point out that, in comparison to the later periods of Soviet oppositional activity, which started after Brezhnev's freeze and includes some female names in the narratives on Soviet dissent (even though these women are not seen as key figures), this "initial" stage of dissent includes only male names. I believe that this is because during that time the opposition between the state and dissenters was concentrated in the public sphere (at least part of the literary

[259] Davies, "Us against Them: Social Identity in Soviet Russia, 1934-1941."
[260] Shatz, *Soviet dissent in historical perspective,* 135.

works that caused severe debates in the society were published in official Soviet magazines) and women's access to this sphere was still limited. By 1976 women still constituted only 13.7% of the members of the Soviet Union of Writers.[261] Moreover, at this stage dissent was strongly connected with the act of writing, and women generally were seen as not suitable for creative activity. However, gradually women started to play more important roles within the dissident movement. According to Chuikina, while during the early ears of Soviet dissent (in her view,this was the period from 1956 to 1964) women performed only "additional" functions, by the 1970s and 1980s women's impact became more creative and independent (even though they mostly stayed within the "women's sphere," which included mainly managing the infrastructure, informational exchange and support of the political prisoners).[262]

Western historiography usually connects the emergence/consolidation/"maturity" of the dissident movement with a new approach of the dissenters to the problems of the Soviet society and regime. In this view, the dissenters of the Brezhnev years were more mature because they not only made moral claims about the Soviet regime, but also tried to challenge concrete Soviet state institutions. According to some scholars, it is even possible to name the date when "conscious dissent" emerged in the Soviet Union, namely December 5, 1965, "the day of the first human rights demonstration in the history of the USSR," caused by the arrest of two Soviet writers, Andrey Sinyavsky and Yuri Daniel[263] (their real names are Abram Tertz and Nikolai Arzhak).[264]

A small demonstration on December 5, 1965 at Pushkin Square, the process against Sinyavsky and Daniel that started in 1966, and a petition campaign in Moscow organized two months later by mathematician Aleksandr Esenin-Volpin are the symbols of the emergence of "mature" Soviet dissent. Sinyavsky and Daniel were tried under article 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR for "agitation or propaganda carried on for the purpose of subversion or

[261] Shipler, "Soviet Women Not Liberated."
[262] Чуйкина, "Участие женщин в диссидентском движении."
[263] Vishnevskaya, "Dissidents in the Brezhnev Era," 4.
[264] The using of pseudonyms was usual practice for Soviet writers, especially for those who in their works expressed the criticism of the Soviet system or lifestyle.

weakening the Soviet regime" for sending and publishing their manuscripts abroad.[265] In February 1966, the two authors were sentenced to respectively five and seven years of imprisonment in laborcamps, which led to a wave of protests among Soviet intellectuals and immediate reactions in the West.[266]

The so-called "Trial of the four" became another prominent case that attracted attention in the Western mass media and among Soviet intellectuals. Alexander Ginzburg, Yury Galanskov, Aleksei Dobrovolsky and Vera Lashkova in 1968 were convicted for publishing an underground magazine, *Феникс*[Phoenix], and for their work on the White book, devoted to the Daniel and Synyavski trial. Both editions were widely circulated among dissidents and smuggled to the West. It is important to note that in the historiography Vera Lashkova was constructed exclusively as a typist, not as a dissident she was.[267] The conviction of these four dissidents caused a new wave of protest, which, according to Alekseeva, was much wider than the previous one.[268]

It seems to me that, although in both cases described above Soviet dissidents were sentenced for the dissemination of materials critical to the regime ("agitation and propaganda"), the main factor that caused their arrest and conviction was the publication of their works abroad. The reason is that the Soviet authorities regarded dissidents as a factor that could weaken their position in the ideological competition with the West. The dissemination of materials critical to the regime within the Soviet Union was less important for the Soviet officials than their publication abroad.

The trials against writers in the Soviet Union were accompanied by an intensification of censorship, which triggered a large number of protest letters. Examples are Lidia Chukovskaya's open letters in 1966 and 1968, Solzhenitsyn's appeal to the Fourth Congress of Soviet Writers in

[265] "The Criminal Code of the RSFSR, October 27, 1960, as Amended to March 1, 1972," *Soviet Criminal Law and Procedure: The RSFSR Codes*, (ed.) Harold J. Berman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 153.
[266] Max Hayward, "Introduction," in *On Trial: The Soviet State versus "Abram Tertz" and "Nikolai Arzhak,"* (ed.) Max Hayward (New York: Harper & Row, c1967), 32-33.
[267] Peter Reddaway, "Introduction" in *The trial of the four: a collection of materials on the case of Galanskov, Ginzburg, Dobrovolsky and Lashkova, 1967-68*, (ed.)Pavel Litvinov (New York: Viking Press, 1972), ix-xi.
[268]Людмила Алексеева, *История инакомыслия в СССР, 118.*

1967, and letters by Andrei Sakharov, Valentin Turchin and Roy Medvedev to the Soviet leaders regarding the democratization of the Soviet system.[269] Since 1966, open protests (such as small demonstrations and open letters) against judicial abuses led to the consolidation of the Russian "Democratic movement."[270] Alekseeva claims that in the beginning quite a big number of citizens participated in these open protests. However, when the government started to suppress dissidents in 1968 with arrests, trials, searches, dismissals from one's job and from the Party, imprisonment, exile to camps and confinement to mental hospitals,[271] only few people continued their protest activities. Historians generally consider this small group - consisting of liberal dissidents (democrats, human rights defenders or the "mainstream movement") - as the most important part of Soviet dissent. Liberal dissidents used such methods as support to political prisoners and their families, open protests and establishing human rights associations. For instance, in 1969 the "Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights in the USSR" and in 1970 the Committee for Human Rights were formed in Moscow.[272]

This period also witnessed the emergence of *The Chronicle of Current Events*, the best known in the West samizdat bimonthly edition, which reported on the violation of human rights in the Soviet Union. The first edition of *The Chronicle of Current Events* was issued on April 30, 1968. Natalia Gorbanevskaya was its first editor, after her arrest in the end of 1969, Anatolii Yakobson replaced her; subsequently the editors were changing every two-three years (mainly because of their arrests).[273] One can claim that *The Chronicle* became one of the instruments of consolidation of Soviet dissent, because its reports were devoted not only to the repressions of members of the human rights movement, but also to the violation of rights of the members of national and religious dissident groups (which comprised large and important part of Soviet dissent).[274]

[269] Ibid.
[270] Brumberg, "Dissent in Russia," 781-782.
[271] Ibid 782.
[272] Людмила Алексеева, *История инакомыслия в СССР, 133.*
[273] Ibid 131.
[274] Ibid.

From 1969 to 1974, the severe suppression of the dissidents led to the decrease of their activity: no issue of *The Chronicle of Current Events* was published from January 1972 to May 1974, and many dissenters were imprisoned or sent into exile. Although the ratification of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 caused a temporary revival of Soviet liberal dissent, and in 1976 the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group was founded to monitor human rights violations in the Soviet Union,[275] the US President Carter's 1976 campaign for human rights led to a new turn of repression in the USSR.[276] Although some liberal dissident groups were active in the Soviet Union until the years of Glasnost, according to Alekseeva, "by the mid-1980s, when most dissidents were either in prison or in exile, we were simply forgotten."[277] However, Alekseeva's observation is correct only regarding Soviet liberal dissent. Literary dissent, as well the so-called Second culture (in relation to the first, official culture), flourished during the whole Brezhnev era.[278]

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. Initially he stated that there were no political prisoners in the Soviet Union and that Sakharov was just a madman, but eventually Gorbachev changed his position.[279] His years witnessed a radical transformation of the whole Soviet society, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, harsh economic reforms, the abolition of censorship, introduction of religious freedom, at least a partial solution of the national question and cessation of political repressions. Soviet dissent as a form of opposition to the regime ceased to exist.

3.1.3 Samizdat: one of the key elements of Soviet dissent

"The clandestine or illegal copying and distribution of literature (orig. and chiefly in the U.S.S.R.); an 'underground press'; a text or texts produced by this. Also transf. and attrib. or as adj. Phr. in samizdat, in this form of publication."[280]

[275] Ibid 155.
[276] Lozansky, "The Role of Dissent in the Soviet Union since 1953," 15.
[277] Alexeyeva and Goldberg, *The thaw generation*, 6.
[278] Елена Здравомыслова, "Ленинградский 'Сайгон' — пространство негативной свободы," *Новое литературное обозрение* 100 (2009) [Elena Zdravomislova, "Leningrad's 'Saigon' – the space of negative freedom," *New literature review* 100 (2009)].
[279] Alekseeva, *The thaw generation*, 7.
[280] Oxford English Dictionary Online, s.v. "Samizat," http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/170390?redirectedFrom=samizdat#eid, accessed April 4, 2013.

Although Soviet dissent was not a coherent movement, it is possible to define some common characteristics that the majority of oppositional groups in the Soviet Union shared. Non-conformist thinking, non-violent methods, extreme diversity of the groups and approaches and an extensive use of samizdat are the main characteristics of Soviet dissent. Samizdat, as one of the main features of Soviet dissent and the principal form of dissidents' activity, deserve separate consideration here.

Samizdat ("I-self-pub"), which refers to underground amateur publishing of censored texts and transmission of these texts from one reader to another in the post-Stalin Soviet Union, was, according to Ann Komaromi, one of the principle forms of activity of Soviet dissidents.[281] The term samizdat was opposed to *gosizdat* (abbreviation for the State Publishing House)[282] and the poet Nikita Glazkov used it for the first time for his own texts in 1952.[283]

The first Soviet documents that introduced censorship were signed already in 1917. These were "The Decree on the Press" and the "General Regulation on the Press," which prohibited the non-Bolshevik press, introduced censorship regulations[284] and created the legal preconditions for the emergence of Soviet Samizdat. Nevertheless, samizdat as a form of opposition and dissent is not a recent phenomenon in Russian culture. Already in 1790 the prominent Russian writer Alexander Radishchev published a book *Поездка из Петербурга в Москву* [A journey from Petersburg to Moscow] on his own press; it is well known that in the 1820s Alexander Pushkin and Alexander Griboedov also widely circulated their unpublished manuscripts.[285] But although the underground publication of censored texts was known in Russia

[281] Komaromi, "The Material Existence of Soviet Samizdat," 597-598.
[282] Hyung-Min Joo, "Voices of Freedom: Samizdat," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 56/4 (2004): 572.
[283] Komaromi, "The Material Existence of Soviet Samizdat," 598.
[284] Hollander, "Political Communication and Dissent in the Soviet Union," 236.
[285] Ibid 263.

long before the emergence of the Soviet Union, as historian Andrei Daniel remarks, nobody among the opposition of the past wrote as much as Soviet dissidents.[286]

Komaromi points out in her 2004 article "The Material Existence of Samizdat" that the heroic representation of the authors of samizdat in the historiography of Soviet dissent made samizdat the repository of "'heroic and uncompromising truth' wielded by dissident-warriors struggling valiantly against the totalitarian regime to bring about its eventual demise."[287] Therefore, even though samizdat was a complex phenomenon that encompassed not only political writings but also other genres including pornography, first in the West and later in the Soviet Union and Russia, samizdat became the symbol of the Soviet opposition, "a rebirth of free speech behind the Iron Curtain, defying ideological brainwashing by the Dart Vaders of the 'Evil Empire'."[288]

According to Peter Steiner, the analysis of Soviet dissent and particularly of Soviet samizdat is a challenging task because the "concept of 'totalitarianism' that usually provides a convenient backdrop for any discussion of uncensored publishing in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe exemplifies the perils of homogenizing some seventy years of Communism into an ahistoric sameness."[289] It is of great importance to acknowledge that, although the historiography often understands and interpretssamizdat as an integral part of the fight for universal human rights, it was a complex phenomenon.

While analyzing the phenomenon of samizdat, Hyung-Min Joo in his 2004 article "Voices of Freedom: Samizdat" claims that it "was a predominantly 'political' phenomenon in spite of its literary origins."[290] In his analysis he relies on the materials of *Arkhiv Samizdata* (the Samizdat archive) at the Open Society Archive in Budapest. The author divides all the materials into four categories: literary, nationalist, religious and political (the last group, according to him,

[286] Андрей Даниэль, "Диссидентство: культура ускользающая от определения," *Россия* (Москва: 1998) [Andrei Daniel,"Dissent: culture that is difficult to define" in*Russia* (Moscow: 1998)], 14-15.
[287] Komaromi, "The Material Existence of Soviet Samizdat," 599.
[288] Peter Steiner, "Introduction: On Samizdat, Tamizdat, Magnizdat, and Other Strange Words That Are Difficult to Pronounce," *Poetics Today* 29/4 (2008): 616.
[289] Steiner, "Introduction," 614.
[290] Hyung-Min Joo, "Voices of Freedom," 572.

constitutes 63% of all documents in the collection). However, even though Hyung-Min Joo mentions that the US Congress sponsored the foundation of the Open Society Archives,[291] he does not question the institute's policy and origins, nor he asks how and why the materials for this archive were selected. Therefore he misses a very important component in his research, namely, the Cold War competition, which not only influenced the conceptof Soviet dissent constructed in the West, but also defined which "valuable" materials were to be preserved in the archives.

The phenomenon of samizdat was accompanied by *tamizdat*, writings of Soviet authors that were published abroad and then smuggled back to the Soviet Union[292] with the assistance of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). According to recent data, from 1956 to 1993 no less than around 10 million books and periodicals were distributed among East European and Soviet people.[293] These data exemplify the enormous involvement of the West in the activity of Soviet dissidents.

3.1.4 The Moscow Helsinki Group and the woman question: inclusive exclusion

In this subchapter I will analyze some documents of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group (MHWG), which are devoted to women. I will show that, even when members of the group were writing about women, in fact they did not consider women's rights and problems in general, but rather tried to attract global public attention emphatically to the violation of civil and political rights in the Soviet Union. I focus on the MHWG for several reasons. First, this Group is one of the best-known Soviet dissident groups; it is also one of the groups that in the main body of historiography replaced all other types of opposition in the Soviet Union. Secondly, members of this group developed intensive contacts with the West and the importance of Western influence on their activities is easy to trace. Moreover, during the years of détente, this group was

[291] Ibid 573.
[292] Oxford English Dictionary Online, s.v. "Tamizdat," http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/197405?redirectedFrom=tamizdat#eid,accessed April 4, 2013.
[293] Ostermann, Christian F., and Kristina Terzieva, "The West's Secret Plan for the Mind: Book Distribution to East Europe during the Cold War," on the discussion of Alfred Reisch's research, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC, February 6, 2008,http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/the-wests-secret-plan-for-the-mind-book-distribution-to-east-europe-during-the-cold-war, accessed April 8, 2013.

important not only because it attracted global public attention to the violation of human rights in the Soviet Union, but also because it triggered the emergence of similar groups in the Soviet Union (in Ukraine, Lithuania, Armenia and Georgia) [294] and beyond (Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia and the Workers' Defence Committee in Poland),[295] the so-called transnational Helsinki network.[296]

In a nutshell, the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group is the oldest human rights organization still active in Russia; it was founded on 12 May 1976 in Moscow in order to monitor human rights violations in the Soviet Union. Yuri Orlov was the founder and the group's first head. The Helsinki Final Act, signed in 1975, and especially its Third basket devoted to human rights, was an important incentive for the creation of the group. In 1977, when President Carter openly supported the Soviet dissidents, the Soviet government intensified the persecution of dissidents and their arrests started. In September 1982, the group was dissolved, because, according to one of its members, Sofia Kallistratova, by "that moment there was only three persons in the USSR who were not imprisoned [among the members of the group]."[297] During eight years, the group released 195 informational documents. In 1989, the MHWG was revived, and Larisa Bogoraz became its chair.[298]

MHWG reports were devoted mostly to such issues as the mistreatment of political prisoners, trials, persecution of religious groups, separation of families, means of communications, and the right to leave the country.[299] An examination of their work shows that women's rights and women's problems were marginal topics, even though some of the materials were devoted to women.

In an 1980 open letter to the thirty-four countries that signed the Helsinki Final Act, Ivan Kovalev and Elena Bonner tried to attract attention to the problem of amnesty of political

[294] Ibid 119
[295] Ibid 120-121.
[296] Sarah B. Snyder, *Human rights activism and the end of the cold war: a transnational history of the Helsinki network* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 8.
[297] София Каллистратова, "Из Воспоминаний" [Sofia Kallistratova, "From memoirs"] http://www.mhg.ru/history/1B3369E , accessed 20.05.2013.
[298] "History of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group,"http://www.mhg.ru/history/13DFEA6, accessed 15.04.2013.
[299] Parchomenko, *Soviet images of dissidents and nonconformists*, 118.

prisoners in the Soviet Union, and particularly, to the plight of female political prisoners. Their open letter stated: "[w]e do not know if there is another country in the world where there are women-political prisoners" and asked to consider that each of the imprisoned women was somebody's mother, sister or daughter.[300] One can see that, in trying to attract attention to the problem of female political prisoners, Kovalev and Bonner were silent about male prisoners and all other female prisoners in the Soviet Union. Moreover, they defined female political prisoners not as fighters for human rights, not as heroes or heroines, but as mothers, sisters and daughters. This approach reminded me of the category "wives, mothers and sisters of people's enemies," which emerged in the Soviet Union during Stalin's Great Purge (1936-1939). Both categories (dissidents' and enemies' mothers, sisters and daughters) implied that women were important not as individual human beings but in their relation to family members and men. This way of referring to them also diminished their importance as political activists. At the same time, these categories reaffirmed an influential Cold Was discourse, according to which women were not emancipated in the Soviet Union (so that they could not be people's enemies or dissidents), despite the fact women were active participants in the dissident movement.

A concrete example isMHWG document N 158, devoted to women "prisoners of consciousness," which discussed the problem of sixty-two "imprisoned mothers, daughters, wives and sisters" sent into exile or to camps and waiting for their sentences or locked away in mental hospitals.[301] In my view members of the MHWG focused on the problems of female political prisoners not because the conditions of life of Soviet female political prisoners deserved special consideration, but because those women were *political* prisoners, and if one may say so, political prisoners were considered to be the "upper-class prisoners" by dissidents.

[300] Иван Ковалев, Елена Боннэр, "Делегатам 34 стран, подписавшим Хельсинкские Соглашения. Открытое Письмо," 3 Ноября 1980, Москва, *Красный Архив* AC N4156 (Женщины) [Ivan Kovalev, Elena Bonner, "To the Delegates of the 34 countries that signed Helsinki Agreements. Open letter," 3 November 1980, Moscow, *Red Archive*, AC N4156 (Women)].

[301] Елена Боннэр и другие, "Документ N158. 'О женщинах узницах совести,'" 1 Марта 1981, Москва, *Красный Архив*, AC N4245 (Женщины), [Bonner and others, "Document N 158.'About female prisoners of conscience'," 1 March 1981, Moscow, *Red Archive*, AC N4245 (Women), 2].

Regarding the rights of the workers, and it is important to stress that there are very few documents even mentioning these,document N 85 stated: "Women with hand-barrows with cement, women in orange uniform[302] with spades and pinch-bars at the track – one of the ugliest pictures of Soviet reality."[303] This description uses the discourse of American mass media, which claimed that Soviet women had to perform the heaviest duties and therefore were deprived of their femininity.

The documents I have read and the historical literature show that Soviet liberal dissidents adopted the rhetoric of the American administration that appealed in its foreign policies not to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but to the Helsinki Final Act, hence focused on political rights and freedoms. Moreover, because they appealed to a Western audience, Soviet liberal dissidents utilized language and concepts understandable for the West. This vocabulary was androcentric and/or gender-blind; it did not include women's rights and problems (unless viewed through these lenses).[304]

3.2 Женщина и Россия [Woman and Russia]: first feminist writing from the Soviet Union?

While considering the place of the woman question within the dissident movement, one should analyze the first feminist samizdat publication in the Soviet Union, the almanac *Женщина и Россия* [Woman and Russia] published in September 1979. In the Western historiography the emergence of an "independent women's movement in the Soviet Union" is often connected with the publication of that almanac.[305] Tatiana Mamonova, Tatiana Goricheva, Julia Voznesenskaya, Natalia Malakhovskaia, Sofia Sokolova and Natalia Maltseva were the first co-editors of the magazine, and it was Tatiana Mamonova who initiated the publication. The

[302] Orange uniform in the Soviet Union was used not for prisoners, but for those who were working outside, for example, at the roads construction.
[303] Елена Боннэр, Софья Каллистратова, Мальва Ланда, Наум Мейман, Виктор Некипелов, Татьяна Осипова, "Документ № 85, Нарушение социально-экономических правчеловека в СССР. Право на труд," [Elena Bonner, Sofia Kallistratova, MalvaLanda, NaumMeiman, Viktor Nekipelov, Tatiana Osipova, "Document 85, Violation of the socio-economic human rights. Right to work"], http://www.mhg.ru/history/15D71AB, accesed 12.05.2013.
[304] Of course, the Western influence is not the only explanation; I will come back to the dissidents' own sexist thinking in Chapter 4.
[305] Fisher, "Women and Dissent in the USSR," 63.

articles published in *Женщина и Россия* were devoted to such issues as the Soviet family and family violence, irresponsible male drunkards, and unhygienic conditions in maternity hospitals and abortion clinics. According to Malakhovskaia, only in this magazine women could "freely, without fear to be ridiculed or infringed upon by the omniscient men, write about the sorest things."[306]

The editors claimed that they initiated the first and only feminist movement in the Soviet Union. However, this is debatable because it denies earlier feminists such as Inessa Armand and Alexandra Kollontai, and the work of the *Zhenotdel* and the Soviet Women's Committee,[307] which are often excluded from the historiography ofthe Soviet/Russian women's movement because of their presumably dependent position on the Soviet state. Yana Knopova calls such an approach, which constructs organized Soviet women as passive implementers of the Party's will, the "Women-Party tools narrative."[308] The exclusion of state feminist organizations from the historiography of the Soviet women's movements is a legacy of the Cold War that should be contested.[309]

The reactions to the publication of the self-proclaimed "first feministmagazine" were quite diverse. According to Voznesenskaya, the almanac was met with sympathy by the Second Culture movement and by men in general, but was rejected by women in dissident circles ("women met it with bewilderment and even mockery"),[310] while Mamonova suggests just the opposite. It is difficult to say today if there was a uniform reaction and how exactly male dissidents reacted to the emergence of the almanac, but taking into account the male dissidents' misogynist attitude towards women (whichI will discuss in detail in the following chapters), I

[306] "Как начиналось женское движение в конце 70-х," Из выступления Натальи Малаховской на первой московской феминистской конференции "Женщина как объект и субъект в искусстве," *Ф Е М И Н Ф*, N 3 (1993) ["On the emergence of the women's movement in the late 70s," from the speech of Natalia Malachovskaya at the First Feminist Conference in Moscow "Woman as a subject and object in the arts," *FEMINF* 3 (1993)]. http://www.owl.ru/win/books/feminf/02/02.htm, accessed 19.04.2013

[307] Knopova, *The Soviet Union and the international domain of women's rights and struggles*.

[308] Ibid 35.

[309] For a sophisticated discussion see Wang Zheng, "'State Feminism'? Gender and Socialist State Formation in Maoist China," *Feminist Studies* 31/3 (2005).

[310] Юлия Вознесенская, "Женское движение в России," *Посев* 4 (1981): 41 [YuliyaVoznesenskaya, "Women's movement in Russia," *Posev* 4 (1981): 41], http://antology.igrunov.ru/authors/voznesenskaya/1145211846.html, accessed 07.05.2013.

believe that the response was mostly negative. The Committee for State Security's (KGB) reaction was also fast and negative: it intervened and after several searches and warnings, Voznesenskaya, Mamonova, Goricheva and Malachovskaya were deprived of their Soviet citizenship and deported.[311]

It is an interesting question why the Soviet government reacted so harshly to the underground publication of the feminist almanac. Of course, part of the answer is that at the time of the almanac'spublication the repression of dissidents intensified in general. However, the almanac *Женщина и Россия* was also one of the few well-known samizdat editionsthat focused not on the freedom of artistic expression or on the problem of civil and political rights in the Soviet Union, but on social problems, which were evident and understandable for the majority of the population. Moreover, the Soviet Union praised itself as a pioneer in the sphere of women's equality, and this publication negatively affected the image of the country where the woman question allegedly had been solved - thus weakening the Soviet position in the Cold War competition.

It is relevant that the almanac and the "first women's movement in the Soviet Union," which ceased to exist by 1982 when almost all of its key figures had been forced to leave the Soviet Union,[312] emerged as a part of literary, not of liberal dissent. Mitrofanova points out that the publication of *Женщина и Россия* was a reaction against the "pure and high art of samizdat" [literary dissent] and against the Soviet state's assertion that women's equality had been achieved.[313] However, the Western press discussed the almanac as part of the liberal human rights movement in the Soviet Union, and not as part of literary dissent. Although the almanac was first published in September 1979, a major Western newspaperwrote that "on December 10,

[311] Fisher, "Women and Dissent in the USSR," 64.
[312] Ibid.
[313] Алла Митрофанова, "Ленинградский феминизм 70х: Условия и причины возникновения феминизма в СССР в диссидентском движении" [Alla Mitrofanova, "Leningrad feminism of 70s: The reasons and preconditions for the emergence of feminism in the USSR among dissidents"], http://ravnopravka.ru/2013/05/leningrad_feminism/, accessed 12.03.2013. The article of the Russian feminist and historian Alla Mitrofanova was published on the web-site of the Wikipedia, but after the long debates was deleted as "not scientific enough," that shows the work of the mechanisms of knowledge production, which nowadays exclude women from the historical narratives about the Soviet dissent.

1979, the anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, the first feminist Samizdads Almanac – Women and Russia appeared in Leningrad" (the previous edition was allegedly only a draft edition).[314] Thus Western mass media symbolically connected the almanac and its editorial collective with the Soviet human rights movement.

Moreover, Western newspapers presented the editors of the almanac as "feminists," members of the women's liberation movement (to highlight once again that Soviet women were not liberated),[315] or members of "the first truly feminist movement in Russia since the Revolution."[316] Thus, both the almanac editors and Western newspapers, while reporting about them, used language suggested that there had been no movement for women's equality in the Soviet Union before. A 1980 article in American *Saturday's Washington Post* devoted to Tatiana Mamonova highlighted the importance of the Western influence for the emergence of the Soviet women's magazine; it said that for the publication of *Женщина и Россия* Mamonova "needed a passionate sense and an opportunity to meet foreigners and to read foreign feminist literature."[317] In this way, not only was earlier Soviet feminism denied, but also the importance of the Western influence for the "genuine" liberation of Soviet women was stressed as well.

However, the attitude of the editors of *Женщина и Россия* towards the West was ambiguous. Soon after the repression started, the editorial collective of the magazine split. Some writers, headed by Mamonova, believed that the magazine should be pro-Western (Mamonova from the very beginning wanted the magazine to be published abroad),[318] others thought that the realities of state socialism demanded a focus on issues specific for Soviet women and should be written for Soviet women. As Julia Voznesenskaia put it, "in particular for social groups, which already live according to Western standards, such an orientation [towards Western feminism]

[314] Jill Tweedie, "How the Russian Kind of Freedom Turned Women into Monstrosities," *The Guardian*, July 31, 1980.
[315] "Liberated Trio: Moscow expels feminists," *Time Magazine*, August 4, 1980.
[316] Tweedie, "How the Russian Kind of Freedom Turned Women into Monstrosities."
[317] Robert Kaiser, "Soviets Spirit Feminists Out of Country," *Saturday's Washington Post*, August 10, 1980.
[318] Fisher, "Women and Dissent in the USSR," 64.

seems to be quite reasonable and vital," but she added that it was alien for the majority of Soviet women.[319]

Despite the fact that Western mass media paid quite a lot of attention to the almanac and its editorial collective, the almanac did not enter the mainstream historical narrative about Soviet dissent. For instance, Alexeeva in her book *History of dissent in the USSR* only briefly mentions the publication of the almanac *Женщина и Россия*, but does not analyze it. It seems to me that in the West the almanac's publication and its editors' expulsion from the Soviet Union allowed highlighting once more the "myth about liberated Soviet women." Numerous articles that emerged after the editors' exile claimed that Soviet women spoke up against an equality that "crossed their ancestral life" and negated "their own fundamental nature."[320] Therefore, women were presented as victims rather than fighters for their rights and did not fit the canon of heroic male Soviet dissent.

3.3 Soviet dissidents in the Western and Soviet mass media: constructing the image of Soviet dissent

To answer this chapter's second question, how women became excluded from the historiography of heroic Soviet dissent, in this subchapter I will analyze the image of Soviet liberal dissent that was constructed in the Soviet and Western newspapers during the period of détente. I will argue that the Western mass media played an important role in the definition of Soviet dissent as liberal dissent and that the picture constructed in the Soviet newspapers only reinforced that interpretation. Moreover, I will show that in both Soviet and Western newspapers dissidents were defined as male, which contributed to the later exclusion of female dissidents from the historical narratives.

Clearly, the images of Soviet dissidents constructed in both the Soviet and Western press were simplified pictures, whose aim was not to give a full account of Soviet dissent, but rather to construct a popular image of the phenomenon. It is also significant to note that in both Soviet

[319] Юлия Вознесенская, "Женское движение в России," 42.
[320] Tweedie, "How the Russian Kind of Freedom Turned Women into Monstrosities."

and Western newspapers the phenomenon of dissent was constructed as something more or less monolithic (even though sometimes Western newspapers mentioned that the dissident movement was extremely fragmented). The Soviet authorities and newspapers usually referred to dissidents as loafers or traitors, people's enemies (in my view, any attempt to classify dissidents and to point to the differences between dissident groups in the Soviet mass media would disrupt the image of dissidents as immature people tricked by the West or as Western agents). Western newspapers constructed dissidents as males, liberals, and heroic fighters for "universal human rights," the only mature and thinking part of the Soviet population.

3.3.1 The image of dissidents in the Soviet mass media

The image of dissidents in the Soviet magazines and newspapers derived from the Soviet officials' public statements. In a speech in March 1977 at the 16th Congress of Trade Unions of the USSR, Brezhnev described dissidents as "enemies of socialism," "traitors" and "agents of foreign propaganda and intelligence services."[321] All these definitions, in fact, derived from Russian history, and particularly, from the history of relations between the state and the opposition. The legend about Russia, which portrays the country as a heroic nation under constant siege, is an important background to understand the representation of dissidents in Soviet mass media. The Tatar-Mongol invasion and occupation, which lasted from thirteen to fifteen centuries, and Napoleon and Nazi Germany's invasion influenced the notion of a constant Russian insecurity and strong external and internal enemies.[322] In 1921 Lenin reinforced this legend and legitimated the suppression of the political opposition as internal enemies, "enemies of the proletariat," and "enemies of the proletarian revolution."[323] During Stalin's years the concept of "enemies" was broadened and encompassed all forms of critique of the regime. It is essential that along with the concept of "people's enemies" the concept of the "wives, sisters and

[321] Leonid Brezhnev (1906-1982), cited in Walter Parchomenko, *Soviet images of dissidents and nonconformists* (New York: Praeger, 1986), 23.
[322] Parchomenko, *Soviet images of dissidents and nonconformists*, 49.
[323] Vladimir Lenin, *Preliminary Draft Resolution Of The Tenth Congress Of The R.C.P. On Party Unity*, http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1921/10thcong/ch04.htm, accessed 13.05.2013.

mothers of the people's enemies" emerged.[324] This concept can be tied to the Decembrists' wives, which were glorified in Russian history for following their husbands into exile in Siberia and for being "proper" wives of outstanding men.[325] It shows that, although by the time of Stalin's Great Purge Soviet women were granted with legal equality and opportunities never known in Russia before, they still were not seen as politically active and ready for participation in oppositional activities.

During the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years, the official image of "those who thought differently" as enemies of the state and people was reinforced.[326] It is not surprising that in the circumstances of the Cold War ideological struggle, dissidents were defined as internal adversaries, agents of the psychological warfare organized by the West against the Soviet State. For example, Soviet mass media portrayed Yury Orlov, the head of the Moscow Helsinki Watch group, as "a renegade or a deserter from Soviet society and the Party; an idler and parasite; a politically immature person […]; a traitor who conspired with foreigners […]; an enemy of détente; a dangerous state criminal and an unripening lawbreaker; and as anti-Soviet agitator and propagandist […]."[327] Such harsh characteristics in the Soviet newspapers can be explained by several factors. First, the Soviet authorities considered dissidents as a serious threat to the regime, and tried to shield the rest of the population from their possibly "contagious" influence. Secondly, it can be explained by the Russian tradition discussed above. Thirdly, the effective campaign in the Western newspapers that portrayed dissidents as fighters for universal human rights made the Soviet authorities respond by condemning the dissidents as traitors.

Initially, Soviet mass media did not use the term dissident, they rather referred to "those who thought differently" as to people infected by nihilism, cynicism and disbelieve in communist ideals. In 1966 the magazine *Молодой Коммунист* [Young Communist] published

[324] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 183.
[325] The Decembrist Uprising (or Revolt) took place in St. Petersburg in 1825. The participants, noble Russian officers, rebelled against the absolutist rule, serfdom and inequality before the law.
[326] Parchomenko, *Soviet images of dissidents and nonconformists*, 51.
[327] Ibid 140.

an article devoted to the nihilism among youngsters.[328] The article presented three stories. The heroes of the first story were poets who allegedly wrote bad poetry that nobody wanted to read. Because of this, they founded their own group called "We are geniuses" and condemned all the existing literature as chained by multiple restrictions. But their self-published manuscripts were known to only a small circle of readers (the suggestion was that they just were not talented enough). The hero of the second story was a young man who did not want to work, and in search for "so-called-freedom" was travelling all around the country and finally was sentenced as a "loafer and vagrant."[329] The hero of the third story was an unacknowledged writer angry at the Soviet state and Soviet society because nobody wanted to publish or read his works (again, presumably because he was not talented) and therefore he started to talk about the lack of freedom of speech in the USSR.

None of these stories mentioned the importance of Western support and Western ideas for the "nihilists." A possible explanation is that at that time the West did not pay that much attention to dissent in the Soviet Union, and "those who thought differently" were portrayed in the Soviet newspapers like loafers rather than traitors. At the same time, the protagonists of the stories were constructed as immature and characterized by a lack of "political consciousness" and, therefore, one can claim that they were "effeminized." After the Great October Revolution of 1917, Soviet women were constructed as a politically backward part of the Soviet population and this image was persistent also during the years of détente.[330] The absence of a significant number of women at the highest political level, mentioned even by Khrushchev in one of his speeches,[331] suggests that by the Brezhnev years women still were seen as politically immature. Moreover, all three protagonists in the *Молодой Коммунист*'s story were male (as well as

[328] Г. Сомов, "Принц и нищие," *Молодой Коммунист* 1 (1966) [G. Somov, "The Prince and paupers," Young Communist 1 (1966)].
[329] On May 4, 1961 a new decree entitled "On Strengthening the Struggle with Persons Avoiding Socially Useful Work and Leading an Anti-Social, Parasitic Way of Life" was adopted in the Soviet Union. Many dissidents have stated that the decree was designed to supress the emerging opposition in the Soviet Union, although in fact the strong moral claim against those who did not want to work was proclaimed already in the text of 1936 Soviet Constitution: "he who does not work shall not eat."
[330] Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen," 220.
[331] Buckley, *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union*, 140.

almost all protagonists of similar stories in Soviet newspapers), suggesting that the Soviet state still did not consider women as oppositionists.

In 1973 the daily Soviet newspaper *Известия* [News] published an article devoted to the trials of Yakir and Karasin (both liberal dissidents). In this article dissidents were described as "used by the emigrant anti-Soviet organization […] which was involved in dense cooperation with fascists during the years of the World War." Moreover, it was stated that Western radio stations ("such as the Voice of America") paid dissidents for producing false materials devoted to the "existence of some [allegedly not real] 'political opposition' in the USSR."[332] The Soviet satirical magazine *Крокодил* [Crocodile] in 1976 published some verse devoted to dissidents where they were portrayed as slanderers who cooperated with bourgeois Western correspondents.[333] In this verse the only dissident in the city was strictly opposed to the rest of the population, he was described as a lonely person living almost outside of the city and not even knowing what was going on. In the 1970s the contacts with the West already played a prominent role in Soviet narratives about dissent. Around the 1980s, when Soviet liberal dissent had all but disappeared, and human rights issues became less important for American foreign policy, the attitude towards dissidents in the Soviet press did not change much. At the end of the Brezhnev era, dissidents were defined as "paranoid criminals" (Bukovski and Orlov), "marasmus renege" (Solzhenitsyn), and"psychologically unstable people" (Grigorenko).[334]

The Soviet mass media rarely discussed female dissidents. In the few cases when women were mentioned, they were constructed as victims, who reported to the police as far as they realized that they were used, as communicators who facilitated the connections between the "so-called human rights defenders" and anti-Soviet groups abroad, or as degraded criminals.[335] It is

[332] Е. Майоров, "Судебныи Процесс в Москве," *Известия*, 29 Августа 1973 [E. Maiorov, "Trial in Moscow," *News*, 29 August, 1973].
[333] Николай Энтелис, "Чем интересен город?" *Крокодил*, 14 (1976) [Nikolai Entelis, "What is interesting in the city?" *Crocodile* 14 (1976)].
[334] "Отщепенцы в рол иправозащитников,"Передача радиостанции "Юность," 3 Марта 1981, RFE/RL 31208 ["Renegades as human rights defenders," the transcript of the Soviet Radiostation "Youth," 3 March, 1981, RFE/RL 31208].
[335] В. Барсов, М. Михайлов, "Маски Сорваны," *Известия*, 27 Августа, 1980 [V. Barsov, M. Mihailov, "Masks are torn off," *News*, August 27, 1980].

significant that female dissidents were never constructed as main protagonists in Soviet mass media; they always just supported the activities of male actors. Real female names are also extremely rare, which further prevented female dissidents from entering the historical narratives about Soviet dissent.

3.3.2 The image of Soviet dissidents in the Western mass media

The construction of potentially dangerous "others" and enemies is a prominent feature of American as well as Russian history. In the American history the fear of Russia emerged long before the Great October Revolution and after that event only a new strong dimension, the communist threat, was added to it.[336] Even though cultural and educational programs launched in the USA during the period of détente decreased the panic regarding the "red threat" that peaked during the McCarthy years, the dominant image of the Soviet Union remained that of an "abnormal" and "dangerous" country. In 1976 the Committee on the Present Danger[337] revealed its major policy statement titled "Common Sense and the Common Danger," in which the international situation was described as "a period of danger."[338] The main and the only cause of this "principal threat to our nation, to world peace, and to the cause of human freedom [was] the Soviet drive for dominance based upon an unparalleled military build up."[339]

Historian Anna Krylova claimed that after the Second World War in the United States the "classic liberal values and the 'autonomous' liberal self [were] defined against the threat of totalitarian collectivism."[340] In the 1940s and 1950s, the message about Stalin's regime in the Soviet Union was that it led to the death of Russian liberal man, and afterwards American scholars were constantly trying to find "the remnants of liberal subjectivity and signs of

[336] Simon Dalby, *Creating the Second Cold War* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990), 43.
[337] A powerful interest group, which was founded in 1950, and during the years of Carter actively lobbied against détente (still active); http://www.committeeonthepresentdanger.org, accessed 12.05.2013.
[338] Ibid 46-47.
[339] *Common Sense and the Common Danger: policy statement of the Committee on the Present Danger*, http://neoconservatism.vaisse.net/doku.php?id=common_sense_and_the_common_danger, accessed 12.05.2013.
[340] Anna Krylova, "The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies" in *The Resistance Debate in Russian and Soviet history*, (eds.) Michael David-Fox, Peter Holquist, Marshall Poe (Bloomington, Ind.: Slavica Publishers, 2003), 169.

resistance against anti-liberal communist Russia."[341] While the "new man" was constructed in the Soviet Union as a male,[342] in the United States Soviet women were also seen as a serious threat to Western values.[343] However, the Soviet totalitarian person was constructed not only as a threat, but, quite paradoxically, also as a "'victim of propaganda and terror,' atomized from his fellow men by fear, dissolved in communist 'patterns of thought,' and unable to sustain a critical distance between himself and society."[344] One notices that the Soviet government used almost the same definitions to describe dissidents. Both American and Soviet governments were trying to effeminate their enemies ("totalitarian man" and Soviet dissidents respectively), while simultaneously constructing them as a threat to the whole of society. In both countries patriarchal and misogynist thinking was strong and played an important role in the political discourse.

Western historiography often associates the emergence of Soviet liberal dissent with the emergence of "liberated disbelieve [in the system] and active resistance."[345] In the 1960s, Western magazines and newspapers constructed dissidents as a few openly protesting individuals, fighters for human rights aligning themselves with the liberal agenda, those who could help to safe the world from the totalitarian communist threat.[346] The publications in the Western newspapers were among the first accounts about Soviet dissent (usually based on the writings of dissidents, which were treated as the ultimate truth).[347] These publications greatly affected the ways in which Soviet dissent was understood and defined.

Firstly, the majority of Western reports on Soviet dissent were devoted exclusively to male dissidents and, second, to liberal dissidents.[348] In the 1960s, when Soviet liberal dissent just

[341] Ibid.
[342] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 150.
[343] Landon R. Y. Storrs, "Attacking the Washington 'Femmocracy': Antifeminism in the Cold War Campaign against 'Communists in Government'," *Feminist Studies* 33/1 (2007): 132.
[344] Krylova, "The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies," 179.
[345] Ibid 186.
[346] Ibid 187, 193.
[347] Falk, "Resistance and Dissent in Central and Eastern Europe," 324.
[348] For example, see David K. Shipler, "Harassing of Dissidents is Camouflaged," *International Herald Tribune*, September 17, 1976; William F. Buckley Jr., "Russia Contra Natura," *International Herald Tribune*, January 7, 1976.

emerged, Andrei Sinyavsky, Yuli Daniel, Vladimir Bukovsky and Alexander Esenin-Volpin were the best-known Soviet dissidents in the West. Later Andrei Sakharov and Alexander Solzhenitsyn replaced them. Dissidents were constructed as heroes, "those outstanding Soviet artists, writers and scientists who have dared speak up for freedom," "those Soviet citizens working for a free and human Russia."[349] The female participants in liberal dissent were usually absent from the Western coverage. Moreover, when they did appear, they were constructed as supporters, playing secondary roles, rather then as full-fledged participants in the movement.

In 1975, the American newspaper *Liberty Tribune* wrote: "The dissenters, speaking at a press conference in the Moscow flat of Mrs Tatyana Khodorovich, a linguist, stated […] that political prisoners in several camps and jails held a one-day hunger-strike."[350] The report, thus, described Khodorovich just as an occupant of the flat and a linguist, but not as dissident. Secondly, the article failed to mention that Khodorovich was an active member of the Initiative Group for the Defence of Human Rights in the USSR, the first formally organized liberal dissident group in the country. Similarly, in a small newspaper report devoted to the solitary protest action of Valeria Novodvorskaya in 1970, she was presented not as a heroic fighter for universal human rights, but as a Russian girl (not even woman), who decided to commit "one of the most *dramatic* protests carried out by Moscow dissidents."[351] While writing about the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, most of the newspapers referred exclusively to its male members,[352] even though among the eleven founders of the group there were three women – Malva Landa, Elena Bonner and Ludmila Alekseeva.

The article "Sakharov Expects to Answer to Clash at Dissidents' Trial" published in the *International Herald Tribune* in 1976 is an illustrative and revealing representation of Soviet dissent in Western newspapers during the years of détente. First of all, the article was devoted

[349] "The Freeze in Moscow," *Friday New York Times*, April 12, 1968; Diana Loercher, "CBS's Russia: Heroic risk for human rights," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 31, 1970.
[350] Jailed Soviet Dissenters Demand Political Status, *Liberty Tribune*, November 1, 1975.
[351] Frank Taylor, "Russian Girl in Kremlin Protest," *Daily Telegraph*, May 21, 1970.
[352] For example, see "Soviet Dissidents See Few Results of Helsinki Pact," *International Herald Tribune*, July 23, 1976.

almost exclusively to Sakharov; his figure in the article almost entirely represented the whole phenomenon of Soviet dissent. Secondly, the article was accompanied by a photograph of Sakharov and his wife Elena Bonner made at home, in which Sakharov takes up much more space than Elena. Thirdly, in the article Elena Bonner was called Elena Sakharova, she was deprived of her own name (and therefore could be recognized only by those few who knew the history of Soviet liberal dissent). Fourthly, Elena Bonner herself was silent in the article, Sakharov spoke for her ("Mr Sakharov said that his wife," "he said that he and his wife)." Last but not least, while Sakharov was described as "Nobel Prize Winner" and "former nuclear physicist," Elena Bonner was described as just his wife, although she was an active participant in the liberal dissident movement and one of the founders of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group.[353]

In Western mass media, Soviet male liberal dissidents represented Soviet dissent, and these male liberal dissidents were constructed as the only thinking part of the Soviet population, the fighters for universal human rights. Soviet female dissidents were constructed as supporters of their male comrades rather than active members of the movement, or as victims of the totalitarian state; this sexist representation subsequently led to women's exclusion from the historical narratives about heroic Soviet dissent.

In this chapter I argued that Soviet dissidents, in fact were both the descendants of the tsarist intelligentsia and products of the Soviet era. Therefore for the goals of this work it was necessary to consider both Russian historical contexts, peculiarities of the Soviet everyday life, and the impact of the Cold War competition. I also claimed in this chapter that, although Soviet liberal dissidents did write about women, they mostly focused on women's rights as civil and political rights. Finally, I argued that Western mass media played an important role in the process of constructing of Soviet dissent as liberal dissent, and that the image constructed in the Soviet newspapers only reinforced such an interpretation, and that in both Soviet and Western

[353] "Sakharov Expects to Answer to Clash at Dissidents' Trial," *International Herald Tribune*, April 16, 1976.

newspapers dissidents were defined as male, which contributed to excluding female dissidents from the later historical narratives.

Chapter 4 - Gendering Soviet dissent: the domestic factors explaining why the woman question was absent from the Soviet dissidents' agenda

In this chapter the phenomenon of Soviet dissent, and Soviet liberal dissent in particular, will be analyzed with the aim of finding out why the woman question was absent from Soviet dissidents' agenda. I argue that, despite the fact that Soviet dissidents are often represented in Western and Russian historiography as fighters for universal human rights, their concept of human rights excluded not only gender issues and women's problems, but also a wide range of problems, such as, for example, the rights of workers. From my point of view, dissidents' indifference to the woman question can be explained, firstly, by the domestic situation in the Soviet Union and by the peculiarities of the history of Russian oppositional movements, and, secondly, by the international context of the Cold War.

Among the most important *domestic factors* I consider the patriarchal structure of the Soviet society and family and the misogynist attitude of male dissidents towards women and women's rights, the influential ideological assumption that the woman question had been "solved" in the Soviet Union and therefore the gender equality problem no longer existed (although the Brezhnev years witnessed the Soviet authorities' revived attention towards the woman question), and the relatively advanced position of women in Soviet society. The Cold War competition between the Soviet Union and the United States of America was the most important *external/international factor* that affected dissidents' attitude towards women's rights and the concept of Soviet dissent itself. The countries of the Western Bloc actively supported Soviet dissidents because dissidents were seen as a useful tool in the ideological competition with the Soviet Union. Some dissidents welcomed Western support and adopted the Western understanding of human rights. It made them prioritize a very particular set of human rights and especially civil and political rights over other rights. Moreover, because Western scholars have

conducted most of the research on Soviet dissent during the years of the Cold War and beyond, the concept of Soviet dissent is highly influenced by a Western gaze.

From my point of view, the domestic factors that affected dissidents' indifference towards women's rights and problems are largely the same for all oppositional groups in the Soviet Union. However, the relations of different dissident groups with the West and the level of Western support differentiated significantly from group to group and it would be problematic to draw conclusions about the impact of the Cold War and Western support for all dissident groups. In this chapter the internal factors that affected Soviet dissidents' indifference towards the woman question will be analyzed. In the next chapter I will analyze the impact of the Cold War competition on the views and activities of Soviet dissidents.

4.1 Women's roles and responsibilities within the Soviet dissident movement

Women constituted a significant part of the Soviet dissident movement. Natalia Malachovskaya, who participated in Soviet literary dissent and was one of the editors of the first feminist samizdat magazine in the Soviet Union, stated in 1993 that both men and women participated in the underground publication of non-conformist magazines in the Soviet Union.[354] However, she added that women in the editorial office of the samizdat magazine "37," where Malachovskaya worked, "felt that they were non-conformists among non-conformists: the materials, which they wanted to publish, for men seemed to be too sharp, too socially oriented, in other words, too dangerous."[355] The Russian feminist and historian Alla Mitrofanova noticed that among Leningrad dissidents, women "were granted with an opportunity to do the technical part of the work (to type and to braid magazines), and only those who possessed a 'male mind' or were writing 'male poetry' […] could publish their own texts."[356]

The prominent Soviet dissident, Revolt Pimenov, in his memoirs on his underground activity in the 1960s *One political process* describes women as conservative, taking secondary

[354] "Как начиналось женское движение в конце 70-х," Из выступления Натальи Малаховской.
[355] Ibid.
[356] Митрофанова, "Ленинградскийфеминизм70х."

roles and incapable of creative activity. Even though he mentions that his female friend Ira was a member of the small oppositional circle he belonged to,[357] Pimenov states that he and his male friend were writing materials for publication while "Ira contributed by editing."[358] Moreover, while describing the process of "publication," he writes that he "committed her to cut out from the newspapers small 'letters' and she "fulfilled the task although [he] did not explain to her the purpose."[359] While speaking about his wife, Pimenov mentioned that he did not want to tell her anything about his underground activity because, according to him, she was unsuitable for it and because he wanted to protect her.[360]

Russian historian Svetlana Chuikina in her 1996 chapter on women in the Soviet dissident movement points to the fact that the division of labor, which was established in dissident circles already by the end of the 1950s, reflected the broader Soviet gender order. She defines the "women's sphere" within dissent as being connected with the creation and managing of the infrastructure, informational exchange and support of the political prisoners. First, women were entirely responsible for re-typing and binding of the underground press.[361] Secondly, women sustained the communication between dissidents and the political prisoners and between the dissidents and Western mass media. Thirdly, women were hosting so-called "open houses" at their homes and played the role of the host who "created a 'favorable atmosphere,' pleased the guests, served food and tea and participated in the discussions."[362] The "men's sphere" consisted of elaborating ideology and writing the texts. Chuikina also defines the "sphere of shared responsibilities," which consisted of various public actions and preparations for the actions.[363] It is important to say that women too considered men to be superior. For example, Alekseeva mentions the "Prince of samizdat" (Julius Telesin) who, according to her, was "the best" in

[357] Револьт Пименов, *Воспоминания* (Москва: Панорама, 1996), [Revolt Pimenov, *Memoirs* (Moscow: Panorama, 1996)].
[358] Пименов, *Воспоминания,* 181.
[359] Ibid243.
[360] Ibid 243.
[361] Samizdat underground materials were usually reproduced by hand or with a typewriter because all the copiers and publishing offices in the Soviet Union were owned by the state.
[362] Чуйкина, "Участиеженщин в диссидентскомдвижении.
[363] Ibid.

duplicating and disseminating samizdat materials and states that between 1966 and 1969 Andrei Amalrik was the first and almost the only messenger between Soviet human rights activists and the West.[364]

According to Chuikina, the gender division of labor was vitally important for the oppositional activity in the Soviet Union. Men knew that they could be arrested any time, but they were sure that in that case they would get support from women (women were rarely arrested in the Soviet Union for their political activity). Women, in turn, could always rely on the network of "open houses."

For Soviet women participation in the dissident movement was a far more difficult task than for Soviet men. Most Soviet women were overburdened with housework and could not be as active as men just because they had to take care of household and families. Moreover, misogynist male attitudes prevented them from being creative and active. But even those women who did play active roles in the dissident movement are often excluded from historical narratives. I argue that, despite all obstacles, Soviet women actively participated in the Soviet dissident movement. Although often women were restricted to their "traditional" sphere, I believe that their roles were not less important than those of men. However, the patriarchal attitude towards women's roles was an important factor that excluded them from the narratives about heroic Soviet dissent.

4.2 Soviet dissidents and the woman question: the internal reasons of indifference

Despite the fact that the Brezhnev era witnessed the re-opening of the woman question, Soviet dissidents almost unanimously ignored it. The reluctance of dissidents, both male and female, towards this issue is a very puzzling issue also because their "spiritual ancestors," the

[364] Людмила Алексеева, *История инакомыслия в СССР, 130.*

tsarist intelligentsia, from the eighteenth century onwards actively participated in public discussions regarding the woman question.[365]

Hyung-min Joo in his 2005 article on the narratives of inequality under state socialism claims that, in contrast to all other dissident groups, liberal dissidents (he refers to them as democrats) "made the point that the goal should be genuine equality not only among classes but also among races, sexes, religions, and other divisions."[366] Therefore, according to him, liberal dissidents were aware of the woman question, and included the gender dimension in their agenda. However, in his analysis he points to the only record where the problem of women's inequality in politics is mentioned, the memorandum of the Democratic Movement of the Soviet Union, based in Tallinn, and acknowledges in footnotes that not much is known about this group.[367] Hyung-min Joo bases his conclusion about the liberal dissidents on the only one oppositional group and excludes from his analyses all well-known liberal units, which makes his argument less then convincing.

Soviet dissidents' indifference towards the woman question was noticed even by Western mass media. While writing about women's inequality in the Soviet Union, David K. Shipler mentioned in *The International Herald Tribune* in 1976 that "[t]hese are such pervasive views [the misogynist attitude of Soviet men towards women] that they are accepted unquestioningly, even by outspoken Soviet dissidents who often take great risks in fighting for fundamental human rights, but who react blankly when the question of women's equality is raised."[368] Along similar line, one of the correspondents of *The Guardian* wrote in 1980 that until the emergence of the underground magazine *Женщина и Россия* [Woman and Russia], women's problems were not discussed in dissident circles, because "the struggle for human rights embraces both sexes." He also noted that only Sakharov in his book *Alarm and Hope* "drew attention to the

[365] Rosalind Marsh, "Introduction," in *Women and Russian Culture: Projections and Self-perceptions*, (ed.) Rosalind Marsh (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998), ix.
[366] Hyung-min Joo, "Narratives of Inequality Under Communism," 52.
[367] Ibid 57.
[368] David K. Shipler, "Soviet Women Not Liberated Despite Professional Roles," *International Herald Tribune*, August 13, 1976.

disastrous effect of Soviet totalitarianism on women's physical and mental health and the resulting decline of birth rate in Russia."[369] In the introduction to the 1994 book *Women in Russia: A New Era in Russian Feminism* Anastasiya Posadskaya writes that all democratic political oppositional parties, movements and groups in the Soviet Union had "a very poor and naive understanding of women's issues" and relied on "the same old theory about the need to 'return women to the home and give them a rest from socialism'."[370]

Why did Soviet dissidents ignore the woman question or hold such conservative views? The answer to that question consists of several parts. First of all, even though various policies were introduced in the Soviet Union in order to change the position of women in the family and society,[371] the misogynistic male attitude towards women was still strong in Soviet society during Brezhnev's years. The debates about femininity and masculinity that started during the Khrushchev years in the Soviet mass media,[372] revealed a strongly negative male attitude towards women's emancipation.

However, most Soviet women shared the view that women's emancipation had granted them with significant benefits. Many women in their letters to Soviet newspapers and magazines praised their work and wanted their lives to be eased by the introduction of new forms of state support, such as dining facilities, kindergartens and longer maternity leaves, and by a greater involvement of men in managing the households. In 1975 Ya. Rushenene from Vilnius wrote in a letter to the Soviet newspaper *Правда* [Truth]: "I'm always asking myself if I could leave my job and devote my life to my family and children?" and answered, "no, I cannot imagine my life without my factory, without the collective."[373] Although some women in their letters claimed that women became "too much interested in the word equality [in the family]" and forgot that a

[369] Tweedie, "How the Russian Kind of Freedom Turned Women into Monstrosities."
[370] Posadskaya, "Introduction,"3.
[371] As it was discussed in the chapter 2, various policies were introduced in the Soviet Union in order to change women's status in the society and in family, but it is important to say that these policies never addressed masculinity as part of the problem.
[372] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 239, 246.
[373] Я. Рушенене, "МыизЦехаЖенского," *Правда*, 31 Января 1975 [Ya. Rushenene, "We are From the Women's Guild," *Truth*, January 31, 1975].

man was "the head of the family,"[374] the majority did not want to leave the working place and to be dependent on men.[375]

Conversely, Soviet men often complained that Soviet women had lost "their main virtue – femininity"[376] and had forgotten that woman's "chief duties [were], all the same, to her family," and claimed that no man wanted to live with a woman who devoted all her time to her job and did not take care of the family.[377] At the same time, few men expressed the desire to share the responsibilities for family and household with women; at best some men stated that there was a need to create more state owned facilities to ease women's life. Therefore, although women were emancipated, old patriarchal models were not defeated in the Soviet Union and they existed also in the dissident circles.

The majority of male Soviet dissidents shared the dominant disdainful approach towards women and women's problems and some of them openly expressed a misogynist attitude. In 1976 *TheInternational Herald Tribune* cited the words of one of the "leading Soviet dissidents" (without revealing his name): "'A woman can never make a great mathematician,' […] He cited his wife's struggle for days over a computer problem that he then solved for her in an evening."[378] Similarly, in 1980 in Nadezhda Mandelstam's obituary (she was a writer and a dissident) famous Russian poet Iosif Brodsky wrote that "out of 81 years of her life, 19 years of her life Nadezhda Mandelstam was the wife of the greatest Russian poet of our epoch, Osip Mandelstam, and 42 years she was his widow."[379] According to Soviet poet and dissident Julia Voznesenskaia, male dissidents always questioned women's ability to do creative work; she says, "all of us women who were engaged in creative work had come across such an attitude."[380]

[374] О. Еременко-Середа, "Письмо Первое - в Защиту Мужчины," *Правда*, 9 Июня, 1965 [O. Eremenko-Sereda, "The First Letter – to Defend a Man," *Truth*, June 9, 1965].
[375] See the same argument in Francisca de Haan, "Women as the 'Motor of Modern Life'," 87.
[376] А. Аркилович, "Сомнительные Украшения," *Литературная Газета,* 47, 24 Ноября, 1976 [A. Arkilovich, "Dubious decoration," *Literary Newspaper* 47, November 24, 1976].
[377] Н., *Литературная Газета,* 3 Августа, 1961[N., *Literary Newspaper*, August 3, 1961].
[378] Shipler, "Soviet Women Not Liberated."
[379] Иосиф Бродский, "Надежда Мандельштам (1899 - 1980). Некролог," [IosifBrodskii, "Nadezhda Mandelstam (1899-1980). Obituary"], http://brodsky.ouc.ru/nadezhda-mandelshtam-1899-1980-nekrolog.html, accessed 12.02.2013.
[380] Yuliya Voznesenskaya, "The Independent Women's Movement in Russia," *Religion in Communist Lands*10/3

It is also revealing that Soviet dissidents changed the Soviet slogan Власть Советов [The Power of the Soviets] and replaced it with a female name "Sofia Vlasievna" (a play of words).[381] Thus Soviet dissidents feminized the hated system even though the majority of Soviet leadership was always men and no woman ever headed the Soviet Union. At the same time, the word *совок* (literally meaning a scoop, but it is also a changed version of the world Soviet), introduced and widely used by dissidents, which usually refers to people with a Soviet mentality and has strictly negative connotations, in the case of woman signifies her asexuality or her adherence to professional growth over family responsibilities.[382]

One can conclude that the misogynist attitude of the majority of Soviet male dissidents and the prevailing strong patriarchal tradition not only made some women accept secondary positions within the dissident movement, but also was one of the most influential factors excluding the woman question from the Soviet dissidents' agenda. Tatiana Mamonova, the founder of the first samizdat feminist magazine in the Soviet Union that emerged in 1979, in 1980 said that she had no strong connections with the most well known dissidents and did not endorse their position because " a lot of them [were] sexists […] who are as afraid of assertive women as the Soviet authorities."[383]

The second part of the answer to the question why Soviet dissidents ignored woman's problems is that, as representatives of the Second Culture, dissidents rejected everything that was connected with the official culture and ideology. Russian feminist and historian Alla Mitrofanova noted that Soviet dissidents could consider equality as one of the attributes of the hated Soviet system and therefore rejected it as part of this system.[384] Even though Mitrofanova rejects this explanation in her article (she explains dissidents' reluctance by mere misogyny), it seems to me that, in fact, it was one of the reasons why Soviet dissidents did not pay attention to the woman question. Similarly, initially Soviet samizdat emerged exclusively as an alternative

(1982): 333-334.
[381] Lipovskaya, "The Mythology of Womanhood in Contemporary 'Soviet Culture'," 124.
[382] Ibid.
[383] K aiser, "Soviets Spirit Feminists Out of Country."
[384] Алла Митрофанова, "Ленинградский феминизм 70х."

medium of information, an attempt to bypass the restrictions of censorship, but, as Komaromi discussed, with the time it became not only a medium but also a fetish, something that was valuable not because of the content but because of the form.[385] Everything official was rejected as not worth reading or knowing. The same way the woman question, which was openly discussed in Soviet mass media and by Soviet scientists, was not "valuable enough" for most dissidents.

Thirdly, the official Soviet ideology played a significant role in the exclusion of women's issues from the dissidents' agenda. Already in the early years of the Soviet Union the necessity to separate women's problems from workers' problems and to establish a distinct organization for working women was criticized by many male members of the party. In an interview with Clara Zetkin in 1920, Lenin stated that there was a need "to draw a clear and ineradicable line of distinction between our policy and feminism."[386] Aleksandra Kollontai, Inessa Armand and other women-revolutionists distanced themselves from "bourgeois feminism" because they believed that only the Revolution and communism could bring about equality between working men and women.

During the Brezhnev years, despite the fact that the woman question was openly discussed, "feminism was condemned as a bourgeois evil, and the feminist writings of the earlier generations of Russian women were consigned to the closed stacks of a few libraries."[387] In 1975, in an interview with the correspondent of the newspaper *Известия* [News], the Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR, Meta Vannas, asserted that she did not believe that the woman question could be considered as an independent issue and that "woman's happiness depended on the realization of Article 122 of The Soviet Constitution"[388] which states that "Women in the U.S.S.R. are accorded equal rights with men in

[385] Ann Komaromi, "Samizdat as Extra-Gutenberg Phenomenon," *Poetics Today* 29/4 (2008): 655.
[386] Clara Zetkin, *Lenin on the Women's question*, http://www.marxists.org/archive/zetkin/1920/lenin/zetkin1.htm, accessed 13.05.2013.
[387] Clements, "Later Developments: Trends in Soviet Women's History, 1930 to the Present," 277.
[388] Т. Герасимова, "Женщина на работе," *Известия, 2* Ноября *1975* [T.Gerasimova, "Woman at work," *News,* November 2, 1975].

all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life."[389] Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman to fly in space in 1963, during a visit to New York in 1977 stated that Soviet women did not need feminist organizations because equality was "part of the state program" and because women were "working from within" at every governmental level.[390] While writing about the UN Conference of International Women's year held in 1975 in Mexico City, a Soviet correspondent highlighted with indignation that during the Conference American feminists "insisted first to solve the so-called woman question, without taking into account the core problems of todays' world, the strengthening of peace and security and complete disarmament."[391]

Therefore the existence of the woman question as a separate problem for a long time was denied in the Soviet Union. The separation of women's problems from workers' problems was seen as a form of bourgeois thinking[392] and Soviet dissidents almost unanimously accepted these Soviet postulates. As Voznesenskaya pointed out, female dissidents did not want to problematize men's misogynist attitude, because they believed that they "shared a common aim and suffered the same repression for 'independent thought' from the authorities."[393]

The next part of the answer to the question why Soviet dissidents ignored the woman question is that many Soviet women, and especially Soviet female dissidents, believed that women *were* truly emancipated in the Soviet Union. As I discussed in chapter two, the Soviet Union provided women with opportunities that never existed in Russia before. Despite the fact that the Soviet system was not perfect and not all women equally benefited from it, many Soviet women were deeply aware of the positive outcomes of the Great October Revolution for their lives. In addition, the Soviet mass media constantly praised liberated Soviet women and compared them with the "enslaved" women of the capitalist world, which strengthened the belief that gender equality had been achieved in the Soviet Union.

[389] Constitution of the USSR adopted in December 1936, Chapter 10, article 122, http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/36cons04.html#chap10, accessed 15.04.2013.
[390] Valentina Tereshkova (1937), cited in "Space. Soviet woman's place in space, but many still in kitchen," *RL Research*, Red Archive, FF041, 240934/82.
[391] В.Листов, Л.Максименко, "'Трибуна разоблачает," *Правда*, 2 Июля1975 [V. Listov, L. Maksimenko, "Tribune Reveals," *Truth*, July 2, 1975].
[392] Buckley, *Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union*, 207.
[393] Ibid.

The majority of Soviet liberal dissidents, both male and female, belonged to the educated Soviet elite and their position in society, their education and their work made them think that, despite some problems, Soviet women were emancipated and equal to men.[394] At the same time, as a historian Barbara Engel concluded, "new Soviet person" was constructed as a male, and men were seen as the norm and as the model to imitate.[395] For example, while describing her childhood, Alexeeva mentions that in the games she played she did not want to perform female roles and always preferred male roles even if she had to "fight for it".[396] Although the gender order in the Soviet Union had changed, women still were seen as passive, others and second-class and that for them in order to be successful it was necessary to behave like man.

The fifth element in answering the question why Soviet dissidents ignored the woman questionis related to the fact that in the Soviet Union (and earlier in the Russian Empire) oppositional activity was always tightly connected with writing. Moreover, in Russian literature and culture there were never "strict distinctions between writers, philosophers and socio-political activists."[397] An extensive using of literary texts as a method of opposition and samizdat as a medium was an intrinsic feature not only of the early stages of Soviet dissent, but also of dissent during the Brezhnev years. All dissidents used samizdat as a medium to circulate information under the conditions of censorship and believed in the sacred power of the word as a powerful weapon. A sentence from Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Lecture, where he stated that "One word of truth shall outweigh the whole world" became the embodiment of this believe.[398]

At the same time, women writers were excluded from the "canon" of Russian literature, which consists of "the collection of literary works deemed superior and worthy of study," although their representation in literary texts always greatly affected women's roles in Russian

[394] For example see Alexeyeva, *The thaw generation*, 9.
[395] Engel, *Women in Russia*, 150.
[396] Ibid 15.
[397] Natasha Kolchevska, "A Difficult Journey: Evgenia Ginzburg and Women's writing of camp memoirs" in *Women and Russian Culture: Projections and Self-perceptions*, (ed.) Rosalind Marsh (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998), 149.
[398] Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, "Nobel Lecture" in *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: critical essays and documentary materials*, (eds.) John B. Dunlop, Richard Haugh, Alexis Klimoff (Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1985), 497.

society.[399] Moreover, intellectual women and women writers were often seen and presented in Russia as freaks, "crocodiles in flannel or dancing monkeys."[400] Even the woman question, which intellectuals from the eighteenth century have actively discussed, was defined mainly by men who commonly expressed misogynistic opinions.[401]

In the Soviet Union this situation did not change much. Men composed the absolute majority of the Soviet Union of Writers (the union of professional writers that was founded in 1932) and no one woman ever headed it. Even though the proportion of women in the Union of Writers grew from 3.6% in 1934 to 10% in 1956,[402] by 1976 women still constituted only 13.7% of the Union's members.[403] Moreover, many female writers were not willing to classify themselves as "women's writers" and preferred to work with "universal themes" that belonged to the patriarchal male-dominated tradition.[404] Therefore, the influence of the Russian literary tradition was one of the main factors that preconditioned the role and place of women within the dissident movement and the exclusion of the woman question from the dissidents' agenda.

[399] Marsh, "Introduction," x.
[400] Rosalind Marsh, "An Image of Their Own?: Feminism, Revisionism and Russian Culture" in *Women and Russian Culture: Projections and Self-perceptions*, ed. Rosalind Marsh (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998), 7.
[401] Ibid 22.
[402] Валентина Антипина, *Повседневная жизнь советских писателей: 1930-1950-е годы* (Москва: Молодая гвардия, 2005) [Valentia Antipina, *Everyday life of Soviet writers: 1930-1950* (Moscow: Young Guard, 2005)], http://lib.rus.ec/b/418330/read, accessed 20.04.2013.
[403] Shipler, "Soviet Women Not Liberated."
[404] Marsh, "An Image of Their Own?," 27.

Chapter 5 - Gendering Soviet dissent: external factors explaining why the woman question was absent from the Soviet dissidents' agenda

In this chapter I will explore the external factors explaining why the woman question was excluded from the Soviet dissidents' agenda. In order to achieve this goal, first, I will elaborate on the gender dimension of the Cold War competition between the Soviet Union and the United States. I agree with Francisca de Haan and Yana Knopova's that, although the historiography constructed the United States as the leader in promotion of women's rights worldwide, in fact during the years of the Cold War it was mainly the Soviet Union that defended and promoted women's rights internationally. In this chapter I will argue that the role of the Soviet Union as a supporter of women's rights globally, a role widely popularized in the Soviet mass media,[405] was an important factor that excluded the woman question from the dissidents' agenda (5.1). Soviet dissidents, as well as the whole Soviet population, were exposed to active propaganda about the advanced position of women in the Soviet society, which, together with the real achievements of the Soviet Union in this area, reinforced the existing among dissidents opinion that women's rights and problems were of secondary importance. In this chapter I will also consider the relations between the West and Soviet dissidents, namely the contacts between various Western (mostly American) institutions and liberal dissident groups (5.2). I believe that the selective Western support was one of the main factors that led to the construction of liberal dissent as the main and only form of Soviet dissent. Moreover, the overwhelming Western support for liberal dissent made the dissidents adopt Western values and the Western understanding of the concept of human rights. Finally, In this chapter I will elaborate on the correlations between the concepts of human rights and women's rights to show that the Soviet concept of human rights was more inclusive (in relation to women's rights) than the American one (5.3). I claim that the concept of human rights, adopted by dissidents, was greatly affected by the Western influence - the concept

[405]For further information about the publications in the Soviet mass media devoted to the role of the Soviet Union as a pioneer of women's rights see HU OSA 300-80-1, Boxes 256-258 (1957-1987).

of human rights dominant in the contemporary United States in which women's rights were seen as gender-only rights, which further predetermined the exclusion of the woman question from Soviet dissidents' writings and activities.

5.1 The Cold War Competition and Women's Rights: who was at the forefront?

The assumption that the Soviet Union and the United States embodied two systems that could not coexist and complement each other in the long-term perspective because their interests, goals and strategies were simply incompatible was at the heart of the Cold War. Moreover, the governments of both countries considered each other, first of all, as a potential menace. The mere fact of the existence of the Soviet Union made the United States make all possible efforts to achieve supremacy in any given area, and vice versa. The relations between the two countries at different periods can be characterized differently, from open hostility to peaceful coexistence and détente, but competition was always the most important element of their relationship. The gender battlefield was a significant dimension of that competition. It can be suggested that for the Soviet Union, whose ideology explicitly stated women's equality as an indispensible part of the new just world, the necessity to compete with the United States made the issue of women's rights of vital importance for the prestige of the country. The American policies towards women's rights were subject to change during the Clod War; however, the desire to confront the Soviet Union in this domain was always robust. Many Western researchers have questioned the achievements of the Soviet Union regarding the woman question,[406] but the role of the USSR for the promotion of women's rights worldwide was not considered for a long time at all. This chapter supports Yana Knopova's argument that "the Soviet Union played a persistent [positive] role within the international domain of women's rights and struggles."[407]

[406] For example, see Jacqueline Heinen, "Women in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe,"*Studies in Political Economy*, 33: 40; Barbara Einhorn, *Cinderella goes to market: citizenship, gender, and women's movements in East Central Europe* (London: Verso, 1993), 114.

[407] Yana Knopova in her Master Thesis *The Soviet Union and the international domain of women's rights and struggles: a theoretical framework and a case study of the Soviet Women's Committee (1941-1991)* proves that in

Already in 1917 Lenin stated that even in the "civilized" countries women were just domestic slaves and did not "enjoy equality in any capitalist state"[408] and thus opened the gender dimension of the competition between the socialist and capitalist countries,which became one of the most important battlefields of the Cold War. As I discussed in chapter two, after the Great October Revolution of 1917, Soviet women got opportunities that never existed in Russia or anywhere else before: they got full legal equality, free access to education, and ideological and material support (though never enough) to enter the labor force. At the international level the Soviet Union was eager to promote the policies to achieve women's emancipation as part of the World Revolution. In 1919 Lenin stated that "not a single bourgeois republic, not even the most advanced one, has given the feminine half of the human race either full legal equality with men or freedom from the guardianship and oppression of men."[409] In 1927 Klara Zetkin in her appeal "The 8th of March – New Step Towards the World Revolution" stated that "working women challenged the hypocritical capitalist society" and that working women all over the world "should follow the route shown by the Soviet working women […] who opened their way towards full liberation."[410] Such claims were especially persistent until Stalin came to power and in 1924 introduced his concept of "socialism in one country,"[411] but even afterwards the desire to extend the borders of the socialist camp was a relevant factor for Soviet foreign policies. Indeed, even during the Brezhnev years the Soviet achievements in the domain of women's rights "had been an integral part of the Soviet Union's strategy of winning nations to the communist cause in the developing world."[412] Moreover, the Soviet Union actively supported revolutionary and

fact Soviet Union was a pioneer and defender of women's rights globally, even though this issues was not always the main concern of Soviet officials.

[408] Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924), cited in Alice Schuster, "Women's Role in the Soviet Union: Ideology and Reality," *Russian Review* 30/3 (1971): 261.

[409] Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924), "Soviet Power and the Status of Women," Pravda No. 249, November 6, 1919 http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1919/nov/06.htm, accessed 10.06.2013.

[410] Клара Цеткин, "8 Марта - Шаг к Мировой Революции: 8 марта 1917 года — 8 марта 1927 года," [Clara Zetkin, "The 8th of March – New Step Towards the World Revolution: the 8th of March 1917 – the 8th of March 1927"] http://www.diary.ru/~vive-liberta/p173815955.htm, accessed 10.06.2013.

[411] Erik Van Ree, "Socialism in one country: A reassessment," *Studies in East European Thought* 52/2 (1998).

[412] Kristen Ghodsee, "Revisiting the United Nations decade for women: Brief reflections on feminism, capitalism and Cold War politics in the early years of the international women's movement," *Women'sStudies International Forum* 33 (2010): 5.

national liberation movements all over the world and it can be claimed that it facilitated the formation of favorable environments for the emergence and/or development of local women's movements.[413]

One of the unknown and unrecognized achievements of the Soviet Union in the major body of historiography of women's rights is the inclusion of gender equality in the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[414] According to Johannes Morsink, it was the "aggressive lobbying of Mrs Begtrup and the steady pressure of the Soviet delegation [that caused] the absence of sexism in the Universal Declaration."[415] Morsink also claims that Soviet representatives were proud of the Soviet achievements regarding equality of men and women and "often attacked the Western countries for 'their backwardness'" concerning women's rights issues.[416] For example, the Soviet representative Koretsky was one of those who opposed the words "all men" in the proposed text of the Declaration because they were "historical atavisms which preclude us from an understanding that we men are only one-half of the human species"[417] and because they "implied a historical reflection on the mastery of men over women."[418] Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of the President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the "First Lady of the World"[419] who was the American representative and the first chairperson of the preliminary UN Commission on Human Rights, approved the words "all men," but paradoxically she is often praised for being a fighter for the inclusion of gender dimension in the text of the UDHR.[420] This still very dominant interpretation of Roosevelt's role clearly demonstrates how the achievements of the Soviet Union in the domain of women's rights were forgotten because of the legacies of the Cold War. The severe debates regarding the text of the Declaration show not only that the

[413] Knopova, *The Soviet Union and the international domain of women's rights and struggles*, 13.
[414] deHaan, "Eugenie Cotton, Pak-Den-ai and Claudia Jones."
[415] Johannes Morsink, "Women's Rights in the Universal Declaration," *Human Rights Quarterly* 13/2 (1991): 231.
[416] Ibid 232.
[417] Vladimir Koretsky, cited in Mary Ann Glendon, *A world made new: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001), 68.
[418] Vladimir Koretsky, cited in Morsink, "Women's Rights in the Universal Declaration," 233.
[419] She was called the "First Lady of the World" by the American President Harry S. Truman for the achievements in the sphere of human rights.
[420] For example, see Charlotte Bunch, "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 12 (1990): 487.

Soviet Union in the 1940s actively supported the promotion of women's rights globally, but also that the gender dimension was an important and fully exploited element of the Cold War.

In the United States in the 1950s feminism was tightly linked with communism and "right-wingers viewed communism as a challenge not only to capitalist class relations but also to prevailing gender and race hierarchies."[421] Therefore the later rhetoric regarding "enslaved" and overburdened Soviet women, quite paradoxically, replaced the rhetoric about the Soviet Union as a repressive mechanism that was aimed to destroy "natural and proper gender roles" by women's emancipation. Such an attitude suggests that in the United States (at least in the 1950s) the Soviet Union was considered to be the leader in the sphere of women's emancipation.

Second Wave feminism that emerged and blossomed in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s played a significant role in the ideological competition between the Soviet Union and the United States. After the end of the Cold War Western liberal feminism, which de Haan defined as "gender-only feminism," was constructed as hegemonic, "real," and "progressive."[422] In contrast to Western liberal feminism, state socialist feminism (whose very existence is often even denied)[423] was constructed is backward, harmful for women and characterized by a lack of women's agency (Soviet feminists are often described as puppets of the state). The severe critique of the socialist states and especially of Soviet women's hazardous position, which the majority of Western feminists made during and especially after the end of the Cold War, reflects an important dimension of the ideological struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States. Even though Western liberal feminists claimed that women from the socialist countries were "politicizing" the feminist agenda (because they focused not only on liberal, "gender-only" problems, but included in their analysis such issues as class, race and imperialism, peace and

[421] Storrs, "Attacking the Washington 'Femmocracy'," 120.
[422] deHaan, "Eugenie Cotton, Pak-Den-ai and Claudia Jones: Rethinking Transnational Feminism and International Politics," 2.
[423] For example, the editors of the feminist samizdat almanac *Woman and Russia* stated that they organized the first feminist movement and published the first feminist magazine in the Soviet Union; this perspective is very powerful nowadays.

security),[424] in fact their own thinking was greatly influenced and politicized by the Cold War competition. By promoting the liberal agenda internationally, the United States utilized Second Wave feminism to claim American superiority and leadership in the field of women's rights. As a result, in the main body of historiography feminism is seen as a Western phenomenon (mostly American) [425] and as a phenomenon that caused "a major restructuring of institutions worldwide."[426] Such a perspective denies all achievements and the role of the Soviet Union in the domain of women's rights, and in nowadays Russia reinforces the stigmatization of feminism as something alien for the country and imported from the West.

According to Melanie Ilič "many of the 'progressive' women involved in the emerging second wave feminist movement in the West and around the world looked to the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War as a model for the advancement of women's rights as workers and mothers in politics and in culture."[427] However, Kate Weigand showed in her 2001 book *Red feminism: American Communism and the Making of Women's Liberation* that, although members of the Second Wave movement were trying to distance themselves from the American Communist movement (Old Left) or would find the notion about the continuity of the ideas between two social movements "quite laughable, even absurd,"[428] in fact "[t]he Communist Party's work on women's issues in the 1940s and 1950s laid important groundwork for the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s."[429] The communist witch-hunt of the McCarthy years made the recognition of the connections between the American communists and women's liberation movement impossible exactly because of the Cold War competition; the war for

[424] de Haan, "Eugenie Cotton, Pak-Den-ai and Claudia Jones," 2.
[425] Ibid 11.
[426] Linda Nicholson, "Introduction" in *The Second Wave: a Reader in Feminist Theory,* (ed.) Linda Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1996), 1.
[427] Melanie Ilič, "Soviet Women, Cultural Exchange and the Women's International Democratic Federation" in *Reassessing Cold War Europe*, (eds.)Sari Autio-Sarasmo, KatalinMiklossy (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), 169.
[428] Kate Weigand, *Red feminism: American Communism and the Making of Women's Liberation* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 140.
[429] Ibid 142.

people's minds excluded the possibility of any positive communist legacy for women's rights in the United States from the main body of historiography.[430]

During the years of Khrushchev the problem of the living standard of the Soviet population (which was considered to be of notable importance especially for women) became one of the foci of his domestic policies. Khrushchev believed that the countries of the "Third World" would join the socialist Bloc because of the evident superiority of the Soviet way of life.[431] Women consisted half of the population of these states and, for this reason too, the supremacy at the gender battlefield and women's rights were an important part of the Cold War competition at the time.

Susan Reid pointed out that by the Khrushchev years the Soviet Union enjoyed the status of superpower and proved its superiority in the cosmos, but "the kitchen, meanwhile – and the conditions of women's work in general – remained the site of the Soviet system's humiliation and a symbol of its backwardness."[432] However, I suggest that, despite the difficult situation of Soviet women, the image of the Soviet Union as a pioneer of women's rights internationally was preserved. For example, the Fifth World Congress of Women organized by the Women's International Democratic Federation and held in 1963 in Moscow and Valentina Tereshkova's space flight just presiding the World Congress were successful Soviet efforts to maintain its position as the pioneer and champion of women's rights worldwide.[433]

Competing femininities and the image of the "real woman" were also important parts of the competition. In the United States the image of ugly, asexual Soviet women, who served the Soviet state, contrasted with the image of the genteel, moral and religious white middle-class American housewife.[434] The Soviet Union opposed the image of the working mother with the image of the Western housewife locked in the household and enslaved by capitalism. At the

[430] de Haan, "Continuing Cold War Paradigms," 549.
[431] William J. Tompson, *Khrushchev: A Political Life* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), 150.
[432] Susan E. Reid, "The Khrushchev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific-Technological Revolution," *Journal of Contemporary history* 40/2 (2005): 290.
[433] See Anna MaratovnaKadnikova, "The Women's International Democratic Federation World Congress of Women, Moscow, 1963: Women's Rights and World Politics during the Cold War," CEU Gender Studies Department master theses (Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2011).
[434] Storrs, "Attacking the Washington 'Femmocracy'," 129.

1959 National Exhibition in Moscow, "one of the Cold War's pitched battles,"[435] the American side presented a modern and fully equipped kitchen, an allegedly ideal environment for a happy housewife, praised by American President Richard Nixon (1969-1974): "these are designed to make things easier for our women." Khrushchev's reply reflected the official Soviet attitude towards women's rights: "your capitalist attitude to women does not occur under communism."[436] Although Khrushchev's words reflects propagandist goals and a desire to justify the difficult position of Soviet women (double burden, scarcity of goods, housing and social facilities), they also reflect his personal and official attitude towards the role of women in the society, which seems to me far more progressive than the American one.

The Brezhnev years witnessed a new phase of the Cold War and new tensions at the gender battlefield of the Cold War. As I discussed in chapter two, in the Soviet Union the open debates in mass media about women's roles in the family and society and about women's problems challenged the notion about the "solved" woman question. Caused and reinforced by the introduction of the concept of non-antagonistic contradictions, these debates made the Soviet government intensify the efforts to promote women's rights internationally in order to show that, even though the women's question was not fully solved in the country, the Soviet Union still was the pioneer in the domain of women's rights. In 1972 the left-feminist Women's International Democratic Federation with the support of the Soviet Union initiated the United Nations International Women's Year.[437] The Soviet Union was among the countries that at the UN proposed an internationally important document on women's rights, the 1967 Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.[438] The Soviet Union also tabled the proposal for legally binding Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[439] adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and called "an international bill of

[435] Reid, "The Khrushchev Kitchen," 223.
[436] Susan E. Reid, "'Our Kitchen is Just as Good': Soviet Responses to the American Kitchen" in *Cold War Kitchen*, (ed.) Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2009), 83.
[437] deHaan, "Eugenie Cotton, Pak-Den-ai and Claudia Jones," 9.
[438] Ibid 11.
[439] deHaan, "Continuing Cold War Paradigms," 548.

rights for women."[440] The Soviet Union ratified CEDAW on January 23, 1981 while the United Stated is among the seven countries in the world, which still did not ratify it.[441]

The United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) and three international conferences on women held in Mexico City (Mexico, 1975), Copenhagen (Denmark, 1980) and Nairobi (Kenya, 1985) also became important elements of the Cold War competition during the Brezhnev years. According to Kristen Ghodsee, "Soviet support for the international women's conferences was instrumental in forcing otherwise reticent American politicians to take the emerging international women's movement seriously." [442] During these three conferences, women from the socialist and so-called "Third world countries" challenged the positions of American feminists who considered themselves "at the forefront" of the women's global movement. Moreover, it was the UN Decade For Women that made the sharp opposition between Western and Eastern feminisms visible. While the majority of American feminists was advocating for political rights and legal equality within the existing system, socialist and Third World women focused on the shortcomings of the dominant capitalist economic system, which undervalued women's work, and was producing poverty, exploitation, imperialism, and colonialism.[443]

The Cold War competition greatly affected the course and consequences of the UN Decade for Women. For instance, Ghodsee pointed out that American congressmen participated in the construction of "appropriate" women's issues for their delegates and therefore participated in the creation of what is now called Western hegemonic feminism.[444] Moreover, American official delegates were forbidden to talk with the representatives of socialist countries, even though some women maybe were willing to cooperate with Soviet representatives.[445] This is not to deny that the Soviet representatives were also instructed to avoid contacts with "bourgeois"

[440] *Overview of the Convention* [CEDAW], http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/, accessed 12.05.2013.
[441] The list of participants of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en, accessed 11.05.2013.
[442] Ghodsee, "Revisiting the United Nations decade for women," 3.
[443] Ibid 4.
[444] Ibid 3.
[445] Ibid.

and "capitalist" Western feminists, but rather to substantiate that what was considered as "non-politicized" feminism in fact was constructed as an instrument to compete with the Soviet Union. The collapse of the Soviet Union allowed the Western countries to proclaim the universality and supremacy of capitalism and liberal democracy; the same way Western (and especially American) feminism was constructed as the only real feminism; "after 1989, it was difficult to speak of women's issues in the postsocialist context."[446]

The relatively advanced position of women in the Soviet Union and Soviet propaganda that was applauding the achievements of Soviet women and the active role of the USSR in the promotion of women's rights globally were influential in excluding the woman question from the agenda of the Soviet dissidents, who, as well as all other citizens, were exposed to Soviet propaganda.

5.2 Soviet liberal dissidents and their contacts with the West

Many historians have pointed to the relevance of Western support for Soviet dissent. Tanya Lozansky, for example, states that without Western support Soviet dissent would have been far weaker and that dissidents even "would be ignored and exterminated, while the reality of Soviet society would have remained unknown to the world."[447] After analyzing the contemporary literature on Soviet dissent, Walter Parchomenko concluded in 1986 that the majority of researchers agreed that foreign support was crucial for the survival of the Soviet dissident movement.[448] However, it is important to stress that almost each time when the importance of the Western support for the Soviet dissent is discussed, only liberal dissent is considered. All other forms of Soviet dissent are ignored and excluded from the historical narrative.

It is widely known that since the emergence of Soviet liberal dissent in the 1960s Western officials preferred to avoid open confrontation with the Soviet Union and not to mention neither dissent, nor the human rights violation in the Soviet Union in their public speeches (other

[446] Ibid 9.
[447] Lozansky, "The Role of Dissent in the Soviet Union since 1953," 16.
[448] Parchomenko, *Soviet images of dissidents and nonconformists*, 30.

forms of the Soviet oppositions never attracted close attention of the American spokespersons). In general Western officials refrained from open criticism of Soviet domestic affairs (and this statement is especially relevant for the Nixon and Kissinger administration, which supported the so-called "quiet policy").[449] American president Jimmy Carter (1977 to 1981) was the first to openly support Soviet dissidents and to claim the necessity to stop human rights violations in the Soviet Union.[450] Soviet dissidents had different opinions regarding this new approach of the American administration. Some of them believed that open American support would lead to intensification of state repression (and indeed, subsequently the Soviet authorities intensified their efforts to defeat liberal dissidents) and would allow the Soviet officials to label dissent as an American enterprise. Others (and Andrei Sakharov was among them) believed that intensive Western support would attract more global public opinion to the violations of human rights in the Soviet Union and that repression could strengthen the dissident movement by giving it more public attention and sympathy.[451]

Despite the fact that only Carter made human rights issues central to American foreign policy,[452] Western mass media were interested in the phenomenon of Soviet dissent from the late 1960s. Probably, for that reason liberal dissent was a phenomenon that was known more in the West than in the Soviet Union during the years of détente. I believe that the mainstream narrative (that prevails in both Western and Russian historiography), which claims that Soviet dissent did not exist before 1966, can be explained, at least partially, by the fact that only in the late 1960s the majority of Soviet samizdat publications reached the West and started to be discussed there.[453]

[449] The quiet policy was the strategy of the United States under Nixon and Kissinger, based on the idea that it was counterproductive to start open confrontation with the Soviet Union because of human rights issues; for more information see Richard N. Dean, "Contacts with the West: The Dissidents' View of Western Support for the Human Rights Movement in the Soviet Union," *Universal Human Rights* 2/1 (1980): 47.
[450] Dean, "Contacts with the West," 47.
[451] Ibid 49.
[452] In his Inaugural address in January 1977 Carter stated that human rights are central for his administration's foreign policy. Jimmy Carter, Inaugural Address, Thursday, January 20, 1977, http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres60.html, accessed 07.05.2013.
[453] Tökés, "Variety of Soviet Dissent: An Overview," 24.

In the late 1960s, the amount of contacts between Soviet dissidents and the West was quite modest. Richard N. Dean suggests that it can be explained by the fact that during that time dissidents believed that the Soviet authorities would provide at least limited liberalization, by the Russian political tradition, and by dissidents' uncertainty about the willingness of the West to help them.[454] However, the unwillingness of the Soviet authorities to make concessions to the dissidents and to continue the liberalization process initiated by Khrushchev made the dissidents look for Western support and develop extensive channels of communication and cooperation. The United States' was willing to support Soviet liberal dissent because dissidents were seen as useful tools in the ideological competition with the Soviet Union.

Historians describe different ways of interaction and communication that existed between Soviet dissidents and the countries of the Western Bloc during the years of détente. For example, Kathleen Parthé refers to the smuggling of samizdat materials to the West , communication of dissidents with Western reporters, diplomatic personnel and sympathetic visitors and Western–funded radio stations.[455] Dean distinguishes between the dissemination of information and the use of formal contacts (for example, The Helsinki Final Act), coercive measures (towards the Soviet government) and international organizations.[456] Tökés describes press conferences and television interviews, dissemination of samizdat publications, direct appeals to international organizations and to prominent politicians and intellectuals[457] (the most notorious example is the correspondence between Sakharov and President Carter in 1977). These various forms of communication between Soviet dissidents and the West (and publications about them) show not only that the contacts were intensive, well known and researched, but also that many historians and politicians considered them as effective instruments to affect the domestic situation in the Soviet Union.

[454] Dean, "Contacts with the West," 50.
[455] Kathleen Parthé, "The Politics of Détente-Era Cultural Texts: 1969-1976," *Diplomatic History* 33/4 (2009): 723.
[456] Dean, "Contacts with the West," 47.
[457] Tökés, "Variety of Soviet Dissent," 24.

Many liberal dissidents considered dissemination of information in the Soviet Union and abroad as one of the most important dimensions of Western support; they saw world public opinion as an instrument that could shield them from political repression and as an instrument of pressure on the Soviet officials. Foreign mass media could also be a forum where different views on the Soviet Union could be exchanged between dissidents and between dissidents and Western (mostly American) authorities.[458]

I suggest that the support (especially the informational support and coverage) of the United Stated was directed primarily at Soviet liberal dissidents. For example, the American State Department in January 1977 issued a statement to warn the Soviet authorities against silencing Sakharov, and in February 1977 expressed its concerns regarding the cases of Ginsburg and Orlov, who were both members of the Moscow Helsinki group. In March, President Carter met Vladimir Bukowski in the White House.[459] The same year,in his correspondence with Sakharov, Carter expressed his concerns regarding the human rights violation in the Soviet Union.[460] Moreover, Dean in his article devoted to the contacts between dissidents and the West explores only the Helsinki monitoring groups in Moscow, Georgia, Armenia, Lithuania and Ukraine.[461] His work shows not only that the United States officials prioritized Soviet liberal dissent over all other types of opposition, but also that, because of the global public attention's focus on liberal dissent, all Soviet dissidents were constructed as liberals. However, one should keep in mind that liberal dissidents were the only group of Soviet dissidents who believed in Western values, and from the late 1960s constantly looked for Western support. For example, the Initiative Group for the Defence of Human Rights in the USSR that was formed in Moscow in May 1969 based its strategy on making constant appeals to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The unwillingness of other dissident groups to cooperate with the countries of

[458] Dean, "Contacts with the West," 55.
[459] Friedbert Pflüger, "Human Rights Unbound: Carter's Human Rights Policy Reassessed," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19/4 (1989): 707.
[460] John M. Howell, "The Carter Human Rights Policy as Applied to the Soviet Union," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 13/2 (1983): 286.
[461] Dean, "Contacts with the West," 49.

Western Bloc and their reluctance towards liberal Western values (or sometimes impossibility to reach the Western audience) were important factors that also explain the Western focus on Soviet liberal dissent.

Soviet liberal dissidents actively used contacts with the Western mass media and international organizations as one of the main instruments of their work. I argue that it was their close connections with and constant support from the West that made Soviet liberal dissidents accept the dominant Western concept of human rights, which focused mainly on civil and political rights and excluded women's rights. As I showed in chapter three with the example of the writings of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, liberal dissidents adopted the rhetoric of the American administration, which in its foreign policies appealed not to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but to the Helsinki Final Act.[462] Moreover, because they appealed to a Western audience, Soviet liberal dissidents appropriated language and concepts dominant in the West (in relations to human rights), which excluded women's rights and women's problems from their agenda.

5.3 Human rights and women's rights

As a German politician and scholar Friedberg Pflüger pointed out in 1989, the problem of human rights is one of the central issues in international relations and "scarcely a multinational conference takes place today without touching" it.[463] Historically the concept of human rights was connected with civil and political rights because they were central for liberal capitalist states and documents such as the English Bill of Rights (1689), the French Declaration of Men and Citizen (1789) and the US Bill of Rights (1791) defined rights as the right to property, freedom of speech, religion, and association.[464] All these rights were gendered, raced and classed: they were constructed as rights and freedoms for privileged white men. Only after the Second World War the importance of economic, social, cultural rights was acknowledged internationally.

[462] Howell, "The Carter Human Rights Policy," 289.
[463] Pflüger, "Human Rights Unbound: Carter's Human Rights Policy Reassessed," 705.
[464] Dominique Clément, "'I Believe in Human Rights, Not Women's Rights': Women and the Human Rights State, 1969 – 1984," *Radical History Review* 101 (2008): 109.

During the years of the Cold War, different concepts of human rights were exploited in the United States and in the Soviet Union, and these differences were reflected also in the sphere of women's rights.

During the years of the Cold War (and especially during the period of détente) the United States proclaimed themselves as pioneer of and the main protagonist in the struggle for universal human rights. According to President Carter, it was "entirely appropriate for our own country to take the leadership role and let the world say the focal point for the preservation of human rights is in the United States of America."[465] However, the understanding of the concept of human rights adopted by the Soviet Union and by the United States was quite different. According to the Western viewpoint, the Soviet concept of human right excluded individual rights, defined rights exclusively in economic terms and treated all political rights as "an unaffordable luxury when a country seeks to realize socio-economic justice."[466] In contrast, liberal democracies, such as the United States, announced that political freedoms are of central importance and that basic socio-economic rights cannot be attained without them.[467] Even though some scholars stated that such rights as the right to food, adequate living conditions, health care end education were included in the Carter Administration's foreign policy agenda,[468] I would rather agree with Nira Yuval-Davis, who pointed out that during the Cold War "human rights discourse, dominated by the West, came to emphasize almost exclusively civil and political rights."[469] Moreover, one should keep in mind that among the American Presidents Carter was one of the most broadminded, and other administrations showed far less interest toward human rights issues, and especially towards social and economic rights.

Historian Howell pointed out that the United States did not consider the United Nations as a suitable place for their human rights policies and used the Helsinki Final Act, not the UN

[465] Jimmy Carter (1977-1981), *The President's News Conference*, March 9, 1977, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7139, accessed 15.05.2013.
[466] Howell, "The Carter Human Rights Policy as Applied to the Soviet Union," 288.
[467] Ibid.
[468] Ibid.
[469] Yuval-Davis, "Human/Women's Rights and Feminist Transversal Politics," 290.

Declaration of Human Rights, as the main tool for their campaigns.[470] The main reason for this choice was that in the Helsinki Final Act, as I discussed in the previous chapters, the focus had changed from a wider range of rights, included in the UN Declaration of Human Rights and based on a compromise between all participant states and between different cultural and legal traditions, to the narrow group of political and civil rights.

Even though President Carter was the first to support openly Soviet dissidents, human rights were an important instrument of American foreign policy already in 1973, when the Jacksson-Vanik Amendment made economic relations with the countries of the Eastern Bloc (and first of all, with the Soviet Union) dependent on the implementation of the right to leave the country.[471] From the late 1970s, human rights advocacy became an even more important instrument of American foreign policies - which at least partly can be explained by the US desire to overcome the political and moral legacies of the Watergate scandal[472] and the Vietnam war[473]- and the Helsinki Final act became an influential tool in the ideological competition between the USSR and the USA.[474]

In their competition, both countries extensively exploited the differences between the two concepts of human rights. Both the United States and the Soviet Union constantly pointed to the dissimilarities and both claimed that it was its understanding that was the only correct and just one, non-politicized and not distorted. The 1973 report *Human Rights – The Soviet Record: The Soviet Attitude to Human Rights*[475]stated that the Soviet Union violated many principles of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and of its own Constitution (and that this could be proved by dissidents' samizdat publications).[476] Its is revealing that the 1973 reportincludes subsections on

[470] Howell, "The Carter Human Rights Policy," 289.
[471] Pflüger, "Human Rights Unbound," 706.
[472] The Political scandal in the United States in 1970s that led to the resignation of President Nixon, the only resignation of a president in American history.
[473] Parchomenko, *Soviet images of dissidents and nonconformists*, 124.
[474] Snyder, *Human rights activism and the end of the cold war*, 3.
[475] *Human Rights – The Soviet Record: The Soviet Attitude to Human Rights*, "The Soviet attitude to Human Rights," September 1973, HU OSA 300-80-1, Box 688. There is no publisher's data in this report. However, taking into account that the Report belongs to the Red Archive of the Open Societies Archives in Budapest, one can say that this document was prepared by the Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe Research Institute.
[476] Ibid.

legal rights and penal conditions, political rights, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of movement and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, whereas the rights to work, to education, to medical assistance and adequate standards of life are not even mentioned. However, in relation to the right to work the document did discuss the absence of "real" trade unions, of the right to strike and of unemployment benefits.[477] From the American point of view, political and civil rights were far more important than all other rights and were the main source of social justice (with the accent on legal equality in the sphere of women's rights).[478]

In the Soviet Union the human rights problem was also acknowledged to be a prominent element of ideological competition with the countries of the Western Bloc,[479] but social and economic rights were prioritized over all others. For example, an article published in one of the most popular Soviet magazines Новый Мир [New World],[480] in 1974 highlighted that it was the achievement of the Soviet Union that articles regarding free public education, the rights to work and to social insurance were included in the texts of many international treaties. It was also stressed that it was impossible to achieve the full implementation of human rights without taking into account peace and security issues.[481] The article then highlighted that "individual freedom in any state cannot be absolute" and that there should be restrictions aimed to protect the majority of the population and to curb those who could violate the rights and freedoms of other people, disrupt the public order or endanger the state security.[482] Therefore, the Soviet state limited the implementation of civil and political rights, which are also an important element of the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights. Even though I believe that nowadays the importance of civil and political rights is overestimated (they are constructed as of privileged importance in comparison with other rights), there is no denying that they were constantly violated in the Soviet Union.

[477] Ibid.
[478] Bunch, "Women's Rights as Human Rights," 488.
[479] И. Блищенко, "Права и Свободы Человека," *НовыйМир*2 (1974): 423 [I. Blishenko, "Human Rights and Freedoms," *New World* 2 (1974): 423].
[480] Новый Мир was one of the most popular magazines in the Soviet Union and during the years of relative liberalization the most "progressive" materials (officially permitted) were published there. However, the Brezhnev years witnessed the end of liberalization and that time almost all the materials reflected almost exclusively the position adopted by the Party.
[481] Ibid 425.
[482] Ibid 423.

Bunch in her 1990 article "Women's Rights as Human Rights" defines four approaches that can link human rights with women's rights. The first one considers women's rights primarily as political and civil rights, the second as socioeconomic rights, the third stresses the necessity to create new legal mechanisms and fourth is based on the transformation of the human rights concept from a feminist perspective.[483] I believe that in the West women's rights were included in the concept of human rights with the stress on the first approach, while in the Soviet Union the accent was made on the second approach (although in both cases one can find elements of all four approaches). Moreover, one can claim that while in the West there was a visible division between women's rights and human rights, in the Soviet Union women's rights were seen as an integral element of human rights. At her speech at the UN 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, Hilary Clinton had to stress that the main message of the Conference was "that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights once and for all,"[484] which was necessary because they were seen (and sometimes are still seen) as separate from and less important than "human rights." As I showed in the previous chapters, in the Soviet Union, women's rights were part of the official ideology and many Soviet officials saw the separation of women's rights from workers' rights as unnecessary and even harmful.

The issue of women's equality and women's rights in the Soviet Union was broadly discussed in the Western mass media at least since the 1950s. In Western newspapers of the period of détente, the amount of articles devoted to the role and place of Soviet women, and claiming that women in the Soviet Union were "enslaved" is astonishing. Such titles as "Dual Role of the Soviet Modern Woman: 'Equality' Sometimes Means Twice the Work Load,"[485] and "Kitchen-Sink Discrimination"[486] reflect the prevailing in the United States attitude towards the Soviet Union and Soviet achievements in the women's rights domain. Radio Freedom/Radio

[483] Bunch, "Women's Rights as Human Rights," 493-497.
[484] Hilary Clinton, Remarks to the U.N. 4th World Conference on Women Plenary Session, 5 September 1995, Beijing, China, http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/hillaryclintonbeijingspeech.htm, accessed 19.05.2013.
[485] James H. Winchester,"Dual Role of the Soviet Modern Woman: 'Equality' Sometimes means Twice the Work Load,"*Christian Science Monitor*, May 21, 1964.
[486] "Kitchen-Sink Discrimination," *The Economist*, July 10, 1982.

Free Europe reports stated many times that even though women were de-jure equal in the Soviet Union, the second shift and Soviet economic underdevelopment (which hampered the production of domestic equipment and caused food shortage) prevented women from being equal with men.[487] However, comparisons between the lives and the rights of Soviet and American women were rare and even when they were presented, American women were constructed as white middle-class housewives, thus ignoring all other American women (not white, working class, lesbians, and so on).

While discussing women's rights, needs and problems, Western media and politicians assumed that Soviet and American women had the same needs, based on and connected with some universal illusory femininity (which of course in both cases was a mere simplification),[488] and portrayed Soviet women, their lives, desires and needs based on these false assumptions. The stereotype about overburdened Soviet women[489] needing to be saved from communist serfdom was a basic part of the Soviet women's image in the West during the years of detente. Western journalists' negation even of the possibility that Soviet women might not want to wear Dior dresses (but wanted to realize their rights to be astronauts, engineers or pilots) is comparable with the current unwillingness to accept that not all Muslim women want to be unveiled. In a way, Soviet people were constructed as exotic and uncivilized "other" that should be taught how to live. For example, the description of Soviet people's behavior made by a Western journalist at the 1959 National Exhibition in Moscow reminds me of the depiction of "savages": "One man cut a pillow open to see what was inside. Another opened and sampled a package of frozen pastry to find out how it tasted."[490]

Western newspapers often portrayed Soviet women as victims of state socialism. As I already mentioned, it was highlighted quite often that de jure Soviet women possessed full legal equality, but de facto they still did not achieve it. I believe, that Western newspapers wrote

[487] Andreas Tenson, "A Soviet Woman's Work is Never Done," *Radio Liberty Research*, RL 180/79, June 12, 1979.
[488] Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen," 223.
[489] Ibid 230.
[490] Ibid 240.

mostly about the problem of equality, not rights, because Soviet women were granted with all rights. The journalists assumed that in the liberal state (the "normal state") legal equality would automatically lead to de-facto equality (in comparison with the "abnormal" Soviet state). The factor that was missing in the Soviet Union was the "proper" implementation of civil and political rights. Here one can find the evident similarity with the Soviet dissidents who believed that it was civil and political rights that were of urgent and only importance for the Soviet society.

In my view, the Soviet concept of human rights (and women's rights as an integral part of them) was more inclusive than the American civil and political rights only and gender-only concepts. There is no denying that the Soviet concept of human rights was not all-encompassing and missed many important aspects. Moreover, it is difficult not to agree that women's full legal equality and socio-economic guaranties in the Soviet Union did not mean de facto equality between men and women. However, I believe that the Soviet approach to the concept of human rights were more progressive that the American one, and granted Soviet women with more opportunities that American women had that time. The adoption by the Soviet dissidents the Western concept of human rights was one of the factor excluding the woman question from the dissidents' agenda.

This chapter has considered the external factors that affected the exclusion of the woman question from the Soviet dissidents' agenda. First of all, I showed that the fact that the Soviet Union was at the forefront of the promotion of women's rights internationally was an important factor that excluded the woman question from dissidents' activities. Secondly, my research demonstrated that the active Western support of liberal dissidents made them accept the American concept of human right that also excluded women's rights and problems from dissidents' agenda.

Conclusion

This thesis has focused on the phenomenon of Soviet dissent during the years when Leonid Brezhnev was the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1964 – 1982), more precisely on Soviet liberal dissent.

Due to the domestic situation in the country and the global context, the Brezhnev years witnessed a decisive re-opening of the woman question in the Soviet Union. But despite the open public debates in the Soviet mass media about the place of women in the Soviet society and about their problems and burdens, contemporary Soviet dissidents almost unanimously ignored the woman question. Based on my research in the Open Society Archives, on the analysis of Soviet and Western mass media sources and dissidents' memoirs, I have shown that this was caused by both domestic and external factors. Among the most important *domestic* factors I identified the patriarchal structure of the Soviet society and family and the misogynist attitude of male dissidents towards women and women's rights, the influential ideological assumption that the woman question had been "solved" in the Soviet Union and therefore the gender equality problem did not exist (although the Brezhnev years witnessed revived attention of the Soviet authorities towards the woman question), and the relatively advanced position of women in the Soviet society. Among the most important *external* factors I defined the active and successful role of the Soviet Union in the international domain of women's rights praised in the country, the close connections of liberal dissidents with various Western institutions and their orientation towards Western liberal values, which prioritized civil and political rights over all others (including women's rights).

Eric Hobsbawm in his 1994 book *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* suggests that the Cold War "utterly dominated the international scene in the second half of the Short Twentieth Century."[491] This is utterly true, but, in addition, the end of the Cold War and the de facto victory of the United States, which germinated the emergence of the

[491] Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century*, 226.

phenomenon of triumphalism, also deeply affected not only people's life all over the world, but also the ways in which the Soviet Union, communism and state socialism are constructed in contemporary historiography. Based on my research in the OSA, I argued in this thesis that due to the phenomenon of triumphalism, the achievements of state socialism, and especially of the Soviet Union, were and are downplayed in historical narratives. The history of Soviet dissent, in turn, in the main body of historiography was constructed from a dominant Western perspective: liberal dissent replaced the complex and diverse phenomenon of Soviet dissent and dissidents were constructed as males fighting for civil and political rights, which excluded not only women, but also such groups as workers or students from the historical narratives about Soviet dissent.

I hope that my thesis has made a meaningful contribution to the history of the Soviet oppositional movements by answering the questions why women were excluded from the historical narratives of Soviet dissent and why Soviet dissidents almost unanimously ignored the woman question. By asking normal historical questions about the supposedly "abnormal" Soviet society I also hope to contribute to the "normalization" of Soviet history. However, the scope of materials in the Open Society Archives and the process of research posed new questions not only regarding the history of Soviet opposition, but also about women's movements in the Soviet Union (whose mere existence is often denied), about Soviet gender policies at both the national and international levels, and about multiple correlations between global and local levels.

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