

Masha Gessen Quits Radio Liberty to Write About Tsarnaevs

By [The Moscow Times](#)

May 02, 2013



Masha Gessen attending a Moscow book fair in 2011. **Rodrigo Fernandez**

Journalist Masha Gessen has quit her post as director of the Russian-language service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty after seven months to write a book about the Boston bombing suspects.

Radio Liberty announced Gessen's departure earlier this week, and The New York Times subsequently [reported](#) that the reason was to write the first book about the Tsarnaev brothers.

The book will "reconstruct the struggle that ensued for each of the brothers between assimilation and alienation, and their metamorphosis into a new breed of home-grown terrorist, with their feet on American soil but their loyalties elsewhere, a split in identity that opened them to a deadly sense of mission," The Times reported, citing a statement from the publisher, Riverhead Books, an imprint of Penguin Group.

Gessen's tenure at Radio Liberty was rocky, with mass staff dismissals followed by a series of resignations in a show of solidarity. Fired staff complained in a letter to the station's management about Gessen's leadership.

"Masha Gessen is an award-winning journalist who will continue to bring her insight, energy and activism to journalism — in the interest of civil society in Russia," Radio Liberty acting president and CEO Kevin Klose said in a statement.

Gessen joined the radio station after being dismissed as editor-in-chief of the magazine Vokrug Sveta for refusing to cover a flight by President Vladimir Putin with storks last August. She made headlines again when Putin invited her to the Kremlin for a private chat and she rejected an offer from him to help get her job back.

Gessen, a former columnist for The Moscow Times, may have an additional insight into the subject matter for her new book. Like the Tsarnaev brothers, she was born in this part of the world and emigrated to Boston as a child.

Riverhead Books also published her last book, "The Man Without a Face," a biting biography of Putin.

A date for the publication of the Tsarnaevs book has not been announced.

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