

## Society for Cheap Lodgings

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From the second half of the nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth centuries, Russia was affected by sudden capitalistic development. This abrupt process fostered economic growth and private enterprise. It also led the women of Russia to found charitable organizations devoted to helping poor people. Three Russian women, Maria Trubnikova (1835–97), Anna Filosofova (1837–1912), and Nadezhda Stasova (1822–75), organized the Society for Cheap Lodgings in St. Petersburg during the spring of 1859. The goal was to provide needy families, especially fatherless ones, with inexpensive places to live.

Members of the society were divided over how far their supervision of the poor should go. One so-called German faction, led by baronesses of German and Baltic extraction, wanted strict control over the recipients of their aid. The Russians, however, including the founders, favored a less restrictive approach. The Germans withdrew and established their own society.

After two years of planning and experimentation, the original society was formally chartered. Its principal agents were soon attracted to the dismal Vyborg Side, a poor quarter of the capital and later a proletarian zone from which the Bolshevik women's movement drew many of its supporters in 1917. The feminists set up dress-making workshops, communal kitchens, and a school for working mothers, staffed chiefly by society members.

SEE ALSO: Addams, Jane (1860–1935); Russia, Revolutions: Sources and Contexts; Women in the Russian Revolution; Women's Movement, Soviet Union

### References and Suggested Readings

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