

The Battle for Spaces and Places in Russia's Civil War: Revolutionary Tribunals and State Power, 1917-22

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Abstract

After the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks needed to battle to control Russia's urban and rural spaces to win the war, exert state power and transform mentalities. This article argues that revolutionary tribunals played an important role by organizing travelling sessions to reach beyond abstract spaces into the familiar places central to people's everyday lives. They held trials in public squares, workers' clubs, passenger waiting halls, and other similar places, transforming them into the official vision of the revolution. As political courts focusing on counter-revolutionary crimes, tribunals projected the concerns of the central state more effectively than local courts. This helped the Bolsheviks to exert state power across Russia, thereby contributing to the end of the civil war.

The Bolsheviks were faced with daunting challenges after the October Revolution; most pressing, to emerge victorious from an increasingly brutal civil war raging across Russia. A new army had to be built from the ruins of the tsarist military, but a strong state structure was needed to achieve this and central institutions were being undermined by hostile or ineffective officials and struggled to exert authority over local organs. Prioritizing local concerns had been a fundamental part of building democracy in 1917, resulting in provinces acting independently of the centre, districts breaking free from provincial control and parishes refusing to submit to districts.¹ The Bolsheviks needed to rebuild a hierarchical state structure. The final challenge was to change mentalities; to get people thinking in the same ways as the

Bolsheviks and subscribing to their vision of Russia's future. Central to all these challenges was space; the Bolsheviks needed to battle to control Russia's urban and rural spaces to win the war, exert state power and transform mentalities.²

Historians have highlighted different ways the Bolsheviks sought to establish their control over space, from building stable and pliable organs of local government to taking control of the public discourse surrounding the revolution.³ These activities, though, tended to be more effective in urban than rural spaces. Wider ranging were agitational campaigns, encompassing pamphlets, newspapers, posters, theatre, and film.⁴ The role of agitational vehicles equipped with cinemas, theatres and reading rooms, and staffed by party enthusiasts, have been highlighted in particular, demonstrating how these extended Bolshevik power into new spaces and interacted directly with the population.⁵

This article argues that the legal system performed a similar but more extensive role in bringing state power to a wide variety of Russia's spaces. Agitational vehicles often attempted to reform local structures of power, intervening in disputes, investigating people's complaints and removing corrupt officials. But they lacked punitive powers and were forced to turn offenders over to revolutionary tribunals. In contrast, legal investigations, trials and the ensuing publicity were also visible demonstrations of state power, and a means of engaging with and moulding popular mentalities, but they were backed up by punitive powers. This was particularly true of revolutionary tribunals. As political courts targeting a wide variety of counter-revolutionary crimes, staffed by party members who proactively sought out crimes, they were better placed to convey the authority and objectives of the central state than other local courts. In this arena, law really was the 'emissary of the state', categorizing diverse human actions into a series of pre-determined crimes, which helped the state to penetrate, reorganize and control the activities and beliefs of the population.⁶

Tribunals used travelling sessions to conduct similar journeys across Russia's rural spaces to agitational vehicles and this article focuses on these attempts to take a more informal and flexible form of political justice to the people. In doing so, as Robert Argenbright has argued for agitational vehicles, travelling sessions reached beyond abstract spaces to reach places that held meaning and value in people's everyday lives.⁷ Distinguishing between space and place, one theorist stressed the importance of experience, intimacy and feeling in transforming an abstract space into a place where people work and live; a place is made up of experiences, often fleeting and undramatic, repeated daily over years, with a unique blend of sights, sounds and smells, all of which provide meaning and stability to those living there.⁸ Every stop for investigations and trials allowed the Bolsheviks to invade these places with an organ very different to any local forms of governance, holding trials in public places, and using a mixture of compulsion and persuasion to help foster obedience and commitment to the Bolsheviks' revolutionary project.

Historians have not paid much attention to revolutionary tribunals generally and have rarely distinguished the activities of travelling sessions from tribunals as a whole.⁹ Sessions faced numerous problems, from staffing shortages and the lack of finances to illness in the field and hostile populations, and it is very difficult to judge effectiveness. Yet the archives are full of reports attesting to their prevalence and perceived value. Legal officials were aware that establishing legal authority facilitated the projection of Bolshevik power more broadly,¹⁰ and the emphasis placed on sessions suggests they had played an important role in extending the visibility and effectiveness of state power by the end of the civil war.

On 24 November 1917, a decree on courts abolished the existing legal system and created two courts: local (or people's) courts to judge 'ordinary' crimes (such as theft, murder and civil disputes) and revolutionary tribunals to focus on 'counter-revolutionary' crimes (such as

revolts, plots, sabotage and other actions directed against the revolution).¹¹ Tribunals quickly spread across Russia. They were established in Petrograd and Moscow in early December and provincial cities had followed suit by early 1918. Indeed, as local authorities at all levels looked to cement their authority, tribunals were created in districts and even parishes. Most of these courts, however, were not tribunals in the sense that the decree had intended; local authorities established tribunals because they believed they wielded more power than people's courts or because they sounded more revolutionary. Thus tribunals reached into Russia's rural spaces, but reports made it clear that most dealt with mundane crimes – drunkenness, petty thefts and even divorce – rather than counter-revolutionary threats and this undermined the intended practical and symbolic impact of tribunals.¹² On 4 May 1918, a new decree restricted tribunals to provincial capitals, large industrial centres (over 200,000 inhabitants) and major railway junctions, and they were instructed to focus on serious crimes.¹³ It took months to implement this decree, but most villages were hundreds of miles from a tribunal by 1919.

This reform streamlined the fledgling tribunal system, making it easier to exert central control over it, but it soon looked mistaken in other respects. The civil war intensified as 1919 progressed, shifting the emphasis of tribunals from plots and revolts to military crimes such as desertion, the embezzlement of state property, and food supply violations. Tribunals emerged in the military and on railways (later extended to water transport), reflecting the militarisation of the Bolsheviks' struggle to retain power, but all tribunals – civilian, military and transport – struggled to combat these 'new' crimes from bases many miles away; deserters fled into remote hamlets, villages resisted food requisitioning, and crimes were committed in distant military units or railway stations. As one official noted, speed was of the essence if a tribunal was to dispense effective justice; a desertion case, for example, lost significance with each passing day as the lack of severe retribution suggested to the perpetrator and those watching that the state was powerless to respond.¹⁴

Therefore, tribunals started looking for ways of projecting their authority back into Russia's rural spaces. Commissions for deserters and food supplies were granted legal powers to investigate and sentence crimes, but were not agreeable to justice officials wedded to the use of established courts and processes, and who did not want to see their monopoly over sentencing eroded further as it was already challenged by the secret police (or Cheka). Instead, some formed travelling sessions of the tribunal, which allowed staff to travel to villages across the province, or where troops were stationed, or railway stations and ports, holding court when they arrived.¹⁵

Some tribunals, such as Nizhnii Novgorod, organized sessions as early as autumn 1918 and these were sanctioned by the First Congress of Tribunal Officials in October-November.¹⁶ Most tribunals, though, acted in 1919. The initiative primarily came from below as decrees initially only mentioned sessions in passing. On 14 January 1919, military tribunals were given permission to create sessions if they needed to visit the locations of crimes,¹⁷ whilst a decree on tribunals on 12 April 1919 acknowledged that tribunals might want to establish sessions.¹⁸ The state soon became more enthusiastic. In June 1919, the Commissar of Justice, D. I. Kurskii, suggested that tribunals should organize weekly trips into districts and parishes to deal with deserters,¹⁹ whilst 1920 saw decrees urging tribunals to use sessions to deal with certain crimes, particularly desertion and food tax violations.²⁰ Local executive committees often became influential in deciding where and when provincial tribunals should dispatch sessions and military councils took on a similar role in the military.²¹ By the end of 1921, most tribunals had a special department devoted to organizing sessions and some even started to produce detailed instructions for participants.²²

Sessions started with the appointment of personnel from the staff of the provincial, military or transport tribunal organizing the session.²³ Sessions were expected to mirror normal tribunal composition and as a decree on 15 August 1921 made clear, this meant that

sessions should contain a chairman, two members, a secretary, a typist and a commandant (in charge of security and order in the court).²⁴ Beyond this, some tribunals appointed additional personnel. Moscow's regional transport tribunal, for instance, was consistently appointing three security personnel (*okhranniki*) by late 1922,²⁵ whilst four investigators were dispatched by the Volga transport tribunal in May 1922.²⁶ Other sessions employed defence counsels and prosecutors. The appointment process was one of the largest challenges facing sessions. Most tribunals faced severe shortages of experienced staff and could ill afford to lose several for what could be a significant period of time. Consequently, reports from tribunals to the central authorities often highlighted the need for sessions in their area before following immediately with a request for experienced, reliable and educated personnel to help staff them. Tver's provincial tribunal, for instance, asked for ten people to help form the five sessions required to deal with local deserters effectively.²⁷

The whole entourage then embarked on their itinerary. This varied in nature. Some sessions were little more than branches of their tribunal in one or two significant population points in the province; essentially, little more than the provincial tribunal finding a means of continuing or resurrecting the old district tribunals in certain places. They had fixed premises and staff, and a permanent presence in a particular place.²⁸ Some provinces did something similar, but on a temporary basis; every few months, they sent out a group of people to the same town to hold court and judge cases, but they would return afterwards. This was the case in Izhevsk by 1921, which was apparently particularly prone to banditry, counter-revolutionary agitation, mass drunkenness, illegal brewing, embezzlement and other crimes. As the chairman of the tribunal in the nearby town of Sarapul' noted, they wanted the time between the crime and the punishment to be 'almost instant', and observing cases at the scene of the crime (frequently Izhevsk) was the best solution.²⁹

Most tribunals, however, established new itineraries for each session, which stopped in various towns and villages to investigate cases, set up court, dispense justice, and project the authority of their parent tribunal. Some of these trips lasted a week or two; others were like expeditions, traversing large distances for a couple of months. In April 1921, for instance, the session of the railway tribunal based in Kiev embarked on an eleven-day trip, covering over 500 miles to the west and south-west of the city, with stops in Korosten', Shepetovka, Proskurov, Khmerinka and Kazatin. These trials judged thirty-six cases, dismissing another eighteen before trial as unimportant. The crimes included stealing firewood earmarked for trains, oppositional agitation, mechanical sabotage, undermining discipline, desertion, speculation, illegal brewing, delaying trains without reason, horse theft, drunkenness, and forgery – a typical set of crimes. It punished ineffective and corrupt officials, helped educate people, and apparently projected greater authority than local courts because it knew official policies and represented the highest legal organs.³⁰

Sessions of military tribunals often served a more focused role, dispatched to areas of intense military action to punish 'panic', ill-discipline, desertion, and ineffective leadership. Some actually found themselves involved in the fighting, and it was hoped that such sessions would not only punish instantly any crimes committed – thereby mitigating their negative impact on the fighting – but also prevent retreat and reinforce discipline through their physical presence. Sessions were also sent to investigate military defeats, seeking those responsible for the 'crimes' of retreat or the advance of the enemy. One memoirist who recalled all these experiences as an investigator and chairman of military tribunals reprinted a mandate apparently provided to one of his sessions; it outlined the session's composition, itinerary, objectives and powers, ordering all soviets, party organs and military authorities to assist it, and highlighting its right to use telegraphs and telephones.³¹ Such mandates permitted sessions to investigate what they wished once they were on the road.

Other sessions performed a variety of roles. A session of Voronezh's tribunal spent 1-15 March 1919 dealing with an overcrowded prison in Pavlovskii *uezd* where inmates had been waiting months for a trial.³² On 14 May 1922, a session of the local transport tribunal left Nizhnii Novgorod for Astrakhan on a steamer. Its aim was not only to hold trials, but to liaise with – and establish better relations with – local departments of justice and other local authorities, and to inspect prisons to check whether they were meeting official regulations. The session spent four months on the Volga, visiting Vladimirovka, Tsaritsyn, Saratov, Samara, Simbirsk and Kazan'. The report noted that eighty-eight cases were judged (involving 404 people), several prisons visited, and meetings held with local justice officials, investigators, and other tribunals.³³

Some tribunals managed, despite staff shortages, to send out several sessions simultaneously. Moscow's regional transport tribunal, for instance, sent out sessions on 14, 18 and 22 December with different chairmen and personnel, all of which took several weeks to complete. One went towards Kursk and then up to Viaz'ma. Another went on a circuit on Riazan', Ruzaevka, Syzran', Kuznetsk, Penza, and Morshansk. A final one went to Murom, Arzamask, Kazan', Nizhnii Novgorod and Vladimir. Many of the crimes judged – from the patchy details available – appear typical, usually thefts from wagons and passengers, some of which involved forging documents.³⁴

Some sessions did follow official procedures in trials.³⁵ They checked that defendants had received a copy of the allegations and the investigator's report. The background of the accused was clarified, followed by an outline of the allegations and whether the accused pleaded guilty. Witnesses were examined, before moving on to lawyers' speeches and, finally, the last words of the accused. The tribunal then adjourned for deliberation before reading out the sentence. If best practice was followed, trials finished by pointing out the time limit for submitting appeals under cassation. Sentences ranged from execution to public censure.³⁶

These ‘model’ trials must have been prepared beforehand. Stavropol’'s tribunal reported how a session sent to deal with several counter-revolutionary revolts only managed to judge four cases because it was so unprepared,³⁷ whilst a session of Western Front’s military tribunal noted how it had only received details of the cases the day before it departed and of the fifteen cases listed, only five proved suitable or sufficiently investigated to bring to trial.³⁸

Most sessions, however, streamlined official procedures. ‘Investigations’ were confined to comparing the allegations with the defendant’s account and those of witnesses available to attend on the day of the trial. Much rested on the witness’s short testimony. If they supported the allegations, then guilt was usually assured; if they denied them, or provided inconclusive evidence, then there was a far greater chance that the accused would be acquitted. Some trials even lacked witnesses with the trial consisting solely of questions to the defendant.³⁹ In part, quick trials must have been governed by necessity; the numbers of defendants and the lack of time and personnel to conduct independent investigations in far-flung villages. In part, though, it is clear that quick trials were conducted by parent tribunals as well. Transcripts of trials by the Northern Region’s water transport tribunal, for instance, reveal that many defendants faced little more than half a dozen to a dozen questions, with a few directed to the witnesses before the judges pronounced a verdict.⁴⁰

Surviving transcripts may be abbreviated, of course, but the numerous sentences dispensed by many sessions support the sense that trials were quick affairs. In August 1920, a session of Moscow’s tribunal stopped in Volokolamsk at the start of a two month tour of the district. Over the course of nine days, it held twenty-five trials involving 110 people. Summaries indicate that the quickest lasted 27 minutes and only a few stretched beyond an hour (not including the time taken to decide a verdict). The tribunal was interested in reasons, past actions and family backgrounds. It tried to ascertain whether a crime had been committed ‘consciously’ [*soznatel’nyi*] (that is, knowingly) and whether the defendant was similarly a

'conscious' (or active) enemy of the state. A 'low cultural level' was often cited as a reason for leniency when sentencing as it suggested that the defendant had not deliberately sought to oppose the state, but this was not a reason to proclaim innocence. In all, the two-month trip sentenced at least 244 people in five different places (and returned to Volokolamsk at the end for two more trials). Of these, 37 (15%) were sentenced to shooting; the vast majority of the remainder received prison sentences of various lengths.⁴¹

The record emerging from this particular trip seems typical in terms of processes and reasoning. The number of death sentences, too, seems to be average for a session. Anecdotal evidence suggested that sessions tended to be harsher than their parent tribunals; they were usually dealing with the most serious crimes (such as desertion or banditry) in places where the state wanted to make the most impression. Certainly, the Volokolamsk session was severer than the averages for all types of tribunals, which suggested that shooting consisted of 7% of sentences by the second half of 1920. This had fallen from 14% in the first half of 1919 and 11% in the first half of 1920, and was to continue to fall, with shooting forming only 1% of all sentences in the first half of 1922.⁴² The percentages were two to five times higher for military tribunals in 1920-2 than provincial tribunals, with transport tribunals in between.⁴³ Nevertheless, whilst the Volokolamsk trip was severer than some, it was eclipsed by others; almost 3% of the 14,486 people sentenced by the sessions in Voronezh mentioned above received the death penalty,⁴⁴ but 34% of the 109 sentenced by a session of military tribunal of the South-West Front did.⁴⁵ Many of these sentences, however, were never enacted; the accused often engaged with the cassation process and emerged with a new sentence, there were frequent amnesties, and original sentences were commuted to lesser sentences, usually for unclear reasons.⁴⁶ The four-month trip down the Volga mentioned above sentenced 355 people. Of these, fifteen (4%) were originally condemned to death, but all were later changed to various prison sentences for some reason.⁴⁷

The Volokolamsk session – and again it was far from alone in this – was particularly damning of those who should have known and acted better; one person was condemned for being a supposedly ‘conscious’ officer and party member who spoke like an ‘unconscious’ one, and he behaved as an active enemy of the state, hiding for several months, forging documents and thus discrediting the party and the officer corps.⁴⁸ The tribunal was also critical of blatant lies. It questioned the story of one deserter who claimed he was needed back home to work the land due to family hardship, asking why someone was needed in the winter when there was no work to be done.⁴⁹

Sessions also varied widely in the scale of their operations. Some dealt with single defendants over a matter of days, whilst others dealt with hundreds of individuals in a single day, even sentencing dozens in single trials. Sometimes this was a logical means of dealing with cases of mass desertion or village unrest; twelve sessions of Voronezh’s tribunal in 1920, for instance, claimed to have judged 14,486 people of which 11,094 (77%) were for desertion.⁵⁰ But just as often such trials involved numerous people accused of very different crimes. A trial in Mozhga (Viatka province), for example, tried sixteen people over two days for a range of apparently unconnected crimes: a counter-revolutionary plot; banditry; desertion; speculation; dereliction of duty; drunkenness; gambling; and hiding deserters and bandits.⁵¹ In contrast, the session of the military tribunal of the Northern Caucasus region lasted a week (23-29 July 1921), but only investigated a few senior military personnel.⁵² Such trials, as noted below, acted as local ‘show’ trials.

Taken together, these sessions became a very significant aspect of tribunals’ activities. In January-March 1923, incomplete statistics indicate thirteen to eighteen travelling sessions of military and transport tribunals in any one month, ranging from two days to over two months in length, averaging three to four weeks.⁵³ This was the case in 1921-2 as well. The military tribunal in Novorossiisk recorded twenty-eight sessions between September 1920 and

July 1921, which dealt with an average four cases each time, usually significant ones with 'large public-educational significance', whilst Tula's provincial tribunal organized over 350 sessions in 1918-21.⁵⁴ Cheliabinsk's military tribunal organized six in the first four months of 1921, which apparently formed the largest part of its work.⁵⁵ This was probably not the case everywhere. Most were probably closer to the experiences of the military tribunal of the Western Front where sessions dealt with roughly 10% of the cases of the parent tribunal.⁵⁶ But there is the sense that this commitment was increasing steadily in many places. Perm's railway tribunal, for instance, noted that sessions were running for 12-14 days monthly prior to August 1922 but expected this to increase. Sure enough, its next report in December recorded sessions lasting for 2-3 weeks each month.⁵⁷

Despite the number of sessions by 1922, it was almost impossible to ensure that the time between the crime and the punishment was almost instant, as the chairman quoted earlier had intended. It took time to discover crimes, investigate them and organize sessions. In late 1922, Moscow's regional transport tribunal was judging crimes committed 6-8 months earlier, a time lag that had risen to 12 months a year later, and this was not unusual.⁵⁸ Sessions faced other problems as well. All tribunals faced staff shortages and finding people to staff sessions for weeks or months was difficult. Sessions cost money, another scarce commodity. Samara provincial tribunal, for example, claimed somewhat implausibly that it was going to use a car to drive around key towns and hold sessions, but it did not have enough money for fuel. As a result, they were now only going to undertake day trips to nearby locations for particular cases.⁵⁹ Other trips suffered from the absence of transport, sometimes having to walk to villages, whilst longer trips suffered from illnesses and weather conditions, and some found themselves forced to help with local problems, from fire-fighting or solving murders to actual

fighting.⁶⁰ It was dangerous work, whether fighting or dealing with desperate deserters and violent rural insurgencies.

One official talked of resistance from local villagers unwilling to give up deserters. A plan was formed to prosecute family members and confiscate their livestock as well as shooting deserters, and once relatives had been sentenced for concealment, the accused usually appeared.⁶¹ Another noted how the twenty-five men (the session and its military escort) who arrived in Shchuch'e (Voronezh province) could never hope to track down and sentence the estimated thousand or more deserters in this single parish. Therefore, they offered an amnesty on their first day. Several deserters responded and they were redirected back into the army without punishment. The next day, they rounded up several dozen deserters, subjected them to trial, shot the worst offenders immediately, and directed the rest to a penal battalion. The same methods were repeated for several days with 250-300 sentenced and several dozen shot. The rest of the deserters then started to return of their own free will and, according the official, there were no deserters left in the parish after 10-12 days of work, despite the initially overwhelming odds faced by the session.⁶²

Other accounts suggest mixed success in pronouncing sentences acceptable to the audience. One memoirist recalled the difficulty in determining when to apply repression and when to be merciful, realizing that mercy was as important in conveying a message as discipline and political enlightenment. He gave the example of judging village officials who had not secured their allotted food supply quota for military units. The session was well aware of the resistance from the local peasants these officials had faced. Therefore, they were dismissed from posts and banned from holding public office for a year, but nothing harsher, and they were apparently grateful at this unexpected mercy.⁶³ Another session apparently grandly pronounced that Soviet power gifted life and freedom to everyone at a mass trial of villagers accused of not provided sufficient resistance to the Bolsheviks' opponents on the

Caucasian front. This expression of fairness and humanism, to use the official's terms, was greeted with applause.⁶⁴ Elsewhere, though, reports in Tula suggested it might be better to hold trials in district capitals, or even the provincial capital, rather than villages, given the threatening mood of the local population when death sentences were pronounced for deserters.⁶⁵ Conversely, another official reported unrest on many ships in the Caspian Sea when a session dispensed what was seen as an overly lenient sentence to a local port commander, which harmed relations between local communists and sailors.⁶⁶

Yet observing cases locally (often at the scene of the crime) not only allowed cases to be judged *relatively* quickly, but also reached out to the intended audience; those who *knew* the criminal, *knew* that a crime had been committed, were *potential* criminals, and who were *waiting* to see what the state would or could do. In the aftermath of the session described above which took in a circuit around Kiev, local leaders described how the session left behind an 'atmosphere where it was possible to work splendidly'; it had provided a clear lesson by punishing careerists (those who worked in official posts purely for personal gain) and it had been educational. Furthermore, as an organ acquainted with official policies and representing the highest legal organs of the state, it wielded an authority that potential alternatives – such as people's courts or disciplinary courts – could not match.⁶⁷

Numerous officials stressed the educational importance of sessions, sometimes above their punitive impact. To quote one, the 'legal process is a school',⁶⁸ a means of agitation whose message was reinforced by punishment. The session in Izhevsk held open meetings with a huge attendance of workers and peasants. This provided a significant opportunity to educate and develop the consciousness of their audience. In the presence of the criminal, the sentence acted as a huge 'warning' to those committing crimes and to those who might be considering it.⁶⁹ Some sessions travelled around in the company of political instructors, demonstrating the close ties between trials and traditional propaganda work.⁷⁰

Some sessions of tribunals through their length and the publicity they received in the local press acted as local 'show' trials, mirroring prominent national trials of obvious political enemies.⁷¹ This was particularly true of the sessions held by the supreme tribunal, which usually involved senior tribunal officials and dealt with issues of national prominence, such as the campaign against the church.⁷² One chairman of a military tribunal recounted a case where a session's investigation into the reasons for a military defeat resulted in 162 prosecutions, including senior officers, which ended up in a public trial over several days in the nearest major town and saw twenty people sentenced to death. In this case, the prominence of the defendants coupled with the state's desire to send a strong message to the troops and workers being tried governed the decision to hold a longer, more prominent and hence, presumably, a better reported trial.⁷³

Iu. Iu. Mezhin, head of the transport tribunal system, noted the importance of a 'few large trials' in conveying a message to workers in one telegram in May 1920.⁷⁴ Yet two months later in a report, he also noted it was in many ways more important that sessions dealt with everyday crimes of a mass character rather than just sensational cases.⁷⁵ In doing so, as another local activist noted, sessions were strengthening workers' moral consciousness, their sense of duty to society, and the importance of areas such as transport to the public and the state.⁷⁶ More prosaically, as noted by K. Kh. Danishevskii, head of the military tribunal system, sessions were a means of spreading the state's decrees and constitution.⁷⁷ And they were an opportunity to contextualize; a railway tribunal session in Kungur opened with a history of the 'struggle of the oppressed with the enslavers', before moving on to discuss the history of tribunals, old and new proletarian courts, and the goals of tribunals as extraordinary punitive organs and part of the workers' front. There was 'colossal' interest apparently and local communists were very satisfied.⁷⁸ Another noted how almost every trial ended with a

speech from the chairman on the significance of the court as an ‘organ of the revolutionary dictatorship of the workers’ and explaining the ‘meaning’ of the sentences.⁷⁹

Sessions were better placed than parent tribunals to achieve educational goals because they were better able to encourage attendance from the target audience. One official noted that attendance was the most effective way of extending the circle of people exposed to the legal system. It was better than reprinting sentences in the press or as orders or posters on public buildings, or distributed to parish and village soviets, although all these were useful.⁸⁰ And whilst sessions held public trials like all tribunals, a public trial in a small town or rural village was very different from one in a large and busy city. Whereas tribunals in the latter complained that workers were not as interested as they hoped and that attendance was poor amid competing demands on workers’ time, a village session became the centre of attention; it was entertainment, people went to see it, and venues were often overflowing. Various reports note that some trials were seen by up to 5,000 people per day with people coming and going during lengthy trials.⁸¹

Lacking a permanent building, sessions took over various places. Some used ‘official’ places, usually a room in the building of various local authorities (although none wanted to commandeer the courtroom of local people’s courts as they wanted sessions to remain distinct). Most, however, preferred ‘unofficial’ places. Some held meetings in the open-air, in public squares, with one describing judges sitting on tables as there were no chairs.⁸² The railway tribunal in the Baikal region of Siberia used workshops and depots.⁸³ Perm’s session used third-class halls at stations, factories, local theatres and even railway wagons, whilst the session travelling the Volga frequently used clubs for water-transport workers.⁸⁴ Another water-transport tribunal extolled the benefits of holding trials on a steamer; it was quick, avoided searching for a local building and it was close to where its target audience worked.⁸⁵ And this was massive advantage of sessions; they could hold trials in places where people

worked and lived, encouraging attendance, even if only for short periods, and enhancing the tribunal's visibility and impact by situating them (and the state) in places with a significant meaning for people's everyday lives.

The main emphasis, unsurprisingly, was on ensuring that workers, peasants and soldiers attended, but one report highlighted the fact that sessions had attracted chairmen and members from the local party committee and local soviet as well as many bureaucrats.⁸⁶ With crimes committed by all types of individuals, it was crucial that trials were seen by as broad a range of people as possible and important that they were publicized as widely as possible in the press. Tribunal staff complained periodically that trials never received the desired coverage in the press and some of this was due to tribunals lacking the staff needed to prepare press releases and liaise with editors. But, as one chairman noted, simply providing the press with a short note was enough for them to expand on. In any case, fairly short articles in comprehensible rather than 'official' language were more effective than lengthy, complex pieces in conveying the basic messages of the tribunal.⁸⁷ The itinerant nature of sessions may have hindered their ability to garner coverage, but it may have also stimulated coverage as tribunals reached new areas. The expedition along the Volga mentioned above managed to have its trials advertised in some newspapers, including outlines of the alleged crimes, calls for witnesses and summons to those accused.⁸⁸ Similarly, the arrival of a session in Orsha prompted the first coverage of tribunals in the local newspaper and thereafter trials received almost daily coverage for a couple of months before interest faded again.⁸⁹

Although some officials bemoaned the practical difficulties of organizing sessions (usually a lack of experienced personnel), the evidence is overwhelmingly positive about their impact. Officials reported back repeatedly to the centre that bringing tribunals closer to the people was an effective form of deterrence. The chairman of Orel's provincial tribunal declared that sentencing deserters locally in Livny, a small town to the southeast, had led to

3,000 more deserters voluntarily handing themselves in.⁹⁰ Officials could be justifying their activities by painting a picture of effectiveness, but given that they were not adverse to belabouring problems in other areas, and sessions involved expenses, hardships and dangers that most would hardly have welcomed, it seems likely that most genuinely believed – true or not – that sessions had a real impact on the fight against crime locally.

It is certainly true that all tribunals judged considerably more crimes as the civil war progressed and sessions played an important role. Numbers rose from an average of 381 cases in each civilian tribunal in 1918 to an average of 821 in 1920 to even more in 1921-22. Military tribunals judged far more – an average 6,283 cases each in 1920 with some at the heart of fighting reaching almost 30,000 cases per annum. And each case started to involve more people as tribunals focused on mass crimes; civilian tribunals, for example, saw a 75% increase in the number of those convicted per case between 1920 and 1921.⁹¹

Some officials made claims that sessions went beyond simply catching criminals to changing popular mentalities. A high-profile trial of religious activists in Smolensk started with a small audience of believers who were clearly unsympathetic to the tribunal and even carried presents of food, milk, linen and flowers for the accused. By the tenth day, though, the hall was overflowing with party workers and other officials, whilst thousands gathered to hear the verdict at the end.⁹² Similarly, a chairman of a military tribunal described how the local population arrived at the court with preconceived opinions, lacking confidence in it, but after a few trials, they started to speak out more, they brought new cases, and – in his words – they became ‘citizens’ trusting the court to remove criminal elements from the village and secure their own interests, apparently encouraged by the session’s focus on targeting corrupt local officials as well as ordinary people. Crime rates declined, but the significance in his eyes was not the new cases – they were usually of minor importance – but growing engagement with the tribunal and, through it, with the state and its goals.⁹³

All tribunals focused increasingly on officials. Crimes of office – exceeding, abusing or ineffectively exercising authority – grew from virtually nothing in 1917-18 to 21% of cases in provincial tribunals by the first half of 1922, whilst in military tribunals they rose from 21% in the second half of 1920 to 45% in the first half of 1922, and in transport tribunals from 46% in 1920 to 81% in the first half of 1922.⁹⁴ In part, this rise no doubt reflected the growth in the number of officials overall. But it also represented the growing recognition by the state that the abuses of local officials – trivial and otherwise – impacted on the state's ability to govern effectively and alienated the population. Officials had to convince people to support the regime not simply through compulsion and persuasion, but through their own actions, and the increased focus on errant officials could only have had a positive impact on how tribunals were perceived by ordinary people.

One participant later described how tribunals had largely turned to 'shock campaigns' (*udarnye zadaniia*) by 1921, citing their involvement in targeting crimes of office, collecting food tax, and campaigns against banditry and religion, to name a few.⁹⁵ This is misleading in some respects; tribunals continued to investigate various crimes, whilst they had been targeting the crimes involved in these 'campaigns' for several years by this stage. However, it is true that the state increasingly focused on particular issues and that tribunals became a central part of these campaigns, with numerous decrees repeatedly threatening prosecution by tribunals. And given the dispersed nature of these crimes, sessions were a central part of tribunal involvement.⁹⁶ In Kursk, for instance, official proclamations from local officials made it clear that tribunals – and particularly sessions – were central to the campaign to gather food taxes in 1921-2; the message had to be conveyed that non-payment would see individuals in front of a court, and only sessions could reach into resisting villages and hamlets.⁹⁷ In Vologda, sessions were working into the early hours of the morning dispensing

sentences for non-payment of food taxes.⁹⁸ These officials clearly placed great importance on being able to project justice into Russia's spaces and places.

As the Bolsheviks started to feel confident they had emerged victorious from the civil war despite the daunting challenges, wide-ranging debates erupted in 1921-2 over the future of tribunals. Many officials felt there was no longer a need for a two-pronged court system. These debates culminated in a decree published on 11 November 1922 (effective from 1 January 1923) abolishing civilian tribunals. Military and transport tribunals remained to deal with serious military and economic crimes, whilst special sessions of people's courts would deal with important civilian crimes.⁹⁹ A year later, transport tribunals were also abolished and their cases transferred to people's courts, leaving only military tribunals, which continued for the existence of the Soviet Union. These tribunals continued to hold sessions into the mid-1920s. In 1924, one official was still arguing that military crimes needed dealing with as soon as possible and legal work must be popularized among the soldiers. Sessions, in his eyes, remained crucial to oversee cases in those places where crimes were committed.¹⁰⁰ Whilst other reports on military tribunals did not directly refer to sessions, they all talked about the continuing concern to bring justice closer to the people in various ways.¹⁰¹

Officials, therefore, continued to believe that fighting crime locally – at its very source – helped combat it. The civil war years had seen criminals judged, often near the site of their crimes, in front of a familiar audience. In doing so, sessions sent out a potent message to criminals and potential criminals. Furthermore, in the words of one chairman, sessions 'strengthened and developed revolutionary legal consciousness as a way of asserting the worker-peasant soviet legal order'. From this 'significant' role, he moved seamlessly into how this harmed those seeking to undermine the power of the Red Army and the strength of the Soviet state.¹⁰² As tribunal justice was a different type of justice to that enacted by other

courts, a politicized form of justice whose practitioners viewed the tribunal as a fighting organ of the Soviet state, the activities of sessions also extended the reach of the state. They projected state authority into local spaces – remote villages, dispersed military units and isolated railway stations – where state organs were weak or ineffective, particularly if the criminals were officials of those state organs that did exist.

Moreover, sessions invaded familiar places within these spaces, whether the public square, the factory, the workers' club or the railway station. They transformed these places temporarily to reflect the Bolsheviks' vision of the revolution and not just in the form of passive propaganda literature, but with the ability to wield real power over people's lives through the sentences they could pronounce. It was very different to having to go to the local court or the local Soviet to conduct business, both of which had fixed locations distinct from everyday life, possibly in distant towns (locations which, not coincidentally, sessions tried to avoid using). Existing courts and local organs were also dominated by petty local disputes, feuds and concerns. In contrast, sessions brought the concerns of the state into people's lives, making the state and its ideology appear visible and active locally, rather than an abstract entity many miles away.

The impact of this is hard to assess with certainty. Undoubtedly, justice officials were correct: it could only help the fight against crime. Undoubtedly, too, the greater visibility of the state locally could only help secure Bolshevik power and re-establish a more effective central, hierarchical state authority. Amid the chaos of civil war, local Bolsheviks depended increasingly on the authorities above them at every level to provide the support they needed to hang on to power. The justice system was an important example of this; the authority of tribunals rested on their image as an organ of the central state, distinct from people's courts or disciplinary courts, even if their officials rarely visited the centre. It was in the interests of these officials to cultivate this central link and the authority of the central state apparatus as it

enabled tribunals to work more effectively. Targeting renegade officials further reinforced central authority. For ordinary people, sessions brought many more of them into contact with the state and the justice system. Whether any of them became more 'conscious' citizens through this, subscribing to the Bolsheviks' views as positive reports claimed, is debateable. But after 1921, the punitive and educational roles of courts worked in tandem with new economic concessions to help undermine the desire to oppose the state. Conflict between the centre and localities persisted throughout the Soviet Union, both in terms of controlling local officials and ensuring the submission of ordinary people, but the reduction in its level by 1922 reflected that the Bolsheviks had turned the tide in the battle for spaces and places.

¹ For a case study discussing these issues, see M. Rendle, 'The Problem of the 'Local' in Revolutionary Russia: Moscow Province, 1914-1922', in S. Badcock, L. Novikova, and A. Retish (eds.), *Russia's Home Front in War and Revolution, 1914-22. Book 1. Russia's Revolution in Regional Perspective* (Bloomington, 2015), 19-44.

² This article sees space as an existing physical environment. For alternative approaches, see N. Baron, 'New Spatial Histories of Twentieth Century Russia and the Soviet Union: Surveying the Landscape', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 55, 3 (2007), 374-400.

³ As well as other recent articles in Badcock, Novikova, and Retish, *Russia's Home Front*, see the classic study, D. Raleigh, *Experiencing Russia's Civil War: Politics, Society and Revolutionary Culture in Saratov, 1917-1922* (Princeton, 2002).

⁴ P. Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929* (Cambridge, 1985).

⁵ R. Argenbright, 'The Soviet Agitational Vehicle: State Power on the Social Frontier', *Political Geography*, 17, 3 (1998), 253-72; idem, 'Soviet Agitational Vehicles: Bolsheviks in Strange Places', in M. Bassin, C. Ely and M. Stockdale (eds.), *Space, Place and Power in Modern Russia: Essays in the New Spatial History* (DeKalb, 2010), 142-63; idem, 'Vanguard of 'Socialist Colonization'? The Krasnyi Vostok Expedition of 1920', *Central Asian Survey*, 30, 3-4 (2011), 437-454; and K. Vladimirov, 'Red East: Soviet Central Asia in the 1920s', *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 1 (2010), 127-33.

⁶ This phrase and these ideas are influenced by R. Guha, 'Chandra's Death', in R. Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies V: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (New Delhi, 1987), 141-2. See also U. Baxi, "'The State's Emissary': The Place of the Law in Subaltern Studies", in P. Chatterjee and G. Panday (eds.), *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (New Delhi, 1992), 247-64.

⁷ See especially Argenbright, 'Vanguard', 438-40.

⁸ Y. Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (London, 1977), 6, 136-48, 179, 183-4.

⁹ Recent work on crime and courts during the civil war has focused on issues of state expansion and control; see M. Frame, 'Crime, Society and 'Revolutionary Conscience' during the Russian Civil War: Evidence from the Militia Files', *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés / Crime, History & Societies*, 17, 1 (2013), 129-50; idem., 'State Expansion and the Criminal Investigation Militia during the Russian Civil War', *History*, 98, 331 (2013), 406-27; and A. Retish, 'Controlling Revolution: Understandings of Violence through the Rural Soviet Courts, 1917-1923', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 65, 9 (2013), 1789-1806. There have been some recent unpublished theses on revolutionary tribunals in Russian (a few are cited below) as well as some articles. Two have been published as books and only mention travelling sessions briefly; see various references in D. Gor'ev, *Deiatel'nost' revoliutsionnykh tribunalov na Kubani (1918-1922 gg.)* (Armavir, 2011); and A. Makutchev, "*Prigovor okonchatel'nyi, obzhalovaniu ne podlezhit...*" *Revoliutsionnye tribunaly v Sovetskoi Rossii v gody Grazhdanskoi voiny* (Moscow, 2012), 60-2. Broader surveys of tribunals ignore the sessions, such as Iu. Titov's three volumes; *Sozdanie sistemy sovetskikh revoliutsionnykh tribunalov* (Moscow, 1983), *Razvitie sistemy sovetskikh revoliutsionnykh tribunalov* (Moscow, 1987) and *Sovetskie revoliutsionnye tribunaly v mirnye gody stroitel'stva sotsializma* (Moscow, 1988). For more information on tribunals generally, see M. Rendle, 'Revolutionary Tribunals and the Origins of Terror in Early Soviet Russia', *Historical Research*, 84, 226 (2011), 693-721; and idem., 'Defining the 'Political' Crime: Revolutionary Tribunals in Early Soviet Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 65, 9 (2013), pp. 1771-88.

¹⁰ For e.g., Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennyi voennyi arkhiv [hereafter RGVA], f. 33988, op. 2, d. 245, l. 5ob (report on tribunals on the Western Front in 1921, early 1922).

¹¹ *Dekrety Sovetskoi vlasti* [hereafter *DSV*] (18 volumes, Moscow, 1957-2009), I, 124-6.

¹² See, for e.g., the discussions in *Materialy Narodnogo Komissariata Iustitsii*, 1 (1918) and 3 (1918).

¹³ *DSV*, II, 231-4.

¹⁴ Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [hereafter GARF], f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 49, l. 72 (inspection report on the Urals regional military tribunal, 8 May 1921).

¹⁵ The term used is a *vyezdnaia sessiia* of the court. I have translated this as a travelling session to convey how this was a session of the tribunal that travelled from place to place as and when it was deemed necessary.

¹⁶ O. Kostrova, ‘Sudebnye preobrazovaniia v Rossii v 1917-1922 gg. (na primere Nizhegorodskoi gubernii) (unpublished kandidat dissertation, Moscow Humanitarian-Economics Institute – Nizhnii Novgorod Branch, 2008), 133-4; N. Krylenko, *Sudoustroistvo RSFSR* (Moscow, 1923), 316.

¹⁷ RGVA, f. 33987, op. 2, d. 53, l. 135ob (instructions from the Revolutionary Military Tribunal of the Republic to all military tribunals).

¹⁸ *DSV*, V, 12.

¹⁹ Makutchev, *Prigovor*, 60.

²⁰ For e.g., GARF, f. R-1005, op. 2, d. 1, l. 168a ob (Narkomiust correspondence, 21 July 1920), ll. 275, 284 (Cassation Tribunal correspondence, 16 December 1920).

²¹ V. Abramov, ‘Sozdanie i deiatel’nost’ mestnykh revoliutsionnykh tribunalov (1918-1922 gg.) (po materialam Penzenskoi gubernii)’ (unpublished kandidat dissertation, Penza State Pedagogical University, 2004), 212; P. Fedorenko, ‘Revoliutsionnye tribunaly Smolenskoi gubernii (dekabr’ 1917-1922 gg.)’ (unpublished kandidat dissertation, Smolensk State University, 2006), 168-9.

²² See, for e.g., those produced in the Don region; GARF, f. R-1005, op. 3, d. 67, ll. 30-39 (Instruktsiia № 2 vyezdnykh sessiiam Donskogo oblastnogo revoliutsionnogo tribunala, late 1921).

²³ Some tribunals appointed a member of their leadership to organize all travelling sessions; for e.g., Omsk's provincial tribunal; GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 49, l. 129 (report on Omsk's tribunals, 13 May 1921).

²⁴ *Istoriia zakonodatel'stva SSSR i RSFSR po ugolovnomu protsessu i organizatsii suda i prokuratury, 1917-1954* [hereafter, *IZ*] (Moscow, 1955), 178.

²⁵ Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Moskovskoi oblasti [hereafter TsGAMO], f. 4762, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 4, 32, 69, 74, 79 (appointments to various travelling sessions, October-December 1922).

²⁶ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 96, l. 36 (report on session, 19 June 1922).

²⁷ GARF, f. A-353, op. 3, d. 124, ll. 61-61ob (meeting of the provincial department of justice, 6 May 1920). The same request was made by Cherepovets; f. R-1005, op. 2, d. 67, ll. 39-39ob (correspondence with the Cassation Tribunal, 12 June 1920).

²⁸ For e.g., the Supreme Tribunal permitted a 'permanent' session underneath Petrograd's provincial tribunal in Kronstadt; GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 47, l. 46 (correspondence, mid July 1921).

²⁹ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 40, l. 43ob (report from Sarapul' tribunal, undated, early 1921).

³⁰ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 116, ll. 90-92 (report by chairman of the South-Western Railway Tribunal in Kiev to the Main Railway Tribunal, 7 May 1921).

³¹ A. Chuvatin, 'Pervye tribunaly' and 'Delo uchastnikov belogvardeiskogo desantnogo otriada', in *Voennye tribunaly – organy sotsialisticheskogo pravosudiia* (Moscow, 1958), 53-62, 242-6. These are memoirs from the Western and Caucasian Fronts in 1919-20. The mandate is reprinted on 242-3.

³² V. Pertsev, “‘Imenem revoliutsii!’: Iz istorii sozdaniia i deiatel’nosti Voronezhskogo gubernskogo revoliutsionnogo tribunala v 1917-1923 gg.’, *Vestnik Voronezhskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Seria: Istorii, politologii, sotsiologii*, 1 (2008), 35.

³³ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 96, ll. 59-67 (chairman’s report, 12 September 1922). This was the tenth session organised by this tribunal and it was abnormally long; others lasted no longer than a month and a half (l. 78).

³⁴ TsGAMO, f. 4762, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 69, 74, 79 (itineraries); op. 2, d. 1 (sentences).

³⁵ Assessments of ‘official’ procedure are based on reading numerous transcripts of trials and on correspondence between Narkomiust and Samarkand’s tribunal in May 1918; GARF, f. A-353, op. 9, d. 41, l. 2.

³⁶ For a model example of this process, see the transcript of a trial held by the travelling session of the Votskaia autonomous region’s tribunal in Mozhga on 16-17 July 1921; GARF, f. R-1005, op. 2, d. 104, ll. 562-67ob.

³⁷ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 2, d. 59, l. 43ob (report to the Cassation Tribunal, 24 September 1920).

³⁸ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 77, ll. 11-11ob (report of chairman, 1 April 1922).

³⁹ TsGAMO, f. 4613, op. 2, d. 62, ll. 1-9 (summaries of four trials, 18 August 1920).

⁴⁰ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 392 (various transcripts, July 1920).

⁴¹ TsGAMO, f. 4613, op. 2, d. 62, ll. 1-66.

⁴² E. Tarnovskii, ‘Sudebnaia repressiia v tsifrakh za 1919-1922gg.’, *Ezhenedel’nik sovetskoi iustitsii*, 44-45, 7 December 1922, 44.

⁴³ D. Rodin, ‘Revoliutsionnye tribunaly v 1920-1922 gg.’, *Vestnik statistiki*, 8, 1-3 (1923), 167.

⁴⁴ GARF, f. A-353, op. 4, d. 58, l. 60 (report on tribunal, 7 February 1921).

⁴⁵ Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii [hereafter RGASPI], f. 17, op. 109, d. 245, l. 1 (undated report on a session from 31 July to 3 September 1920).

⁴⁶ For more on amnesties, see M. Rendle, 'Mercy amid Terror? The Role of Amnesties during Russia's Civil War', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 92, 3 (2014), 449-78.

⁴⁷ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 96, ll. 65-65ob (report, 12 September 1922).

⁴⁸ TsGAMO, f. 4613, op. 2, d. 62, ll. 3-4 (trial of Garanov, 18 August 1920).

⁴⁹ TsGAMO, f. 4613, op. 2, d. 62, ll. 5-6 (trial of nine deserters, 18 August 1920).

⁵⁰ GARF, f. A-353, op. 4, d. 58, ll. 59ob-60 (report on tribunal's activities in 1920, 7 February 1921).

⁵¹ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 2, d. 104, l. 562 (trial transcript, 16-17 July 1921).

⁵² *Znamia truda*, 2 August 1921, 2 [a copy is in GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 52, l. 122].

⁵³ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 62, ll. 102-04 (information gathered by the Supreme Court, 16 May 1923).

⁵⁴ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 56, l. 148ob (report by chairman, 4 August 1921); Makutchev, *Prigovor*, 60.

⁵⁵ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 49, ll. 67, 95ob (inspection reports, 11 May and 30 May 1921).

There is also evidence that this was the case for the Baltic-Mariinskii water transport tribunal (f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 95, ll. 8-25 (correspondence and reports, August-December 1920).

⁵⁶ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 77, ll. 9-11ob (various reports, March-June 1922).

⁵⁷ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 84, ll. 19 (report, 5 August 1922), 33 (report, 1 December 1922).

⁵⁸ TsGAMO, f. 4762, op. 2, d. 1 (various cases, 1922-3). See also GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 84, l. 13 (report by Perm' railway tribunal, 2 April 1921).

⁵⁹ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 91, l. 197ob (report by Samara tribunal, 7 August 1922).

⁶⁰ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 84, l. 14 (report by Perm' railway tribunal, June 1921); d. 96, ll. 66-66ob (report by Vologda tribunal, 12 September 1922); op. 3, d. 227, l. 41 (report from Kalmytskii region, c. 1921-2); V. Petrov, 'Iz proshlogo', *Proletarskii sud*, 19-20 (1927), 42.

⁶¹ N. Nemtsov, 'Sud bez formal'nostei', *Rabochii sud*, 21 (1927), 1659-62.

⁶² G. Segal, 'Iz raboty voennykh tribunalov epokhi grazhdanskoi voiny', *Rabochii sud*, 21 (1927), 1665.

⁶³ Segal, 'Iz raboty', 1667-8.

⁶⁴ Chuvatin, 'Delo', 246.

⁶⁵ Makutchev, *Prigovor*, 62.

⁶⁶ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 97, l. 11ob (report, autumn 1921).

⁶⁷ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 116, ll. 90-92 (report by chairman of the South-Western Railway Tribunal in Kiev to the Main Railway Tribunal, 7 May 1921).

⁶⁸ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 23, l. 37 (anonymous report, early 1921).

⁶⁹ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 40, l. 43ob (report from Sarapul' tribunal, undated, early 1921).

⁷⁰ RGASPI, f. 17, op. 109, d. 245, l. 1 (undated report on a session from 31 July to 3 September 1920).

⁷¹ See, for e.g., the lengthy account of a trial conducted by the military tribunal in the Northern Caucasus published in *Znamia truda*, 2 August 1921, 2 (a copy is in GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 52, l. 122).

⁷² For e.g., the session held in Ivanovo-Voznesensk on 21-25 April 1922 related to the ongoing investigations surrounding Patriarch Tikhon: GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1a, d. 377, ll. 94ob-96; and the trial of 46 clergy and believers in Smolensk on 1-24 August 1922, including the local bishop; N. Karzhanskii, *Protsess Smolenskikh tserkovnikov. 1-24 avgusta 1922 g.* (Smolensk, 2008).

⁷³ Chuvatin, 'Delo', 244-6.

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- ⁷⁴ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 2, l. 12 (telegram to all transport tribunals, 3 May 1920).
- ⁷⁵ GARF, f. A-353, op. 3, d. 40, l. 130ob (report by Iu. Iu. Mezhin on railway tribunals prior to 1 July 1920).
- ⁷⁶ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 95, ll. 30-31 (report of Baltic-Mariinskii tribunal, 20 May 1921).
- ⁷⁷ K. Danishevskii, *Revoliutsionnye voennye tribunaly* (Moscow, 1920), 18.
- ⁷⁸ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 84, ll. 8ob-9 (report, November 1922).
- ⁷⁹ RGASPI, f. 17, op. 109, d. 245, l. 1 (undated report on a session from 31 July to 3 September 1920).
- ⁸⁰ RGVA, f. 33988, op. 2, d. 245, ll. 11ob-12 (report on tribunals on the Western Front in 1921, early 1922).
- ⁸¹ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 73 (report from Bugul'ma, 20 June 1920); d. 23, l. 37 (anon. report, early 1921).
- ⁸² Petrov, 'Iz proshlogo', 42.
- ⁸³ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 1, d. 116, l. 216 (report, 12 July 1921).
- ⁸⁴ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 84, ll. 8, 13, 16ob (reports from Perm', November 1920, 2 April 1921, and 13 March 1922); d. 96, ll. 59-67 (report from Volga tribunal, 12 September 1922).
- ⁸⁵ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 95, l. 17 (report from the Baltic-Mariinskii tribunal, 3 December 1920).
- ⁸⁶ RGASPI, f. 17, op. 109, d. 245, l. 2ob (undated report on a session from 31 July to 3 September 1920).
- ⁸⁷ RGVA, f. 33988, op. 2, d. 245, ll. 11ob-12 (report on tribunals in 1921 on the Western Front, early 1922).
- ⁸⁸ GARF, f. R-3042, op. 1, d. 96, ll. 68-70 (various cuttings).
- ⁸⁹ *Nabat*, 16 July 1919, 2 (and subsequent issues).
- ⁹⁰ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 2, d. 54, l. 1 (report, 7 September 1920).

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- ⁹¹ Ia. Berman, 'O revoliutsionnykh tribunalakh', *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia i pravo*, 11, January 1919, 48-9; Rodin, 'Revoliutsionnye tribunaly', 155, 161-2.
- ⁹² Karzhanskii, *Protsess*, 13, 28, 89, 151.
- ⁹³ RGVA, f. 33988, op. 2, d. 245, ll. 5-5ob (report on tribunals on the Western Front in 1921, early 1922).
- ⁹⁴ Rodin, 'Revoliutsionnye tribunaly', 158-9.
- ⁹⁵ P. Alimov, 'Tri goda Sovetskoi iustitsii v Sibiri', *Zhizn' Sibiri*, 6-7 (1923), 79.
- ⁹⁶ See, for e.g., M. Pivovarov, 'Uchastie revoliutsionnykh tribunalov Sibiri v prodovol'stvennoi kampanii 1920-1921 gg.', *Gumanitarnye nauki v Sibiri*, 2 (2005), 88-91.
- ⁹⁷ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 3, d. 37, ll. 36-42 (various proclamations and resolutions, late 1921-early 1922).
- ⁹⁸ GARF, f. R-1005, op. 3, d. 16, ll. 25-25ob (report, October 1921).
- ⁹⁹ *IZ*, 238-47.
- ¹⁰⁰ A. Minichev, 'Rabota voennykh tribunalov LVO', *Rabochii sud*, 8-10 (1924), 71-4.
- ¹⁰¹ See, for e.g., K. Viatkin, 'K voprosu o priblizhenii raboty Voennykh tribunalov k masse', *Rabochii sud*, 19-20 (1924), 589-92; V. Ul'rikh, 'Voennye tribunaly', *Rabochii sud*, 7-8 (1925), 275-8; and P. Melngalv, 'Neskol'ko zamechanii o rabote voennykh tribunalov', *Rabochii sud*, 15-16 (1926), 985-8.
- ¹⁰² RGASPI, f. 17, op. 109, d. 245, l. 3 (undated report on a session from 31 July to 3 September 1920).