Amalia Galladzheva-Löbsack was an Adventist lay pastor in the Soviet Union. She and her husband, Aleksei Galladzhev, were pioneer workers in Georgia and Armenia. Both husband and wife were imprisoned during the times of massive religious repression in the Soviet Union. Amalia Galladzheva-Löbsack was executed on February 4, 1942. Amalia Galladzheva-Löbsack represents many women from the Soviet Union who served the Church in trying times and whose names we do not know.

Early Life

Amalia Galladzheva-Löbsack was born May 5, 1891, to Heinrich Johannes and Maria Katharina Löbsack, in the village of Fran in the region of Saratov in southwestern Russia. Her father H. J. Löbsack was a leading Adventist minister and missionary in Russia and the former Soviet regions. Amalia was the oldest of five siblings. She and her brother, Georg Samuel, studied at the Friedensau Adventist Mission Seminary in Germany. After graduating as a nurse, Amalia worked in Leipzig and in Pforzheim, Germany, as a medical home missionary.

Ministry and Marriage

In 1920, at the request of her father, president of the All-Union Council of Seventh-day Adventists, Amalia returned to Russia to serve as a secretary and Bible worker, taking the place of her sister Rahel (Rachel) who had died of typhoid that year in Kiev at the age of 20.

In 1928 Amalia married Aleksei Georgievich Galladzhev, an Adventist pastor of Armenian background, ordained the same year to the gospel ministry. Until then he had served as a Bible worker and secretary at the office of the Moscow Seventh-day Adventist Church. In 1930 Galladzhev was sent to serve as a pastor in the city of Tbilisi, Georgia, and was president of the Transcaucasian Mission Field. Childless, the Galladzhevs adopted in 1935, five-year-old Rosanna, a girl from a German colonist family, Pabst.

Later Years

In 1939 the arrest of Aleksei Galladzhev on charges of “religious propaganda” left Amalia alone with Rosanna. Along
with being a caring single mother, Amalia continued to support her arrested husband for almost two years by taking him food. Amalia’s mother moved to be with her daughter. Amalia’s father, Heinrich J. Löbsack, who had served as president of the Adventist Church in the Soviet Union, was no longer alive, having become a victim of religious persecution. Both mother and daughter now cared for the spiritual welfare of the small Tbilisi Adventist congregation that Aleksei Galladzhev had formerly served. This was typical for that part of the world. During Stallin’s persecution in the 1930s, when most of pastors were arrested, women took care of churches. They did not perceive themselves as pastors; they just continued to do what should be done to keep a church alive.

In 1941 Amalia got a letter from the German Consulate in Tbilisi regarding her brother’s (Georg Samuel, a successful and wealthy journalist in Germany who died in 1936) inheritance. She refused to be a recipient of her brother’s inheritance. However, the news about the letter and her visit to the German Consulate got reported to the NKVD (i.e. KGB) by her neighbors or by the post office. Since the country was at war with Germany, this visit was considered a crime. Amalia was followed and arrested the same day and sentenced by a military tribunal as a “spy” or “secret German intelligence,” to a long term of imprisonment in a forced labor camp. Little Rosanna and her grandmother were left behind with little or nothing to live on.

Soon after, as the German troops rapidly advanced on the Soviet regions, the Soviet government ordered banishment of all people of German origin from the western part of the USSR. Maria Katharina Löbsack, together with Rosanna and others, was deported to Soviet Central Asia near the city of Tashkent. Maria’s younger daughter, Martha, and her daughter, Ruth, were deported in the other direction, one thousand kilometers away from Maria and Rosanna.

After several years of imprisonment, Aleksei Galladzhev was released while the fate of Amalia, at first, remained unknown. He took Rosanna in while Maria Katharina Löbsack moved to the city of Alma-Ata to live with her youngest daughter Martha.

In 1946 Aleksei Galladzhev, who began serving as a pastor in Moscow, requested information about his wife from the KGB headquarters on Lubyanka. He was orally informed that his wife Amalia was executed by shooting near the city of Tbilisi on February 4, 1942. Ten years later, in 1956, while living in Ukraine, he made another request. This time he was given Amalia’s death certificate with the same date. It was stated in the certificate that she died. Her family was convinced that she was seen as a “German spy” and was executed shortly after her arrest.

**Contribution**

Amalia Galladzheva-Löbsack was one of the Seventh-day Adventist female workers in the Soviet Union. She and her husband were pioneer workers in Georgia and Armenia. She became a martyr whose unyielding faith and dedication served as an example for church members during the times of massive religious repression in the Soviet Union.

**Sources**


**Notes**

1. There are different spellings of their family name. In the 1930 *Sév?day Adventist Yearbook*, his last name is spelled as Galladshew (“Transcaucasian Mission Field,” *Sév?day Adventist Yearbook* [Washington, D.C: Review and Herald,1930], 270).

2. 
Amalia had a brother, Georg Samuel (born 1893 in Kabanowsfelde near River Don), and three sisters: Lea (born 1897 in Chigir, Northern Crimea), Rachel (born 1898 in Frank, Volga region), and Martha (born 1903 in Alexandrodar, Kuban region).


4. Pavel and Nina Kulakov, email message to Daniel Heinz, April 11, 2019.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.