

T.A. Volkonskaya – a doctor, the Red Duchess and a member of the French Resistance

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Abstract. The article presents a biography of Princess T.A. Volkonskaya (also known as Thérèse Dubois, Tereza Dubua, and La Princesse). She began her medical work as a nurse in World War I, and at the end of the war found herself in Constantinople, where she received a medical degree. The education she got in Constantinople was not recognized in France, where Volkonskaya moved to live, and she had to change her field of work. So, she was engaged in sewing women's clothing and was quite successful in it.

By the beginning of World War II, France was one of the centers of Russian emigration; and doctors were one of the most significant professional groups among Russian emigrants in terms of numbers and influence on the European scientific community. The war forced Volkonskaya to remember her skills as a doctor. Volkonskaya, as well as many other Russian emigrants, became a member of the French Resistance. Volkonskaya actively participated in the guerrilla movement: provided medical assistance to the wounded, conducted agitational work. After the war, she did everything possible to preserve the memory of those who fought against the Nazi occupiers. Volkonskaya's biography is a prime example of the fate of Russian emigre doctors, who in difficult conditions remained faithful to their vocation.

In the article documents from the archive of Solzhenitsyn House for the Russian Diaspora are cited.

Keywords: T.A. Volkonskaya, Russian emigre doctors, World War II, the French Resistance

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Although many scientific works are dedicated to the activity of Soviet doctors in the years of the World War II, little is known about Russian migrant doctors during this period. For historians of medicine, the discovery and development of historical knowledge about Russian medical emigration during World War II remains an important mission.

Formed following the revolutionary events of 1917 and the subsequent Russian Civil War, the Russian scientific diaspora made an outstanding contributions to global culture and science. Many great representatives of the Russian Empire were forced to leave the country [1, 2, 7, 8, 10–13, 17]. Among them were many doctors. According to some historians', the Russian medical diaspora comprised up to a few thousand people and was one of the most significant and influential professional groups of the Russian Empire [14,

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p. 86]. Along with the countries of the Balkan Peninsula, Paris – a great hotspot of Russian emigration – also became an important centre of the medical diaspora between 1920–1940 [10, p. 6]. Many Russian emigrants vocationally involved in the medical field participated in the French Resistance. As a result, the cardiologist V.D. Aitov (1879–1963) – who served in World War I and was a member of the committee of the League Against Antisemitism – was arrested by the nazis and sent to the concentration camps (including Buchenwald and Auschwitz). He was freed in May 1945 and awarded the Order of the Legion of Honour [10, p. 26]. The microbiologist N.A. Bulgakov – brother of the writer M.A. Bulgakov – also took part in the resistance and was also arrested and sent to a concentration camp in Compiègne. He accepted French citizenship following his liberation [10, p. 224]. The physiologist S.A. Voronov (1866–1951) – having organized medical service offering skin grafts to the wounded French that suffered burns – died in Auschwitz [10, p. 313]. The hematologist P.P. Gratsianskiy (1909–1999) – chief of the clinic of the Sorbonne medical faculty in 1938 – was awarded the Military Cross for his medical work on the side of the Allies during World War II. [10, p. 416]. Internal medicine specialist S.Y. Zilberstein (1892–1948) was bestowed the title of Cavalier Order of the Legion of Honour for his service in the French Resistance [10, p. 594].

The French Resistance has rightfully secured a special place in the history of World War II. Initially used by Russian emigrants B.V. Vilde and A.V. Levitskiy as the name of an illegally printed antifascist newspaper from December 1940, the word “resistance” almost instantly became the name of an international liberation movement, uniting numerous underground antifascist groups and organizations of Europe¹ [3, 5, 6, 16]. In Russian emigre circles, the “Day of National Mobilization” was proclaimed on

¹ The origin of the term “resistance” (counteraction, resistance to the enemy), according to the recollections of participants, dates back to medieval motto of the French Huguenots (Protestants) – non-conformists: the inscription “resister” was engraved on the wall of the castle tower in Aigues-Mortes (Provence).

June 22, 1941. Individually or in small groups, the Russian antifascists joined the French underground groups or formed their own organizations. Difficult and complicated feelings overwhelmed the Russian emigrants that had joined the ranks of the European Resistance: a sense of indebtedness to the country that had taken them in – a country that became their adopted motherland – and the hope of Russia’s victory and liberation, and the defeat not only of the Nazis, but the downfall of Stalin’s USSR. Some Russian emigrants interpreted participation in the antifascist movement as an opportunity to help the Motherland, which had been swept by war [1, 3, 4, 11, 16]. In May 1943, the National Council of Resistance (NCR) was established by divided and isolated groups of patriots, having united and restored the patriotic forces of France, including Russian emigrants. That same year, de Gaulle’s covert army, the “Secret Army” (SA) was founded. In 1944, three military organizations – “French Sharpshooters and Guerillas” (FSG), “Organization of the Resistance Army” (ORA) and the SA were united under the “French Domestic Forces” (FDF) [16, p. 106].

Little is known of the contribution of Russian emigration to the antifascist struggle, as Russian historiography on the matter is quite scarce. There were many who played a significant role in the social and cultural life of “Russian Paris” in prewar times – B.V. Vilde and A.V. Levitskiy, A.A. Skryabina-Knut, V.A. Obolenskaya (the legendary “Vicky”) [3, 11, 18], the mother Maria Skobtsova (E.Y. Kuzmina-Karavaeva) [7], Dimitri Klepinin, Ilya Fondaminsky, O.N. Obolensky, G.V. Gagarin, V.L. Andreev, T.A. Volkonskaya, A.Y. Smirnova-Marly, V.S. Varshavsky [1, 3, 11, 17]. Nothing is known about many of the Russian emigres who participated in the French Resistance. Conspiracy required them to take on pseudonyms or made-up foreign names upon joining underground groups. Many disappeared without a trace in German concentration camps and Gestapo torture chambers. In the postwar years, the Commonwealth of Russian Volunteers, Partisans and Participants of the Resistance and studies from this period established hundreds of names of participants of the French antifascist underground in the postwar years [6, p. 88; 9, p. 119].

Archive material about Russian members of the French Resistance is kept in the A. Solzhenitsyn House of the Russian Diaspora (HRD) in fund No 25. It was donated to the HRD by G.A. Nechaev² in August 2004 and L.S. Flam-Obolenskaya³ (in 2008–2010). There are 22 documents on the participants of the French Resistance in the fund No 25. Noteworthy among them is Princess T.A. Volkonskaya (under the pseudonyms Therese Dubois and La Princesse).

Tamara Alekseevna Volkonskaya was born in 1900 in Saint Petersburg. Apparently, she married early.⁴ Her husband most likely died in World War I. As a nurse in the 1st Caucasian Cavalry Regiment, she was sent to the Caucasian front in 1917, where she acquired combat medical experience. In HRD is a written order of the commander of the 1st Caucasian Cavalry Regiment from September 11, 1918, addressed to Volkonskaya and informing her of her assignment to front line duties.⁵ As she was preparing to return to Russia through the Caucasus, she was arrested by Mensheviks and ended up with the English army in Turkey at the end of the war.⁶ This is confirmed by a document, dated June 4 1919, addressed to the government of Georgia on regarding Volkonskaya's freedom of movement, signed by the lieutenant colonel of the General Staff of the 27th division of the British Forces in the Southern Caucasus.⁷

Later, Volkonskaya wrote: "I am not an emigre. I, being a nurse, was taken prisoner by the Turks. I wanted to go to Russia afterward. But they did not permit me entry – the Revolution was

taking place there".⁸ In 1918, she began to work as a hospital nurse in Constantinople. With the aid of an Indian migrant doctor and his English wife, Volkonskaya enrolled in studies to become a doctor (Fig. 1). Having successfully met the minimal prerequisites, she obtained her diploma. After working for a few years in a hospital in Constantinople and saving enough money, she left for France. However, as she lacked French citizenship and her diploma was foreign, the French authorities did not permit her to work in her field of specialty.

In Paris, with her characteristic energy, Volkonskaya joined other the emigrants and opened a clothing business, making women's fashion dresses. "I was rich – she wrote in one of her letters (April 1967). – I brought money from Turkey and then opened a studio in Paris, 'making ladies' outfits including clients in Brazil, Argentina and Turkey, making a lot of money".⁹ In 1938, having managed to save her wealth, she was able buy a profitable farm (a stone mansion, 37 hectares of arable land, vineyards and forests) in La-Boureche, near Rouffignac (Department of Dordogne).¹⁰

Following the war, Volkonskaya offered an answer on why she left Paris in 1940 and began her involvement in advocacy work: "Simple because Fascists arrived there. I have old scores with them. My father, fighting in the 8th Brusilov Army died in '16 and 2 brothers were also killed there".¹¹

Between 1941–1943, Volkonskaya was actively involved in the guerilla movement.¹² She distributed pamphlets with appeals to the local population, and then to the combatants of the Red Army to take part in the French guerilla movement. In the 1960s, she write of herself to

² G.A. Nechaev – historian, specialist on the anti-fascist struggle of the Soviet patriot in a occupied France.

³ Ludmila Flam-Obolensky is a publicist, writer and chairman of the Committee for "Books for Russia". She is involved in the collection and delivery of emigré literature, periodicals, archival materials, manuscripts and works of art that reflect the spiritual and social life of the Russian diaspora to Russia. She is the author and editor of several books on emigration, including Viki. Duchess Vera Obolenskaya. (Russian Way, 2010).

⁴ T.A. Volkonskaya's relation to the princely family is doubtful. In only one preserved document, addressed to the staff colonel of the 27th division of the British forces in the South Caucasus does she refer to herself neé Shira-Shikhmatov. It is unknown which "Volkonsky" was her husband. Overall, little biographical information has been preserved about Volkonskaya, especially in her prewar life.

⁵ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 9. L. 1.

⁶ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 16 ob.

⁷ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 9. L. 2.

⁸ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 5, 5 ob.

⁹ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 17 ob.

¹⁰ Volkonskaya's success in that period was likely an exception to the rule.

¹¹ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 13. This is practically Volkonskaya's only mention of the fate of her closest relatives. The 8th army, 8th field army (8 A, 8 FA "Brusilov Army") – formation (combined operational union, army) of the Kiev Military Okrug of the Russian Imperial Army during World War I.

¹² Personal documents and photos of Volkonskaya were shown during the HRD exhibitions "Russian Heroes of the French Resistance" (2010) and "Russian Participants of the Antifascist Resistance during World War II: Books, Photos, Documents" (2015).



Fig. 1. T.A. Volkonskaya
(second from left) in Constantinople, 1920

G.A. Nechaev: “On the day that I began my guerilla life, I was not worth a copper penny! I understand nothing about politics, but I have not forgotten for even a minute that I am Russian. I am no hero. I am a simple, ordinary Russian woman. But my thought is about the fact that my motherland suffers so, is deluged in blood, an unhuman hatred for the savage enemy has awoken inside me. When the headquarters has sent me with the treatises, sometimes I was a very elegant lady, sometimes a hunched old woman, or a pregnant woman, and even a nun. I felt no fear”.¹³

In 1943, Volkonskaya was assigned a most difficult task – to spread propaganda among the Soviet prisoners of war and forced civilian as part of a larger operation among the Soviet POWs whom the German Todt organization was using to build the Atlantic Wall fortifications to repel an expected Allied invasion of Nazi occupied France. In the archives of the HRD, a text written by Tamara Volkonskaya is preserved: “An appeal to the Russian soldiers in the German army...your motherland has been liberated! Free yourselves! Do not become accomplices of those who destroyed our houses

¹³ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 4.

and forced our parents, brothers, fiancées, wives, children to suffer, as well as as those who killed so many of your brothers and destroyed so many wonderful creations of socialism”.¹⁴

Between the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, the guerilla squads began to campaign actively in the Dordogne and other areas. Volkonskaya participated in combat operations (fought in the ranks of the guerilla group under the leadership of Captain A. Khetaurov). Khetaurov’s guerillas aided the allies in liberating southwestern France.

In order not to arouse the suspicions of the German administration and maintain her freedom of movement, Volkonskaya acquired forged documents under the name “Teresa Dubois”. Soviet guerillas called her the “Red Duchess”, and the French dubbed her “La Princesse”. “I worked personally, possessing papers under the name of a French woman named Dubois, which, in the case of capture by guaranteed me death by firing squad without any investigation on who, what and from where. The guerilla leadership has equipped me with printed leaflets and has taken me by car to within two or three kilometres of the German position. Afterward, I act on instinct. I recall how 85 fully-armed former Soviet fighters ran to the “poppies”¹⁵ in a single day”.¹⁶

Volkonskaya established communication with the leadership of the 1st battalion of sharpshooters and guerillas (FTPF). Its leader was Major “Hercules” Roger Ranuks – then a lieutenant – the commander of the French Domestic Forces (FFI) of the department of Dordogne (Fig. 2). She converted her house into a hospital, where she treated wounded French guerillas that had fled concentration camps. Later, she treated Soviet soldiers. She bought plenty of food, clothing and medicine with her own money. In one of her few letters, she accidentally reveals that she used a large metal... bucket to boil her medical instruments, in which she used to prepare soup for her cattle on the farm.

¹⁴ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1 D. 7. L. 8–9.

¹⁵ The Poppies (French Maquis.) were part of the resistance movement in France against the Nazi occupying forces during the Second World War, mainly consisting of armed guerrilla groups operating in rural areas. Former Soviet soldiers - the so-called Vlasovites

¹⁶ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 6. L. 1. Published in the newspaper Soviet Patriot (Paris, 1946, No. 97).

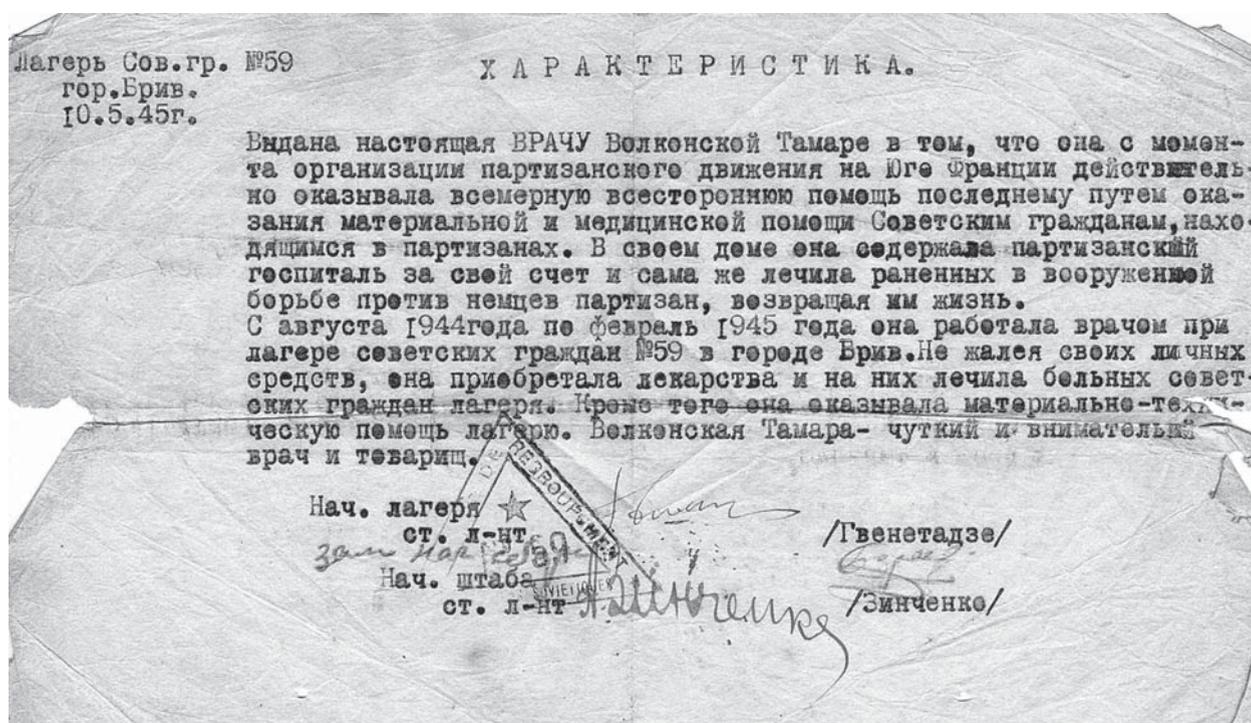


Fig. 3. Document of Service, issued to T.A. Volkonskaya, doctor of the camp of Soviet citizens No 59 of the city of Brive. May 10, 1945 г. HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 10. L. 3.

Volkonskaya continued to distribute pamphlets and appeals. She describes a tragicomic incident during her guerilla activities. "...We have reached the Perigueux-Versan road. On the right is a mountain covered with shrubs, and on the left a water meadow. At the bend, fascists from the SS Das Reich division are advancing quite far.¹⁷ An offer is standing on the tank, looking through binoculars. There is nowhere to hide. Albert Carré says — death is coming. I replied: "Not ours». And in a second I hatched a plan. I say, push me down, embrace me and rape me. I talk sooner, and by the look on his face, he understood. He pushes me down, wants to kiss, but I fight back with all I had — legs, fists — and we both tumble into the ditch. My basket treatises and his musette flew into the grass; we have certainly gone wild. My dress is torn, as is his shirt. The fascists see this and laugh heartily. They applaud. They did not stop. They passed us by".¹⁸

¹⁷ 2nd SS Panzer Regiment "Das Reich".

¹⁸ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 8.

On March 31, 1944, in response to the intensification of guerrilla warfare, the Nazis destroyed and burned down many towns and villages, including Rouffignac. Volkonskaya was arrested on an anonymous tip. She was tortured by the Gestapo. Echoes of those events are found in the postscript to her 1965 letter "Forgotten Graves", addressed to society: "I cannot write in Russian very well, and moreover, the Germans broke my hand".¹⁹ Although no direct evidence against Volkonskaya was ever found by the Nazis, she was freed, remaining under close watch. However, despite the risk of a second arrest Volkonskaya resumed her activities (in medicine and propaganda).

As doctor of the 7th battalion with the rank of the lieutenant, franc-tireurs and guerillas in the area of liberated port cities along the French Atlantic coast during the liberation of Dordogne. Later on, she accepted an invitation to lead the medical and sanitary unit of assembly point No 59 of the Soviet immigrants in Brive (Department of Corrèze) (Fig. 3). Volkonskaya

¹⁹ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 7. L. 3 ob.

provided material aid to the same assembly points in Bordeaux and Toulouse: until March 1945, she treated the wounded and sick and bought the necessary medications, all with her own money. War and helping the wounded all but ruined Duchess Volkonskaya. In her letter to Colonel G.I. Sinitsyn, dated September 29, 1965, she describes the reaction of her attending physician to her unauthorized trip to Perigueux to meet her military comrades: "He scolded me for the trip to Perigueux. He said, 'What are you doing? You sacrificed your health and wealth for your Russian patriots during the war; no one can return them to you'. I responded to him with the words of Tyutchev, that Russia cannot be understood with reason and measured with a yardstick. Russia can only be loved, and in Russia you can only believe. He was pleasantly stunned by my words, saying 'You are an incomprehensible people!'..."²⁰

In 1945, Volkonskaya accepted Soviet citizenship and received a Soviet passport. She was arrested for a short time by the French government and sent to Corsica for serving in the Resistance and assisting in return of Soviet citizens. "They sent me to Corsica for 8 months as it was illegal to be sent to prison, and I lived at my expense in a hotel. Deportation cost me 500 000".²¹

In the 1950s and 60s, Volkonskaya corresponded actively with the Soviet Ministry of Defence, the society "Forgotten Graves" and the Soviet consulate and embassy in Paris: She appealed to them with requests for the reburial of the remains of Soviet soldiers and guerillas. In a letter from June 1, 1965, Volkonskaya described the situation that had materialized: "During the reception of the ill, one of the soldiers told me, 'Comrade doctor, I am leaving France, I am returning to the Motherland. But it is difficult for me to leave my comrades here...". Following this is a detailed description of how his regiment was captured at the beginning of the war, the fascists Nazis attempt to recruit and send them to fight the Red Army, the numerous escape, trips to France, and subsequent escape attempts, tortures and shootings. "They dug a big hole in the forest, 20 meters by 20, drove their posts and ordered their very own Russians

to shoot them. The whole time, one of them said, 'Executioners! Shoot, we are not afraid of your bullets, you will not destroy everything. The Motherland will prevail!!' They cut off his tongue. They then filled the hole. Learning of this, I called hastily called commandant colonel Lebedev in Perigueux...I took the car and the soldiers, knowing their location in the forest. I ordered coffins and appealed to the funeral service and the Gendarmerie. They dug them up. Since the soil was full of clay, their bodies were preserved very well. The French leadership provided an orchestra and a guard of honour. The entire city attended the funeral. There were flags everywhere and they delivered speeches as their escape had raised patriotic enthusiasm among the French population. The French understood that something had burst in the German war machine. And many became guerillas themselves afterwards. The fascists grew furious. They burned and killed but nothing could stop the patriotic fervour anymore. I also delivered a speech. I said, 'Comrades, your sacrifice was not in vain, thousands have come to your funeral. Your coffins are covered in allied flags. We leave you temporarily with our French comrades, and then we will send you to the Motherland. The Motherland will not forget those like you!' But the Motherland forgot! I was in Paris following the war and I told general Vikhorov, consul Emelyanov, the first secretary of the embassy Tavodze, 'They all promised; I requested that if they will not take them back, then at least have someone from the military mission come'".²² This was on May 5, 1945 at 8:00. Only 20 years after the war's conclusion did Volkonskaya manage to uphold her oath: she reburied the remains of the soldiers and officers, rewrote their ranks and surnames and sent this information to the USSR. Volkonskaya did much for a dignified burial and reburial of Soviet soldiers and prisoners of the concentration camps who fought and died on French territory (Fig. 4).

Although Volkonskaya dreamt of returning to Russia, her health, which had significantly declined during the war did not allow this. She recuperated for a lengthy period, lying in hospitals. Doctors often did not permit her to write as it was exhausting (they took away

²⁰ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1 D. 7. L. 15, 15 ob.

²¹ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 12.

²² HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1 D. 7. L. 1-4.



Fig. 4. Burial site in the woods near Périgueux (prior to being transferred to a French cemetery), organised by T. A. Volkonskaya for Red Army officers shot by Nazis. T. A. Volkonskaya is fifth from the left. HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 18. L. 5.

her paper and pencils). On May 19, 1967, she writes in one of her final letters: “It seems that I have survived! I recalled that in my childhood I was gifted a Roly-Poly. No matter how you throw it, it will always remain standing. Just like me. No matter how life tossed me around, I stood back up on my feet time and again”.²³ Much was written in the French press about the fate of this woman with such a surprising life story.²⁴ Volkonskaya treated and helped treat her fellow patients in the hospital, sewed together peasants and lead a simple life. Not long before her death, G.A. Nechaev thanked Tamara Alekseevna (Volkonskaya) for an interesting letter of remembrance of her participation in the French Resistance in his own letter from May 24, 1967: “I deeply regret that I made you labour, overburdened your nervous system at night; I will consider your illness going forward. Judging by your schedule of medication intake, your heart is certainly ill to the extent that it is time to lead a calm lifestyle without any overload of your nerves”.²⁵ The list of medications in the

prescription issued to Volkonskaya contains many heart medications. The letter arrived only after her death. Tamara Alekseevna Volkonskaya died on June 3, 1967 and was buried in a graveyard in Plazac. Not long before her death, she joked about herself and about death. “My “wardmates” ask me, ‘well and if you die, who should we tell and where should we bury you?’ I replied that there will be no funeral as I will donate my body to the medical faculty in Bordeaux. Let the students there learn. It is very difficult to find a cadaver in France for science”.²⁶

France recognized the Volkonskaya’s merits and exploits by awarding her the order “Croix de guerre” and the medals “Medaille des Services militaires volontaires” (“Military Cross with Bronze Star”) and “Voluntary Military Service”. In 1965 The Soviet Committee on Cultural Relations with Compatriots Overseas once again considered awarding her an order, even sending its emissaries to Périgueux and prepared a report on their trips and documents on Volkonskaya’s life and activities.²⁷ For one reason or another, the award ceremony never took place. Along with the order, France issued Volkonskaya the Diploma of Participation of the FTPF and bestowed on her

²³ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 19.

²⁴ A few clippings from French newspapers of the 1950s and 60s are currently kept in the archives of the HRD. For example, please see: HRD Archive. Op. 1. D. 12. L. 7, 8 (Le Travailleur. 1950. 24 déc.).

²⁵ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 25, 21.

²⁶ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 8. L. 17.

²⁷ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 13. L. 1–8.

the rank of Lieutenant of the Medical Service (Fig. 5).

Volkonskaya also had a membership card (no. 230212) of the Republican Union of Former Soldiers and War Victims (Fig. 6). Additionally, in April 1967 (not long before her death) she was offered help from the French Republican Union of Former Soldiers and War Victims.²⁸

In the motherland, Volkonskaya is merely on a footnote in history at the sunset of an epoch that they now refer to as the “Brezhnev Stagnation”. In the year of the victory jubilee, the government remembered the Russian heroes and resisters. On May 7, 1985, by the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Volkonskaya was awarded the Order of the Patriotic War of the 2nd Degree.²⁹

More than 35 000 Russian emigres and Soviet citizens who had escaped German captivity served in the French Resistance. There stands a monument dedicated to emigre soldiers of immigrants who served in the Resistance and fought in the French army in the Russian cemetery of Sainte-Genevieve-des-Bois, near Paris. It was erected by Anna Voronko-Goldberg in memory of her son Edward and other Russians that gave their lives for France. A monument dedicated to the Russian participants of the French antifascist movement was revealed on May 3, 2005 in the Paris graveyard of Pere Lachaise, created as a result of the project of the sculptor V.A. Surovtsev and the architect V.V. Pasenko. On the pedestal, made of Ural marble, the words “The Motherland remembers” are incised in Russian and French [3, p. 23].

²⁸ HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 11. L. 3.

²⁹ By the same decree, E.Y. Kuzmina-Karavaeva (Mother Maria), B.V. Vilde and A.C. Levitskiy were all awarded Orders posthumously.

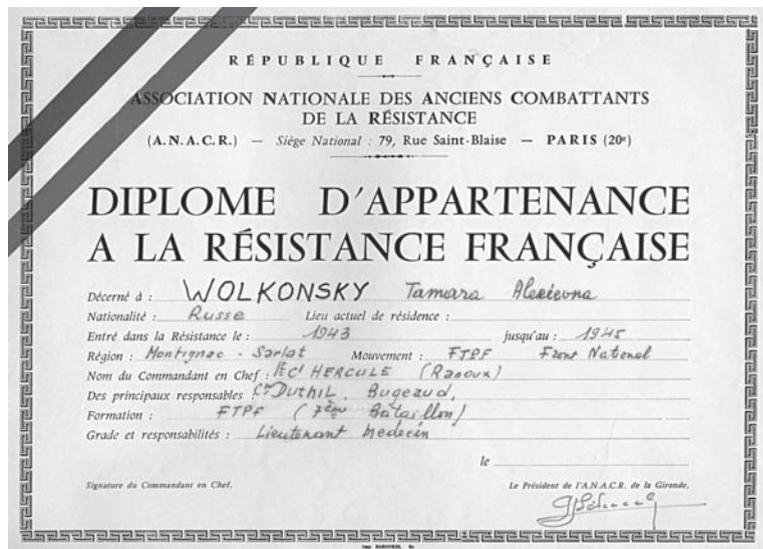


Fig. 5. Diploma of Participation in the French Resistance, issued to T.A. Volkonskaya.
HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 10. L. 4.



Fig. 6. Member of the republican union of former soldiers and war victims identity document No. 23012 — issued to T.A. Volkonskaya in 1965.
HRD Archive. F. 25. Op. 1. D. 10. L. 5.

Volkonskaya’s biography is not only a shining example of the contribution made by representatives of the Russian medical diaspora to the struggle of the French Resistance, but it also confirms that a doctor, regardless of her circumstances, remains faithful to her duty — to uphold the Hippocratic Oath and save lives.

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