

POLICIES OF WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION IN SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA,  
1917 - 1953

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
OF  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE  
IN  
THE DEPARTMENT OF GENDER AND WOMEN STUDIES

September 2015







Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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## ABSTRACT

POLICIES OF WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION IN SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA, 1917  
- 1953

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September 2015, 176 pages

This thesis discusses the Soviet policies regarding the emancipation of the Central Asian women in between 1917 and 1953. The work analyzes the factors that impeded and determined the outcomes of the Soviet policies. The thesis studies the Marxist feminist theory developed in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Kollontai; discusses the place and role of propaganda in addressing 'woman question'; examines the main spheres where Bolsheviks dealt with the issues, such as legal, educational, cultural, production and healthcare; and, lastly, discusses the social and cultural processes in the region, such as revolt of *Basmachi* against the Bolsheviks, *Jadids* cultural and educational movement as well as the position of the conservative Islamic clergy in the region that affected the outcomes. Particular attention is paid to the study of the propaganda materials, notably the propaganda posters related to the issues of women education, healthcare, rights and labor. Author analyzes 20 original posters of the Soviet era in order to present the importance and main aspects of the Bolsheviks reforms.

**Key words:** Central Asia, Soviet Union, women, emancipation, Marxism



## ÖZET

### 1917-1953 ORTA ASYA SOVYETLERİNDE KADIN ÖZGÜRLEŞMESİ POLİTİKALARI

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Eylül 2015, 176 sayfa

Bu tezde, 1917 ve 1953 yılları arasında Orta Asyalı kadınları özgürleştirme adına Sovyetlerin izlediği politikalar tartışılmaktadır. Çalışmada, Sovyet politikalarının sonuçlarını belirleyen veya geciktiren çeşitli faktörler analiz edilmektedir. Yazar, Marx, Engels, Lenin ve Kollontai'nin çalışmalarıyla geliştirilen Marksist feminist teoriye odaklanarak, 'kadın sorunu'nun öne çıkarılmasında propagandanın oynadığı rolü rolü tartışmakta ve Bolşeviklerin meseleleri çözmeye çabaladıkları hukuk, eğitim, kültür, üretim ve sağlık gibi temel alanları incelemektedir. Son olarak bölgedeki toplumsal ve kültürel süreçler, örneğin Bolşeviklere karşı *Basmacı* ayaklanması ve eğitimsel ve kültürel bir hareket olan *Cedidler*, ayrıca sözkonusu siyasetlerin sonuçlarını etkileyen muhafazakar İslam ulemanın bölgedeki konumu tartışılmaktadır. Çalışmada, başta kadın eğitimi, sağlığı, hakları ve emeğine odaklanan propaganda posterleri olmak üzere, propaganda araçlarına özel olarak odaklanılmıştır. Yazar, Bolşevik reformlarının ana yönlerini ve bunların önemini göstermek için, Sovyet dönemindeki 20 orjinal posterini analiz etmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Orta Asya, Sovyetler Birliği, kadınlar, özgürleşme, Marksizm

*To My Family*

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Fatma Yıldız Ecevit for her overall guidance, valuable comments and suggestions in the course of the research, as well as for her endless optimism, moral support and encouragement. I would like to acknowledge gratefully the guidance, advice, criticism, and insight that I received from Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Aydingün and Prof. Dr. H. Simten Coşar.

I am thankful to all my friends for their support and valuable pieces of advice. My special thanks go to my husband Erhan Alpman, who was an enormous help in preparing the Turkish summary of the thesis, and my dear Natalia Ivanchenko who helped me with solving the issue of the Russian language translation.

Finally, I want to thank my parents and my beloved brothers for their constant support during the work on the thesis.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Introducing the Region.

For discussing the issue of the women emancipation policies in Central Asia, it is important to start with the general characteristic of the region, its history and political developments.

##### 1.1.1. Conquest of the Region by the Russian Empire

Kazakhstan was the first region that entered the Russian Empire. Kazakhs themselves were living in a tribal way and were divided into three tribes unions: Smaller, Middle and Older *zhuz*.<sup>1</sup> In 1718, smaller *zhuz* under the rule Abulhair Khan established diplomatic relations with Russia, and, in 1731, was taken into custody, by the Russian queen Anna Ivanovna. A year later, in 1732, when Khan Semeke adopted Russian citizenship as well, and Middle *zhuz*, which guaranteed protection from predatory raids Jungar tribes. Older *zhuz* was in the sphere of influence of the Kokand Khanate. In 1818, several families of the older *zhuz* announced entry under Russian protection. Over the next 30 years, where under pressure, where the majority of births voluntarily *zhuz* announced the adoption of Russian citizenship.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tribe union which still represents one of the main territorial and ethnic division of Kazakhs

<sup>2</sup> Rywkin, Michael, *Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia*, (rev. ed.), Armonk, New York; London, England: M. E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990, p.7

The conquest of the rest of Central Asia by the Russian Empire was held in four stages through the military campaigns. The first phase included the period from 1847 to 1864. During this period there was the conquest of the Khanate of Kokand, and an attempt to capture Tashkent was made. In the conquered territories Turkestan region located in the part of the Orenburg governor-general was formed. The second phase began in 1865 and lasted until 1868. During this period Russian undertook were aggressive actions against the Khanate of Kokand and Bukhara Emirate. From 1873 to 1879, during the third stage, Russian military campaign ended up with the conquest of the Khanate of Khiva and Kokand khanate liquidation. From late 1880 to 1885 the fourth phase of the conquest continued. During this period, military operations were carried out mainly in the territory of modern Turkmenistan. With the submission of the Turkmen tribes the hostilities of the Russian empire in Central Asia ended.<sup>3</sup>

The area was divided into *okrugs*, *volost's*, *auls* (*kishlaks*). *Aul* had in its composition from 50 to 70 tents, 10-12 *auls* formed *volost'*, 10-15 *volost'* - *okrug*, which had a certain territory. Senior sultans, for which the Government retained administrative power, were mainly designed to ensure the consolidation of the government's position. The head of *volost'* were *volost'* sultans, equates to 12th rank of the officials; *auls* were led by the *aul* elders, their rights are equated with the village headman. The election of the local administration and the appointment of lower administrative positions among the 'natives' turned to auctions, as the money invested in bribing subsequently recouped system of bribes and tributes. Moreover, these elections could be canceled by the imperial administration at any time.

Russian administration after the conquest of the region, trying not to disturb the way of life of local Muslim peoples, retained with minor changes *qadis* court on *Sharia* (Islamic religious law) to sedentary peoples and *biy* court of *adat* (custom) for the nomads. However, soon it became clear the imperfection of these vessels. *kazii* and *bies* (people's judges since 1886) universally accepted bribes. Things dragged on for

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<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 9 - 14

months, and sometimes years. Judges, especially *bies* associated with strong tribal ties, ruled in favor of their compatriots. In addition, the judges knew little about Islamic law, *adat* and Russian judicial legislation. Especially unprepared were *bies*. Many of them were illiterate and ignorant. The Muslim population were constantly complained about the decision of people's judges, however, appeal to a higher Russian court is not filed, fearing revenge. Russian administration did not have adequate number of officials in general, and particularly with knowledge of local languages, almost did not check people's judges decision.

Depriving Muslim clergy state support Russian authorities initially did not interfere in the religious life of the local people. Clergy after the conquest was completely freed from the poll-tax, but the right of *waqf* were limited. They were subject to land-tax and other taxes from which were previously exempt. Part of *waqf* land was confiscated to the State Land Fund.

### **1.1.2. Soviet Rule and Delineation Policy**

After the October Revolution in Russia, by the end of 1917, in most parts of the Turkestan governor-generalship Soviet power was established. However, in late 1917, was made an attempt to establish a non-Soviet republic authorities. In Kokand (Ferghana Valley), representatives of the national bourgeoisie and the clergy in alliance with local Mensheviks and SRs and the combined forces of the White Guard troops and local militia leader *Basmach* Irgash Congress gathered representatives Kokand and declared an autonomous republic within Russia, declared a 'holy war' of Soviet power. However, this republic was short-lived. In February 1918 Irgash troops were routed by the Red Guards, and autonomy was destroyed.

In January 1918, the fourth Congress of Soviets Turkestan in Tashkent declared the Turkestan Autonomous Republic and formed the Council of People's Commissars of Turkestan, which along with the Bolsheviks entered the SRs. Later, it included representatives of *dekhane* Muslims. During this period, the local communist

movement have arisen about the future of the edge device. Some of the Muslim members of the Russian Communist Party of Turkestan was influenced by the ideas of the creation in Central Asia united and independent state. The Moscow government feared this idea and prefer disengagement in the province along ethnic lines.

However, pan-Turkic ideas shade disappeared from the documents of the Muslim Bureau of the Russian Communist Party of Turkestan, at least since the fall of 1920, when the renamed Communist Party of Turkestan supporters won Moscow's line. In April 1921 it was decided to divide the territory of the former Turkestan province into two administrative units: its south-western lands and Transcaspian was established Turkmen Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, the rest of - the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The two - part of the RSFSR. The capital Ashgabat has become the first, the second - remained Tashkent.<sup>4</sup>

Developments in Central Asia after the establishment of Soviet power in its northern parts has been closely connected with the situation in neighboring Iran and Afghanistan - especially since almost immediately after the October events in Petrograd as a result of the anti-Bolshevik speeches Cossacks of Orenburg and Ural Turkestan land were cut off from the Central Russia. That situation remained until September 1919 the Soviet authorities Turkestan often had to act quite independently.

Following the October Revolution, the new republics were established in Central Asia. Thus, in 1918, Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) as well as Bukhara and Khorasm People Soviet Republics were established. As a result of the delineation (*razmezhevaniye*) policy, Kyrgyz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was formed in 1920, followed by Uzbek and Turkmen Soviet Socialist

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<sup>4</sup> Cummings, Sally N., *Understanding Central Asia : Politics and Contested Transformations*, Philadelphia: Taylor & Francis Group, 2012, pp. 38 - 40

Republics (SSR), in 1924. Five years later Tadjik SSR was established. However, in 1936, Kyrgyz ASSR was transformed into SSR losing its autonomous status.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2. Introducing the Study

The thesis is devoted to the Soviet policies aiming at the emancipation of the Central Asian women between 1917 and 1953<sup>6</sup>, and captures the discourses of the Marxist theoreticians, Soviet leadership and the Soviet feminist activists that shaped the policies, complemented by the analysis of the activities of Bolsheviks in Central Asia. This topic was chosen due to its particular importance and narrow focus: existing literature and theses mainly capture the Soviet Union in general devoting some chapters to the 'woman question' (e.g. Sheila Fitzpatrick (2000),<sup>7</sup> Wendy Z. Goldman (1993)<sup>8</sup>), or particular countries, e.g. Marianne Kamp (2008),<sup>9</sup> and smaller regions. Some authors devote the whole book to the gender issue (Linda Edmondson

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40 - 54

<sup>6</sup> After Stalin's death in 1953 the liberalization came and the priorities of the Soviet leadership changed

<sup>7</sup>Fitzpatrick, Sheila, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000

<sup>8</sup> Goldman, Wendy Z., *Women, the State and Revolution. Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993

<sup>9</sup> Kamp, Marianne, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008

(1992)<sup>10</sup>. Some other researchers concentrate on particular issues which were in focus of the Soviet leadership (Lynne Attwood's (1999)<sup>11</sup> analysis of the Soviet female magazines as the constructors of the women's identity; Amy E. Randall's (2001)<sup>12</sup> research on the Soviet propaganda against abortions; Melanie Ilic's (1994)<sup>13</sup> study of the labor protection regulations in the Soviet mining industry). Based on the documentary research (analysis of legislation, archives of the periodic media), even under the conditions of the limited access to the Soviet Union, they still leave the gap in the understanding of the Soviet policies regarding women, especially in Central Asia. Particularly they omit the issue of the size and multiculturalism of the USSR and stemming from it inability to achieve the same results in different regions. Rather they lack area knowledge engaging the history of the region, language and cultural peculiarities.

### 1.3. Theoretical Background of the Research

Marxist theory is used in this thesis insofar as it was declared the official ideology of the Soviets and elaborated on many issues of the everyday life, including feminist questions. In 1884, Engels, in his book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property,*

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<sup>10</sup> Edmondson, Linda, *Women and Society in Russia and the Soviet Union*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992

<sup>11</sup> Attwood, Lynne, *Creating the New Soviet Woman Women's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity, 1922–53*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999

<sup>12</sup> Randall, Amy E., "Abortion Will Deprive You of Happiness!" Soviet Reproductive Politics in the Post-Stalin Era", *Journal of Women's History*, Vol.23 No.3 (2011), pp.13–38

<sup>13</sup> Ilic, Melanie, "Women Workers in the Soviet mining industry: a Case - Study on Labor Protection", *Europe – Asia Studies*, Vol. 48, No.8 (December 1996), pp.1387 – 1401



*and the State*<sup>14</sup> discussed the link between the changing mode of production and the status of women in a society. According to Engels, the shift from feudalism to private ownership of land has had a huge effect on the status of women. Particularly, it resulted in the creation of separate public and private spheres and assigned access to waged labor disproportionately to men.

Engels argues that a woman's subordination is not a result of her biological position but due to the social relations. Men's desire to control women's works and sexual life eventually resulted in a nuclear family. Through the prism of a Marxist theory, Engels analyzes the moral duties of women, particularly the importance of virginity and sexual purity. Thus, adultery is being punished and it is indoctrinated that woman belongs to her husband. The roots of this can be found in the ancient times, when the slave-owning class controlled the private property, and aimed at passing private property only to its own descendants. This determined the control over the women's sexual and reproductive abilities among the men belonging to the property-owning men. Therefore, Marxism argues the oppression of women is similar to the class oppression, while the relationship between men and women are similar to those between proletariat and bourgeoisie.<sup>15</sup> The women's subordination is a function of class oppression, insofar as it serves to the interests of the capitalists and the ruling class. They secure the men's interests in order to gain their support, and, at the same time, keep the domestic labour of women unpaid. This divides men against women.

To get rid of it, Lenin argues, women are asked to join the ranks of employees, to participate actively in the class struggle, which leads to the socialist revolution. And in a society free from discrimination, exploitation and oppression, it seemed then, the

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<sup>14</sup> Engels, Friedrich, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Chippendale: Resistance Books, 2008

<sup>15</sup> Vogel, Lise, *Marxism and the Oppression of Women: Toward a Unitary Theory*, Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2013

conditions for the effective equality of men and women.<sup>16</sup> In order to secure labor of women, Marxists envisage the system of schools and kindergartens that would take care of the children; public cafes and restaurants that would liberate woman from the 'kitchen slavery'; laundries and many other innovations with the aim to ease the burden of housework.

This thesis concentrates on the study of the Muslim population of the Central Asia (despite the presence of the Russian population), that determined the region's difference from the rest of the Soviet Union due to the strong influence of Islam, traditions, local community and nomadic past. Unlike existing works mentioned above, it does not generalize the implementation of policies and their outcomes, but rather aims at presenting the uniqueness of the region: despite the same rhetoric of the emancipation that Soviets were spreading in the whole USSR, this region appeared to be resisting more than others. The side effects and omissions of the Bolsheviks' interference led to the mass massacres of the women who 'dared' to join Communists by their conservative families and community.

This time period between 1917 and 1953 was chosen due to the following reasons. Bolsheviks established their power in Russia in 1917, and till mid-1950s it was the period of building the new state, mobilization of the citizens and total party control over the private issues, such as family affairs, religious affairs and even women's bodies, as it will be shown in the third chapter. This is the period of the leadership of two important figures - Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin who shaped the Soviet Union through their ideas and policies. After Stalin's death in 1953, the thaw began bringing liberalization into all the spheres of political, economic and public life. The examined period can be divided into two periods. First one, 1917 - late 1920s is the period of *Zhenotdels* (women's departments of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) and *Zhensoverts* (women's sectors of the Communist Party), as well as the experiments in the sphere of family, and political mobilization of women,

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<sup>16</sup> Vladimir Lenin, *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, in *Collected Works*, 4th edition, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964 (original transcription by R.Cymbala ), Vol.3, p. 548

introduction of the new legislation. Period between 1920 - mid 1950s can be characterized as *androgenization* of the society, the attempt to create gender-free new Soviet man.

The main aim of the thesis will be the study of the implications and the reasons of the partial failure of the Soviet emancipation policies in Central Asia. This work will present the factors that impeded the Bolsheviks in their work, as well as the negative outcomes of such policies. As it will be shown in the theoretical chapter of this thesis, the generalized, utopian and based on conflict approach ideology of Marxists neglected the analysis of the female identity as such, as well as did not consider the spiritual sphere of life, the importance of religion and traditions. Therefore the thesis aims at discussing the impact of such approach as well as analysis of gender through the prism of production system on the results of the emancipation policies of Bolsheviks, particularly in Central Asia. Besides, it is important to examine the impact of the *basmach*i (revolt) movement and *Jadids* (educational) movement in Central Asia on the outcomes of the Soviet policies.

It is possible to argue that the Soviet leadership, as well as feminist activists in their lust to emancipate Muslim women and create the new Soviet woman, neglected the traditional and religious aspects of the everyday life of these people. Also they tried to use them as a tool for the spreading Socialist ideology among their families and society. The whole Marxist ideology based on the economic considerations of the production and surplus, under which to emancipate woman means first of all to bring her back to the production sphere and make dependent economically, ignored the spiritual aspects of gender, family and traditional societies, and therefore, failed when it came to the Central Asian countries. Understanding woman through the production and class paradigm not only made this approach biased toward the proletariat and ignoring the representatives of the other classes but also devalued the woman itself, as a mother and housewife.

Moreover, Bolsheviks ignored the existing *basmach*i revolt against the first Tsarist regime and then Bolsheviks that aggravated the conflict between Russian and Muslims in Central Asia. Besides, their work was assertive, spontaneous and not

planned therefore it was not consequent. As a result, having started the work among women, Bolsheviks failed to protect those who became the victims of the violence against women. Also, due to the imposition of the new Socialist values through women, Bolsheviks managed to devalue Islam among the population of Central Asian republics.

#### **1.4. Method**

First, the thesis is based on a documentary research. Here, particular attention is paid to the analysis of the Soviet Constitutions of 1924 and 1936. It is followed by the study of the legislation: Family Code of the Soviet Union that substituted traditional and religious regulations in the Central Asia; criminal code that prohibited brides kidnapping, *kalym* (money bride's family receive before marriage); laws on education in the USSR, abortions; decrees on the labor conditions; celebration of the Women's Day 8 March; and local regulations. These included all legislative documents issues in the USSR in 1917 - 1953 concerning women, family, fertility.

Second, propaganda materials which constitute an important source for understanding the vision of women will be evaluated. These include, first of all, the articles of the Soviet feminists Zetkin, Kollontai, Lenin discussing the exploitation of the women under capitalism and feudalism, and the changes that would be brought by Socialist system. Besides, the author focused on the periodic media data archives - magazines and newspapers spreading the Socialist ideology, providing examples of the outstanding workers and their achievements. These included analysis of the newspapers *Kommunistka* (Female Communist), *Rabotnitsa* (Female Worker), *Pravda* (Truth), *Bednota* (The Poor) between 1917 and 1953.

Moreover, the analyses of the visual materials - propaganda posters - are utilized in this thesis. Twenty original posters that were issued in the Soviet Union in the mentioned period, and calling women to study, to control its fertility, to work etc., were selected to prove and illustrate the findings of the first and secondary sources.

Posters are seen as available and particularly illustrative source of data regarding Soviet Union for non-Russians due to the 'iron curtain' and the secret or falsified nature of the statistics and other data in the USSR, as well as the language barrier existing. The propaganda materials are seen as important source of data due to the few reasons. Despite the difficulties of access to the data in the Soviet Union, periodical newspapers, posters are easily accessible. Furthermore, these sources had a wide range of readers, the broad auditory. The easy language of the Soviet newspapers and the visuality of the posters, holiday's celebrations determined their persuading impact on the Soviet citizens. Finally, the state ideology regarding the status of woman was represented symbolically in the posters emphasizing the changing status of woman.

Lastly, the important source was the works of the Marxist theoreticians Marx and Engels, Vladimir Lenin, as well as the works of the Soviet feminists Klara Tsetkin and Alexandra Kollontai that demonstrates the main ideas of the Socialists as to the role of women in the society became the theory basis of this research.

Needless to say, the analysis of the primary data was complemented by the secondary sources of the experts on gender and Soviet Union. Additionally, it is noteworthy that due to the limited access to the data from the USSR under Joseph Stalin, there is still a problem of the lack of data that remain some issues underestimated.

### **1.5. Organization of the thesis**

The first chapter of the thesis discusses the theory of Marxism which was the base of the Soviet policies of women emancipation. It starts with the analysis of the classics of Marxism Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and proceeds with the discussion on the ideas and works of Alexandra Kollontai who was one of the most outstanding Soviet feminists and activists. The following chapter is devoted to the Soviet propaganda in

mass media and mass culture. The second section of it also touches upon the issue of the implication of the Soviet emancipation policies and Central Asia.

The third chapter focuses on the emancipation policies and covers the following issues: the main institutions dealing with the women in the USSR (*Zhenotdels*, delegates meetings etc.); main legal provisions regarding women and family (particularly, issues of marriage, divorce, kidnapping of bride, *kalym* etc.); educational policies; family and health issues (especially issues of fertility and abortions); employment and labor conditions; public activities of women. Particular attention here is paid to the public and mass cultural expression of the role and image of the new soviet woman. The originality of the research is achieved due to the analysis of the Soviet posters, as a tool of propaganda that aimed at educating women and bringing them to the material production sphere, away from the households and non-paid work.

The last chapter of the thesis concentrates primarily on the peculiarities of the Central Asia, such as the role of Islam as a system of beliefs, clergy, and traditions that affected the work of the Soviet activists. It also touches upon the side effects of the Soviet policies; evaluating pros and cons. Finally, the concluding chapter examines the main findings of the thesis.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: MARXIST APPROACH TO THE ISSUES OF FEMINISM

This chapter will elaborate on theoretical provisions of the Communist emancipation policies. The approaches to the 'woman question' of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, followed by Vladimir Lenin will be analyzed here. Besides, the works of Alexandra Kollontai who developed detailed program of the work among women will be discussed.

#### 2.1. Marx and Engels on 'Woman Question'<sup>17</sup>

The Marxist feminism starts with the premise that "the spread of capitalism, rapid industrialization, urban poverty, changes in family structure and a departure from the standard economic roles have generated both liberal and socialist responses."<sup>18</sup> Marxism and feminism have a common goal towards women - emancipation from the existing 'social slavery'.<sup>19</sup> However, the theory of liberal feminism and Marxist

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<sup>17</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, "The Social Basis of the Woman Question", in Alexandra Kollontai: *Selected Articles and Speeches*, edited by Cynthia Carlile, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1984, available at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1909/social-basis.htm>, accessed on 10 March, 2015

<sup>18</sup> Mandell, Nancy, "Introduction", in Nancy Mandell (ed.) *Feminist Issues: Race, Class, and Sexuality*, Scarborough, Ont. : Prentice-Hall Canada, 1995, p. 20.

<sup>19</sup> Kollontai (1984)

theory had different reasons for the existence of the oppressed women and ways to overcome it, that is why, as Hartmann argues, 'marriage'<sup>20</sup> of Marxism and feminism, where it was possible, was unhappy.<sup>21</sup> Methodological basis of consideration of the gender issue, which in the XIX century appeared in the form of 'woman question', in K. Marx and F. Engels' works were the following. Historicism in their works was represented by the idea that the existing division of labor between the sexes, according to Marx and Engels did not exist at the same form but was constantly changing. Besides, family was seen as a historical category. Marxist theorists believed that human development is moving gradually (progressivism).<sup>22</sup> The principle of centrality was a feature of the Marxism, typical for European cultural consciousness. Thus, in the center of the Marxist concept was hegemonic class, i.e. proletariat. Conflictology paradigm also was used; the authors believed that the engine of social progress was the conflict between the productive forces and relations of production, which is expressed in the class struggle. Finally, Marxism can be characterized by its universalism, typical of many theories the belief in the possibility of creating a universal picture of the world.<sup>23</sup>

The first three principles were in tune with the feminist views on the past and present (only in the center of feminist theory woman with her interests not the proletariat has been put). But, unlike the feminists and many of their predecessors, Marx and Engels

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<sup>20</sup> Hartmann, Heidi I., "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a more Progressive Union", *Capital & Class*, Vol. 3 (Summer 1979), p.1

<sup>21</sup> Pushkareva, Natalia, "'Woman Question' In Marxist Theory (Why a Marriage of Marxism and Feminism Appeared to Be Unhappy)", *Woman in Russian Society*, No.1 (2002) pp.2-13

<sup>22</sup> Bryson, Valerie (ed.) *Feminist Political Theory: An Introduction*, Houndsmill: Macmillan, 1992, p. 74

<sup>23</sup> MacKinnon, Catharine A., "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory", *Signs* Vol. 7, No. 3, Feminist Theory (Spring, 1982), pp. 525-26



were not appealing to the individual but to the masses, including the masses of women, drawn into wage labor, above all - to their fathers and husbands. It is to them they expected to apply their generalized, universal concepts, in order to draw women in the class struggle.<sup>24</sup>

Striving for averaging and discarding all the errors that destroy the scheme, made the classics of Marxism to consider first of all the classical version of Western society, hegemon of which should be proletarian, struggling against their oppressors. Those who do not fit into the scheme - peasants, intellectuals and women, including the wives of proletarians - Marxist theorists tried to pull up under the scheme, or left outside their consideration. To do this, they used the concept of class, the concept that is not very suitable for the analysis of society, taking into account the peculiarities of its socio-sexual hierarchy, but through which the status of the men in society is well determined. Involving women appeared to be more difficult.<sup>25</sup> Over the centuries, the entire pre-industrial era, they were driven out of the production sector at home, were not involved in property relations, distribution and appropriation of the social product, but because of their belonging to a particular class could be carried out only through men - fathers or husbands.<sup>26</sup>

Marxists saw relations of reproduction of the human race, so that sexual relations appeared in one of the classics of the particulars of relations of production. According to Marx and Engels, the division of labor originates from the 'division of

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<sup>24</sup> Hartmann (1979), p.3

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7

<sup>26</sup> Engels, Friedrich, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Chippendale: Resistance Books, 2008, p. 26

labor in the sexual act',<sup>27</sup> or 'naturally occurring' needs.<sup>28</sup> The authors, however, did not elaborate on the issue why at the time of appearance of the private property division of labor became crucial.<sup>29</sup>

In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Engels discusses in details the main forms of marriage and family relations as well as the origin of the private property. However, he did not explain why before the emergence of the private property society was matriarchic and matrilineal, and after it became patriarchal. Why ownership did not concentrate in the hands of just women? Was the emergence of private property just men's attempt to wrest power, or at least the central status of women whose ability to produce new members of society could give her a central status?

Marx and his followers were explaining any inequality by economic circumstances - namely, the property relations. But through the prism of the economy it cannot be explained or understood what factors led to the emergence of the masculinist ideology and patriarchal social organization.

Understanding the gaps in the theory, in the name of the purity of their scheme, Marxists simply discarded what the economy does not explain, including the problem of personal formation of women, the problem of female identity. This was the historical context of the emergence of Marxist theory: not a topic of women's identity, but the theme of women's work has been the focus of many European scientific and journalistic debates of the time.<sup>30</sup> The existence of private property and

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<sup>27</sup> Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998, p.50

<sup>28</sup> Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology, Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Blackwell, 1998, Vol. 3, p. 7

<sup>29</sup> Engels (2008), p. 68

<sup>30</sup> Hartmann (1979), pp. 5 - 7

the class structure of society - these are, according to Engels, the reasons for discrimination of individuals on the basis of sex (namely - women).<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, changes in industrial relations in the conditions of the abolition of private property and the elimination of class division of society, in this case can be a major and, in fact, the only way to save women from centuries of inequality.

Marx and Engels recorded in their works that the initial stage of the emergence of social and gender inequality was the emergence of the patriarchal family, in which women, children and slaves became the property of men in positions of authority. Their concept does not explain, however, why, despite the fact that slavery as a formation for some time has outlived its usefulness, slavery of women in the family continued to exist for centuries. Why a man, even in the poorest family appropriated labor force of the woman through the family as a social institution of the time. Relations in the traditional family (from the beginning of the emergence of private property and up to the time when Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels lived) appeared in their understanding the relationship of sale, and in this sense Marxism anticipated many modern feminist views, and, in a certain sense, became their source. But speaking of working every day to sell their labor power, Marx was not looking for an answer to the question of who gave the worker right not only to dispose his labor, time, health, but also time, labor, health of his wife and children.

Despite the interest of Marxists in the problem of reproduction, including reproduction of 'human capital', the issue of women's reproductive rights was not raised. As is the case with the acquisition of the time by her husband, health, strength of women in the family, Marxism in this matter remained on the patriarchal position, assuming the necessary control over the female body and female sexuality. New

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<sup>31</sup> Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology, Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 2nd ed, Oxford: Blackwell, 1998, Vol. 3, p. 31

society, built after the socialist revolution, was to put an end to such 'ugly phenomenon of capitalism', as prostitution.<sup>32</sup>

Marxist concept of the housework also appears as a quite complete expression of patriarchal attitudes. According to it, the cost of bearing children (when a woman jeopardizes their health), motherhood and education of the younger generation, as well as a housework appeared as a Marxist concept much less than the cost of material. This does not mean that Marx did not understand the significance of the total volume of women's work, its price, its value - on the contrary, once he even said that the evaluation of the working force includes 'historical and moral element'<sup>33</sup> - but as time study of this 'historical and moral element' Marxism never dealt with, this area was the focus of feminists. Production of public goods and reproduction of the working force were never given the same role by the classics of Marxism.<sup>34</sup>

According to Marxist theory, the subordination of women is constantly reproduced by the capitalist system. Marxists saw a guarantee of its rapid development in women's participation in social production. However, this made the Marxist theory of approaching women very utilitarian, namely, as to the mass labor and social power, mass detachment of the proletariat. It is curious that speaking for the creation

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<sup>32</sup> Evans, M. "Engels: "Materialism and Morality", in J. Sayers, M. Evans, N. Redclift. L. (eds.), *Engels Revisited: New Feminist Essays*, New York, 1987

Jaggar, Alison M., *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, Brighton, 1983

<sup>33</sup> Marx, Karl, *Capital*, Vol.1, Chapter 6, *The Buying and Selling of Labour-Power*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1987, available at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch06.htm>, accessed on 1 March, 2015

<sup>34</sup> Hartmann, Heidi, "Capitalism, Patriarchy and Job Segregation by Sex", in Martha Blaxall and Barbara Reagan (eds.) *Women and the Workplace*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press: 1976, No. 1, pp. 137–169

of a women's section in the International Workers' Association<sup>35</sup>, Marx did not consider the fact that women as a social group may have goals and interests, conflicting interests of men. Similar ideas he met (and later Lenin) rigidly negative, seeing it as a manifestation of bourgeois false hopes, or, even tougher, saw them as attempts to divide the working class, to distract it from the class struggle within the scope of legalized political debate.

At the same time, propagating the hired female labor was seen by Marxists as a true economic basis for breaking traditional forms of family relationships (in which the man works and the woman stays at home and brings up children). However, the classics of Marxism, and their followers did not ask to find out why in a traditional society pay for women is always different from those of men in the smaller and worse.<sup>36</sup>

Much later, more than a century after the publication of the works of Karl Marx, Marxist feminist orientation, based on the methodological principles of the analysis of the situation of the oppressed in the labor market have revealed at least four factors that influenced the occurrence of unequal pay for equal work for men and women. They were the common picture of male responsibility for material well-being of the family and therefore the traditional financial dependence of the wife on her husband; the presence of the male labor unions and their policy of discrimination against women; lack of education and skills in women; a lower standard of living for women and their agreement to work for lesser wage.<sup>37</sup> Low wages, in turn, encouraged women left alone (widows, single mothers), look for opportunities to marry, as a way to improve the well-being for them was less available, as well as to

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<sup>35</sup> Vogel, Lise, *Marxism and the Oppression of Women: Towards a Unitary Theory*, Rutgers University Press, 1987, p. 71

<sup>36</sup> Hartmann (1979), p.17

<sup>37</sup> Hartmann (1976), pp. 168–169

take on most of the domestic load as a reciprocity for marriage. Domestic work time-consuming, which adheres to the professional development. Thus, the circle locks.<sup>38</sup>

Marx considered hired female labor positively: the creation of economic prerequisites for the elimination of existing forms of property, to release (as it seemed to the authors of the theory) all at once violence and oppression, particularly the one of women. Later, Lenin wrote directly about it that the "labor of women and adolescents is a phenomenon fundamentally progressive ... Large-scale machine industry ... increases their independence, i.e., creates conditions of life that are much higher than the patriarchal immobility of pre-capitalist relations."<sup>39</sup> Therefore, discrimination against women in these works appeared as just a special case of all social discrimination. To get rid of it, women are asked to join the ranks of employees, to participate actively in the class struggle, which leads to the socialist revolution. And in a society free from discrimination, exploitation and oppression, it seemed then, the conditions for the effective equality of men and women. The problem of the equation of women's rights with men was quietly overridden problem of the equations of women in the production system or as a labor force along with a man. With the disappearance of the same concept of female identity, the problem of the formation of the woman as a subject of history disappears.

In the end, Lenin brought his thoughts on women's issues to the lack of recognition of the existence of any kind were female social interests other than the interests of the social strata (class) as a whole. In the new society, which will be built after the socialist revolution, he believed, the state itself will take care of raising children and

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<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, in *Collected Works*, 4th edition, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964 (original transcription by R.Cymbala ), Vol.3, p. 548

organizing life so well that women are exempt from the 'mind-numbing daily housework'.<sup>40</sup>

The task of Marxists was the subordination of the working women's movement of movements for the proletarian revolution, and those who opposed it were considered, if not enemies, then unnecessary fellow travelers. Engels considered the struggle for Western feminists women's suffrage 'purely bourgeois stunt',<sup>41</sup> 'junk', Lenin saw it as a 'disgusting bourgeois hypocrisy',<sup>42</sup> and in relation to ourselves activist feminist classics have used terms such as 'these ladies',<sup>43</sup> 'the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois careerists'<sup>44</sup> and even 'semi-bourgeois donkey'.<sup>45</sup>

Deliberately avoiding the consideration of the reasons for the continuing tendency of men to acquire time, energy, labor of women (including and especially in the family), Marx and Engels repeatedly and insistently emphasized their agreement with the thesis of Fourier that the "degree of emancipation of women in society is the

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<sup>40</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, "The Tasks Of The Working Women's Movement In The Soviet Republic", in Vladimir Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th edition, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965 (original transcription by R. Cymbala ), Vol.39, p. 200

<sup>41</sup> Engels, Friedrich, A Letter to Laura Lafargue, in Kenneth Lapides (ed.), *Marx and Engels on the Trade Unions*, New York: International Publishers, 1987, p.145

<sup>42</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, "Fifth International Congress Against Prostitution", in Vladimir Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th edition, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977 (original transcription by R.Cymbala), Vol.19, pp.260 - 261

<sup>43</sup> Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge, 29 October, 1891, in *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Selected Correspondence*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975, pp.167–168

<sup>44</sup> Engels to Paul Ernst, 5 June, 1890 in *Marx and Engels Correspondence*, International Publishers, 1968 p.350

<sup>45</sup> Engels, Friedrich, A Letter to Laura Lafargue, in Kenneth Lapides (ed.) *Marx and Engels on the Trade Unions*, New York: International Publishers, 1987, p.145

natural measure of general emancipation."<sup>46</sup> The reason for this persistence becomes clear when referring to the works of Lenin, who brought the idea of rational utilitarian predecessors to its logical conclusion: the problem of women's emancipation Marxists interested only in connection with the prospect of global social reconstruction of society. The interest in the theme of women's emancipation of Marx, Engels, and Lenin was only determined by the fact that it was linked with the objectives of the revolution, and the problems of women's movement were examined by theoretical Marxism only in connection with the general tasks of the proletarian social movement.

The classics of Marxism categorically arrogated the right to determine the purpose of the women's movement, as well as the intention to subordinate the first idea of revolution, and then industrialization, collectivization, etc., seized the right to speak about women's interests and social problems and even provide these interests and objectives.<sup>47</sup> In other words, women are represented as means of addressing public tasks by the Marxist theorists. Almost all Marxist theorists were giving women a passive role, considering them as martyrs who should be saved or (if it was a representative of exploiting classes) as the beneficiary of some benefits, which men had.

It is noteworthy in this context that Marx and Engels, and Lenin, thought that all women's work is of no prestige, humiliating, and in terms of Lenin, 'stupefying'.<sup>48</sup> A sample of such assessments has been set classic work of Engels' *Condition of the Working Class in England*, in which workers are given letters and analyzed cases of

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<sup>46</sup>Engels, Friedrich, *Anti-Dühring. Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1947, pp.270–271

<sup>47</sup> Zetkin, Clara, *Memoirs About Lenin*, Vol. 5. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970, p. 48

<sup>48</sup> Zetkin, Clara, *Lenin on the Women's Question. From My Memorandum Book*, in Vladimir Lenin *The Emancipation of Women: From the Writings*, New York: International Publishers, p.31



changing family roles (i.e., described families where women work 12 hours a day, and men, who could not find the workplace forced to perform female homework). Such situations are characterized by classic Marxism as 'absurd, nonsensical position'<sup>49</sup> when the woman provides the entire family with all the necessary and a man who looks after the children, washes, cooks. Such man becomes a woman for Engels, but it is considered as a humiliation, devaluation of both sexes and human dignity in general.<sup>50</sup>

Thinking about the oppression of capitalism in general and in particular, Marx and Engels did not analyze how the husband-proletarian can exploit his wife, refusing to participate in housework. Marx and Engels actually very little turned to the topic of the female workers; not only do they never set out above the issue of unequal pay for equal work for men and women in the capitalist enterprise, but also wondered about the meaning of man's rejection of women's work. Despite the attention to the economic aspects of any topic, Marx did not stop at a typical phenomenon of capitalist society as a 'family wage',<sup>51</sup> on what man earn enough revenue to maintain his wife and children and allow (because of their respectable size) to hold and wife, and children in the economic dependence in any mode of production (historical formation).

Marxists thought that under socialism, all society will take care of children (through specially created structures and institutions), to the extent that the young girls will not be thinking of the consequences of their relations (referring to the position of a single woman with a child who is not on the that contain), "that make a young girl to

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<sup>49</sup>Engels, Friedrich, *The Condition of the Working Class in England, Marx Engels On Britain*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1953, p.375

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.375–380

<sup>51</sup> Vogel (1987), p.240

refuse intimacy with her beloved man".<sup>52</sup> The idea that effective contraception can save her from such fears and that she may simply not want to get pregnant never was considered by Engels. Moreover, having considered the idea of violence during the revolution, Marxist theorists did not elaborate on the issue of domestic violence. In the relationship of husbands and wives in families, Engels modestly observed only "some rudeness in communication, entrenched since the introduction of monogamy."<sup>53</sup>

Assuming that in the society of the future, where there will be no private property and no incentive to establish family relationships of domination/submission, author believed that a woman in such a family will always be free to abandon cruel or unloved husband. Impediments like children, and especially fears associated with loneliness, lack of earnings, stigmatization of women, seemed so small that they were not taken into account and fell in all his theoretical constructs. Engels, in his analysis, relied on developing the system of 'nurseries for babies of women who work in the neighboring cooperatives'.<sup>54</sup> Lenin, later, generalized this idea to the level of state policy of 'struggle with a small household': "This communism only begins there where the mass struggle begins (led by the proletariat ...) against a small household or a massive restructuring of it's in large-scale socialist economy".<sup>55</sup>

This, of course, was a manifestation of the general conviction founders of Marxist theory is that the "real equality of women and men can be realized only when the

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<sup>52</sup> Engels, Friedrich, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Chippendale: Resistance Books, 2008, p. 85

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 74

<sup>54</sup> Engels to Marx, 10 November, 1868 in *Marx and Engels Correspondence*, Moscow: International Publishers, Vol.32, p. 160

<sup>55</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, "Great Beginning", in Vladimir Lenin, *Collected Works*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976, Volume 29, p. 24

housekeeping, which was previously private employment, becomes a branch of social production."<sup>56</sup> At the same time, neither Marx nor Engels did reflected on the question who will do the job of raising children, washing, cooking, when it becomes a branch of social production. It is quite straightforward answered by Lenin: "Release of the women workers must be the work of women workers themselves".<sup>57</sup> In short, the first prerequisite for the liberation of women was the return of the women to social production, the second - the above mentioned conversion of a household in the sector of social production that will occur no earlier than the socialist revolution is accomplished.

Lenin, in 1919, speaking about the problems of the women's movement in the Soviet Republic, directly pointed to the fact that women's political activity will consist in the fact that due to her organizational skills she should help the man.<sup>58</sup> In other words, the author of practical recommendations for the construction of a new society recognized the high level of organizational skills of women and offered only to use them in the right ideological direction. Female labor, Lenin believed, should be directed to the development of the social production, and only the last progresses inevitably bring changes of the social status of not only the workers but also of all women in socialist society.

As Hartmann argues in his work *The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, the Marxists theoreticians although stood for emancipation of women, rather expresses the paternalistic view on the women's place in society, using pragmatic

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<sup>56</sup> Engels to Guillaume-Schack, 5 July, 1885 in *Marx and Engels Correspondence*, Moscow: International Publishers, Vol.32, p.294

<sup>57</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, "The Tasks Of The Working Women's Movement In The Soviet Republic", in Vladimir Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th edition, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965 (original transcription by R. Cymbala ), Vol.39, p.204

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, p.205

approach to the gender (women), as a part of production process. As it can be seen from the analysis, many issues, such as the source of the paternalistic oppression in the society, birth control and domestic violence were not examined.<sup>59</sup>

## **2.2. Ideas of a Soviet Feminist: Alexandra Kollontai's Concept of the 'New Woman'**<sup>60</sup>

At the end of the XIX century, when Alexandra Kollontai first became interested in 'woman question', socialism not only included the resolution of this issue into its program, but also declared itself the only political movement that can address this issue fully.

Apart from the promises to solve the problem of women's oppression given by socialism, Kollontai provided an explanation of the reasons of this oppression. Marxist theorists believed that the subjugation of women under capitalism, as well as the exploitation of the proletariat, was caused by the division of labor and private property, as it was shown in the previous section of this chapter. Due to lack of funds forced the proletarian to sell their labor to capital. For the same reason a woman as a prostitute or wife offers herself to a man. The role of the bourgeois wife is complicated by the fact that her duty is not only to meet the sexual needs of men (the only role of the prostitutes and mistresses), but also to perform legitimate duties, such as housekeeping. And bourgeois morality requires a hypocrite of a conjugal love even if there is a naked economic calculation. According to Marxism, women workers experiencing double yoke - from the capital and from the bourgeois family. Her release will happen with the proletariat as a result of the victory of the proletarian revolution that would destroy the private property, and with it the

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<sup>59</sup> Hartmann (1979), pp.187-199

<sup>60</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, "New Woman", in Alexandra Kollontai, *The New Morality and the Working Class*, (Translated by Salvator Attansio), New York: Herder and Herder, 1971

bourgeois family. The discussion of the form of the relationship between the sexes in socialist society is avoided by Marxists, saying only that they will be cleared from the economic interests and will be based on mutual love, freedom of choice and full equality.<sup>61</sup>

According to Kollontai, the social revolution must precede the sexual revolution; women's rights will come as a result of the class struggle. This thought became her main argument in the fight against the feminist movement that emerged in Russia in the beginning of the XX century. Kollontai declared war to feminists, insofar as in their activities she saw attempt to divert Russian women from the class struggle of the proletariat and to split the socialist movement. She underlined also that their demands for political and civil equality under the existing system only serves the interests of women of the upper class, but not the working class.<sup>62</sup>

Kollontai wrote two major scientific volumes - *The Social Basis of the Woman Question* (1908) and *Society and Motherhood* (1916). The main idea of the work *The Social Basis of the Woman Question* is in the call to direct the efforts of women's liberation struggle not against 'external'<sup>63</sup> forms of oppression, but against the reason producing it. In other words, unlike the Russian feminists seeking government's reforms to improve the status of women, Kollontai insists on the destruction of the government as the most important condition for the full and comprehensive women's equality. Furthermore, Kollontai requires radical change of traditional family relationships. Until then, she writes, while a woman is economically dependent on man and is not directly involved in the social and production life, she cannot be free and possess rights equal to men's.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Bebel, August, *Woman and Socialism*, New York: Socialist Literature, 1910

<sup>62</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, *From My Life and My Work*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974, p.371

<sup>63</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, in *Selected Writings of Alexandra Kollontai*, London: Allison & Busby, 1977, p.224

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

In *Society and Motherhood*, using data of the medical and production statistics, as well as numerous historical data, Kollontai argues that factory labor makes motherhood 'a heavy cross'. Awful hard work and life conditions cause women's and children's diseases, high infant mortality, homeless and disadvantaged children. What is most important about Kollontai's work is that she considers that a combination of work and motherhood is possible and necessary. But, firstly, there is a need to change the nature of women's work and to improve its conditions. Secondly, society must recognize the need to protect and provide maternity by public insurance. In many economically developed European countries, Kollontai wrote, the first steps towards the social care about motherhood have been done. Large industrial enterprises offer their female workers insurance birth. However, this innovation is very limited: insurance reimburses loss of salary only for a short post-natal period, after which the worker-mother does not receive any help. This situation is unacceptable - health of the working woman and her child, as well as childcare should be a responsibility of the state.<sup>65</sup>

In contrast to the *Society and Motherhood*, author's work *Communism and Family* is not so much a case study but rather as a social utopia, which describes the society in a way it should be. In this society, the family does not exist. Kollontai proves that the family loses its functions under capitalism, because foundations on which it rests disappear. On what the traditional family is kept? First, on a family household. Second, she names the women's economic dependence of woman on her husband-breadwinner. And third, there is a need to take care of children. However, under capitalism, small household ceases to produce any tangible assets. It becomes an area of large-scale production. Man ceases to be the sole breadwinner of the family, because his wife also goes to production. And finally, the education of children due to the employment of their mother in proletarian families is provided by the streets, and in wealthy families - by hired nannies.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, *Communism and the Family*, in *Selected Writings of Alexandra Kollontai*, London: Allison & Busby, 1977, p.15

In the new society, woman is dealing only with the housekeeping and child-rearing. And the economy of the modern family, without making any tangible assets, only requires a daily cost of labor required for cooking, cleaning houses, washing and mending clothes. The new communist society would free women from this unpleasant and inefficient operation. It will replace the domestic labor with the efficient public service. This will create numerous dining rooms, kitchens, laundries, workshops for repairing clothes and so on.<sup>67</sup>

Communist state will take over not only the burden of household and caring for children. On the playground, in the nursery, in the kindergarten children will be under the control of the experienced teachers. School children get a good education, free housing, food, clothing, books. In order to avoid the possible objections, Kollontai adds: "Frightened workers and mothers should not fear, communist society is not going to take away children from their parents, to tear the baby from the mother's breast or forcibly destroy the family. Nothing like this".<sup>68</sup> It will take the only 'financial burden of raising children',<sup>69</sup> the joy of parenthood will be left to those who is able to understand and feel this joy. At the same time, it is still expected that the children will live in communities, and parents who choose to participate in their education, learn "not to make a difference between your and my child, and remember that there is only our children, children of the Russian Communist labor".<sup>70</sup> Of all the responsibilities towards children parents can only give birth to a healthy baby and care of him until it is too small for a group of children. But here, Kollontai requires independence of women from men's care. She believes that the state must take care of the mother and the baby.

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<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, p.16

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, p.21

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, p.22

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, p.23

There should not be lonely, abandoned girls, mothers, and abandoned wives with babies in their arms. Labor government aims to provide each and crowning unwed mother while she feeds the baby, build a house around motherhood, enter at each plant nursery, lullabies, to enable women to combine useful work for the state with the responsibilities of motherhood.<sup>71</sup>

The absence of any family responsibilities, according to Kollontai, would create the conditions for the emergence of the new forms of communication between the sexes. Ideally, this communication was seen as a monogamous marriage - "a friendly and cordial union of two free and independent, earning, equal members of the communist society". This alliance would not be a home slavery of women. It would leave no space for inequality, women's fears to be left without support with children in their hands.

The omission of Kollontai was that she saw only economic and social, rather than spiritual and mental values of the family. Moreover, economic and social functions of the family were perceived negatively, as unpleasant and inefficient domestic labor, painful for children. The rationality and attractiveness of the public services was exaggerated.

Kollontai one of the first noticed that to declare a political and civil equality of women does not mean make them equal. Kollontai believed that in the new society, woman will be put to the first place, because for a long time, tradition had put her in a second place. She writes about this in the essay "New Woman," which was first published in 1913, and after the revolution included in the book *The New Morality and the Working Class*. According to Kollontai, the new woman is independent, living with the human interests and fighting for her rights. Traditionally, women were not conceived without a man, love and family. These allowed men to manipulate a woman to use her support to achieve their personal goals, capture and strengthen their rule of life. New woman refuses to play a secondary role in society; she wants to be a full and complete personality. But for this it is necessary to educate a new quality, until recently, traditionally associated with the nature of man.

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<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, p.20



First, for the new woman it is important to learn how to cope with her emotions and develop inner discipline.<sup>72</sup> Secondly, new woman is not a prisoner of her feelings. Demanding respect for freedom of feeling for themselves, they learn to tolerate this freedom for the other.<sup>73</sup> Thirdly, the new woman acquired increased demands to her man. According to Kollontai,

The modern woman can forgive a lot of the things the woman of the past would reconcile: the inability of man to provide her financial maintenance, neglect of the physical appearance, even treason, but she would never reconcile with a careless attitude towards her spiritual 'I'.<sup>74</sup>

According to the author, modern, new woman is an independent person, unlike the old woman who did not know how to value personal autonomy. With the departure or death of men, women were losing not only financial support, but also its only moral support.<sup>75</sup> The new woman puts love experiences to the second place as the majority of men do.<sup>76</sup> Finally, the new woman stands against the double standards in the relationship with a man.<sup>77</sup> Kollontai wrote that new woman as a type could appear only under capitalism in connection with the involvement of female labor in production. Engaged in manufacturing, a woman becomes economically independent

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<sup>72</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, *New Morality and the Working Class*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1919, p.17

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.19

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21 - 22

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.28 - 29

from men, which is one of the most important conditions for its emancipation. Moreover, it is in the labor force is a change of the internal shape of a woman.<sup>78</sup>

The concept of the 'new woman', which replaces weak and inadequate for the new world traditional woman, definitely requires a revision of the existing bourgeois society relations between the sexes. In the second article of *The New Morality and the Working Class*, Kollontai criticizes the three main forms of communication between the sexes in the capitalist world that are a legal marriage, prostitution and so-called 'free union'.<sup>79</sup> The basis of bourgeois marriage, according to Kollontai, is false due to two principles: on the one hand, its indissolubility, and on the other - an idea of the so-called property of the undivided affiliation of spouses to each other.

Kollontai argues that the idea of indissoluble marriage contradicts the very psychology of the human personality, constantly changing throughout life. A person can fall out of love, to lose common interests with the partner, to meet a new love, but a bourgeois marriage protects only the family property, not human happiness. The notion of the rule of undivided ownership of one spouse to another is another absurdity of bourgeois marriage, because continuous interference with partner restricts a person's personality and, ultimately, kills love. But much more frightening form of sexual intercourse, Kollontai believes, is the prostitution. Apart from the fact that prostitution entails a number of social evils (the suffering, disease, degeneration of the race, and so on), it distorts the soul of man and deprives him of the ability to experience a real feeling. Kollontai also criticized the so-called bourgeois 'free union'. 'Free love'<sup>80</sup> in bourgeois society is flawed, because it made false representations and unhealthy moral, educated bourgeois legal marriage, on the one hand, and prostitution, on the other. Kollontai sees a way out of the protracted sexual

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<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*, p.31

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, "Communism and the Family", first Published: in *Komunistka*, No. 2, 1920, and in English in *The Worker*, 1920; in Alexandra Kollontai, *Selected Writings of Alexandra Kollontai*, London: Allison & Busby, 1977 (translated: by Alix Holt)

crisis in the radical re-education of the human psyche and the formation of a new sexual morality. The third and final article of the collection, dubbed "Sexual Relations and the Class Struggle" is devoted to this issue.<sup>81</sup>

Gender relations and the development of a new moral code, according to Kollontai, have a direct impact on the social structure of society and can play a crucial role in the outcome of the class struggle. Sexual morality of the bourgeoisie, based on individualism, competition, private property and inequality, showed complete failure. It should be replaced by the morality of the working class, which is based on the principles of collectivism, comradely cooperation and equality. The transition to the new morality cannot be easy, because the remnants of bourgeois deeply entered into the psyche of the modern man. Individualism, a sense of possessiveness and bred for centuries idea of inequality and gender disparities will long be an obstacle to the formation of new relationships.<sup>82</sup>

Kollontai argues that "the Union should be based [...] on the harmonic consonance of souls and bodies, and is ideal for the future of humanity". And she continues "when a marriage is based on a 'big love', we must not forget that the 'great love' - a rare gift of fate that befell the chosen few."<sup>83</sup> What is left to do for others, less fortunate women? Use prostitution? Kollontai think that during the interim period women can benefit from erotic friendship, 'love game',<sup>84</sup> the notion that Kollontai borrows from German sociologist G. Meisel-Hess, author of the book *Sex Crisis*. This 'love game' will bring together the two free and equal members of society in the Union, which may not always end the marriage. "First of all, - Kollontai wrote, - society must learn

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<sup>81</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, "Sexual Relations and the Class Struggle" in Alexandra Kollontai, *New Morality and the Working Class*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1919

<sup>82</sup> Osipovich, Tat'jana, "Communism, Feminism, Women's Liberation and Alexandra Kollontai", *Social Sciences and Modernity*, No.3 (1993), p.181

<sup>83</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, *New Morality and the Working Class*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1919, p.43

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46

to recognize all forms of marital intercourse, whatever they may be unfamiliar contours had, on two conditions: that they do not compromise the race and oppression was not determined the economic factor."<sup>85</sup> Monogamous union based on the 'big love', but not permanent is seen as an ideal. The more complex the human psyche is the more inevitable change is. Realizing that the inevitable change in sexual relations falls primarily on women's shoulders, Kollontai requires that society first, in fact, would recognize the importance and difficulties of the motherhood, by morally and financially supporting the mother and child. According to Kollontai, women should be taught to make use of love in order not to be harmed, but to utilize it as a stepping stone on her way.<sup>86</sup>

As the only woman in the new Soviet government, Kollontai had a unique opportunity to bring Marxist ideas to life practice. As it will be discussed in details in the following chapters, already in the early days of the revolution a law on women's equality was adopted; and, in 1918, with the direct participation of Kollontai "Code of Acts of Civil Status, Marriage, Family and Guardianship Law" was issued. According to this document, only the civil registration of marriage was recognized by law; and although the church ceremony was not prohibited, it lost the right of legalization of marital status. The new code called the rights of both spouses; the wife could keep her name, have a separate residence from her husband, dispose of their income and have equal rights to family property. Registration of a marriage and a divorce procedure was greatly simplified. The notion of illegal child aborted: born in marriage and out of wedlock child acquired the same rights. The first Soviet law on marriage and the family was immediately recognized as the most revolutionary in the world.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*, p.47

<sup>87</sup> Osipovich (1993), p.182

Aware of the backwardness of Russian worker and peasant women who could not even read the law, Kollontai took an active part in the creation of the Women's Department of the Central Committee of the Party (*zhenotdel*). The purpose of this department was the organization of political, cultural and educational work among women, as well as the creation of a network of preschool institutions.<sup>88</sup>

To sum up, the Marxist authors elaborated a lot on 'woman question', particularly on emancipation of women in the new Socialist state. However, as it can be seen from this chapter, their approach to the issue was quite paternalistic and pragmatic. Woman was supposed to become a worker, to enter the production sphere which, in its turn, secures the women's rights and liberation. At the same time, spiritual, mental issues, as well as the female identity as such were not taken into consideration. Neither traditional, nor cultural and religious differences were estimated and accepted. The task of the new woman was a production of the members of the new society that in our opinion minimize the value and role of women. Instead of being liberating such discourse appeared to be patriarchal. This can also be understood from the absence of the explanation of sources of paternalism brought by the private property. Woman is seen as a passive object of the state policies. The next chapter of the thesis will analyze the implication of the Soviet policies in Central Asia, as well as public discourses related to the issue that existed in the early Soviet period.

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<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.*, p.183

## **CHAPTER III**

### **CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW SOVIET WOMAN: IDEOLOGY AND PROPAGANDA**

Pursuing the goal of the emancipation of women, and, more importantly, involvement of women into the Soviet production, Bolsheviks used various measures. Needless to say, literature, cinematography, arts, and mass media appeared to be on service of Socialism construction. This chapter focuses on Soviet media and visual art, particularly propaganda posters in re-construction of the gender in Soviet Union and, in particular, Central Asian republics. It will be followed by the discussion of the representation of the new Soviet woman in the art and the public celebration of the International Women Day - 8 March.

#### **3.1. Implications of the Soviet Policies Concerning Women**

It is important to start the analysis of the Soviet policies concerning Central Asian women with the discussion of the implications of these policies. The Soviet policy as to the 'woman question' in the Central Asian republics of the USSR had the following implications. According to one of the key Marxist assumptions "every society had to be in a permanent state of change and flux, the latter simultaneously brought on by, and giving birth to, ever new and antagonistic social forces".<sup>89</sup> Needless to say that the Central Asian societies were considered as backward and traditional due to the

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<sup>89</sup> Massell, Gregory J. *The Surrogate Proletariat*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974, p.128.

Tsarist regime as well as the historical and cultural conditions, religion, traditions and every-day life.

The position of women in the national regions of the former Russian Empire was estimated in the Party documents and brochures by the Party activists as more severe than in the country as a whole: woman's life was seen as bleak, not only because of hard work and disfranchised situation, but also as a result of centuries of oppression by the religion and prejudices. For example, in the brochure dedicated to the work among Tatar women it is told that girl is being bought as 'a thing', while married Tatar woman is 'helpless and providing a full arbitrariness of her lord'. In the brochure for the employees among Bashkirs it is written that 'a woman is considered almost as an instrument of production'. 'Uncivilized' due to the certain traditions and habits though justified by reference to the best European models and scientific data, these documents anyway imply a certain cultural superiority of those who are excluded by default from national groups - *natsionalok*: workers, city dwellers conscious women of the center - who almost always are Russians/Russified and come from Christians (even being an atheist in a new life). 'Backward *natsionalka*' (representative of these non-Russian ethnic groups) draw as less suitable for the construction of socialism, insofar as, in accordance with the terminology of the modern studies of colonial difference, should be de-nationalized. At the same time, the traditional costumes of these women, their food and even everyday hygiene of the Muslim women was criticized by the Soviet propaganda literature.<sup>90</sup> These issues were illustrated well in the Soviet propaganda posters.

The economic implications of such policies stemmed from the view of the Bolsheviks that patriarchy, inequality of citizens, class oppression started from

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<sup>90</sup> Gradska, Julija, "Freedom As a Coercion? Soviet Onset on a 'Women Enslavement' and Imperial Heritage. Mid-1920 – beginning 1930s, Volga-Ural Region)", *Ab Imperio*, No.4 (2013), pp. 113-144

family relationships, in which women occupied the lowest positions.<sup>91</sup> According to Engels, historically, the class struggle began from the family, particularly from the division of labor that contained slavery and serfdom.<sup>92</sup> During the New Economic Policy (NEP) and World War II, Soviet economy needed workers and bringing women to the plant and factories or even to the collective farms was seen as a significant contribution to the industrialization cherished by Party.

In order to create a new social system in Central Asia, Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) had to destroy a traditional system of values, customs, relationships, beginning with the primary cell – the patriarchal Muslim family; and it used women, the core of the family, as an effective instrument.<sup>93</sup> This task was to be fulfilled by the education, system of schools, professional and higher educational institutions, as well as the public activism and party membership of women that would secure socialization of women.<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, before the cultural assault of the Bolsheviks, the education level was quite low in these republics. Thus, before the October revolution, only 2% of women in Central Asia were educated. The general literacy rate can be assessed as it follows: among Karakalpaks it constituted 1.3% of the whole population in 1926; followed by Turkemen - 2%, Tajik - 2.2%. Among Uzbeks the share of literate population constituted 3.8%, Kyrgyz and Uyghur - 4.5%. The most educated ethnic group - Kazakh - had 7% literate population.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Massell (1974), p.93

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, p.87

<sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*, p.88

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, p.142

<sup>95</sup> Allworth, Edward, "The Changing Intellectual and Literary Community", in Edward Allworth (ed.) *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, 3rd edition, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994, p. 376



Gregory Massell, who devoted his research to the activities of the Communist Party among the women, summarized the reasons of the Bolsheviks' propaganda among women as it follows. The achievement of the new status of woman in the Soviet society dependent on the weakening not only Islamic outlook of woman but also of her family and community. By providing them new rights and freedoms, social guarantees and care Bolsheviks aimed at attracting women to the Party membership.<sup>96</sup> According to the key Marxist assumptions, the labor of woman as well as her wage were to change the relations of dependence of woman on her male relatives.<sup>97</sup>

Furthermore, the Soviet economy, especially during the Great Patriotic War of 1941 - 1945 and first post-war years, needed labor force. Due to the cultural and religious peculiarities, Central Asian women were mostly occupied in domestic labor. Using propaganda, penalties and different encouragements, as well as providing child care system, Soviet authorities were trying to bring women to the factories and plants. Besides, local women had to fill the vacuum of the local party members.<sup>98</sup>

### **3.2. Role of Ideology and Propaganda in the Soviet Policies**

Ideology played important role in the Soviet state. Particular attention should be paid to mass media and such a tool of the Soviet ideologists as propaganda posters.

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<sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*, p.94

<sup>97</sup>*Ibid.*, p.160

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, p.171

### 3.2.1. Public Discourse in Soviet Mass Media

Apart from the theoretical approaches to the feminist issues expressed in the works of the leading Communists and Marxists that was discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis, it is important to mention mass media. Here, particular attention would be paid to the women's magazines *Kommunistka* (Female Communist), *Delegatka* (Female Delegate), *Rabotnitsa* (Female Worker).

General discourse of political and educational influence on the women was worked out by the magazine *Kommunistka* - the main organ of the Department on the Work Among Women of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (*Zhenotdel* of the RCP(B)), which was published monthly (in some years, twice a month) since the beginning of 1920. The chief editor for all the years of its publication was Lenin's wife Nadezhda Krupskaya. Works of I.Armand, A.Kollontai, S.Smidovich, K.Nikolaev, A.Lunacharsky, L.Trotsky, G.Zinoviev, I.Stalin and others were published in the journal. They offered their vision of the image of the new Soviet woman, defined priorities (in accordance with the decisions of the Party and government) in the implementation of the policy and monitored implementation of the planned solutions in this area.<sup>99</sup>

Even before *Kommunistka*, different ways of speaking with the representatives of different social groups, especially women workers and peasants, and ways of conveying national and party systems to them have been tested at the so-called women's pages in newspapers, which began to be published in summer 1918 (originally in *Bednota* (Poorness) and *Krasnaya Gazeta* (Red Newspaper). Since 1922, special women's magazines started their activities: *Krest'yanka* (Peasant Woman), with up to 85 thousand copies; then *Rabotnitsa* (The Worker), circulation

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<sup>99</sup> Alferova, Irina, "The Bolsheviks' Female Press in 1920s as Mechanism of Social Construction of the 'New Soviet Woman'", *Bulletin of the Udmurtia University*, No.3 2011, History and Philology, p.106

of which reached 425 thousand copies; *Rabotnitsa i Krest'yanka* (Worker and Peasant), that had 120 thousand copies; *Zhenskiy Zhurnal* (Women's Magazine), with up to 100 thousand copies; *Delegatka* (Female Delegate), with up to 100 thousand copies and others.<sup>100</sup>

By the beginning of 1930s, there were 18 printed mass women's magazines with a total circulation of 800 thousand copies (according to some sources up to 1 million). With the beginning of the civil war, the government began to develop various forms of attracting women to provide direct assistance to the Red Army. Women, Bolshevik Party activists, began organizing courses of the 'red sisters',<sup>101</sup> their programming, providing the necessary ideological training. Department on Work Among the Women of the RCP(B) that was formed in autumn 1919, developed a circular letter and abstracts on the involvement of women in *Vsevobuch* (*vseobshcheye obucheniye* - total education system) and about their participation in the creation of a militia army.<sup>102</sup>

Program article "Class Warfare and the Female Worker", to make sure women contribute to the consolidation of the Red Army and the 'battle of the revolutionary front', was written by Aleksandra Kollontai, one of the leaders of the women's movement of the RCP(B), and published in *Kommunistka*. For Kollontai, the participation of women in the class struggle was not limited to the health service of the 'red sisters'. It was a question about their service in the machine-gun battalions, at the post offices, participation in defensive squads, as well as digging trenches, and mobilization to carry the planned service in militia.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Nurses in the Red Soviet Army

<sup>102</sup>Attwood, Lynne, *Creating The New Soviet Woman: Women's Magazines As Engineers Of Female Identity, 1922-53*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999

<sup>103</sup> Kollontai, Alexandra, "Class War and the Female Worker", *Kommunistka*, No.5, 1920

Another direction to which periodicals paid constant attention was the involvement of women into production. On the one hand, actively involving women in economic construction, the leaders of the women's movement appealed to the Marxist view that the economic independence of women workers is the pledge of its full social emancipation. On the other hand, they did not hide the fact that in a situation where the industry in the country was experiencing an acute shortage of labor due to the need for man in the Red Army, in connection with the departure of workers in the village because of the food crisis and the sharp drop in wages, attracting women on the production became an objective necessity. So, Samoilova in the article "Labour Front and the Female Worker" frankly admitted:

To establish economy is more difficult task; it lacks any raw material or fuel, or hands. <...> That is why there is a shortage of unskilled workers, that makes up 300 thousand people. People, especially important and necessary part on the labor front workers and peasants.<sup>104</sup>

Encouraging women to mobilize in the labor brigade, to participate in the cleaning and *voskresnik* (volunteered unpaid cleanings in the cities), Samoilova actively promoted the 'real communist labor', which had become the norm in the future communist society. She argues in the second issue of *Bednota*: "You have all of our work to build in a military way, all the days turn into a Saturday, to improve transport, raise productivity in factories, work out of home itself good, economical, thrifty and industrious. <...> For business, working women".<sup>105</sup>

The theme of the 'communist labor' continued to develop in the press and with the introduction of universal labor conscription (1920),<sup>106</sup> the discontent of the population was evident. Nevertheless, Kollontai, in numerous speeches on the

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<sup>104</sup> Samoilova, "Labour Front and the Female Worker", *Kommunistka*, No.5, 1920

<sup>105</sup> Samoilova, "On the Bloodless Front", *Bednota*, No.545, 31 January, 1920

<sup>106</sup> Law of the Council of People's Commissars on the Total Labor Duty, 29 January, 1920

subject interpreted forced labor measures in the light of 'woman question' as a prerequisite of women's liberation, which will provide them with economic independence and free from 'domestic slavery'. As Kollontai argued:

labor service will help to emancipate women, because the more hands will be busy forging our economy and the construction of new forms of life, the sooner the whole Russian labor construct orphanages, nurseries, communal housing, canteens, central laundry, etc... i.e. all the institutions which will discharge woman from unproductive housework.<sup>107</sup>

In the same way E. Blonina considered universal labor conscription as a possibility to "work in a truly communist way in the sense that everyone works for all and all for each," and therefore "labor service is a huge step forward in the direction of communism, i.e. towards the total liberation of men and women".<sup>108</sup>

After the introduction of the New Economic Policy in 1921, when there was a reduction in the public sector, after the demobilization of the army that liberated 4 million men, crop failures and hunger in rural areas, an excess of workers, and women were forced out of production. Authorities had to deal with not only the task of engaging women in the factories as providing mitigation of unemployment. The main means of combating unemployment and women's *de-facto* equality becomes a professional development of women's work, which was directly reflected in the press, designed for women. Magazines and newspapers started to pay attention to women in the professions, including previously inaccessible to them. As Blonina notes in *Kommunistka*:

There is still a lot of prejudice among the first and foremost among men about women's inability to perceive the technical wisdom associated with the qualification of women in

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<sup>107</sup> *Kommunistka*, No.1-2, 1920

<sup>108</sup> Blonina, Elena, "Female Worker and the Organization of Production", *Kommunistka*, No.1-2, 1920, p.26

the metal industry and other industrial and technical fields, - Deeply rooted prejudice that women should only qualify in the garment and textile industry.<sup>109</sup>

Illustrating the main thesis put forward by the main female newspaper, various periodicals started putting materials about women, not just participating in the 'communist' production, but learning new skills, including not traditionally female. In this sense the magazine *Workeris* is the example. On its pages, readers could get acquainted with the biographies of notable women, such as nurses Zhdanovs. Both, at the end of the high school, were enrolled in higher courses for women, but for lack of funds have been forced to abandon them and enter into short-term courses for the drivers.<sup>110</sup>

The magazine *Kommunistka*, generalizing some facts already at that time stated: "We have not only women-turners, instrumental workers, milling machine operators, but even women blacksmith, laminators". In fact, statistics shows that the views and traditions with respect to the chosen profession were changing very slowly, even under the influence of emancipatory propaganda at state ideology. Thus, according to the Commission for the study and improvement of women's work at *Narkomhoz* (*Narodniy Kommissariat Khoziaystva* - People's Commissariat of the Economy), the number of girls of the total number of students at the school, in 1926, was 31.7%, in 1928 - 1929, it constituted 38.2%; in vocational schools, in 1927, 14% of the enrolled students were girls; in educational workshops - 17.7%, in the evening schools - 23%. In 1926, women accounted for 6% of the total number of machine operators in the country, and only after, when the country experienced a period of total *industrialization*, the number had increased to 28%.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> "Female Workers - Drivers", *Rabotnitsa*, No.1(13), 1924

<sup>111</sup> Alferova (2011), p.108



Poster 1. G. Shegal', "No more kitchen slavery! Give a new life!"(1931).<sup>112</sup>

The idea of the emancipation of women from the serfdom of the household was realized in all the spheres of everyday life. Thus, even the system of public nutrition was to become the servant of the Soviet system. The socialization of the meal inevitably raises the question of who in this case would be its cook. The official discourse of eliminating women from totalitarian cuisine at first glance aims at freeing women from the slavery of the kitchen (see Poster 1). Building socialism woman should be engaged in socially useful work would coincide with her self-development. Experts in proletarian culture suggested that the production of food is much more productive if it is prepared in a common dining room for many families than by the private hostess for one family. The quality of cooked food was expected to be excellent; the volume of it was planned significant, coupled with well thought-out recipes for this time. In addition to its concise rationality, it was based on the principle of maximum economy of material products and energy resources that the country needs for more important purposes. Also, according to official propaganda,

<sup>112</sup> Grigorian, Sergey, and Marina Lafont, *Sovetsikiye Plakaty*, Moscow: Prestel, 2014

small shops where housewives buy products quality of which is often falsified by the entrepreneurs and sellers who calculate their own profit now are simply unnecessary insofar as products fall into the public dining room directly from the manufacturer and under the constant supervision of the state. Saving effect is obvious, and there are all kinds of savings in the long run.<sup>113</sup>

### **3.2.2. Soviet Poster as a Tool of Propaganda**

This thesis includes the analysis of the Soviet poster as a means of propaganda. Particularly, author analyzes the image of woman represented in posters in 1917 - 1950s. Therefore, author finds it reasonable to concentrate on the peculiarities of the Soviet poster in this section, while the next chapter focuses on the topical issues in details.

### **Soviet Propaganda Poster as an Art and Tool of Propaganda**

Poster, as a form of fine art, appeared before October 1917 - in the middle of the XIX century. Since 1917 till mid-1920s, posters became a major tool of the proletariat in campaign, calling to wage an irreconcilable struggle against the enemy and to raise the morality of the people. Soviet poster carrying Communist Party appeals to the masses, called for the struggle for freedom and justice.<sup>114</sup> The emergence of the mass

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<sup>113</sup> Sohan', Irina, "No More Kitchen Slavery! To the Question of the Gender Transformations of the Everyday Life in the Soviet Russia of 1920s, *Women In Russian Society*, Is.4 (2011), pp. 88-95

<sup>114</sup> Lezhen, Yevgheniy, "Poster as a Means of Political Campaigning in 1917 – 1930s", *Bulletin of Saratov State Social and Economic University*, No. 3, 2013, pp. 122 - 124



propaganda art movements were conceived by Lenin as a part of the 'cultural revolution in a backward country'.<sup>115</sup> He claimed: "Behind the scenes we have already reached the first goal - we touched the illiterate man's soul".<sup>116</sup>

Propaganda was conducted by means of the brightly painted trains and ships, carrying promoters and speakers. Such ships and trains were equipped with special theatrical teams and film projectors, which all the way were spreading a huge amount of posters, newspapers, and other printed products. Such methods played a considerable role in educating illiterate, impoverished country, which had virtually no other means of transfer of information about what is happening. During the movement, and at each stop, these impressive phenomenon attracted the attention of people.<sup>117</sup> Writing slogans with the oils on the corps of the campaign steamers, wall wagons, graphic posters and scenic panels, artists were using primitive art forms and techniques available to the layman. The main and integral part of the campaign was the texts, supplementing and developing the semantic part of the work. Word was given not only to explain the composition of the poster, but also to be perceived as a motivation for action.<sup>118</sup> Bright, sharp writing and slogans posters sounded

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<sup>115</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, *On Cooperation, Collected Works*, 2nd English Edition, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965, Volume 33, p.468

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p.473

<sup>117</sup> Kenez, Peter, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 56 - 63

<sup>118</sup> Bolsover, George H., "Soviet Ideology and Propaganda", *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 24, No. 2 (Apr., 1948), pp.170-180

deliberately rough, for example: "All the enemies of Soviet power in three deaths blend!" and "Death to the Tsar's generals!"<sup>119</sup>

Propaganda posters carried a simple, but at the same time sufficiently capacious and colorful symbols, slogans and perceived well remembered even with fast browsing, they are promoted, encouraged and inspired people. During the Civil War, propaganda posters became a kind of substitute for newspapers, thereby satisfying the hunger for information of the young proletariat. Among the first revolutionary campaign posters the works of D. Moor, V. Mayakovsky, M. Cheremnyh and V. Deni were allocated. All these artists are noted for their original and unique to their manners and techniques. Known master of political caricature of the time Deni said that the Soviet poster had sharp satirical effect. His works mercilessly ridiculed political speculators, capitalists and compromisers. Artist Moor wrote about the poster: "The poster, a smashing blow aimed at the head of the class enemy, is the causative agent of the activity of the masses, and it should be to provide adequate attention".<sup>120</sup>

The main objective of the poster art was to be accessible to the perception by the masses. Propaganda posters, circulated in the Civil War, allegorical compared with cartridges and shells, they became a powerful psychological tool cart action against the enemy. The posters pasted on the walls of buildings, and houses in the cities, effecting attack foreign invaders and White Guards. During the first five-year plan campaign poster continued to pursue its important ideological purpose.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> White, Stephen, *The Bolshevik Poster*, New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1988, p. 123

<sup>120</sup> Bonnell, Victoria E., *Iconography of Power: Soviet Political Posters Under Lenin and Stalin*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, pp.20 - 25

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1 - 20

The main functions of poster can be summarized as advertising, propaganda and information. The poster is a means of mass media and advertising. In 1920s, propaganda poster feature was comparable to the role of the mass media (newspapers and radio) at the same time foster a propaganda poster of aesthetic taste of the masses. Comparing the works of famous masters of poster graphics, can be described as a variety of creative method and the difference of methods and techniques used in the creation of posters. In art there are no rules, but has its own strict laws. There was a difficult task for poster artists: to develop a new approach and original means of expression. In the 1920s, language of the poster was extremely simple and concise. The art of propaganda posters in the related genres comes to the fore, it becomes the reference. There was an open desire to consolidate the high status of poster art by the methods traditionally used for samples of high art: the archive location, inclusion in museum collections. Since 1917, poster exhibitions became very popular.<sup>122</sup>

Soviet authorities were carefully monitoring campaign activities. The Bolsheviks banned print ads in all sources of information, other than newspapers, which were published by the Soviets in the provinces and in the cities and the Central Council in Petrograd. The decree was introduced monopoly on paid print ads in periodicals, as well as in books and on posters. Propaganda art was used by Soviet power to mobilize the population to the Red Army and the promotion of their own. After the war with the Whites theme and content of campaign posters have become more diverse.<sup>123</sup>

In the 1920s' campaign posters were not only means of propaganda, but also a kind of advertising. Soviet advertising from a historical point of view was quite high. In 1925, in Paris, it hosts art and industry exhibition, where the cycle was exhibited

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<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17

<sup>123</sup>Brook, Jeffrey, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!: Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, pp.3 - 5

posters Soviet advertisers, award silver medal.<sup>124</sup> A special layer in the art of that time is the theme of hunger. One of the examples was a famine of the 1920s, known as the Volga famine that received particular attention in the posters. The pictures were very diverse: from children's joy at the discovery of a random bag of flour to the mention of the terrible examples of cannibalism and murder to starvation. The government released posters with an appeal to share with the hungry. Poster depicted against the background of the crowds of people who suffer from hunger, a piece of bread and water, and the inscription: "Remember the starving!" Another poster depicts the thin peasant's on a black background, behind which is seen a spike, with an appeal: "Help!"<sup>125</sup>

The posters also made its contribution to the promotion of the values of communism and the activities of the Soviet government. For example, one of the posters depicts Lenin on the platform, lit from behind by the sun, with the inscription: "Lord of the world will work". The concept of 'master of the world' is associated in this case with the leader of the revolution, and labor is understood as the value of communism. In the period of war communism in the farmers shall have the task to provide all the state with bread. A striking example of this is the poster of Sapozhnikov, which depicts a peasant scratching his head, and these words: "To plow the earth, you need to have a plow and plow to do, and I forgot about it. It would be necessary to feed the workers". Propaganda poster aims to change the social consciousness. In Soviet times, the government sought to instill in the public the 'right' views forward on the dates of state activities, such as migration to undeveloped land. Even after the civil war, there was a popular poster with the slogan: "We gather a rich harvest from the virgin!"<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Lezhen (2013), p.124

<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.*, p.125

<sup>126</sup>Bonnell (1997), pp. 137 - 186

In the years after the revolution, Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky helped to organize the so-called 'windows of growth', in which a special role was played by Cheremnyh and Moor. While the artists involved in the creation of awareness-raising materials available for understanding the illiterate population. Posters were exposed wire service in first-floor windows, and hence came the name of the organization - "Windows of growth". Posters, accompanied by biting phrases, responded to urgent problems: calling for the defense of the country, branded deserters who campaigned for the new households. The 'windows of growth' had a tremendous impact on the development of the graphics of the Great Patriotic War(1941 - 1945).<sup>127</sup>

Thus, the Soviet poster was politicized and ideologized, but at the same time made a very high artistic level. Propaganda posters carried the important advocacy role for the state: the information (delivering necessary information to the public), communicative (was a link between government and the people), and image constructing, i.e. creating a noble, majestic image of power that takes care of its citizens, as well as the educational function. Apart from these, Victoria Bonnel notes that the Soviet propaganda posters performed important function of creating heroes for the Soviet people - worker-hero, new man. If in early 1930s, posters were schematic, rough, and people on them were rather silhouettes, in mid-1930s situation changes. The faces on the poster receive national, gender features, as well as details that can ascribe the hero to 'us' or to the 'enemy', such as the elements of dress, habits, social status and activities.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Deák, František, "The AgitProp and Circus Plays of Vladimir Mayakovsky", *The Drama Review: TDR* Vol. 17, No. 1, Russian Issue (March 1973), pp. 47-52

<sup>128</sup>Bonnell (1997), pp. 34 - 39

## Image of Woman in the Soviet Posters

The first ideal of the new Soviet woman, quite naturally, appeared to be a heroine, who was born in the fire of revolution and civil war.<sup>129</sup> According to Barbara Clements:

The Soviet character first appeared in the pages of periodicals as a nurse, the commissioner in the army, even as a soldier. She was humble, hard, loyal, courageous, brave, hardworking, energetic and often young. She did not think about their personal well-being. If it is needed at the front, she could, although with regret, to leave her children; she could put up with the physical difficulties without flinching to take the fight, and in the case of capture - torture and even death, believing that it was the victim of a contribution to a better world.<sup>130</sup>

If the image of the European woman of the early XX century embodies the famous beauties, captured on film, the image of Russian women in the same period can be found on the Soviet poster. Soviet posters were actively promoting the advantages that the revolution gave to women. The key benefits of these were freedom and political equality with men. The idea of equality was clearly embodied in the works of great masters of propaganda art of 1920-1930 Moor, N. Kochergin, A. Kohout. The artists depict female workers near the symbolic figure of a blacksmith; put it on a par with men at the festival May 1, 1920 (see Poster 2).

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<sup>129</sup> Chernyaeva, Ekaterina, "Creating the Perfect Image of the Soviet Man in the 1920s Art Culture Practice", *Bulletin of the Kemerovo University of Culture and Arts*, No.26, 2014, pp.163 - 169

<sup>130</sup> Clements, Barbara Evans, "The Birth of the New Soviet Woman", in Abbott Gleason, Richard Stites (eds.) *Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution*, Indiana University Press, 1989



Poster 2. D. Moor N. Kochergin, A.Kohout."With weapon we smashed the enemy. With labor we earn the bread. Let's work comrades!"<sup>131</sup>

Poster 3. E. Lissitzky at the Soviet pavilion of the International Exhibition of Printing in Cologne (1929)<sup>132</sup>

The climax of sound idea of equality and unity of men and women will find in one of the most remarkable poster of the 1920s - the poster E. Lissitzky to the Soviet pavilion of the International Exhibition of Printing in Cologne in 1928 (Poster 3). The poster depicts merged into a single entity, like Siamese twins head of boy and girl, which are a symbol of the future of the young Soviet state.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Grigorian and Lafont (2014)

<sup>133</sup>Chernyaeva, Ekaterina, "Creating the Perfect Image of the Soviet Man in the 1920s Art Culture Practice", *Bulletin of the Kemerovo University of Culture and Arts*, No.26, 2014, p.166

The state, represented by the Bolshevik Party, poses a challenge to women - a woman, received the freedom of the outside, and through a declaration must find the inner freedom is to become active in policy issues, to participate in the Cultural Revolution, to become literate. Women theme in the poster of the 1920s defined by these goals and its propagandists are the women themselves.



Poster 4. N. Iznar, "Woman! Literacy is a pledge of your emancipation!" (1920).<sup>134</sup>



Poster 5. A. Strakhov-Braslavsky, "The emancipated woman, build socialism!" (1924).<sup>135</sup>

Poster of Natalia Iznar "Woman! Literacy is a pledge of your emancipation" (1920), shows the evolution of the female characters from the past, through the present, to the future. Women were depicted in the lower right corner is the darkest place of the

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Soviet posters collection available at [https://artchive.ru/artists/9893~Plakaty\\_SSSR/works/280506~Raskreposchennaja\\_zhenschina\\_stroj\\_sotsializm!](https://artchive.ru/artists/9893~Plakaty_SSSR/works/280506~Raskreposchennaja_zhenschina_stroj_sotsializm!), accessed on 3 May, 2015



poster. They hunched over their typical feminine work with children and in the house. Women's domestic work is endless, really hopeless and so dark it appears on this poster. Woman in present is at the bottom of the left, shown bent over hard work, but this work is reading, education, literacy development. A woman bent over a book as it is illuminated by the radiance emanating from the book - the bright spot of the poster. Woman of the future is depicted in the center of the composition. It rises over its ally. It is liberated and free, her hands are not busy hated work, her back straight and her towering pipe factories, represents the future, when the work will be mechanized. This liberated, bright, glowing like a combination of yellow and white woman of the future is the embodiment of the ideal representations of the Soviet people, almost replacing an aesthetic ideal.<sup>136</sup>

The poster gives a perfect image of the Soviet women, which is part of the ideal image of Soviet man, through the hyperbole of certain areas of life. So, posters of the 1920s, often idealize women's social status. "Every cook should learn to govern the state",<sup>137</sup> a popular phrase of Lenin becomes a slogan and motto of the set of works of propaganda.

Call of A. Strakhov-Braslavsky "The emancipated woman, build socialism!" (1924) is specified in many works, indicating the important role of women in the workplace, in cooperation, in the elections and in the struggle against the world bourgeoisie. As if cast in steel, monochrome figure, this close-up on a background of plants and pipes of the solar disk, represents the future, in a modest, almost masculine shirt, focused and calm, monumental and significant likened to sculpture. The most important attributes of the image are kerchief, red banner and the smoking pipe factories. Poster resolved almost monochrome, but the red flag and red letters the slogan bright spots

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<sup>136</sup> Chernyaeva (2014), p.168

<sup>137</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, "State and Revolution"; Spunk Library: An Anarchist Library and Archive, "The Bolsheviks and Workers Control 1921." available at <http://www.spunk.org/texts/places/russia/sp001861/1921.html>, accessed on 3 May, 2015

attract the viewer's attention. The author, a sculptor by training, does the worker close to the famous image of V. Mukhina. But there is nothing feminine, traits of femininity, softness, motherhood, as well as sexual characteristics are completely absent.<sup>138</sup> Inner strength and credibility allow it closer to the heroic Red Army man's image in the poster D. Moore, "You volunteered?" (1920). the revolutionary symbols put a woman A. Strakhov-Braslavsky on a par with men's heroic characters.



Д. Моор, Москва  
WWW.PRETIENAR.CO.RU

Poster 6. Union of Realist Artists, "Stop, Night Panel!" (1929).<sup>139</sup>



Poster 7. D. Moor, "You volunteered?" (Moscow, 1920).<sup>140</sup>

That is what should have end

<sup>138</sup>Bonnell (1997), pp.78 - 79

<sup>139</sup> Simpson, Pat, "Bolshevism and 'sexual revolution': Visualising New Soviet Woman as the eugenic ideal", in F Brauer & A Callen (eds), *Art, Sex and Eugenics: Corpus Delecti*. Ashgate Publishing , pp. 224 – 226

<sup>140</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at <http://redavantgarde.com/en/collection/show-collection/915-have-you-enlisted-.html>, accessed on 2 May, 2015

That is what should be fought  
The belch of the old regime  
In front of you on a panel

Feathers, powder, colors, midge  
The shine of the fake beauty  
The sold soles  
The ugly 'cats'

The infectious enjoyment  
The licentious scream till morning  
This cruel delusion  
Should have been stopped

Purulent dump should be overcome  
The cities should be healed  
By the proletarian endurance  
Of the women's will and labor

Dem'yan Bedniy

A characteristic feature of posters of the 1920s is to emphasize the difference images workers and peasants, and mainly in the clothing, such as a poster L. Emelyanov "Knowledge and work will give us a new way of life ... "(1924).



Poster 8. L.Yemel'yanov, "Knowledge and Work Will Give Us New Life"(1924).In villages, cities, with machines and in the fields, we will build the future of the children.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters available at <http://www.davno.ru/posters/>, accessed on 1 May, 2015

The poster shows two women - workers and peasants, on the background of urban and rural schools respectively, both are holding a book. An employee wearing a shirt or blouse with sleeves rolled to the elbow, in the likeness of men, free red skirt, kerchief tied on his head, which knocked out from under the short cropped hair. Peasant is depicted in sandals, a dark skirt with ornament and *telogreyka*, kerchief on her head - so the artist tries to show the elements of a traditional Russian costume. But there is something in common their images: a red kerchief tied at the city hub woman from behind in the countryside - under the chin. This item of women's clothing, who met in the poster before 1917, in a revolutionary-oriented art gets symbolic meaning. Red kerchief and in real life remained fashionable element of everyday clothing.<sup>142</sup>

Images of women toilers of 1920s whose image are given with a mean and concise language poster, costume, accessories have emphasized the symbolic character. Also mentioned a red kerchief, the sign is endowed with a function; also apron, near female form to the male, as an element of the working clothes. As a symbolic element is red - it highlights not only the hat, but the dress, part of the entourage, the letters. He - a symbol of revolutionary activity, a symbol of freedom and the future. The social function of a woman who gives her a new society and the state, forcing it to be active, it often acts as agitators and propagandists, such as in the poster Makaricheva and Rayeva "Every cook should learn to govern the state!" (1925).

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<sup>142</sup> Bonnell, Victoria E., "The Peasant Woman in Stalinist Political Art of the 1930s", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (February, 1993), pp. 58 - 59



**Poster 9. Makaricheva and Rayeva, "Every cook should learn to govern the state! Lenin."(1925)<sup>143</sup>**

The design of this poster is symbolic: on a dark background - a circle with the image of the Council, though the spotlight illuminated the building, symbolizing the state, on which stands the image of the worker to operate it. The face of a woman stressed monumental and androgynous. Femininity is revealed by a red kerchief, which is not only a symbol of revolutionary propaganda, but also a kind of sign of the woman.<sup>144</sup>

Unilateral, emphasized the social, political features posters with the female characters appear in commercials, which flourished in the second half of the 1920s. It reveals certain aspects of life and leisure of women; it gives way to a generalized image of specificity, allowing buyers to identify themselves with the heroines of the poster. Thus, cheerful peasant depicted by V.Bayuskin in advertising *Rezinotrest* (Rubber Factory in Moscow) galoshes was very popular. It was reprinted several times in different formats, reproduced in newspapers and magazines. Widely smiling

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<sup>143</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters available at [http://museum.edu.ru/catalog.asp?cat\\_ob\\_no=13047&ob\\_no=134266](http://museum.edu.ru/catalog.asp?cat_ob_no=13047&ob_no=134266) accessed on 4 May, 2015

<sup>144</sup> Chernyaeva (2014), p.168

farmer in a red shirt and a colorful kerchief shows, however, against the background of the same smoking factory chimneys.



Poster 10 V.Bayuskin, Advertisement of Rubber Factory (1925). *Rezinotrest*, Moscow - - rubbers with the triangle mark. In every house there should be rubbers of *Rezinotrest*<sup>145</sup>



Poster 11. Rodchenko, Advertisement of Leningrad Publishing House (1925). Leningrad Publishing House - Books in all Branches of Knowledge<sup>146</sup>

Individualization of female images promoted montage introduced in printing masters of industrial art and constructivists, primarily Rodchenko. As a basis for advertising publications of Leningrad publishing house *Lengiz* (1925), Rodchenko took a photo of Lili Brik.

<sup>145</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters available at <http://www.davno.ru/posters/>, accessed on 1 May, 2015

<sup>146</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters available at <http://www.davno.ru/posters/>, accessed on 1 May, 2015

The new man was to appear different from the traditional man, and obvious way would be to clothe it in a new suit. In fact, in the end of the XIX century, the position of the person in the creative omnipotence equal has been put forward. Revolutionary artist imagine himself not only as the embodiment of titanic image. One of the most dangerous enemies of the new man, the revolutionaries believed, was the petty-bourgeois element. The reality, daily expressed an archaic way of life, need to be converted. New life, reality, must be approved by other things. And constructivists created these things, designed to create a new reality for the new man. It is clean, simple design, attracting close to the contours of the future of things. Even the simplest things have stood the critical estimates and assumptions in the new life for the new man subjected to a complete rethinking. Sketches of those years are a subject from all sides at once, as if bringing in the composition of movement in space. Costumes are not we a man in a suit and bare design cut, identify the components of a suit: the sleeves, cuffs, collar, mill and so on.<sup>147</sup>

### **Central Asian Women Theme in the Soviet Art of Poster**

As to the appeal to the Central Asian republics, it can also be seen in less numerous posters. Their common theme - the liberation, culture and literacy that the Soviets brought to the Central Asian societies. The former are often depicted as primitive and barbarian in comparison with the new Soviet life. Natives of the Central Asian states are drawn in traditional dresses which show them as conservative, as opposed to modern.

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<sup>147</sup> Chernyaeva (2014), p.168





**Poster 12. Poster of unknown author<sup>148</sup>**

This poster (12) by unknown artist presents the changes that are associated with the Bolsheviks in Central Asia. Women dressed in traditional Muslim costumes are on the top, along with the man. The author obviously tries to show the equality of man in woman in the new society. They are educated - the book symbolizes this, and engaged into the Socialist production - red tractor as a tool of their work is in the corner. The female figures are on the top, brave and underlined by the size, under the red flag of the Socialist revolution. Under them - tiny male figures, dressed in traditional costumes - their husbands, perhaps, and the traditional buildings - their culture, as well as the veil - symbol of women's oppression in the society. The separate figure in the right down corner is the religious servant - imam or mufti, shown as negative old ugly constrain. Women step over the fence of their community for the sake of the new work and life despite the attempts of the traditional members of their community to oppose that.

Poster 13 shares the same topic that is the liberation of women. This poster of 10,000 copies was released in 1921, in Moscow, for Turkestan. It invites Muslim women to

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<sup>148</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at <http://redavantgarde.com/collection/show-collection/1620-no-name.html?themeId=47>, accessed on 2 May, 2015



the *Komsomol*. A poster called "I am free, too." This inscription in Arabic letters in the Uzbek can be seen on the red flag, which is in the hands of the girl who proudly threw off the veil. Above the open door, where she is invited by two young men, apparently, already freed before it is written to the same schedule and the same language: "Youth Union", i.e. *Komsomol*.



Poster 13. "I am Free, Too" (Moscow, 1921, In Uzbek language)<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters available at <http://polit.ru/article/2009/05/07/bobrovnikov/>, accessed on 1 June, 2015



Poster 14. "Backwoods of Volga" (1930s).<sup>150</sup>



Poster 15. Kaganovich "We Were the Country of Patriarchy, Middle Ages and Illiteracy. We became, but rather becoming one of the leaders among educated and cultural countries" (1934)<sup>151</sup>

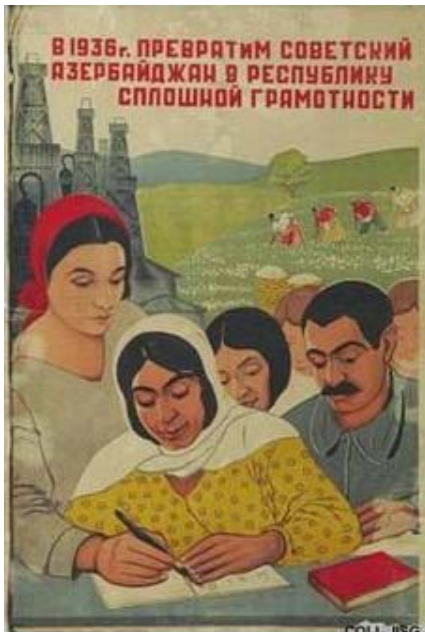
This work (poster 14) of the unknown author published in Uzbekistan in 1930s, also presents the 'backwoods' of the Volga region, where the Tatar population reside. It is seen as illiterate and not cultural - man is beating the woman. The text in Uzbek says that this is the "Backwoods of Volga". This term bears meaning of wildness and barbarianism of this region.

<sup>150</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at <http://redavantgarde.com/collection/show-collection/1398-povolzhe-s-back-lands.html>, accessed on 1 June, 2015

<sup>151</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at <http://redavantgarde.com/en/collection/show-collection/1571-we-were-a-country-of-patriarchy-medievalist-and-illiteracy-now-we-became-correctly-becoming-one-of-the-most-advanced-countries-in-terms-of-the-literacy-and-culture-kaganovich-.html?themeId=556> accessed on 1 May, 2015

Poster 15 bears lots of information - it demonstrates the evolution of woman's position in Central Asian society (Moscow, 1934). In the right down corner there is a veiled woman, dark crooked figure preparing food. Above it, author depicted the girls in the school, writing the text. Asian girl sits next to the Russian girl in red communist kerchief. Finally, the main emphasis of this poster is on the woman-pilot - the image of the new Soviet woman. She has rough features, looks rather like man next to the plain. The text of the poster says that from patriarchy, Middle Ages and illiteracy, "we became, but rather becoming one of the leaders among educated and cultural countries". Important is the formulation of the text - *WE* is underlined, showing that all the peoples of the USSR share the same path and everyone can reach the highest level of the society.

The issue of education is primary issue in the poster published in Azerbaijan, see poster 16. Although it is not a part of the Central Asia, the influence of Islam and traditions here put the same tasks for the Party as it was in the Central Asian region. Among 4 figures on the poster one can note three women and only one man that makes poster addressed to the females which historically had lesser access to the educations. The red kerchief of the woman on the left as well as her physical appearance uncovers the Russian party worker whose goal is to educate the natives in the republic.



Poster 16. "Let's Turn Soviet Azerbaijan Into the Republic of the Whole Literacy" (1935).<sup>152</sup>

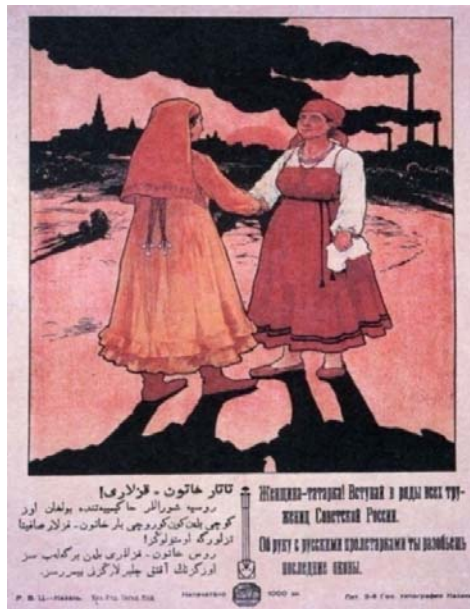


Poster 17. "Peasant Woman! Revive Your Rights that Are Trampled Down!" (1927).<sup>153</sup>

This poster (17) presents the Uzbek woman wearing headkerchief and willing to disclose it. It calls for the women's rights that were ignored and neglected for a long time. Written in Uzbek and issued in Tashkent in 1927, it appeals to the Muslim women of the region and calls for unveiling. The headkerchief here is the symbol of backwardness and oppression.

<sup>152</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters available at <http://abovyangroup.org/2013/12/27/political-posters-continued/6> accessed on 26 April, 2015

<sup>153</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at <http://redavantgarde.com/en/collection/show-collection/1706-peasant-woman-start-rebuilding-your-rights-trampled-in-the-ground-.html?themeId=55>, accessed on 2 May, 2015



Poster 18. "Tatar Woman! Join the Workers of the Soviet Russia. Hand in hand with the Russian female proletarians you will break up the last chains" (1924).<sup>154</sup>



Poster 19. "Enjoying Full Rights Soviet Woman Votes for Socialistic Motherland and Happy Life", Azerbaijan (1930s).<sup>155</sup>

Poster 18 calls for Tatar woman to join the working class in order to break the chains along with the Russian proletariat. Two women - one is the Russian worker, dressed in symbolic red kerchief and red dress (Russian villager traditional costume), and Tatar woman, wearing traditional dress are shaking hands in front of the factory. The Tatar woman is expected to join the laborers of the Soviet Russia that will secure her independence and freedom, elaborate her from the chains of oppression. Russian comrades are eager to help her in on her way.

The poster 19 is also devoted to the issue of the woman rights. Published in Azerbaijan it presents the woman with the child in traditional *tubeteika* (*fesk*) in front

<sup>154</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters available at <http://kudabra.ru/pics/revolyucionnyye-plakaty-sovetskogo-soyuza-1495/>, accessed on 29 April, 2015

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*



of the school and kindergarten with the portrait of Stalin on it, it aims at presenting the wide range of benefits the Soviet government gave to woman, such as children education and care institutions and female rights.



Poster 20. "Peasant Woman! Go to the Re-election of the Village Council! Through the *Soviet* the New Village Is Built"(1922 - 1930)<sup>156</sup>

This poster, published in Baku, in 1922 - 1930s, in Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani languages calls female peasants to participate in the elections of the village council. Muslim women are shown near the men meaning equality of right and participation in public life. Red kerchief of one of the women and the red tablecloth as the symbols of the Socialist revolution draw attention to the picture. The slogan says that the new village is built through the village council.

<sup>156</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at <http://redavantgarde.com/en/collection/show-collection/1710-peasant-go-to-the-re-election-of-the-village-council-.html>, accessed on 2 May, 2015



**Poster 21. "Why Children Die" (Tashkent, 1920s - 1930s). Do not kiss children's lips, there can be infection. Quack can kill the child. Through the domestic animals child can get infected. Child is without air and daylight.<sup>157</sup>**

This poster (see poster 21) of the unknown author was published in Tashkent in 1920 - 1930s in Russian and Uzbek language. Its main topic is how the every-day life of traditional society kills children. It bears rather educational meaning and aims at enlightening the people. It calls not to kiss children's lips, due to the possibility of infections. The quack can kill the child. Domestic animals are the source of infections. Child should not stay without light and air. The everyday life of the people on the picture is seen as primitive and unhealthy: in the dark room without light few women and few new-born babies as well as toddlers are staying near the dogs and goat. The waste is on the floor.

As it can be summarized after the analysis of the Soviet posters, they illustrate the program of the Bolsheviks as well as their activity regarding 'woman question'. There can be traced three common themes in the examined poster. The first one and the

<sup>157</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at <http://redavantgarde.com/en/collection/show-collection/1493-from-what-are-children-dying-.html?themeId=1>, accessed on 3 May, 2015

most popular - education. The whole poster can be devoted to this or certain elements of the one, such as books and notebooks, classrooms are used by author. This signifies not only achievements of the Bolsheviks but also their call for future development - women are required to join the students and workers. Important feature of the female figures their simplified image, general rough picture, which had no feminine features, or elegant cloths or coquetry in behavior. The image of woman is minimalistic, while cloths allow distinguishing worker from peasant. At the same time, minimalistic image of woman, especially her clothes and lack of accessories aim at stressing the non-material value of person for the Soviet, importance of its work and ideas that allowed to attract many new people to the Party membership regardless of their social and financial status. Moreover, the posters mainly present adult woman that reveals the lack of schools education for children before the Bolsheviks.



Poster 22. E.Kruglikova, "Woman, Learn Reading! Ehh, mother, if you had been literate, you would have helped me"(1923)<sup>158</sup>

The second theme of the posters that should not be neglect is the participation of women in the production and public life. Thanks to the Soviets she can become a

<sup>158</sup>Collection of the Soviet posters of Sergey Grigoryan, available at [http://museum.edu.ru/catalog.asp?cat\\_ob\\_no=13047&ob\\_no=13424](http://museum.edu.ru/catalog.asp?cat_ob_no=13047&ob_no=13424), accessed on 3 May, 2015



worker of the factory, a member of the village council or even a pilot - in this way the possibilities of women are shown as broad and not limited to 'kitchen slavery'. According to the authors, this secures not only woman's well-being but the development of the country in general. As Victoria Bonnell presented in *Iconography*, new heroes were created in the Soviet Union in mid-1930s to fill the existing vacuum.<sup>159</sup>

Finally, the analysis shows the importance of the women's emancipation and liberation topic in this type of art. The women rights abuses are also seen in the posters where man is beating his wife or trying to close her at home. Unveiling campaign, although not presented in details as separate topic, still found its place in the works of the Soviet artists. Artists also touched upon participatory rights of women - elections of the Soviets. Personal security and freedom of action are another important themes of the Soviet art.

Important feature of the propaganda posters was visual monologue discussed by Ekaterina V. Haskins and James P. Zappen. They examine the poster art of the Soviet Union from the position of the social engineering utilizing the works of the Russian scholar of the Soviet art Mikhail Bakhtin. According to these authors, visual propaganda engages either praise or blame as tools. From the top down the monologue was established by the Party of Communists, as well as the notion of 'otherness' was introduced. Furthermore, the 'others' were either assimilated and utilized as a social type (worker, peasant, and ethnic national) or labeled as enemy - prostitute, for instance, or Muslim clergy.<sup>160</sup>

It is important to note that the Soviet propaganda underline the role of the collective, group in the work among women - on her own woman cannot cope with the issues. Another aspect is the leading role of the Russian republic, and the secondary role of

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<sup>159</sup> Bonnell (1997), p.27

<sup>160</sup> Ekaterina V. Haskins & James P. Zappen "Totalitarian Visual "Monologue": Reading Soviet Posters with Bakhtin", *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, Vol.40, No.4 (2010), pp. 326-359

those being led - the Central Asian republics. As I mentioned before, these countries are shown as backward, traditional and that need to be educated and liberated in order to reach the level of the Russia.

In comparison with the number of posters in Russian, and oriented either for Russians or for the whole USSR, the posters for the Central Asian countries, written in local languages are few. Their feature is the failure to integrate the Socialist reality into the culture and traditions of the native peoples but rather rejection of it. This radicalism and spontaneous nature, the lack of flexibility will provoke the severe response of the Muslim community and clergy, as it will be discussed in the fourth chapter of the thesis. Besides, posters regarding Central Asian republics have women as the central figure that proves the argument of Gregory Massel that the Muslim women were chosen as a surrogate mothers for the Socialist ideas, as a tool of spreading them. Party leadership chose to deal with the women, as more flexible stratum of the society instead of directly affecting male population.

### **3.3. Public and Mass Cultural Expressions of the New Role and Place of Woman in the Soviet Society**

The previous sections analyzed the public discourse of the Bolsheviks regarding 'woman question' that included not only theory works but also periodical media and mass cultural means to deliver sometimes uneducated people the main ideas of Socialism. Apart from posters, discussed above, important channel of the transmission of the Socialist thoughts was mass art and public holidays, particularly their celebrations.

#### **3.3.1. Representation of the New Woman in Mass Culture and Art**

While for development of the ideological consciousness periodical press was used widely, for the broader mass of the Soviet population, mass arts and culture became a tool of spreading the Socialist ideas and construction of the New Soviet Man.

As Susan E. Reid, in her article "All Stalin's Women: Gender and Power in Soviet Art of the 1930s" analyzes the representation of gender in Soviet art in 1930s by concentration on two exhibitions: *Industry of Socialism*, which was sponsored by Sergo Ordzhonikidze and his Commissariat for Heavy Industry; and *Food Industry*, sponsored by Anastas Mikoian, commissar of Food Industries, as well as on the *Exhibition of Women Artists* in 1938.<sup>161</sup> The author comes up with the conclusion that such events have pragmatic character and were used by the Bolshevik leadership for the careful propaganda:

The audience for images directly promoting the Stalin cult was imagined as female, and spectatorship was construed as an act of 'feminine' identification and submission. The personification of the power and beneficence of the Soviet state in the form of the charismatic male leader aimed ultimately to cast the entire Soviet people in the conventionally female role of devoted obedience.<sup>162</sup>

But in the first instance, it courted the loyalty and love of women, stereotyped as low in political consciousness yet most susceptible to persuasion, and most given to unquestioning fanatic thralldom.

Pat Simpson also examines the representation of women in the Soviet art, although concentrating on the later period of 1949 - 1950. The author concludes that the central theme of the art works of the mentioned period was the concept of beauty achieved in relation to the concept of the New Soviet Man. The most important element of this was the issues of belonging to the Communist Party and the

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<sup>161</sup> Reid, Susan E., "All Stalin's Women: Gender and Power in Soviet Art of the 1930s", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (Spring, 1998), pp. 133-173

<sup>162</sup>*Ibid.*, p.172

patriotism.<sup>163</sup> The guidelines for presenting New Soviet Woman included "the avoidance of the connotations of the domestic drudgery, celebration of the women's achievements and heroism in the Soviet state".<sup>164</sup>

### **3.3.2. International Women's Day as a Tool of Soviet Propaganda**

The first IWD was celebrated in Russia in 1913, the first Sunday of February. By February 1917, the hardships of World War I caused the strikes of the Petrograd women that have grown into a general uprising and overthrow of the monarchy.<sup>165</sup> The further fate of the Day March 8 depended on the deployment of the political process in Russia. According to the Bolshevik ideology

Every worker must become a soldier of the revolution. The main task of working women is the most active part in all forms and types of revolutionary struggle, both at the front and in the rear, as by agitation and propaganda, and by direct armed struggle.<sup>166</sup>

In the very first years of Soviet power, during the Civil War and foreign intervention, March 8 was not observed. In 1921, the 2nd Communist Women's Conference, it was decided to celebrate IWD on March 8 to commemorate the women's strike in

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<sup>163</sup> Simpson, Pat, "On the margins of discourse: visions of New Socialist Woman in Soviet art 1949-50", *Art History*, Vol.21, No.2 (June 1998), pp.247-267

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, p.252

<sup>165</sup> Kaplan, Temma, "On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day", *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring 1985), pp. 169

<sup>166</sup> Tartakovskaja, Irina, "Men and Women in Legitimate Discourse", *Gender Research*, No.4 (2000), pp. 245—265

Petrograd in 1917 which became the beginning of the February Revolution.<sup>167</sup> Gradually the realization of a holiday becomes an integral part of the Soviet-party work among women to engage them in the first place in the process of industrialization and modernization of Soviet industry. The original meaning of the holiday, expressing women's solidarity, fades into the background. In the *Small Soviet Encyclopedia*, published in 1930, stated that the Communist International Women's Day (CIWD) March 8 is a celebration of the 'new life',<sup>168</sup> created for the political education of workers and their involvement in the movement of the proletariat, for the mobilization of the international revolution.<sup>169</sup>

Active political campaign was conducted on 8 March, 1927. In that time, at the regional level at the Presidium of the executive committees annually were establishing a special committee for the Women's Day, which was outlining the main activities for the whole week, and put the practical problems of female social worker for the year.<sup>170</sup> The initiative to give a wide political scope to the holiday, as well as many other initiatives in addressing women's issues, did not come from women, but from the party organs. Moreover, in accordance with the Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU (B) of January 5, 1930, "On the Reorganization of the Central Committee of the CPSU (B)"<sup>171</sup> women's departments as authorities work

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<sup>167</sup> Kaplan (1985), pp. 169 - 170

<sup>168</sup> "International Communist Women's Day", *Small Soviet Encyclopedia*, Moscow: Soviet Encyclopedias, Vol.5 (1930), p. 87

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 87 - 89

<sup>170</sup> Kozlova, Natalia, "International Women's Day, March 8, as a Soviet Political Culture Constructing Factor", *Women in Russian Society*, No.1 (58) 2011, p.37

<sup>171</sup> Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) "On the Reorganization of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B), 5 January 5, 1930

among women were eliminated. As a result, instead of women's organizations, workers and peasants received holiday 8 March. In opinion of many scholars, in the end of the 1920s, in the USSR, IWD March 8 became the core of the formation of gender culture of a new type, the core of the new gender policy of the Soviet state. The most succinctly the essence of a new totalitarian system of gender was expressed by A. Temkin and E. Zdravomyslova, denoting it as etocratic gender contract. 'Woman - worker - housewife' was a new set of social roles, the state intended for women.<sup>172</sup>

To create and maintain the image of 'caring' state the most important task was the presentation of the results of policies aimed at gender equality. Every year, on March 8, the State party 'accounted' for their achievements in the advancement of women in the USSR. Propaganda, periodicals devoted to the holiday, replete with statistics about the electoral participation of women, their real contribution to the national economy, expressed in millions of tons of iron smelting or collection of millions of tons of grain to increase their level of education and so on. The development of the new women's professions, such as tractor drivers, pilots, was used demonstrate the openness of the state of new features, new degrees of freedom. On the occasion of March 8 to new heights were raised mythologizing and glorification of women serving the interests of the Soviet state. As role models selected specific female characters, lined up and replicate their biographies. From newspapers published on March 8, it was possible to learn these Soviet heroines. In the 1930s. Model was constructed history of women's movement, in which there was no place active, independent women's organizations. Revolutionary, member of the Civil War gave way to a woman's place in it - the best workers.<sup>173</sup>

Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU (B) every year put forward any problem for women. Thus, in the decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU (B)

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<sup>172</sup> Temkina A., Rotkirh A. "Soviet Gender Contracts and Their Transformation in the Modern Russia", *SOCIS*, No.11 (2001), pp. 4—15

<sup>173</sup> Kozlova (2011), p.38

s "On International Women's Day 8th of March" in 1939 noted that "the CPSU (B) indicates the need to enhance the care of the woman-mother, remembering that the education of children, our future generations, is one of the most important tasks of a woman".<sup>174</sup> During the World War II the tasks changed. The struggle against fascism, the support of the liberation struggle in the third world, the peace movement became the new theme for IWD in early 1940s. The decision of the Party Central Committee "On International Women's Day 8th of March" in 1942 stated that "... the sacred duty of every Soviet patriot is selfless work to help the front."<sup>175</sup>



Poster 23. "Female Workers Under the Flag of the Russian Communist Party! Long Live International Day of Female Workers 8 March"<sup>176</sup>



Poster 24. "8 March - Day of the Female Workers' Revolt Against the Kitchen Slavery. Get Away From the Burden and Narrow-Mindedness of the Home Way of Life"<sup>177</sup>

<sup>174</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup>*Ibid.*, p.41

<sup>176</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters, available at <http://www.st-dialog.ru/magazin/167-rabotnitsy-pod-znamya-vkp/m>, accessed on 1 April, 2015

To sum up, the activities of Bolsheviks aiming at the emancipation of the women were preceded and supported by the propaganda tools. The use of ideology and propaganda was very wide and accessible to wide strata of the population: while illiterate Soviet citizens could be reached by means of posters, ordinary people can be affected through mass media, cinematography and professional and social based activities, the intelligentsia had access to the theoretical works of the Marxists. These means not only presented the New Soviet Man and Woman but also showed the way of reaching this ideal - education, works and Communist party membership.

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<sup>177</sup> Collection of the Soviet posters, available at <http://www.tatu.announcements.ru/displayimage.php?album=102&pos=386>, accessed on 11 April, 2015



## CHAPTER IV

### POLICIES FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN IN SOVIET

#### CENTRAL ASIA, 1917 - 1953

This chapter discusses the policies of the Soviet government regarding Central Asian women starting from the establishment of the USSR in 1920s till 1950s. The chapter starts with the analysis of the implications of these policies implementation; main actors of these policies, and continues with the examination of the spheres where the policies were applied, such as protection of rights of women, education, employment and labor conditions, health issues etc. Finally the author examines the expression of the vision of the New Soviet Woman by the Soviet authorities in mass media, mass culture and art.

This time period between 1920s and 1950s was chosen due to the following reasons. Bolsheviks established their power in Russia in 1917 and till mid-1950s it was the period of building the new state, mobilization of the citizens and total party control over the private issues, such as family affairs, religious affairs and even issues related to women's bodies, as it will be shown in the section on the abortions. After Stalin's death in 1953, the thaw began bringing liberalization into all the spheres of political, economic and public life. The examined period can be divided into two periods. First one, 1917 - 1920s - the period of *Zhenotdels* (women's departments) and *zhensoverts* (women's sectors) growth, as well as the experiments in the sphere of family, and political mobilization of women. Period between 1920 - mid 1950s can be characterized as *androgenization* of the society, the attempt to create gender-free new Soviet man.

#### 4.1. Main Institutions and Organizations Dealing with the 'Woman Question'

The realization of the above discussed goals of the Soviet leadership was to be done by the special organs on the work among women. The politics of the emancipation of the Central Asian women started since the second half of the nineteenth century. It was first of all represented by the idea of need of the education for women, and was implemented by the *Jadid* movement which will be discussed in the fifth chapter of this thesis. The exact date of the beginning of the 'emancipation campaign' in the Soviet Union is difficult to specify insofar as it is linked to the emergence of the 'woman question' in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin.

##### 4.1.1. Work of the *Zhenotdels*

At the first years of the Soviet state, Department on the Work Among Women of the Communist Party – *Zhenotdel* - was founded.<sup>178</sup> Established in 1919, the first *Zhenotdel* was initially led by a group of women (chief among them were Inessa Armand, Aleksandra Kollontai, Sofia Smidovich, Konkordia Sanoilovna and Klavdiia Nikolaeva) who began organizing working-class women in the pre-revolutionary years. Of varied backgrounds, they shared a deep commitment to drawing women into the Party line creating the institutions that would liberate them.<sup>179</sup> The central feature of *Zhenotdel* was the creation of a 'new woman' whose defining characteristics were independence and activism. *Zhenotdel* writers portrayed

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<sup>178</sup> Corcoran-Nantes, Yvone, *Lost Voices: Central Asian Women in Transition*, New-York: Zed Books, 2005, p. 44

<sup>179</sup> Clements, Barbara Evans, "The Utopianism of the *Zhenotdel*", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Autumn 1992), pp. 485-496

her as a true believer and a revolutionary fighter who was, as one propagandist stated, "a human being, the builder of a new life".<sup>180</sup>

To ensure that Russian women would support the Party, *Zhenotdel* devised a system of delegates and delegates' meetings. Nationally, according to some estimates, around two million delegates served in *Zhenotdel*. In a hierarchical pyramidal structure, delegates were supported by a much smaller number of supervisory workers called organizers. In turn, the organizers reported to *Zhenotdel* staff members. Critically, each *Zhenotdel* was attached to its corresponding party organization: for example, the district *Zhenotdel* to the district Bolshevik party organization and so on. Throughout the 1920s, an uneasy tension existed between *Zhenotdel* and the Party. *Zhenotdel* leaders who were Communist party members often manifested divided loyalties. In addition, jurisdictional overlap was the norm because both the Party and *Zhenotdel* gave instructions. Complicating matters further, *Zhenotdel* lacked financial autonomy: it was either funded in a circuitous route through *Agit-Prop*<sup>181</sup>, or through its party committee. Across the 1920s, the Party reduced its financial commitment to *Zhenotdel* and compelled an increasing reliance on unpaid delegates.<sup>182</sup>

#### 4.1.2. Delegates Meetings

As it was mentioned before, *Zhenotdels* managed to extend their influence over millions of female workers and peasants largely due to the women's delegates meetings. Organizationally, the report of the Central Committee of the RCP (B) XII

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<sup>180</sup>*Ibid.*, p.487

<sup>181</sup> Agitation and propaganda section of the Communist Party

<sup>182</sup> Patterson, Michelle Jane, *Red 'Teaspoons Of Charity': Zhenotdel, Russian Women And The Communist Party, 1919-1930*, PhD Thesis, Department of History University of Toronto, 2011, p.3

Congress of the Party of the delegates meetings said that they were "very important driver joining our party with the female part of the working class."<sup>183</sup>

At the stage of the formation of the system of the delegates, elections were held on different dates, which were scheduled by the local women's departments. Since autumn 1923, by the decision of the Department on the Work Among the Female Workers and Peasants of the Central Committee elections were held at the same time all over the country in September, in rural areas - after the end of the agricultural season.<sup>184</sup> Urban delegates were being elected at the general meetings: one person from 50 workers of the factories. Similar proportions were provided for the rural areas, where there were small businesses. In 1922, the basis of representation for the election of delegates was changed: one of 25 female workers was to be elected. In 1925, the Central Committee of the Party adopted a new regulation on the delegate meeting, according to which, one delegate was chosen from 10 female workers; while for women Soviet officials the quota constituted one person from 100.<sup>185</sup>

Initially, the delegates were elected for a term of three months; since 1921, they were elected for a term of 4 months, in 1922, the term became six months, and after 1923, delegates were elected for one term. The gradual increase in the time of the delegate's authority was explained by the desire to give the party a longer work "in one and the same composition."<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> XII Congress of the RCP (B), Stenography Report, Moscow, 1968, p. 58

<sup>184</sup> Alferova, Irina, "Delegates' Meetings of the 1920s as a Projects of the Soviet Women Preparation to the Managerial Activity", *Bulletin of the Chelyabinsk State University*, No.1 (216), 2011, History, Vol.43, p. 46

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

One of the features of the delegates meetings was a democracy in conjunction with the class approach during its formation. Delegates were being elected at mass non-party women's meetings and conferences. The basis of representation was established by the Central Committee of the Party. Party committees and women's departments were responsible for the consistency of the class composition of delegate meetings. Therefore, before each election delegates meetings party committees of the republics, territories and regions took special provisions, which, on the basis of general Party units, determined the specific tasks of the election campaign, scheduled measures to assist in its implementation.<sup>187</sup>

In the first year of the delegates meetings, their status was not formalized. Delegates as such appeared and there was only due to the initiative of the workers and the women's departments of the female population. Only at the VIII All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers, Peasants, Red Army and Cossack Deputies, on 28 December 1920, a special resolution "On Attracting Women to Economic Construction" was adopted. The document stated the need to "attract workers and peasants to all economic bodies developed and implemented by general economic plan, involve them in the plants, in the factory committees and the boards of trade unions." Relying on the decision taken by the Congress, Department on the Work Among Women offered the Central Executive Committee to approve the draft document developed by them. At the meeting of the Smaller Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of March 30, 1921, issue was discussed, and the People's Commissariat of Justice was asked to make a project in the People's Commissars.<sup>188</sup>

According to the decree of the Council of People's Commissars "On Attracting Female Workers and Peasants to Work at the Soviet Institutions", signed by Lenin, female workers and peasants were involved into the practical work in the

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<sup>187</sup> Dubinina, Natalia, "Victory of the Great October and the Initial Steps of the Party in Solution the 'Woman Question'", in *Experience of the CPSU in Solution the 'Woman Question'*, Moscow: Mysl', 1981, pp. 14-34

<sup>188</sup> Alferova (2011), pp.46-54

departments of the executive committees and their institutions for the revival of the Soviet system, in order to release it from the bureaucratic elements and training practice of workers and peasants of the Soviet workers. Later, they were attached to the sections of the Councils. The impetus for the creation of the first meeting was a delegate meeting of the female communists of the East held in April 1920. In 1922, already 4.5 thousand of women in the Eastern republics of the Soviet Union participated in the delegates meetings.<sup>189</sup>

At the early stage of their existence, the main goal of the delegates was to communicate with the female workers systematically, in order to involve the most active of them into the work of the new Soviet institutions and erase 'the bourgeois elements'. Later, the goal became the prevention of the dissatisfaction among the female workers, as well as prevention of any potential riot. Delegates also worked in schools and medical centers, participated in mass cleanings campaigns - *subbotnik*.<sup>190</sup> Therefore, it can be concluded that in early years of the Soviet state, the control and mobilizing function were the most important for the delegates.

Delegates meetings appeared to be a form of political education of the working masses, found by the Communist Party in the early years of the revolution. Working under the direction of women's departments, the Party cells, organizers of the Communist delegates meetings helped women to master the fundamentals of political knowledge, to attach them to the practical work of strengthening the Soviet regime, the management of public and government affairs, contributed to the introduction of the socialist norms of life. Delegates meetings embodied the principles of propaganda by word and deed. The Communist Party constantly improved the performance of delegate meetings, in order to strengthen their political, increasingly closer to the needs of socialist construction. Delegates meetings for a

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<sup>189</sup> *Pravda*, 31 January, 1924

<sup>190</sup> Alferova (2011), p.48

long time (1919-1932) remained the important element of the party's work among women.<sup>191</sup>

Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP (B) of January 1925 expressed the need to expand the influence of the party among the workers. It pointed out that the party will make a huge step forward if achieves "as much as possible all-embracing organization of the female workers ..."<sup>192</sup> Delegates' meetings were organized at the factory Party cells; at the large workshops.

Thanks to the new position of the composition of delegate meetings in 1925, compared to 1924, increased from 378 thousand up to 0.5 million. The number of delegates of the Eastern republics also increased. By the end of 1925, the number of delegates of the East reached 57.5 thousand; at least half a million women participated in their election.<sup>193</sup> All this indicated that the delegates meetings became an important tool in the education of the Communist Party and the most backward part of the women of the East, in the development of their social activity.

#### **4.1.3. Activities of *Zhenotdels* in Central Asia**

In the early 1920s leaders in the Central Asian campaign were mostly outsiders: Russian, Armenian, Jewish women joined the party before or during October Revolution and civil war. The ideologists of the socialist women's movement were Alexandra Kollontai, Nadezhda Krupskaya, Inessa Armand. Krupskaya was occupied with the problems of women's education and liberation; Anna Nukhrat, a Chuvash teacher and writer, committed to organizational and propaganda work among Central

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<sup>191</sup> Dubinina (1981), pp.14-34

<sup>192</sup> Patterson (2011), p.151

<sup>193</sup> *Kommunistka*, No.2, 1926, p.10

Asian women; Anna Aksentovich, one of the first communist organizers, headed female mobilization in Ferghana region; Yevtsaliia Ross and Lidia Otmar-Shtein, both political commissars in the Red Army, participants of the battles on the Turkestan front, organized Muslim women under *Zhenotdel* in Turkmeniia and Bukhara respectively; Serafima Luibimova and Nadezhda Kleiman were sent to head *Zhenotdel* work in Central Asian Bureau of the Party's Central Committee; Zinaida Prishcheperchik and Yelizaveta Popova headed Uzbek and Kazakh *Zhenotdel* respectively. But some Central Asian women (for example, Kulieva in Turkmenistan, Gaibdzhanova in Uzbekistan, Yesova in Kazakhstan) were also important actors in the campaign.<sup>194</sup>

In June 1921, the II International Congress of Communist Women took place. Klara Tsetkin, European Marxist, known among Western feminist movements, attended the conference. The most impressive and memorable was the arrival of Central Asian women. According to Leon Trotsky's speech at the conference, "Henceforth woman will be to a far lesser degree than ever in the past a 'sister of mercy', in the political sense of the term, that is. She will become a far more direct participant on the main revolutionary battlefield".<sup>195</sup> The role of woman was designed in accordance with the party goals and it was to bear the revolutionary ideas and values, building the new Socialist system.

By mid 1920s, the Central Committee of the Communist Party had recognized the need to increase the staff of the organizers of peasant women in the Eastern part of the Soviet Union by 200 persons.<sup>196</sup> In the provinces, where the ethnic minorities

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<sup>194</sup> Massell (1974), pp.133 - 134

<sup>195</sup> Trotsky, Leon, *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Speech Delivered at the Second World Conference of Communist Women, available at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/ffyci-1/ch14.htm>, accessed on 21 April, 2015

<sup>196</sup> Patterson (2011), pp.147 - 148



constituted a significant number of the population, in the department staff of the party committees administered instructor was hired. His/her duty was to work with the women from the ethnic minorities. In some places (Caucasus, North Caucasus, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) the post of the deputy head of the department female workers was introduced. Generally, they were the local women. Apparatus of the Department of the Female Workers and Peasants of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia (new name of the Department on the Work Among Women) also increased by one officer, responsible for an adjustment of the work among the women of the East. The increase in the party apparatus facilitated the deployment and deepened the work with the women of the Eastern republics of the USSR.<sup>197</sup>

During the Congress of Communists of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, in 1925, special reports on the work among the women of these republics were presented, in order to develop practical measures for its deepening. For the first time to the Central Committee of the Communist Parties of these republics Uzbek and Turkmen women were elected.<sup>198</sup>

In January 1930, *Zhenotdels* were disbanded and their functions began to be carried out by the *Zhensektor* (female sectors) of the Agitation and Mass Campaigns Department, which lasted until 1934. In the same year, Stalin announced the successful solution of the 'woman question' in the Soviet Union. Closure of women's departments considered to be one of the signs of clotting democracy in the Soviet Union.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Dubinina (1981), pp.14-34

<sup>198</sup> *Pravda*, 8 March, 1925

<sup>199</sup> Patterson (2011), p.13

## 4.2. Legal Provisions Related to 'Woman Question', 1917 - 1953

Legislation provisions regarding 'woman question' in the early years of the construction of the Soviet state was conducted in two dimensions: abolition of the traditional court structures, including religious and customary tribunals, and their replacement by a secular, bureaucratic system of Soviet courts; and the abolition of religious and customary law, applying to personal status and family matters, and its replacement by a written uniform system of Soviet law.<sup>200</sup>

In the legal field, Soviet state was forced in any way to combine the old patriarchal setting (to provide accounting and control of the 'female factor') and new ideologies of gender equality. Not accidentally legal equality between men and women was anchored in the first Soviet Constitution of 1918, but it was not equality of opportunity. Words of the Constitution could not become a reality and they were only the text for all "male and female citizens of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, who was eighteen years old on the election day" (Chapter 13, item 64).<sup>201</sup> The famous words of Lenin that no state and no democratic legislation "has made for women a half of what Soviet power did in the first months of its existence"<sup>202</sup>, were valid only in respect of the right of women to vote. The representation of women in higher and local authorities remained negligible, at the highest level - the People's Commissariat for Charity - only one woman, A. Kollontai, was elected.

In the name of the implementation of the *de-facto* equality between men and women in the family sphere, a number of important and unique activities were implemented.

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<sup>200</sup> Massell (1974), p.196

<sup>201</sup> Constitution of the Russian Federation, 1918, available at <http://www.greatflags.ru/dokumenty/konstitutsiya-rsfsr-1918-goda.html>, accessed on 21 April, 2015

<sup>202</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, "International Day of Women-Workers", in Vladimir Lenin (ed.) *About Working Woman*, Moscow: Mysl', 1925

As early as December 18 and December 19, 1917, decree "On Civil Marriage, Children, and on Keeping Books of the Civil Status" and "On a Divorce" was adopted, respectively.<sup>203</sup> The draft decree on civil marriage was made up by A. Kollontai. The first, recorded by the Soviet authorities, marriage in the new Russia was her marriage - rich bourgeois in origin and revolutionary sailor Dybenko. Adopted in the first months as urgent (due to the demographic importance), these decrees were the basis of the adopted on October 22, 1918 single family legal act "Code of Acts of Civil Status, Marriage, Family and Guardianship Law".<sup>204</sup> It argued that the marriage was a private matter of the spouses and declared all the old church parish registers as not legal any longer; instead the books of civil status were introduced.<sup>205</sup>

These documents explicitly spelled out the terms of the new revolutionary morality. Marriages could be contracted only by voluntary mutual consent; it became effective upon simple registration at ZAGS (Soviet civil registry) and without religious consecration. Divorce was simplified: unilateral declaration on the part of one of the spouses was enough. Furthermore, children born out of wedlock were to have the same rights as legitimate children; while the abortions were legalized. The marital age was fixed at eighteen for males and sixteen for females. Bigamy was prescribed. Women were guaranteed the right to equal pay for equal work.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Collection of the Laws and Decrees of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, Moscow, 1917, No.1, p.10

<sup>204</sup> Collection of the Laws and Decrees of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, Moscow, 1918, No.76

<sup>205</sup> Pushkareva, Natalia, "Gender System of the Soviet Russia and Russian Women's Destinies", *New Literature Review*, 2012, No.117, pp. 8 - 23

<sup>206</sup> Massell (1974), p.201

In contrast to the pre-revolutionary rules, according to the Code of 1918, husband and wife were completely equalized in the right to choose the place of residence as well as to choose the family names - getting married could take her husband's name and his wife's name, link them together and refer to as a double name. Divorce in the circumstances of that time simplified to the extreme. The Code did not impose obligations on the spouses to live together and fidelity. Questions about the alimony had to be solved by the social security departments at the People's Commissariats, guided by the degree of need and disability of the applicants.<sup>207</sup> At the same time, the law equalized the status of legitimate and illegitimate children, and gave the opportunity to establish paternity in court. Even if the defendant cited witnesses indicate that at the time of the alleged conception plaintiff cohabited with each of them and determine the child's father was difficult, the court may impose an obligation to collect child support from all of these alleged fathers as a share of.<sup>208</sup>

Code on marriage of 1918 acted for eight years. Implementation of these provisions took place against the background of not only complex brittle, reorganizations and restructurings of the different areas of public life, but also under the circumstances of the general cultural backwardness of Russia's population, the instability of life, general psychological disorientation. Old administrative bodies have been eliminated; the new ones had no trust among the population. The result of the efforts of the Bolshevik ideology for political mobilization of the individuals, their orientation to the early approach of communist paradise was the *de-familization* of the social life and primitivization of the moral norms.<sup>209</sup> Having separated church and state, and recognized as insignificant the church wedding, the new government

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<sup>207</sup> Collection of the Laws and Decrees of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, Moscow, 1918, No.76, articles 130—133

<sup>208</sup> Goldman (1993), pp.133 - 134

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.142 - 143

established its control over the marriages of individuals, as well as began to dictate the new regulations of the privacy. Year after year, the family sphere became more and more politicized in the country; etacritic marriage started to spread. It was an order in which the state has usurped the power to authorize (instead of the church) the conclusion of the marriage and to intervene in the lives of families. As a social institution, marriage could not exist without government intervention; as a contract, which must be authorized, the state became the sole source of legal initiatives. Polygamy was prohibited even for the people who professed Islam. Orthodox marriage norms were ridiculed as a manifestation of political backwardness. This causes confusion and resentment of foreign lawyers.<sup>210</sup>

New "Code on Marriage, Family and Guardianship" of 1926 gave legal significance to *de-facto* marital relations (unregistered cohabiting) and from a legal point of view it was defending the interests of women. Recording of the fatherhood of the child in the metric case on their written application was allowed. Evidence was not required - the alleged father was only offered the opportunity to challenge in court the previous decision during the year after the action of the mother, so the presumption of innocence guaranteed by the parent legislation.<sup>211</sup> Earlier than anywhere else in Europe, in Soviet Russia, in 1920, woman's right to abortion was recorded, i.e. women's reproductive rights were resolved by legislation. Children born in wedlock and extramarital become equal. Pregnant and lactating mothers appeared under the protection of the law since they were given the right for a paid leave.<sup>212</sup> The new code introduced the principle of the commonality of the marital property regardless of whether the marriage was only actual or officially registered. In practice of the

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<sup>210</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.194 - 198

<sup>211</sup> Pushkareva, Natalia, Kaz'mina Olga, "Marriage in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia", in S.A. Ushakin (ed.) *Family Connections: Models for Construction*, Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2004, Vol. 1, pp.185—219

<sup>212</sup> Kollontai Alexandra, *Krest materinstva i Sovetskaja respublika*, *Pravda*, 1 October, 1918

courts, work of women in the household was treated as equal to the male labor for the extraction of the means of life.<sup>213</sup>

Divorce through the courts was abolished; instead, postcard divorce was introduced: it was enough to send a postcard to the registry office.<sup>214</sup> Divorce in Russia at that time was easier than check out from the house. Pitirim Sorokin, in his article, provided the following information as of the Petrograd family after the 1917 revolution:

At 10,000 marriages in Petrograd there are now 92.2% of divorces - a fantastic figure, and among 100 divorces 51.1% happened within less than one year; 11% marriages lasted less than one month; 22% - less than two months, 41% - less than 3-6 months and only 26% of the marriages survived for more than 6 months.<sup>215</sup>

As to the Central Asian region, the innovations came here as well. Thus, in 1924 women in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan received the rights to vote and to stand for elections, about 20 years ahead of women in France (1944), Italy (1945), and Mexico.<sup>216</sup> But because of hostility among Central Asian population some practices in Muslim milieu remained ambivalent. The transgressions against the new norms were to be treated as 'crimes based on custom', but it carried very different connotations in Central Asia and Russia.

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<sup>213</sup> Collection of the Laws and Decrees of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, Moscow, 1926. № 82

Goldman (1993), p.225

<sup>214</sup> Goldman (1993), p.237

<sup>215</sup> Sorokin, Pitirim, "The Effect of War," *The Economist*, No.1, 1922

<sup>216</sup> Abazov, Rafis, *Culture and Customs of the Central Asian Republics*, USA: The Greenwood Press, 2007, p.221

In October 1924, Soviet authorities issued a supplement to the criminal code which became almost immediately applicable in Central Asia. It outlawed polygamy and forced marriage, as well as the payment of *kalym* and of *diya* (indemnity paid to the victim of a hostile act or to his kin). In October, 1926, a new code on domestic relations finally invalidated all religious authority in marriage, declared that unregistered marriage entailed the same rights and obligations as a registered one.<sup>217</sup> In April, 1928, a unified code of laws "On Crimes, Constituting the Relics of the Tribal Order" was enacted. In a few months it was reflected in the legal systems of all Central Asian republics. The catalogue of proscribed acts included bride-price, child-marriage, forced marriage, marriage by abduction, rape, polygamy, levirate.<sup>218</sup> In order to ensure the mentioned above documents, a new network of courts replaced the antecedent Muslim judicial system in September, 1927.<sup>219</sup>

#### **4.3. Educational Policies**

Significant achievement of the Soviet leadership was the system of the mass public education introduced in early years of the USSR and the high rates of literacy system resulted with. Bolsheviks measures touched upon not only school education but the wider variety of educational institutions, clubs, and so on.

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<sup>217</sup> Massell (1974), pp. 204 - 205

<sup>218</sup> Massell (1974), pp. 206 – 207

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, p.190

#### 4.3.1. Administrative Assault and Cultural Revolution

The legal provisions discussed before were not enough to socialize and revolutionize women therefore Party leadership at the XIII Party Congress, in May 1924, declared the need to proliferate the system of associational, vocational, and social-service units. One of the first measures in this directions was anti-seclusion campaign. The concept *khudzhum* ('all-out attack', 'sweeping advance', 'assault') was introduced by its leaders Zelenskii and Manzhara.<sup>220</sup> The idea of this movement was the abolishment of seclusion, isolation of women, particularly abolishment of veil.

In 1926 – 1927, Communist Party Bureau in Central Asia and Uzbek Republican Commission for *khudzhum* organized the congresses of the representatives of the Party cells in Tashkent, Ferghana, Samarkand, Zerafshan.<sup>221</sup> Consequently, these were complemented by the meetings of the Party activists with the representatives of the trade unions in the major cities with the aim to explain the goals and meaning of the *khudzhum* campaign. They recommend workers to initiate family evenings with their wives and other married couples in order the women can get used to.<sup>222</sup> Since the 1927 *khudzhum* campaign received new impetus. Thus mass media were widely utilized; the harm of veil was discussed from the medical point of view and the information was popularized; native artists were also engaged in the campaign as it could be seen in the discussion of posters. Special attention was paid to the celebration of the International Women's Day. Thus, on March, 8, 1927, members of

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<sup>220</sup>*Ibid.*, p.229

<sup>221</sup>*Ibid.*, p.233

<sup>222</sup>*Ibid.*, p.239



Uzbek Communist Party organized public event where participants marched in procession to the city centers. The most memorable event of that day was about 10,000 women burnt their veils.<sup>223</sup>

#### 4.3.2. Educating Women

Before 1917 Revolution and in recent years after it, girls in Central Asia could receive education in *Jadid* (cultural and educational Muslim movement) schools or from *otin* (a female teacher who was educated in Islamic religious texts, and in the classics of Central Asian literature, and she instructed children in prayer, Quran recitation, and these texts).<sup>224</sup>

In the context of Central Asia, *Zhenotdels* had to create new opportunities for the inclusion of Muslim women into public life. To this end, *Zhenotdels* were organized at district and city Party committees for education and cultural work among women. They conducted various activities of educational and educational measures, organized women's literacy schools (*likbez*), graduates of these schools involved in the training courses midwives, chairwoman of early childhood education teachers for girls' schools, which played a huge role in the protection of women's interests. Among the drastic measures of Soviet power, aimed at changing the status of women, it should be noted the introduction in 1921 of the ban on religious wedding, bride price and polygamy. Marriage age was set at 16 instead of 9 for girls, with 18 instead of 16 for boys.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>223</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.241 – 245

<sup>224</sup> Kamp, Marianne, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan. Islam, Modernity and Unveiling under Communism*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2006, p.77

<sup>225</sup> Karrieva, Roza, *From the Illegality to the Equality*, Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1989, p. 35

As Corcoran-Nantes notes, "Soviet education was geared to the ideological and economic prerequisites of a socialist system".<sup>226</sup> Before the Revolution, only about 2% of all women (aged between 9 and 49) in Central Asia were literate; for comparison, in 1970 this figure was around 90%. Following the events of October 1917, the new Soviet governments started establishing trade schools, Russian-language primary schools, and Turkic- or Tajik-language primary schools that also taught Russian. The Turkistan Commissariat of Enlightenment trained teachers, translated textbooks into local languages, and published an educational journal called *Maorif* ('Education'). By 1920, over two thousand secular primary schools existed in the region, although many lacked adequate textbooks or teachers. Understanding Muslim traditions Bolsheviks had to allow sex-segregated schools and some religious instruction. Introduction of NEP was followed by the budget cuts in the sphere of education, therefore local officials faced the need to use traditional educational foundations or *waqfs*. Remarkably that *waqf* could not be used for secular Soviet schools but should have been spent for *maktabs* (Muslim schools). However, in 1927, following Stalin's decision to abolish Muslim social institutions *waqf* properties were appropriated.<sup>227</sup> Consequently, all religious subjects in Central Asian schools were excluded.<sup>228</sup>

In Uzbekistan, for instance, the first girls' school was founded on the initiative of Basharat Jalilova in Beshagach part of Tashkent, in December 1917, for 42 Uzbek girls. In 1918, in Tashkent, 4 female schools operated.<sup>229</sup> Soon, these schools were

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<sup>226</sup> Corcoran-Nantes (2005), p. 68

<sup>227</sup> Keller, Shoshana, "Going to School in Uzbekistan", in Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca (eds.) *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007, p. 253

<sup>228</sup> Kamp (2006), p.91

<sup>229</sup> Bendrikov, K.E., *Essays on the History of Public Education in Turkestan*, Moscow: Academy of Pedagogic Science Publishing House, 1960, p.491

opened in Andijan, Kokand and other cities. Only in Kokand and Kokand county, in 1919, more than 270 Uzbek women and about 130 Kyrgyz women were enrolled in these schools. The first teachers in girls' schools in Kokand were Salihahon Mukhamedzhanova, Mukarramah Kadyrova, Gulsum Kogaeva, Fatyma Burnasheva, Zebiniso Razzakova, Zainab Sadriddinova, Myra Sharipova and others.<sup>230</sup>

In 1919 - 1920, Women Institutes and secondary technical schools were created, with the enrollment of the local girls. But they did constitute not more than 7 - 8% of the total enrollment. Authorities explained such a low attendance of girls by the actions of the reactionary clergy, the lack of teachers willing to implement the Soviet school tasks, lack of textbooks and politically matured materials. Prejudices of the population before were associated with the anti-religious propaganda, especially in girls' schools.<sup>231</sup>

In 1923-1924, *likbez* (illiteracy liquidation) began to move from the cities to the villages. To attract women and girls in school literacy classes, various benefits were established. These benefits included agricultural credits and loans from the agricultural banks, the acquisition of agricultural implements with a 5% discount and a deferred payment of the cost within 2 years for those who have graduated from an educational program or for farmers, whose daughters and wives were engaged in 6 months *likbez* courses.<sup>232</sup> As on May 1, 1924, the number of female literacy schools reached 18. They were educating about 500 women; in 13 of them, indigenous women were teaching. Through the activities of girls' schools and literacy courses for women, in 1921-1922, Uzbek women appeared among the employees of the Soviet institutions. Uzbekistan began publishing the first female newspaper "Yangi-Yul"

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<sup>230</sup> Kamp (2006), p.88

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, p.89

<sup>232</sup> Massel (1974), p.234

("New Way"), which has become a valuable training tool for Uzbek girls' schools. In 1924, women were created courses organizers, played a significant role in bringing women and protection of their interests.<sup>233</sup>

In 1927, Uzbekistan, the largest of the new Central Asian republics, had an estimated 1,548 primary schools serving 83,963 students, 55 secondary schools with 24,680 students, and 49 technical schools with 6,790 students, out of a total population of 4.6 million people.<sup>234</sup> As to the institutions preparing cadres for the work at the schools, Uzbek Women and Girls' *Bilim Yurt* (Women and Girls House of Knowledge) in Tashkent, became not only a base for producing women teachers, but also a center for shaping young Uzbek women to become activists and enter the Communist Party.<sup>235</sup>

One of the objectives of the Soviet educational system was political education and socialization. While in urban areas this could be achieved easy, in rural areas and particularly among nomadic population political conscientization of the population occurred very slowly. That is why women were pushed to move to the towns and cities. Women could study between two weeks and six months and benefit from literacy programs, political education courses and training in women's and children's health with the perspective to become political organizers in the end. The latter were often returning to their home towns and villages in order to establish 'red corners' and literacy schools that could be a support center for women. In case of nomadic groups, *Zhenotdels* developed a system of 'red tents', that travelled with each nomadic group for few months.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Bendrikov (1960), pp. 491-492

<sup>234</sup> Keller (2007), p. 253

<sup>235</sup> Kamp (2006), p.93

<sup>236</sup> Corcoran-Nantes (2005), p. 52

In towns and cities, particular attention was paid to the establishing women's clubs, shops and tea houses that were to become a special space for women. Moreover, in the early 1920s activists of *Zhenotdels* used 'door-to-door' approach to draw women to such clubs. These meetings and other activities were complemented by the political education of women.<sup>237</sup>

The number of Soviet activists working in urban and rural areas grew up to the growing number of graduates from the schools and institutes. Soviet Constitution promoted free universal education regardless of gender and social status. The duration of compulsory education was equivalent to the time needed to graduate and qualify to sit the entrance examination for the university or specialist tertiary education. Soviet state allocated significant resources to the free secondary and higher education system. Besides, as an additional support to the families that could not support their children fully were free school meals, books, summer schools and special trainings and classes for those with special talents in the arts. Moreover, subsidies were offered to low-income families with respect to uniform and transport where necessary.<sup>238</sup>

The schools set up small classes; and every village had a school. During the period of compulsory education both families and state gave a high priority to the education of both boys and girls. Non-attendance was not an option. The only evidence of non-attendance could be found in rural areas. Given the importance of agriculture to the Central Asian economy, most especially in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, this was unavoidable, and children would be expected to make up for the loss of schooling in this period at other times in the school year.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>237</sup>*Ibid.*, p.53

<sup>238</sup>*Ibid.*, p.69

<sup>239</sup>*Ibid.*, p.72

In 1923, a campaign with the primary emphasis on trade union membership both employed and unemployed started. In this regard, at factories, plants and other organizations a specialized *likpunkt* (centers for illiteracy liquidation) were established.<sup>240</sup> In 1927, as a result of the *Khudzhum* campaign, 7169 women became the members of trade unions, 5916 women entered the consumer cooperation organizations, 2343 women were elected to the organs of the public administration, whereas 1000 women were chosen to the local Soviets.<sup>241</sup> I All-Uzbekistan Symposium of the female workers held in September 1927, as well as IV All-Union Council of the Workers among Women of the East and National Minorities (September 1928) facilitated the process of involving women into production and public life.<sup>242</sup>

Furthermore, as it was discussed in the theory chapter, in the Marxist approach, particular attention was paid to the child care that was to be provided by the state. Thus a system of crèches and kindergartens was designed to help working or studying mothers. However, in Central Asia pre-school facilities were unable to cater for more than half the number of eligible children. The system of crèches and kindergartens was much more developed in urban areas.<sup>243</sup>

The achievement of the Soviet authorities in educating the Central Asian population (male and female) can be presented in the following table:

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<sup>240</sup> Clark, Charles E., "Literacy and Labour: The Russian Literacy Campaign within the Trade Unions, 1923 – 1927", *Europe – Asia Studies*, Vol. 47, No.8, (December, 1995), pp. 1327 – 1341

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1333

<sup>242</sup> Ahmedshina F., Shnyrova O., Shkol'nikov I., "Experience of the Solution of the 'Woman Question' in Soviet Times", in *Main Dimensions of the Feminist Theory. Introduction to Theory and Practice of the Gender Relations*. Tashkent, 2007. pp. 95 - 105

<sup>243</sup> Corcoran-Nantes (2005), pp. 69 – 70

National group	1926 census			1956 census		
	Population	Number of literate	Per cent literate	Population	Number of literate	Per cent literate
Karakalpak	146,303	2,056	1.3	170,822	87,261	51.0
Kazakh	3,831,611	264,340	7.0	3,232,403	1,785,352	52.1
Kyrgyz	762,391	34,560	4.5	962,001	504,376	52.4
Tajik	978,627	21,983	2.2	1,385,835	725,912	52.3
Turkmen	755,963	15,465	2.0	985,643	511,524	51.9
Uyghur	42,524	1,946	4.5	92,974	50,716	54.5
Uzbek	3,903,585	148,938	3.8	5,973,147	3,070,460	51.0
Total	10,421,004	489,288	3.6	12,802,825	6,735,601	52.1

**Table 1. Literacy Rates of the Soviet Citizens, 1926 and 1956 Census<sup>244</sup>**

### 4.3.3. Separate education experiment

The experiment on the separate education was introduced by Bolsheviks in 1940s. Thus, Thomas Ewing analyzing this issue in his article begins by noting that the main reason of this decision taken in 1943<sup>245</sup> was the bad discipline in the classrooms during the war. Besides, he mentions, wartime showed the need to prepare male students for taking military service, while female students should have been trained

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<sup>244</sup> Allworth, Edward, “The Changing Intellectual and Literary Community”, in Edward Allworth (ed.) *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, Third Edition, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994, p. 376

<sup>245</sup> Directives of the All-Russian Communist Party (B) and the Decrees of the Soviet Government Regarding Public Education: Collection of the Documents of 1917–1947, ed. Boldyrev I., Moscow, Leningrad: Academy of Pedagogic Sciences Publishing House, 1947, Is. 1, 2

to take all responsibilities at home and in production sphere. Such measures appeared to be very effective in terms of overcoming disciplinary problems in the Soviet schools. Moreover, needless to say that the Central Asian citizens, represented by the conservative Muslim people met the experiment with the enthusiasm - it was the only way to avoid emancipation policies spread by the Bolsheviks. As the scholar notes, there was no significant resistance to the educational reform among the Party leaders, even though Marxists considered women's status in society as a consequence of socio-economic system rather than the biological.<sup>246</sup>

As to the content of the programs, initially the decree planned the separate distinctive programs for female and male schools. However, in 1945, Methodological Council of the RSFSR People's Commissariat noted that "... for all subjects curriculum in male and female schools teaching is assumed to be carried out according to the same program, except of the initial and pre-conscription military training lessons". In girls' schools the pedagogy lessons were additionally provided. "This course was to equip girls the necessary knowledge and skills to raise their children". Also, the curriculum introduced shorthand or needlework for female students.<sup>247</sup>

The aim of the Soviet school education became a Soviet citizen as a man of the special socio-anthropological type, regardless of the system of separate or joint training. "The common issues that characterize the education of the person, will come first and become leading, and the difference in the education of boys and girls will take its rightful secondary place", the People's Commissariat on Education assumed.<sup>248</sup> This was proven by the school books of that time. For instance, textbook

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<sup>246</sup> Goshuljak, L. D. "Educational Process in Schools of the Central Volga Regions in 1943 - 1944 on the Basis of the Gender Approach", in L. D. Goshuljak, L. Ju. Presnjakova (eds.) *Bulletin of the Higher Educational Institutions*. Volga Region. Humanities, Vol.3, No.11 (2009), pp.138-145

<sup>247</sup> "In Educational - Methodological Committee of the USSR", *Soviet pedagogy*, No.3, 1945, p.61

<sup>248</sup> L'vov, K. I., "Joint Education in Past and Present", *Soviet pedagogy*, No.10, 1945, p. 38



*Pedagogy* of 1948, edited by I.Kairov, was based on the gender-neutral approach; there was no section on gender and age singularities children. Individual characteristics of boys and girls, according to the authors, should not affect the content of the subjects, teaching methods, forms of construction of educational work.<sup>249</sup>

Nevertheless, within time, ideology undermined the educational reform and the system of the segregate education, insofar as the schools could not be equal and the teachers faced discipline issues in the boys' schools. The issue of gender equality and women' participation in public life appeared to be the one that put the end to the experiment. In fact, the evaluation report on the People's Commissariat on Education summed up that there had been no significant difference in curricula achieved; as well as the teachers for the segregate schools had not been trained.<sup>250</sup> Although under Stalin it was impossible to raise voice against government's initiative, the unification of the schools happened within 18 months after his death in March 1953.<sup>251</sup>

#### **4.4. Family and Health Care Issues**

For the Central Asian women, the high fertility was remarkable. At the same time, extended family appeared to be an impediment for women's participation in

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<sup>249</sup> Kairov, I. A. (ed.), *Pedagogy: Textbook for Pedagogic Higher Educational Institutions and Universities*, 2nd edition, Moscow: Uchpedgiz, 1948

<sup>250</sup> Goshuljak (2009), pp.143 - 144

<sup>251</sup> Ewing, E. Thomas, *Separate Schools: Gender, Policy, and Practice in Postwar Soviet Education*, De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press. 2010. Pp. xii, 300

production and public life of the Soviet Union. Therefore, Bolsheviks faced the need to adopt a series of measures to decrease birth rates in traditional families.

#### **4.4.1. Measures to Decrease Fertility**

One of the objectives of the Soviet policies was to decrease birth rates of the Muslim women. Throughout sixty years between the 1920s and the 1980s, the Soviet statistics indicated a decline in birth rates in Central Asian countries.<sup>252</sup>

In this period, in Uzbekistan, birth rates fell from 39.8 to 33.6 per 1,000; in Turkmenistan, from 42.4 to 36.2 per 1,000; and from 39.9 to 30.5, in Kyrgyzstan. It is important to note that the decrease in the birth rates among Slavic women occurred faster than the childbearing of native women. Although the period covered by this work is 1920s - 1950s, the table above shows the tendency in birth rates that was an achievement of the Soviet policies. Thus, in 1938 - 1939, the birth rate per 1000 women constituted 139.5 in the Soviet Union whereas, in 1926 - 1927 this figure was 159.1. Consequently, the childbearing continued to decrease and already in 1954 - 1955, constituted 86.2 per 1000 women aged between 15 and 49.

<b>Years</b>	<b>Age 15 - 49</b>
1926 - 27	159.1
1938 - 39	139.5
1954 - 55	86.2

**Table 2. Changes in the fertility rate in the USSR (Births per 1000 Women, 15 - 49), 1926 - 1955.**<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Lubin, Nancy, "Women in Soviet Central Asia: Progress and Contradictions", *SovietStudies*, Vol. 33, No.2, April, 1981, p.188

#### 4.4.2. Abortions in the USSR

Another way to control the birth rates was abortion. This issue was treated differently in European and Eastern parts of the USSR. Thus, in 1913, Lenin wrote about the need to "demand the unconditional cancellation of all laws pursuing an abortion or for the distribution of medical works on precautionary measures".<sup>254</sup> Therefore, after Bolsheviks came to power, the question arose on the agenda.

Already in 1920, abortion was legalized for medical and social reasons. Resolution of the People's Commissariat of Health and the People's Commissariat of Justice on 18 November 1920 permitted abortion in health care institutions. It noted the increasing number of illegal abortions as a result of the economic difficulties caused by the Civil War, and free abortions in hospitals can be in the interest of women's health. The resolution stressed the temporary nature of the introduction of such a measure, "while moral vestiges of the past and the present difficult economic conditions even force some women to decide on this operation".<sup>255</sup>

According to official Soviet statistics, legalization significantly reduced the mortality of women from abortion: from 4% to 0.28%.<sup>256</sup> At the same time, abortion without medical indications quickly became the common practice. In Moscow, from 1921 to

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<sup>253</sup>Ofer, Gur and Aaron Vinokur, "Work and Family Roles of Soviet Women: Historical Trends and Cross-Section Analysis", *Journal of Labor Economics* Vol. 3, No. 1, Part 2: Trends in Women's Work, Education, and Family Building (January, 1985), pp. S328-S354

<sup>254</sup> Lenin, Vladimir, *Collection of Works in 55 volumes*, Moscow, 1973, Vol. 23, p.257

<sup>255</sup>Kon, Igor S., *The Sexual Revolution in Russia: From the Age of the Czars to Today*, New York: The Free Press, 1995, p.61

<sup>256</sup> Solomon, Susan Gross, "The Demographic Argument in Soviet Debates Over the Legalization of Abortion in the 1920's", *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, Vol. 33, No.1. (Janvier-Mars, 1992), p.64

1926, the number of abortions per 1,000 people increased from 5.7 to 15.8, in Leningrad, - from 1924 to 1928 - from 5.5 to 31.5.<sup>257</sup> It was also noted that the legalization of abortion had not led to a reduction in fertility - it remained at the level in 1911 and in 1926 was 43.8 births per 1,000 people. At the same time, the number of abortions has increased dramatically, topping at 54.7 per 100 births in 1926.<sup>258</sup> However, such a high abortion rate is due primarily to the improvement of the statistical registration and disseminating information about the possibility of the production of hospital operations.

The situation changes dramatically by the mid-1930s. The official propaganda began to support the idea of a big family and motherhood and was trying to increase the birth rate. Thus, Bolsheviks began to implement a grand social experiment on the 'abolition of the family' - the Soviet government returned to the traditional model of a large family and tried to fix in the minds of the Soviet Women's notion of 'natural' role for them that is a mother. In addition, the decline in fertility in the mid-1930s. Pushed law-makers to review the regulation on the legalization of abortion for social reasons.<sup>259</sup> Bill to prohibit abortion was presented for public discussion and get different estimates. Opponents of abortion rather sharp opinion expressed:

Abortion - it is an evil legacy of the order when the person lived with its narrow personal interests but not the life of the collective. Soviet women have equal rights with men. But our Soviet woman is not exempt from the great and honorable duty, which has been given to her by the nature - she is a mother, she will give birth. And it is certainly not only her own business.<sup>260</sup>

Council of Peoples' Commissars and the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) on June 27, 1936 issued a document titled "On the Prohibition of Abortion, Increase of the

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<sup>257</sup> Goldman (1993), p.283

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, p.266

<sup>259</sup> Fitzpatrick (2000), pp.155 - 156

<sup>260</sup> Sol'c A., "Abortion and Alimony", *Trud*, 27 May, 1936

Financial Aid to the Big Families, Expanding the Network of Maternity Homes, Nurseries and Kindergartens, Strengthening Criminal Penalties for Failure to Pay Child Support and Some of the Changes in the Legislation on Divorce"<sup>261</sup> not only banned on abortion 'on demand', i.e. for non-medical reasons, but also limited the list of the medical reasons, permitting abortion. Those considered the likelihood of hereditary diseases and the threat of a woman's life. The resolution stated that "abortion is not only harmful to women's health, but also a serious social evil, the struggle which - it is the duty of every conscientious citizen, mostly medical workers".<sup>262</sup>

For pregnant women, making an abortion in violation of this prohibition the decree envisaged a punishment of public censure, and at repeated infringement - a fine. The operation is given by the medical commission and strictly for the medical reasons. For the conduct of such operations in the absence of medical indications committee members carried criminal liability to imprisonment for a term of 1 year to 2 years.<sup>263</sup> On admission to the hospital women with incomplete abortion doctor was obliged to report to the prosecutor's office for criminal prosecution.

In addition to the ban of the abortions, the Resolution establishes a special government benefits mothers with many children, to decree expanding the network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens, determined by the amount of support, complicated divorce procedure - for its registration in the registry offices became necessary personal presence of both divorcing spouses and payment of the fee. Fee for divorce increased from 3 to 50 rubles. (With payment of 150 rubles for second divorce and 300 rubles for the third one). Press complication justify divorce the fact that "many people do not care for the family and view marriage as a means

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<sup>261</sup> Collection of Laws of the USSR, 1936, No.34, article 309

<sup>262</sup> Michaels, Paula, "Motherhood, Patriotism, and Ethnicity: Soviet Kazakhstan and the 1936 Abortion Ban" *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Summer, 2001), p.314

<sup>263</sup> Fitzpatrick (2000), p.152

of satisfying his personal whim", and that "the right to divorce is not the right to sexual promiscuity ... People who abuse the freedom of divorce, should be punished".<sup>264</sup> According to official statistics, the number of abortions in the country, in 1937, compared to 1935 decreased by more than 3 times, but in subsequent years, once again began to grow mainly due to unsafe operations (80-90% of total)<sup>265</sup>. In 1939, the collection of statistical data on induced abortion was discontinued.<sup>266</sup>

The legal responsibility for the abortion lasted for almost 20 years. The 1955 decree decriminalized abortion as long as it was conducted in hospitals or other medical institutions. This document made it easier for the Soviet women to control their fertility. At the same time, government promoted contraception awareness campaigns that also contributed to the birth control. Nevertheless, on practice the public opinion as well as the medical institutions pushed women to avoid abortions. The lack of contraception in the Soviet Union and the poor conditions under which the surgery could take place sometimes made women abstain from it.

On the other hand, Bolsheviks managed to engage men into the anti-abortion campaign that depowered women leaving too little space of the control over their own bodies and a huge fear of living unmarried if she cannot give birth. This means that women's ability to choose her own path was still limited in the Soviet Union despite all the proclamations and legalization of the abortion.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Fitzpatrick (2000), p.144, p.152

<sup>265</sup> Historical abortion statistics, U.S.S.R. compiled by Wm. Robert Johnston, last updated 18 January 2015, available at <http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/policy/abortion/ab-ussr.html>, accessed on 1 April, 2015

<sup>266</sup> Shapovalova, Yanina "State Policy Of Soviet State Concerning Abortions in 1920-1930s: From Permission Towards Absolute Prohibition", *Society: Philosophy, History, Culture*, No.1 - 2 (2011)

<sup>267</sup> Randall, Amy E., "Abortion Will Deprive You of Happiness!" Soviet Reproductive Politics in the Post-Stalin Era", *Journal of Women's History*, Vol.23, No.3 (2011), pp.13–38

In opinion of some scholars, the anti-abortion campaign assigned man a larger role in providing and safeguarding the family. Nevertheless, at the same time, Soviet leadership did not support the idea of the supremacy of the man over the woman. Basically, the state remained the supreme patriarchal power. The men were supposed to become more responsible for their sexual behavior. The Soviet citizens especially women criticized the 1944 Family Law for encouraging immoral male sexual behavior and increasing the number of 'lone mothers' and 'fatherless children' who suffered 'social, moral, and economic problems' because of their status.<sup>268</sup>

To sum up, it can be said that the state, though not declaring abortion as illegal, in fact extended its tools of the control over its citizens and their bodies.<sup>269</sup>

#### **4.5. Employment and Labor Conditions of the Soviet Women in Central Asia**

As it was discussed earlier, one of the goals of the new Soviet leadership was to involve women into the production. This would allow Bolsheviks to spread their ideas on the wider masses of population, as well as guarantee the economic growth. The latter was particularly important during and after the World War II when the male population had to join the Soviet army.

##### **4.5.1. Involving Women into Production, 1917 - 1953**

Articles 122 and 137 of the 1936 Constitution claimed to guarantee women equal rights to vote, work and, rest, as well as to provide for maternity leave and childcare. Indeed, women's labor remained just as vital to efforts to increase productivity

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<sup>268</sup> Fitzpatrick, Sheila, *Tear off the Masks: Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005, chapter 12

<sup>269</sup> Randall (2011), pp.13–38

during the second and third Five-Year Plans as it had been to the rapid industrialization drive of the first, and the central authorities launched repeated campaigns to encourage women to take up traditionally male occupations and swell the industrial labor force.<sup>270</sup>

Under the New Economic Program (NEP), introduced in the 1920s by Vladimir Lenin, many women were forced to join the industrial sector in order to increase wellbeing of their families. However, the shift toward the work in the industrial sector instead of housework was occurring very slow. Therefore, one of the tasks of the *zhenotdel* was establishing so-called *artels* for Central Asian women where they could continue traditional occupations such as weaving, carpet-making and embroidery but in the industrial scale. Also for production of handicrafts or processing raw materials cooperatives were established in villages. These measures were to guarantee the gradual transition of women from the housework towards the industrial work.<sup>271</sup>

Leadership of the Soviet state considered that the involvement of women into the social production is the main contribution to the actual emancipation and paid serious attention to the involvement of rural and urban women into production. The main branch of production, where predominantly female labor was used was agriculture. In 1927-1928, Uzbekistan organized 30 field crop farming and other women's cooperatives. In 1930, 80% of the workforce in agriculture was women. An increasing number of women were employed in the industry. At the industrial and agricultural production a network of children's institutions was established, in which, in the beginning of 1930s, contingent of children has reached more than 91 thousand.<sup>272</sup> This allowed women to work in production freely. In this way Soviet

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<sup>270</sup> Filtzer, Donald, "Soviet Workers and Stalinist Industrialization: The Formation of Modern Soviet Production Relations, 1928-1941", London, 1986, pp.144-47; and Manning, Roberta T., "Women in the Soviet Countryside on the Eve of World War II, 1935-40 ", in Beatrice Farnsworth and Lynne Viola (eds.) *Russian Peasant Woman*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992 pp. 206 - 235

<sup>271</sup> Corcoran-Nantes (2005), p. 53

<sup>272</sup> Massel (1974), p.223



authorities managed to engage indigenous women into the social production. Only in 1932, a system of different production qualification courses prepared 7.4 thousand workers. Preparatory courses in high schools in 1932 - 1933 trained up to 5 thousand women.<sup>273</sup> Steadily, the proportion of female labor in the industry of Uzbekistan was increasing, amounting to 36.2% in 1937. In 1940, the number of women - workers and employees was 40.7% of the total number of workers and employees in Uzbekistan.<sup>274</sup>

Thus, between 1920 and 1940, Soviet government took steps to involve women into the education system and the production life, to create the wide network of children's institutions, to secure the participation of women in public life and public administration.<sup>275</sup>

In the first half of 1930s, the focus of the Soviet state was on the situation of women and their promotion to management positions, engagement in learning, gradually, these figures began to disappear from the targets and reporting. The reason was the formation of a new concept of 'solving women's issues in the USSR'. Although women have still preserved quotas for executive positions on the seats, but these issues are gradually ceased to be assessed as a politically important. 'Woman question' was recognized as a foregone conclusion.<sup>276</sup>

Since the beginning of the Great Patriotic war in 1941, another issue become the most important; it was the involvement of women in social production. Without the

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<sup>273</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 225

<sup>274</sup> Croll, Elizabeth J., "Women in Rural Production and Reproduction in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and Tanzania: Socialist Development Experiences", *Signs*, Vol.7, No.2 (1981), p.370

<sup>275</sup> Lapidus, Gail Warshofsky, *Women in Soviet Society: Equality, Development, and Social Change*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978, pp. 98 -99

<sup>276</sup> Patterson (2011), p.232

participation of women and adolescents in social production would be impossible to replace the men who had gone to the front. During the war in enterprises and institutions of the republic unfolded training for women 'male' occupations. As a result, in 1943, the proportion of women in the industry of the country was 63.5%.<sup>277</sup> In connection with the occupation of the most important agricultural centers of the USSR it was necessary to expand the production of food crops in the rear areas, including in Uzbekistan. Solving these problems exacerbated by acute labor shortage caused by the mobilization of a large part of the male population in the army. In the first months of World War II for military service were designed more than 20% farmers, primarily mechanics. Thousands of women responded to the call: "Women at the wheel of the tractor," "Women - on the production!". In 1941 - 1945, more than 25 thousand women were prepared for the work on tractor. In the 1942-1945, women accounted for more than half of those employed in the collective farm production and have made great strides labor. During the war, 64 thousand women were appointed to senior positions in the collective farms, and carried on his shoulders all the basic tasks of military labor.<sup>278</sup>

In the postwar period, policy on women in Uzbekistan, as well as in the Soviet state as a whole, continued to have a dual character: on the one hand, the government declared the equality of women and to take measures to strengthen their participation in production and public life, on the other - to keep the proverbial 'glass ceiling' for women in political and professional career. In Uzbekistan and other former Soviet republics of Central Asia has noticeably increased the level of education of women has changed their social status, role in society. Thus, already in the 1960s women doctors were in the Uzbek SSR 60%, in the Kazakh SSR - 70%, in the Kirghiz SSR - 66%, in the Tajik and Turkmen SSR - 58%. Life expectancy for women has increased significantly and exceeded the life expectancy of men. Was created by an extensive system of social protection, health and structure of the network of

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<sup>277</sup> Lapidus (1978), p.99

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, p.166

children's institutions. All this has brought the region to a greater extent to the European than Asian standards.<sup>279</sup>

#### **4.5.2. Labor protection**

Soon after the October Revolution, Soviet authorities designed a range of measures to protect workers and secure labor conditions that would attract women, particularly native ones. In the first months of the existence, Soviet state issued a series of decrees that contained special items relating to women. For example, the decree of the 8-hour day on October 29 (November 11), 1917 prohibits the use of night work for women. Regulations on Social Insurance of November 1917 provided benefits for pregnancy and childbirth for 8 weeks before the birth and 8 weeks after the birth. Decree on wages set the minimum wage regardless of gender. Decree on tariffs adopted in December 1917 argued the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women.<sup>280</sup>

In 1918, by the special decree the work of women in the mines and mining industry was outlawed, however, due to the economic decay after the World War I, women were still employed in this sector. In 1929, the first 5-year plan was launched in the USSR that raised the number of women in this sector. This can be explained by high salaries and the unemployment in some regions of the Soviet Union. This determined the weaker labor protection regulations in the sphere.<sup>281</sup>

Due to the NEP, the main goal of the Bolsheviks was raising the production indexes and economic capabilities of the country therefore the labor protection particularly the health and the reproductive health of female workers was a secondary issue.

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<sup>279</sup> Massell (1974), p. 231

<sup>280</sup> Katz, Katarina, *Gender, Work and Wages in the Soviet Union: a Legacy of Discrimination*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, p.49

<sup>281</sup> Ilic, Melanie, "Women Workers in the Soviet Mining Industry: a Case - Study on Labor Protection", *Europe – Asia Studies*, Vol. 48, No.8 (December, 1996), pp.1387 – 1401

However, after 1928, as a result of a number of surveys devoted to the impact of the working conditions on women health conducted in the Soviet Union, the authorities faced the need to modify the legislation of women's employment. Thus, in accordance with new regulations, girls younger than 16 should go through puberty before starting industrial employment; short, five-minutes break twice a day during the work could improve women' health etc.<sup>282</sup>

Furthermore, on January, 11, 1922, the labor protection department of the trade union organization issued a decree that allowed female workers employed in garment industry to take two days leave in the beginning of the menstruation period on the production of a medical certificate. During this period women were to be paid wages, equivalent to their average monthly earnings. After 1926, Labor Department (*Narkomtrud*) extended the number of industrial brunches in which female workers could take leave.<sup>283</sup>

#### **4.6. Women in Public Life of the USSR**

In the previous section of this chapter I have shown that one of the main objectives of *Khudzhum* was involving women into the public life. Particularly, Bolsheviks were eager to bring Central Asian women ti the Communist Party and provided them with the jobs in the party apparatus as well as managerial positions in public sector.

Nevertheless, the indigenous women were reluctant to abandon their houses in order to join the Party ranks. Thus, in the 1920s and 1930s, they entered female-only environments – all-female schools, all-female groups at farms and factories. Gradually, mixed-gender working environments became quite common, especially during and after World War II. Some occupations started to be considered as

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<sup>282</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.1410 – 1411

<sup>283</sup>*Ibid.*, p.1413

'desirable' for women, such as nurses, school teachers, accountants, etc. Other fields were regarded as 'unacceptable', for instance drivers, police officers, etc. Even top position could be occupied by women although the share of native women was very small.<sup>284</sup> It is important to note that education, schools and universities played particular role in socialization of women.

#### **4.6.1. Promotion (*Vydvizhenchestvo*)**

*Vydvizhenchestvo* (promotion of the person by the Party) as a phenomenon has its roots in the years of revolution and civil war. Then, due to objective circumstances, this process was spontaneous and did not have planned character. However, the end of the civil war and restoring peace in the country set for the Soviet government new tasks that required replenishment of the staff of the party-state and economic apparatuses workers capable of consolidating Soviet power and to strengthen its relationship with the society. Therefore, in the early 1920s, *vydvizhenchestvo* becomes systematic and focused. Being aware of the need to involve women in the Soviet construction, the party leadership has carried out ideological and practical approaches to address this issue. The massive participation of women in the decision of government and public affairs provides:

... membership in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; ... Broad participation in the formation of governing bodies; ... Participation in the Council of People's Deputies and national discussion of the most important projects of laws, making proposals aimed at improving the work of all public authorities.<sup>285</sup>

One of the main arguments of the Bolshevik ideology in women's issues was equal opportunities for representation of men and women in government. Marxist ideology

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<sup>284</sup> Abazov (2007), p.220

<sup>285</sup> Sharova, Tatiana, *Involvement of Women into Industrial Production (1921 - 1925): Experience of the Communist Party of Ukraine*, PhD Dissertation, Odessa, 1990, p. 74

strongly emphasized the class character of law as 'a means of class oppression'. Interests and needs of the women from the 'working people' classes (workers and peasants) were presented as common to all the oppressed population and as opposed to the interests of the oppressing minority. Existing between men and women of the working classes relations and, moreover, relations between different groups of women who belonged to the class of the oppressed (working women, wives, workers, peasant women, domestic workers, etc.) actually were ignored. At the same time, women from other classes: merchants, nobility, clergy, intellectuals - were declared alien class and received no political rights, as evidenced by Article 65 of the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic of 1919:

deprives the right to vote and to be elected the following person, if they belong to one of the above categories: a) persons using hired labor for personal gain; b) persons living on unearned income, namely income from businesses, estates, etc.; c) private traders, commercial intermediaries; g) monks and spiritual leader of the Church of worship; e) agents of the former police officers separate corps of gendarmes and security departments, as well as members of the ruling house in Russia; e) persons recognized as an established systems crazy, as well as persons who are under the care; g) persons convicted of selfish and shameful deeds settled law or a court judgment.<sup>286</sup>

Thus, the proletarian version of women's equality immediately excluded a significant portion of the female population from the scope of its facilities, but an undeniable achievement of Soviet power was the proclamation of equality of voting rights of men and women. It was a legal guarantee for equal participation of women in government. The practical realization of the idea of the equal participation of women in the administrative sphere in the 1920s was the *Zhenotdels* that were discussed before. Before the women's departments, which were an integral part of party structures in the 1920s, set the task "to awaken the broad masses of women who associate them with the party to keep under its influence".<sup>287</sup> More specifically, the function of women's departments were identified by the Central Committee of the

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<sup>286</sup> Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, 1919, article 65, available at <http://www.hist.msu.ru/ER/Text/cnst1918.htm#14>, accessed on 13 March, 2015

<sup>287</sup> Patterson (2011), p.242

RCP (B) of 8 July 1921, obliging women's departments to conduct agitation among women workers in order to attract them to the Soviet and professional construction, study and guide the work of the Party committees in the field of work among women to participate in development issues -Party building, and make proposals on issues related to the actual emancipation of women. Clear definition of tasks and functions women's departments showed that they were not a tool of the women's movement, but an instrument of the Party's ideological work among women.<sup>288</sup>

In a telegram to the Secretary of the Central Committee of the RCP (B) M. Krestinsky in January 16, 1920 reported: "The work of women hampered by the lack of workers. Samoilov commanders and other productions for the work ...".<sup>289</sup>

However, the Bolsheviks could not break down in a short time the public consciousness, and the vast majority of the male population continued to consider a woman being antisocial, incapable of independent thought and action. This is confirmed by archival materials. For example, in a memo of the People's Commissariat on Economy of the USSR about the checks made to attract women to the social construction one can read:

Resistance and neglect of the female chairman of the village from the male members of the boards began from the first day, which is very influenced by the authority of village councils. Commission of the Obukhov region had to admit that in average of 5-6 people reduced their voters turnout at the Plenary Session, if Council was presided by women,. Women are increasing their turnout in average by 2 people against meetings where men preside.<sup>290</sup>

The hardest task for the activists was to work in rural areas, where men just do not let their wives on the charges. For this reason, in the early years after the revolution

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<sup>288</sup> Zemziulina, Natalia, "Staffing Policy by the Soviet Administration System in 1920s and 1930s: The Gender Aspect", *History Sciences, Ethnography and Archeology*, 2005, No. 3, pp. 14 - 18

<sup>289</sup> Patterson (2011), p.64

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, p.65

township congresses of villagers carried out separately. During 1923 - 1927 years, special activity was recorded among peasant women on the boards, agencies of the cooperation and work of cultural and community institutions. They took the initiative, carefully treated the work. Objective evidence of activation of social life was the increase in their number in the local government. Peasant women are increasingly involved in social life, and have in the village council or any other authority or representation of women became fashionable. However, fashion, strict ideological principles was one of the reasons for the election of women. Percentage of their presence in the government did not comply with the role performed in the economic life of the peasant society. Women choose reluctantly, the men were in no hurry to change their view of the intellectual and organizational capabilities of the fairer sex. In addition, the involvement of women in social activities in rural areas often the administrative methods, 'by the order'.<sup>291</sup>

The delegates of the peasantry dealt with issues of economic development of the village or district, welfare and education of children included in the compositions nursery committees, which raised funds for the organization of nurseries and kindergartens and to provide them with food. Even the first steps toward "transformation of women in full-fledged member of society" have shown that the mere provision of equal political rights with men was obviously insufficient even for passive participation of a significant number of women in the construction of a new society. Despite the formal granting of political rights for working women, the leadership of the Bolshevik Party did not consider their ability to immediately take advantage of their rights to the extent that it was able to man. Thus, women accounted for about 75% of all illiterate, and therefore the participation of women - representatives of the working class in the proletarian movement was negligible, which gave the leaders of the Bolshevik Party an opportunity to see women not just as depressed, but also as a 'cultural backwardness' segment of the population. The documents before the Revolution and the Bolsheviks in the first years after

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<sup>291</sup> Zemziulina (2005), p.17



constantly find mention of the need to "involve women in independent participation", "complete liberation of women". The tone of the statements, despite their overall thrust of liberation, constantly working woman puts in the position of 'recipient' of the gifts.

After the revolution, the Bolshevik leaders did not expect that the woman actually take responsibility for solving political problems. Women were supposed to gradually realize the extent of the resulting freedom and help them in this had male proletariat. But in practice, those who had to help, not always adhered to, not only the party line, but also ordinary moral norms. Activation of women's political participation was planned as a 'natural' transition from elementary to achieve a comprehensive literacy and modern (for the time) ideas about hygiene in political literacy and literacy from - to activity. It was assumed that learning to read words written in the political declarations of the Bolsheviks, the working-class woman will act in accordance with them, because the 'real' interests of all working women coincide with the objectives advocated.<sup>292</sup> Despite the numerous measures of the Soviet leadership, yet women were significantly underrepresented in the public sector well into 1950s. In order to overcome this situation the government introduced system of quotas. It assigned a specific percentage of all positions in the Party, public organizations, education, management, government, and legislature of all levels to women. It usually fluctuated between 25 and 35% in the 1970s and 1980s respectively.<sup>293</sup>

To sum up, the Soviet emancipatory policies cannot be evaluated unambiguously. On the one hand, it should be admitted that Bolsheviks in fact created the Central Asian republics as a result of the *razmezhevaniye* (delineation) policy. Their achievements in the work with the women can be seen in the growing literacy rates, decreasing influence of the traditional and religious institutions, participation of women in

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<sup>292</sup> Zemziulina (2005), p.18

<sup>293</sup> Massell (1974), p.221

production and administration. The legal provisions as to the protection of the rights of women should also not be neglected. However, on the other hand, the aim of the Communist Party was the creating of the gender-free person capable of perceiving the official ideology and building socialism. Woman was perceived only through the prism of the proletariat class, therefore the representatives of the other classes were ignored. The so-called involvement of women in work was in fact not that promising - the lower positions as well as wages did not allow women to be promoted. Women appeared to be not only a final goal, but also a tool of such policies, as it was shown in this chapter. Needless to say that the Muslim societies of Central Asia resisted to the emancipation of their women. It resulted in mass killings of thousands of women. The next chapter of this thesis is going to discuss the issue.

## CHAPTER V

### OUTCOMES OF THE SOVIET EMANCIPATION POLICIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

The main argument of this thesis is that the neglect national, traditional, religious peculiarities of the Central Asia, as well as the assertive, rigid Party policy, converting native population into backward and criminalizing every-day life provoked enormous side effects of the work among Muslim women and in the region in general. In their lust to emancipate women, to bring them into the sphere of production, Bolsheviks, although controlled and evaluated the local context, failed to predict the whole range of responses of the traditional circles.

#### 5.1. Social and Cultural Conditions in Central Asia Neglected by Bolsheviks

Particular attention, in our opinion, should be paid to such historical movements and aspects of the Central Asian society as *Basmachi* protest that started in the XIX century; a position of the Islamic clergy in Central Asia; and the revival of the Islamic culture through the *Jadid* movement. These issues should not be neglected insofar as they strengthened the hostility of the local population toward the Russian and Soviet invaders.

##### 5.1.1. *Basmachi* as a Riot Against Bolsheviks

To analyze the resistance of the Central Asians to the emancipation policies of the Bolsheviks, it is important to note that it happened in the context of the broad riot of the Muslims against firstly Russians, and later - Soviets. What is called *Basmachi*, or

bandits, acted particularly active in Ferghana Valley and adjacent highlands of Artsinsk and Alai Valley, Samarkand and Syrdarya regions in Eastern Bukhara, Khorezm, Karakum, Krasnovodsk district, Naryn district. The compounds numbered from a few dozen to several thousand people. The tactics of the struggle was that, being based in the remote mountains and desert areas, to make horse raids in densely populated areas, killing Bolshevik commissars, Soviet officials and supporters of the Soviet power. The rebels resorted to guerrilla tactics avoiding collisions with the large part of the regular Soviet troops; they suddenly chose to attack small detachments, strengthen or occupied by the Bolsheviks settlements, and then quickly depart.<sup>294</sup>

An important impetus for the rebellion was the policy of the Bolshevik government against the Muslim population. The most serious discontent caused believers measures scrap the traditional way and the way of life. *Basmachi* movement started in 1860s, but spread in the years of Civil War as a response to Moscow's policies, particularly the decision of 1918 to send the main product of that region, cotton, to the center. Furthermore, the Red Army invasion and mass killings, rapings of women and economic losses of the native population gave a new impetus to the movement. With the establishment of the Soviet Union, and spread of the Party activities into the spheres of traditional culture and private matters, this movement received the features of the national liberation movement.<sup>295</sup>

If in 1918, the main center of the resistance movement was Fergana, in 1919-1920, it spread almost all over Central Asia. In early 1921, the Red Army succeeded in defeating the main forces of *Basmachi* in Fergana. By the fall of 1926, *Basmachi* were basically divided the whole of Central Asia. A new impetus the movement received in connection with the forced collectivization in the late 1920s and early

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<sup>294</sup> Rywkin (1990), pp. 33 - 35

<sup>295</sup> Panin, Sergey, "*Basmachi*: Main Characteristics, Stages of Evolution and Connections with Afghanistan (1920 - 1930s), in Sergey Panin (ed.) VII Baykal International Social and Humanitarian Readings: Materials in 3 volumes, 2013, Vol.1, pp. 108 - 110

1930s.<sup>296</sup> As Rywkin argues, it was not a struggle between communists and anti-communists but between Russians and Muslims - while *Basmachi* were the native Turkestan groups, Red Army soldiers fighting with them were predominantly Russians.<sup>297</sup>

After a while, Soviet leadership understood that military measure should be conducted along with the political and economic concessions. Thus, in 1922, religious courts - *kazi* -were reestablished temporarily in Ferghana valley; the lands that earlier belonged to Muslim institutions were returned; and the taxes were abrogated. Food supplies to the region as well as the water reform began to bear fruit.<sup>298</sup> As Olcott shows, by 1922, main leaders of the movement were dead; others were bribed with the land; movement was distorted in general. This made Soviet authorities comfortable to launch again the cotton collection that put the native population in difficult conditions.<sup>299</sup>

Thus, in 1925, in Central Asia a 'sovietization' started which included the ban of the bourgeoisie and clergy. In June 1927, *waqf* holdings were reduced, and in September 1927, the *Adat* and *Shari'a* courts were closed. Restrictions on Koran schools were introduced in 1925, leading to their decline, and in 1929, they were banned entirely. The first five-year plan in 1928 called for the nationalization of all remaining *waqf* lands. The beginning of forced collectivization provoked one final sustained outburst of *Basmachi* resistance. It is important to note that the collectivization and nationalization of land meant a change of the social structure in Central Asia. Additionally, collectivization was accompanied by the anti-religious slogans that

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<sup>296</sup> Rywkin (1990), pp. 33 - 43

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, p.38

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, p.41

<sup>299</sup> Olcott, Martha B., "The *Basmachi* or Freeman's Revolt in Turkestan 1918-24", *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (July 1981), p.360

showed the priority of the economic survival of the country over the spiritual values of its people. Thus, in the 1930s mosques and Koran schools were closed, many of the representatives of the clergy arrested. As a response, resistance movement of *Basmachi* splashed in eastern Tajikistan and western Turkmenistan that determined the delay of the collectivization in these regions till 1931.<sup>300</sup> By 1933, with the capture of Ibragim-bek, one of the leaders of the movement, *Basmachi* revolt was defeated by the Soviet Army.

It is also important to mention here is that while Russian literature<sup>301</sup> tends to see the *Basmachi* movement as a banditry, the Western authors approach it as a national liberation movement, against Soviet, but Russian in nature, assault on economic as well as social and cultural life of the native population. As Martha B. Olcott argues that "the *Basmachi* played a critical role in the political modernization of Turkestan by bringing together the various elements of Central Asian society in an effort to defeat a common enemy, and through this action the basis of a common consciousness was formed".

She continues that native people started to develop a political identity through the public action and resistance. Before that, people were rather considering themselves as Muslims or were ascribing themselves to the particular village. The realization of the sharing the common way of life, languages, customs and Islam escalated the nationalist and political awareness and therefore the resistance to the Soviet policies. It also revealed the importance of the Islamic community *umma* able to overcome internal division in order to resist when the community is challenged.<sup>302</sup>

At the same time Penati maintains, the resistance to *Basmachi* provided a sort of 'rudimentary Soviet socialization', through local communities acting against

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<sup>300</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 361

<sup>301</sup>Panin (2013), pp.108-116

<sup>302</sup>Olcott (1981), pp. 365 - 366

*Basmachi* revolt. Assistance to returning migrants, resettlement, and even famine relief aimed at securing support, as well as at establishing new ties between the people and Soviet institutions. Author shows that Soviet administration and local population through this cooperation managed to achieve certain compromise. This also contributed to establishing new economic and political ties between centre and the region. Penati concludes that the *Basmachi* revolt was a stage of re-conquest of the region after the revolution, civil war and establishing Soviet regime and it played an important role in Sovietization of Central Asia.<sup>303</sup>

Although *Basmachi* revolt directly was not connected to the issue of women liberation, it is important movement in the Central Asian resistance to the Soviet assault and therefore contributed to the consolidation of the Muslim community in the region.

#### **5.1.2. Muslim Culture Revival and *Jadids***

Apart from the radical forms of the revolt against the Russian and Soviet culture spread in Central Asia, more soft forms of activities existed. One of the cultural movements of the Central Asia that operated since the beginning of the XX century was *Jadids*. This movement was born in Tatarstan and spread to Bukhara, Khiva and Turkestan, involving bourgeoisie and intelligentsia of the big cities. In general, they acted against the Russian schools which were seen as a tool of Russification, but in fact they established a new method of education involving Turkic language and theology. The ideological leader of *Jadids* Ismail-bey Gasprinsky, Crimean Tatar poet, activist, managed to establish 20 schools in Tashkent and 16 in Kokand.<sup>304</sup> The

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<sup>303</sup> Penati, Beatrice, "The Reconquest of East Bukhara: the Struggle Against the *Basmachi* as a Prelude to Sovietization", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol.26, No.4, 2007, p.533

<sup>304</sup> Brezhneva, S, "Leading Vulture of *Jadids* in Central Asia in the beginning of XX Century", *Bulletin of the Orenburg State University*, No.10, 2008, p. 50 - 55

main activities have been the formation of the Central Asian *Jadid* schools, functioning charities, creating publishing institutions, preparation and publication of educational books, the publication of literary and journalistic works, the opening of public libraries and reading rooms, theater and creative development of the national press.<sup>305</sup>

If at the first stage of movement's development, their main purpose was to unite Muslims embodying democratic forces. By 1917, these ideas went beyond the scope of internal unity. The sovereignty condition of Turkestan as a part of Russia was to unite all forces regardless of religious and national identity. M. Bekhbudi wrote that the laws are to be issued in the new state that would protect the rights of all Turkestan population, irrespective of religious and racial identity.<sup>306</sup> At the II Regional Muslim congress on 7 - 11 September, 1917, convened on an initiative of *Jadid* party *Shuroi Islomiya*, the resolution was passed. The document stated that "the Congress opposes the surrender of power to Councils of soldier's, workers and rural deputies. The authority is to be coalition and rely on all forces of the country i.e. national".<sup>307</sup>

One of the main contradictions between *ulama* and *Jadids* were women's rights. Thus, one of the crucial issues was the right of women to vote. The status of woman in society was a matter of concern for *Jadids* and they welcomed the provisions of the Soviet government regarding women's rights. However, for the *ulama* opposed to such innovations, using Shur-a words that "certain *mullahs* and old functionaries who have united with foreign enemies who do not wish Muslims to achieve progress and

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<sup>305</sup> Gafarov, Numandzhon, "*Jadidism* in Central Asia in Late XIX - Beginning of XX Century", Dissertation of the Doctor of History Science, Tadjik State National University, Dushanbe, 2014

<sup>306</sup> Bazarbayev, Kanat and Adilbekova Zabirash Ashimkhanovna, "*Jadids* Movement in Central Asia in the Late 19th and the Early 20th Centuries", *Asian Social Science* Vol. 8, No. 8 (July 2012), p.233

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234



take their affairs in their own hands and [who therefore] oppose the *Shura-i Islamiya*."<sup>308</sup> During the *ulama* congress in 1917 that hosted more than 500 delegates from the five oblasts of Turkestan as well the Turgay and Ural'sk oblasts of the Steppe region, the question raised once again. The crucial importance in the *ulama's* resolution of the questions of religion and women. The *ulama* resolved that "the affairs of religion and of this world should not be separated, that is, everything from schools to questions of land and justice should be solved according to the *shariat*." Similarly, "Women should not have rights equal to those of men, but everyone should have rights according to one's station as adjudged by the *shariat*."<sup>309</sup>

On December 1, 1917, the Provisional Government of Turkistan distributed leaflets with the appeal to the population of Turkestan where it was said: "Extraordinary All-Muslim Congress urges all citizens of Turkestan - Muslims, Russians, Jews, workers, soldiers and peasants, all tribes and nations, municipal and local self-governments, political and professional bodies and unions, all public and private institutions that exist in the *kray* to rally round Turkestan popular rule and help to realize the difficult tasks entrusted to it" (Reports of provisional government of Autonomy Turkestan, 1917).<sup>310</sup>

It is important to stress that in the early Soviet years, the Bolsheviks, skillfully used *Jadid* ideology in the struggle against Pan-Islamism, pan-Turkism and *basmachi* in the republics of Central Asia. In the first years of Soviet power there were small works, which were written by historians - *Jadids* and party functionaries. These authors attempted to change the *Jadids* into real revolutionaries, who, together with the Bolsheviks would fight for the establishment of Soviet power in Turkestan, Khiva Khanate and the Bukhara Emirate. But in the late 1920's and early 1930's,

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<sup>308</sup> Khalid, Adeeb, "Tashkent 1917: Muslim Politics in Revolutionary Turkestan", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (Summer, 1996), p.286

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p.289

<sup>310</sup> Reports of provisional government of Turkestan, 1917, quoted in Khalid (1996), p.291

Bolsheviks uncovered the bourgeois essence of *Jadidism* and drove them under the tracks of the repressive machinery of Soviet power.<sup>311</sup>

Hostile position of the clergy became an impediment not only for activities of *Jadids* but for the whole Soviet campaign of liberation women in Central Asia. Importantly, hostility of both the Bolsheviks and the *ulema* further curtailed the *Jadids'* use of print. The former had the power to censor books and newspapers; the latter provided sustained opposition to every innovation introduced by the *Jadids*. Print provided the elite with a powerful instrument in their social struggles; it did not, however, define those struggles, nor could it transcend the material and political difficulties that marked them. The *Jadids* lacked the resources to counter the problems of low sales and political hostility.<sup>312</sup>

### 5.1.3. Position of Islamic Clergy

Another serious threat to the stability and development of the Party in the Central Asia was Muslim clergy that deserves consideration and estimation. The proof of this can be found in the article of Dmitriy Arapov that contains the original document of the estimation of the Muslim clergy of Uzbekistan by the representative of the Party department of the Central Asia Belskiy and Berman. The document is based on the analysis of the Cairo Congress and Mecca Congress of 1926,<sup>313</sup> where the representatives of Tataria, Bashkiria, Crimea, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan took part, and which was seen as an attempt to raise the Islamic religious feelings of the Soviet

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<sup>311</sup> Bobohonov, Rahimbek, "*Jadidism* as a Schools of Islam Modernization in Central Asia", *Centrasia.ru*, available at <http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1424558880>, accessed on 3 June, 2015

<sup>312</sup> Khalid, Adeeb, "Printing, Publishing, and Reform in Tsarist Central Asia", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (May, 1994), p.197

<sup>313</sup> Kramer, Martin, *Islam Assembled The Advent of the Muslim Congresses*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, p. 106

citizens by means of establishing international connections. The connections of the delegation with the emigrants in Turkey also influence the Central Asia. According to Muslim movement activist and orientalist Zeki Validov, Uzbek clergy can be the heart of the resistance movement against Soviet power that is why the organization and coordination are strongly recommended. Another issue of concern of the Soviet Party workers was the Congress organized by the Central Spiritual Administration in Ufa, in November 1926. The level of organization and the number of participants confirmed the necessity to counteract to the Muslim organization in the USSR.<sup>314</sup> Such organized movement of the Soviet Muslims should have been considered by the Soviets and the policies changing the traditional way of life and religion observance should have been more cautious. Nevertheless, as it can be traced from the analysis, Bolsheviks neglected issues of crucial importance but rather chose the struggle with Islam.

This can be understood from the point when Party workers Belskiy and Berman, in the secret document addressed to the head of the *Politbureau* (Political Bureau of the Communist Party) of the Central Asia Zelenskiy, argue that Uzbekistan is quite different from the region in general. Conservative clergy has much greater influence here and is based on feudal relations. Despite this, the support of the clergy is decreasing territorially, largely due to the land reform. The village (*kishlak*) clergy though losing its support among the population can appeal to the city clergy. Therefore, according to the Bolshevik estimations, the danger of the clergy is seen mainly as its lust for organization, and the latter will result in the unity of the clergy and the strengthening of existing, nearly dead spiritual administrations. This is aggravated due to the inability of the Party to rely either on one of the groups of clergy at the Spiritual Administration, although the progressive part of it support the actions of Bolsheviks in 'woman question'. The merger will provoke the assault of the clergy inevitably, and it would be dangerous for the situation in Uzbekistan, and even more than in the interior provinces of the Union consequences. Organization of

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<sup>314</sup>Keller, Shoshana, *To Moscow, Not Mecca: The Soviet Campaign Against Islam in Central Asia, 1917-1941*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001, p.98

the clergy would cover *kishlaks*, furthermore it can block the activities of the Party in the region.<sup>315</sup>

Needless to say that the position of the clergy as to 'woman question' was quite conservative, although there was progressive wing that stood for women's education. For instance, conservative, reactionary clergy of Uzbekistan, Shoshana Keller argues, was trying to counteract to the measures of the Bolsheviks in the region. Thus, they managed to establish Muslim version of *zhenotdels* to strengthen the role of Islam in women's lives. Furthermore, the education system was introduced by the mullah - based in private houses classes for women (education was supposed to be segregated) aimed at spreading first of all religious ideas and values.<sup>316</sup>

At the same time, progressive mullahs stood for women's liberation within Islamic norms, while some of them even argued for education of women and free access to mosque. At the same time, some representatives of the reformist clergy of Uzbekistan were trying to find the justification for the women's emancipation in Islamic law of Sharia. Thus, mullah Urunbaev wrote for the Spiritual Administration newspaper *Ferghana*:

According to the *Shari'a*, according to the testament of Muhammed, women occupy an equal position along with men before God. Women may pray five times a day equally with men; they may participate in social life. They also have the right, as men do, to visit [friends], go to the *bazar*, study, and receive an education. Women are even allowed to occupy such posts as judge of the *Shari'a* [*qadi*], *mutawalli*, and other [positions].<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Arapov, Dmitry, "Muslim Clergy of Uzbekistan in 1927. Estimate of the Plenipotentiary Representative of the United State Political Administration in Central Asia", *Bulletin of Eurasia*, No.4, 2006, pp. 160 - 173

<sup>316</sup> Keller, Shoshana, "Trapped between State and Society: Women's Liberation and Islam in Soviet Uzbekistan, 1926-1941", *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Spring 1998), p.33

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34

Unveiling became a matter of conflict between two wings of the clergy in Central Asia. While conservatives urged women to re-veil, by punishing those discordant, the liberal wing of the spiritual community accepted the Party policies due to the pragmatic issues - to preserve their power over the population. Issue of education for women also provoked various responses. As it can be understood, the conservative group of mullahs protested against schools of the Soviets as well as against *Jadids*. In Uzbekistan, local people set on fire schools, while others did not let their women attend schools.<sup>318</sup>

As it was discussed in the previous chapter, the Soviet administration promoted the rejection of religion as an official policy and utilized a vast range of opportunities to criticize religion and promote secular education. Adaptations of the public to them produced a new understanding of religiosity and religious life among the population in Uzbekistan.

## **5.2. Side Effects of the Soviet Policies in Central Asia**

The whole range of the unpredicted outcomes of the Soviet policies in Central Asia cannot be estimated. In our opinion, the most important of them that should be listed are the violence against women, the inability to correspond to the different roles, the spiritual values which women transmit appeared to be under the risk.

### **5.2.1. Resistance to the Soviet Policies**

In the early period of the campaign women were interested in it very little. They did not unveil; they failed to vote or otherwise assert their newly preferred rights; they avoided contact with Soviet agents and institutions; they failed to bring their

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<sup>318</sup>*Ibid.*, p.35

grievances to Soviet courts.<sup>319</sup> Those women who showed their willing to exercise their rights did it through massive, public, and dramatic violation of traditional taboos. For example, the mass incineration of veils during the celebration the Soviet Women's day on March, 8, 1927. Another example is the fact that applying for a divorce some women, especially young, claimed for the equal division of property and assignment of children.<sup>320</sup>

On their turn, Muslim males managed to find the way to evade the Soviet legal institutions and procedures.<sup>321</sup> So the forced and under-age marriages, *kalym* (bride price), polygamy, private ceremonies with mullah remained. Muslim men even did not report to ZAGS about the birth of child until he/she aged at least 1 year.

Sometimes Muslim males showed the signs of interest in female emancipation. As a response to Soviet politics some organizations that aimed 'to win back' women and youth emerged. They chose respected Muslim women in order to establish regular contacts with female masses; they conducted meetings and celebrations, involving women; encouraged women to veil; helped widows, poor women and children; established organizations for youth rival to Komsomol; recognized the necessity of education for women, establishing special girls' schools for 'religious enlightenment'; attracted women to Islam.<sup>322</sup>

Usually male responses to female self-assertion were forceful keeping them away from schools, voting booths etc. While more rich males were against the female participation insofar of fear of economic and political competition, negative effects on women's morality, relatively poor males did not resist a lot.<sup>323</sup> During 1925 –

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<sup>319</sup> Massell (1974), p.257

<sup>320</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 260 - 263.

<sup>321</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 266 – 269.

<sup>322</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 269 – 270.

<sup>323</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 274.

1927, the radical male response to the unveiling and female participation occurred. Muslim clergy, as well as male population of Central Asian republics accused women in nature disasters. Many unveiled women were raped and killed in large cities of Uzbekistan.<sup>324</sup> According to Marianne Kamp, at least 235 females in Uzbekistan were recorded as killed in 1927. She continues that by 1929, the figures raised up to 2000.<sup>325</sup> According to Kamp, women themselves were organizing special groups in order to punish those discordant and demand the veils back. At the same time, the crimes were not only against women but also targeted party workers and activists working among women.

In late 1927, as Northrop discusses the 'phenomenon of mass re-veiling'<sup>326</sup> started to spread among the female Muslims of Central Asia. As author notes, "some women re-veiled because of the threats from husbands, fathers, brothers and neighbors".<sup>327</sup> Women that participated in mass unveiling campaign of March 8 were not comfortable to appear on public any longer since it was being regarded as, consciously or subconsciously, a sin or a religious deviance. Restlessness, however, has not simply emerged from internal revenges and religious beliefs; instead readily established link between the unveiling and impurity –more specifically prostitution– caused the emergence of strong sense of discomfort among these women. From verbal to physical harassment, from death threats to rape, unveiled women confronted with various forms of traumatic cases. By 1928, it was reported that the outcomes of divorce ratings, unveiling and overall mobilization of the women had

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<sup>324</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 275 – 284.

<sup>325</sup> Kamp, Marianne, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan: Islam, Modernity, and Unveiling under Communism*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006, p. 186

<sup>326</sup> Northrop, Douglas, *Veiled Empire: Gender & Power in Stalinist Central Asia*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004, p. 97

<sup>327</sup>*Ibid.*, p.188

gone further than the Bolsheviks could have ever envisioned; due to some economic and psycho-cultural reasons like the isolation of divorced or unveiled women from their communities, the aforementioned outcomes have verged on the level of mass prostitution among the unveiled and divorced.<sup>328</sup>

As Douglas Northrop discusses in his article, the response to the unveiling campaign were various and conflicting. While Bolshevik agitators were seen as foreign urban atheists, the veil was seen as a symbol of Muslim Uzbek culture. In this way Bolsheviks reinforced the seclusion of women and gave a new impetus for protest in society. In fact, veil, as the author suggests, became the symbol of tradition in Central Asia and many women, after 1991, chose to use it.<sup>329</sup>

What Marianne Kamp calls *counter-khudzum*, or terror against those who chose to unveil, happened in the context of broad political and social conflict, such as 1916 uprising and *basmachi* movement. According to the scholar, the crimes against women were not spontaneous crimes of passion but rather planned, organized and involved groups of people. Apart from murdering certain activists, they aimed at terrorizing other women.<sup>330</sup>

### **5.2.2. Impact of the Cultural Assault on Religion and Everyday Life**

Another issue that raised as a consequence of the Soviet policies was the issue of the new and multiple identities for Muslim women. The traditional social roles and statuses were complemented by the new public roles - worker, student and so on.

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<sup>328</sup> Massell (1974), p.265

<sup>329</sup> Northrop, Douglas, "The Limits of Liberation: Gender, Revolution, and the Veil in Everyday Life in Soviet Uzbekistan", in J. Sahadeo and R. Zanca (eds), *EverydayLife in Central Asia Past and Present*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007, pp.89-10

<sup>330</sup> Kamp (2006), pp. 186 - 214



This required re-negotiation of the statuses by women as well as by their milieu. However, the Soviet authorities sometimes failed to consider this issue: as Thomas Ewing shows in his article analyzing the roles of the teachers in the Soviet Union, some women were praised for managing both occupations, while others were punished for giving priority to their families and children. In opinion of Party *apparatchiks* (representatives of the Communist Party of the USSR apparatus) the professional and ideological issues should have priority for the women.<sup>331</sup> This is proved by Douglas Northrop, who gives an example of the petition of the teachers of Samarkand, in his book *Veiled Empire*. According to him, women are criticizing the leadership for being not consequent in the liberating policies and not precluding those who oppose women in their will to unveil.<sup>332</sup>

What is more important here - the Party failed to establish the law enforcement mechanism against those who impeded these women and attacked them, and therefore authorities put women under the risk of not only being criticized by their community, but even attacked, raped and killed. How the Bolshevik leadership responded to the violence against women? First of all, it is important to say that the most violent behavior against women was recorded in Uzbekistan, which, as it was discussed before, suffered the most from the Soviet power. Economic losses were determined by the need to send the main product - cotton - to the Moscow; the clergy was quite conservative and highly organized; city population rate in Uzbekistan and the rate of literacy were quite low that determined the inertness of the local population. Therefore, the Uzbek Party Section was one of the first to respond to the challenges - Uzbek Criminal Code was revised twice in 1928 and 1929. Initially, minimum 8 years severe isolation for the crime of killing or severely wounding a woman on the basis of religious concerns or other daily matters whereas three years for humiliating women due to unveiling and two years for lighter versions of such

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<sup>331</sup> Ewing, E. Thomas, "Maternity and Modernity: Soviet Women Teachers and the Contradictions of Stalinism", *Women's History Review*, Vol.19, No.3 (2010), pp.451-477

<sup>332</sup> Northrop (2004), pp. 99 - 100

crimes were established. In 1929, the punishments for general opposition for unveiling were strengthened; murdering the unveiled women was regarded as an act of terrorism which by implication meant that the sentences for anti-Soviet terrorist activities may well be applied in cases of murders of unveiled women.<sup>333</sup>

Moreover, issuing a decree to illegalize the veil has publicly been discussed in 1928 and early 1929. The *Zhenotdel* activists, including Serafima Liubimova, former head of Central Asian *Zhenotdel*, were strongly in behalf of the enactment of such a decree, however, stressing on the importance of the political, economic and social mobilization and development of the material conditions of women rather than formally abolishing the veil, according to Massell, Kamp and Northrop the issue of outlawing veil was totally abandoned in January, in mid-April 1929 and in July 1929 respectively<sup>334</sup> due not to reach consensus because of inner-Party struggles and divergences and to the lack of massive popular support. By mid-1929, Central Committee of the Communist Party decided to retreat in terms of the policies of unveiling and according to this new Bolshevik standpoint, official encouragement for unveiling would be terminated, "administered massive unveiling in public as an overly crude and dangerous violation of local customs" would be stopped and the women who wanted to unveil would be kept under scrutiny<sup>335</sup>.

Religion, not only as a faith but as a more broad identity represented in culture, rituals and everyday life, suffered the most from the Bolsheviks' assault, in our opinion. Thus, Timur Dadabaev discussed how life under the Soviet government not only resulted in changes in lifestyles but also redrew the 'boundaries' of 'proper'/'modernized' religious life and of what are now considered to be the religious remnants of the past. Soviet administration promoted the rejection of religion as an official policy and utilized a vast range of opportunities to criticize religion and

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<sup>333</sup> Kamp (2006), pp.207, 211

<sup>334</sup> Kamp (2006), p.209; Massell (1974), pp.350-352; Northrop (2004), p.297

<sup>335</sup> Massell (1974), pp.353-354

promote secular education. Adaptations of the public to them produced a new understanding of religiosity and religious life among the population in Uzbekistan.<sup>336</sup> Although religious practices might be abandoned, and the Shari'a prohibited, some rites and customs appeared to be more viable. According to Ewa Chylinski some ritual practices such as marriage, name-giving, burial rather appeared to be a mixture of the traditional and Soviet culture that conformed to peoples' understanding of the duty to family and community, whereas circumcision, examined in her article, as Muslim religious and cultural phenomenon, had no Soviet analogue. Its social meaning as differentiating person from representative of any other religion, making him Muslim prevented this rite's disappearance.<sup>337</sup>

The surrogate nature of the rituals after the Bolsheviks' assault was also proved by the research of Elizabeth A. Constantine.<sup>338</sup> The interviews she conducted with the Uzbek women revealed that the criminalization of the religious and everyday practices resulted in adaptation of the people, such as praying at home, for instance. However, as the author notes, some women internalized Soviet ideology, they started to consider religiosity as backwardness and utilized the facilities like schools, kindergartens and so on.<sup>339</sup>

Religion as 'a burden of the past, especially for women', that keeps her in 'a repressed social status' was criticized by the poem *Zaynab and Aman*, by Uzbek poet Hamid Alimjan. The analysis of this poem by David Montgomery reveals the approach that

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<sup>336</sup> Dadabaev, Timur, "Religiosity and Soviet 'Modernisation' in Central Asia: Locating Religious Traditions and Rituals in Recollections of Antireligious Policies in Uzbekistan", *Religion, State and Society*, Vol.42, No.4 (2014), pp.328-353

<sup>337</sup>Chylinski, Ewa A. 'Ritualism of Family Life in Soviet Central Asia: The Sunnat (Circumcision)', in Shirin Akiner (ed.) *Cultural Change And Continuity In Central Asia*, London and New York: Routledge, 1991, p.169

<sup>338</sup> Elizabeth A. Constantine "Practical Consequences of Soviet Policy and Ideology for Gender", in Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca (eds), *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007, pp. 115-126

<sup>339</sup>*Ibid.*, p.123

"the desirable goal of modernization was finally achieved" in the Soviet Central Asia. The young girl Zaynab is the ideal for all women - she is educated, working at the collective farm, and free in her expression of the will. The traditions of the girl's family that symbolize the way of life of the Central Asian are criticized by poet, as remnants of the past.<sup>340</sup> Another literary example of the condemnation of the practices associated with the religion can be found in the works of the Kyrgyz writer Chyngyz Aitmatov. Thus, in *First Teacher*, he obviously stands against the traditions of the Muslims to marry under-aged girls against their will, and presents the fruits of the modernization and education.<sup>341</sup>

From the perspective of the Soviet approach to the religion discussed above, and due to the extensive role of women in preservation and transmission of Islam, Yvonne Corcoran-Nantes concludes, that the latter aggravated the negative impact of the Socialist assault on the spiritual sphere.<sup>342</sup> Although Corcoran-Nantes suggests that after the revolution, in the context when women were restricted in their access to the religious education, *otines* - females coming from religious dynasties and occupying positions equal to mullahs, preserved Islam in the Central Asia,<sup>343</sup> it is hard to measure the extend of the outcomes. The author argues that the Islam presented an obstacle to the Soviet authorities, though; it is a mistake to think that there was a clear delineation between those who joined the Bolsheviks apparatus and those who opposed it. As Northrop shows, there were Uzbeks who were the members of the

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<sup>340</sup>Montgomery, David C., "«Zaynab and Aman»: Love and Women's Liberation in the 1930s, a Story Poem by Hamid Alimjan", in Shirin Akiner (ed.) *Cultural Change And Continuity In Central Asia*, London and New York: Routledge, 1991, pp. 1-13

<sup>341</sup> Aitmatov, Chyngyz, *First Teacher*, Moscow: Azbuka Klassika, 2008

<sup>342</sup> Corcoran-Nantes, Yvonne *Lost Voices: Central Asian Women Confronting Transition*. London and New York: Zed Books, 2005, pp. 137 - 148

<sup>343</sup>*Ibid.*, p.140

Party, but at the same time reluctant as to the 'woman question'.<sup>344</sup> At the same time, Constantine maintains that despite the neglect of the religious practices, use of alcohol, many Central Asians still consider themselves as Muslims.

Analyzing the outcomes of the Soviet policies, we believe, it is important to avoid generalization, but rather to note certain trends in the society. As Gregory Massel argues, women appeared to be transmitters of the Socialist ideology, especially young females who benefited from the Soviet innovations through the education system, state supported childcare, medicine, production sphere and many other issues.<sup>345</sup> While no one can say the number of the females who opposed the Bolsheviks' policies and those who adopted them, the decrease in the religious affiliation of those who benefited from the socialist system is obvious.

### **5.3. Discussion of the Soviet Policies**

One must remember that the outcomes of the Soviet policies cannot be analyzed as merely positive or negative. While the woman's status in society was re-negotiated due to the Bolsheviks' innovations, the following outcomes of the latter should not be neglected. The formation of the Central Asian states as the result of the delineation policies; the introduction of the education; the social protection of the population including free medical care, kindergartens; public services; legislative protection of the females can be attributed to the positive changes in the Central Asia. Though, when it comes to the less analyzed issues, the discussed about killings and attacks against women are not the exhaustive list.

For instance, Douglas Northrop discusses the position of the Central Asian native population in the context of the Soviet policies as a subaltern: "the imposition of

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<sup>344</sup> Northrop, Douglas, "Subaltern Dialogues: Subversion and Resistance in Soviet Uzbek Family Law", *SlavicReview*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Spring, 2001), pp. 115-139

<sup>345</sup> Massel (1974)

legal norms by a colonizing power can create a discursive sphere in which the contradictions of colonial rule both flourish and are laid open for all to see, a situation that certainly existed in Soviet Central Asia".<sup>346</sup> By introducing legislation on under-age marriages, polygamy, *kalym* the Soviet activists in fact criminalized the everyday life (*byt*) of the Muslims in Central Asia, establishing the canon, the official vision of the right world.<sup>347</sup> The rigid assertive Party policies as it was shown before failed to realize the peculiarities of the milieu they entered. In fact, Soviet activists appeared to be not liberators but rather colonizers.

The issue of the secondary role of the spiritual world for the Bolsheviks can be analyzed not only as an abandonment of the religious observance, but also as a neglect of the culture of the ethnos. This can be traced in the works of the Soviet writer Chyngyz Aitmatov. For instance in *Legend About Mankurt*, author appeals for those young people who lost the connection with their roots, culture, and motherland.<sup>348</sup> Thus, Simon Crisp proves this by the following findings: between 1926 and 1959, the number of non-Russians claiming Russian as their native language increased by 3.3 million.<sup>349</sup> The author ascribes this to the use of the Russian language in the educational institutions of the different levels; the Soviet troops presence; the ideology of supra-national and supra-ethnic consciousness; the role of the language in the job promotion.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>346</sup> Northrop (2001), p.117

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>348</sup> Aitmatov, Chyngyz, *Legend About Mankurt*, in *And The Day Lasts More Than a Century*, Moscow, Azbuka Klassika, 2008

<sup>349</sup> Crisp, Simon, "*Census and Sociology: Evaluating the Language Situation in Soviet Central Asia*", in Shirin Akiner (ed.) *Cultural Change And Continuity In Central Asia*, London and New York: Routledge, 1991, p.84

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84 - 123

As Deniz Kandiyoti argued the most thoroughly internalized feature of Soviet policies for women in Central Asia was not the message of gender equality (despite the existence of quotas for women and other forms of affirmative action) but that of social protection by the state. The Soviet system which in fact was the alternative to the capitalism, according to the author, secured reproduction of family and communal life.<sup>351</sup>

What is neglected by Bolsheviks themselves as well as by many researchers is the standpoint of women themselves. In opinion of Freeman, the absence of a women's movement in Central Asia before the revolution was an impediment for the Soviet activists. Author argues that women had no experience of public campaigns, formulation and expression of their demands. The Turkestan Communist Party under Tsarist regime did not hire the people from the local population and rather saw them as inferior. In addition, the Russian chauvinism exhibited by some members of the Turkestan Communist Party left a legacy of mistrust between it and the wider population. This mistrust and even hostility of the local people towards the Moscow officials and activists was aggravated due to their demands for women to work, to study and unveil.<sup>352</sup> It is important to mention that women themselves, under these circumstances, could not realize and pursue their own goals as to their status in society. This is supported by the view of Shirin Akiner who argued that

Central Asian women did not in fact assume the role of a revolutionary force to destroy traditional society. Rather, they colluded in its preservation: by accommodating external pressures through the adoption of additional identities, appropriate to the public sphere, they deflected intrusions into the private domain, thereby protecting the integrity of the older disposition of family roles.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> Kandiyoti, Deniz, "The Politics of Gender and the Soviet Paradox: Neither Colonized, nor Modern?" *Central Asian Survey* Vol.26, No.4 (December, 2007), pp. 601–623

<sup>352</sup> Freeman, Jacqui, "The Emancipation of Women in Soviet Central Asia from 1917 to 1940. Strategies, Successes and Failures", in Sevkett Akyildiz and Richard Carlson (eds.) *Social and Cultural Change in Central Asia: Soviet Legacy*, London and New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 42

<sup>353</sup> Akiner, Shirin, "Between Tradition and Modernity: the Dilemma Facing Contemporary Central Asian Women", in M. Buckley (ed.) *Post-Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 17

To sum up this chapter, the outcomes of the Soviet policies cannot be estimated easily and unambiguously. The Russian imperialist and later Soviet (but *russifying*) policies provoked responses of the native population which also affected the outcomes. Different understanding of gender and role of man and woman in society cause violence against women. Besides, the renegotiation of the female identity took place - women started to lose the role in religious and cultural practices that devaluated their meaning sometimes; but instead acquired the professional status. Additionally, the social care provided by authorities was important factor of incorporation of many native women into the Soviet production.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

This thesis is an analysis of the Soviet policies related to women emancipation in Central Asia between 1917 and 1953. The Marxist theory which was the base of the Bolsheviks policies, and particularly the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, as well as the ideas and works of the outstanding Soviet feminist and activist Alexandra Kollontai are discussed. A special attention is paid to the Soviet propaganda in mass media and mass culture; and to the analysis of the Soviet propaganda posters of the mentioned period. Furthermore, this work focused on the emancipation policies themselves and covered the following issues: the main institutions dealing with the women in the USSR (*Zhenotdels*, delegates' meetings etc.); main legal provisions regarding women and family (particularly, issues of marriage, divorce, kidnapping of bride, *kalym* etc.); educational policies; family and health issues (especially issues of fertility and abortions); employment and labor conditions; public activities of women. Finally, the last chapter of the thesis concentrated primarily on the peculiarities of the Central Asia, such as the role of Islam as a system of beliefs, clergy, and traditions that affected the work of the Soviet activists; *basmachis* and *Jadids* movements that affected the outcomes of the Bolsheviks work in the region. It also touched upon the side effects of the Soviet policies; evaluating achievement, positive and negative outcomes of the reforms.

To sum up the findings of the research, it is reasonable to start with the Marxist theory; insofar it included many contradictions and omissions. Thus, as it was shown in the theory chapter, Marx and Engels, elaborating on the oppression of women with the appearance of the private property and labor division, failed to discuss how these two led to the minimization of the role of women in society, i.e. failed to explain the roots of the domestic oppression. Similarly, these authors failed to explain the patriarchy institution as well as the lasting female 'slavery'.

The Marxists approached woman only through the system of production and the relations of productions: the woman was seen as a producer, either of the humans or material goods, and the latter played a crucial role for the theoreticians. This explains the absence of the focus on the female identity itself. Woman was rather an object for Marxists, she was supposed to be liberated and brought to production. Her time, mind and body were prescribed to the tasks of the Socialism. Housework was humbled: its cost and value were less in comparison with the material production. Such utilitarian approach left no space for the female rights and thoughts; Marxists could not even imagine that woman may want to become a wife and a mother. Therefore, they failed to see the difference of goals of men and women.

Such picture was generalized and had no provisions as to different religious and ethnic groups, so everyone had to fit to the Socialist scheme. All the women were subordinated to this scheme regardless of their multiple statuses. Besides, discussing the role of women, Marxists touched upon the representatives of only proletariat, while the other classes were left outside of the scheme.

Moreover, Marxists did not touch upon the issue of the domestic violence in their program. Later, when Bolsheviks faced the violence against women in Central Asia, the corresponding provisions were be adopted by the Party. However, this could not protect the victim of the policies, but rather showed the inconsistent character of Bolsheviks' work.

The original contribution of this thesis is in the analysis of the Soviet posters, not only as a piece of art, but as a propaganda material. As it can be summarized, they illustrate the program of the Bolsheviks as well as their activity regarding 'woman question'. There can be traced three common themes in the examined poster. The first one and the most popular topic of the propaganda materials is education. The whole poster can be devoted to this or certain elements of the one, such as books and notebooks, classrooms are used by author. This signifies not only achievements of the Bolsheviks but also their call for future development: women are required to join the students and workers. Important feature of the female figures their simplified image, general rough picture, which had no feminine features, or elegant cloths or

coquetry in behavior. The image of woman is minimalistic, while cloths allow distinguishing worker from peasant. At the same time, minimalistic image of woman, especially her clothes and lack of accessories aim at stressing the non-material value of person for the Soviet, importance of its work and ideas that allowed to attract many new people to the Party membership regardless of their social and financial status. Moreover, the posters mainly present adult woman that reveals the lack of schools education for children before the Bolsheviks.

The second theme of the posters that should not be neglected is the participation of women in the production and public life. Thanks to the Soviets she can become a worker of the factory, a member of the village council or even a pilot - in this way the possibilities of women are shown as broad and not limited to 'kitchen slavery'. According to the authors, this secures not only woman's well-being but the development of the country in general. As Victoria Bonnell presented in *Iconography*, new heroes were created in the Soviet Union in mid-1930s to fill the existing vacuum.

Finally, the analysis shows the importance of the women's emancipation and liberation topic in this type of art. The women rights abuses are also seen in the posters where man is beating his wife or trying to close her at home. Unveiling campaign, although not presented in details as separate topic, still found its place in the works of the Soviet artists. Artists also touched upon participatory rights of women, particularly elections of the Soviets. Personal security and freedom of action are another important themes of the Soviet art.

Important feature of the propaganda posters was visual monologue. Visual propaganda engages either praise or blame as its tools. From the top down the monologue was established by the Party of Communists, as well as the notion of 'otherness' was introduced. Furthermore, the 'others' were either assimilated and utilized as a social type (worker, peasant, and ethnic national) or labeled as enemy - prostitute, for instance, or Muslim clergy.

It is important to note that the Soviet propaganda underline the role of the collective, group in the work among women - on her own woman cannot cope with the issues.

Another aspect is the leading role of the Russian republic, and the secondary role of those being led - the Central Asian republics. As I mentioned before, these countries are shown as backward, traditional and that need to be educated and liberated in order to reach the level of the Russia.

In comparison with the number of posters in Russian, and oriented either for Russians or for the whole USSR, the posters for the Central Asian countries, written in local languages are few. Their feature is the failure to integrate the Socialist reality into the culture and traditions of the native peoples but rather rejection of it. This radicalism and spontaneous nature, the lack of flexibility will provoke the severe response of the Muslim community and clergy, as it was discussed in the fourth chapter of the thesis. Besides, posters regarding Central Asian republics have women as the central figure that proves the argument of Gregory Massel that the Muslim women were chosen as a surrogate mothers for the Socialist ideas, as a tool of spreading them. Party leadership chose to deal with the women, as more flexible stratum of the society instead of directly affecting male population.

The analysis of the main organizations engaged in the work with women, particularly *Zhenotdel* and established by them delegates meetings reveal the following aspects. Firstly, *Zhenotdel* should not be treated as organization of women and for women. It is rather a Communist Party section that aimed at sharing the Party doctrine and bringing to the Party female workers. This is also proved by research of Patterson (2011). Under such conditions, the female citizens of the USSR who are not engaged into the production, industrial or agricultural, are not able to participate in the meetings and decision-making process. In fact, the absence of the civil society in the USSR, the absence of the tradition of social movements and organizations in Central Asia, and the totalitarian regime, prevented the Party activists from establishing the organizations dealing with the 'woman question' outside of the CPSU. This resulted in the inability of the Party to address the issues of women to the full extent.

At the same time, the Soviet emancipatory policies cannot be evaluated unambiguously. On the one hand, it should be admitted that Bolsheviks in fact created the Central Asian republics as a result of the delineation policy. Their

achievements in the work with the women can be seen in the growing literacy rates, decreasing influence of the traditional and religious institutions, participation of women in production and administration. The legal provisions as to the protection of the rights of women should also not be neglected. However, on the other hand, the aim of the Communist Party, was the creating of the gender-free person capable of perceiving the official ideology and building socialism. Woman was perceived only through the prism of the proletariat class, therefore the representatives of the other classes were ignored. The so-called involvement of women in work was in fact not that promising - the lower positions as well as wages did not allow women to be promoted. Women appeared to be not only a final goal, but also a tool of such policies, as it was shown in this thesis. Needless to say that the Muslim societies of Central Asia resisted to the emancipation of their women. It resulted in mass killings of thousands of women.

Furthermore, the legal provision of the Soviet authorities that substituted the religious marriages resulted in the *de-familization*, primitivization of the relations between man and woman, insofar as the marriage lost its value and sanctity. The simplification of the divorce procedure resulted in the growing number of divorces that proves our argument. At the same time, the introduction of the kindergartens and crèches aggravated the issue - nuclear family appeared under the threat. In this regard, it is possible to say that the state gave itself the right to control the private sphere of its citizens, such as marriage, birth, children upbringing.

As to the education of women, with no doubts it can be estimated as a positive achievement of the Communist Party. However, it should not be forgotten that the education was provided through the prism of Party ideology, socialist values, and with the Russian bias. Therefore, the negative outcome of these policies lies particularly in the neglect of the national languages and the promotion of the Russian, neglect of Islam as a system of knowledge, values and practices, and the secondary role of the national and local issues.

Another important issue was involvement of women into the production sphere. As it can be seen from the corresponding chapter, this was one of the main goals of the

Soviet leadership. Women were perceived through the production theory and seen as a passive object that can be manipulated. However, it is important to mention, that only industry was given a priority. The agricultural sphere was neglected by the Bolsheviks. Moreover, the leading positions were also difficult to achieve by women due to the lack of education and qualification.

Unveiling, women's education and public activities became a matter of conflict between different social groups in Central Asia. While conservatives urged women to re-veil, by punishing those discordant, the liberal wing of the spiritual community accepted the Party policies due to the pragmatic issues - to preserve their power over the population. Issue of education for women also provoked various responses. As it can be understood, the conservative group of mullahs protested against schools of the Soviets as well as against *Jadids*. In Uzbekistan, local people set on fire schools, while others did not let their women attend schools.

As it was discussed in the previous chapter, the Soviet administration promoted the rejection of religion as an official policy and utilized a vast range of opportunities to criticize religion and promote secular education. Adaptations of the public to them produced a new understanding of religiosity and religious life among the population in Uzbekistan.

The Russian imperialist and later Soviet (but russifying) policies provoked responses of the native population which also affected the outcomes. Different understanding of gender and role of man and woman in society caused violence against women. Furthermore, Party activists, calling women to abandon their traditional conservative way of life failed to protect those that became a victim of violence of their male relatives. In fact, Party policies related to women appeared to be inconsistent and unfinished. They lacked mechanism of protection of women as well as mechanisms of punishment of aggressors.

Besides, the renegotiation of the female identity took place: women started to lose the role in religious and cultural practices that devaluated their meaning sometimes; but instead acquired the professional status. From the perspective of transmitting religious and traditional values in her community, woman started to lose its role,

instead, she started to share the elements of the Socialist ideology. Additionally, the social care provided by authorities was important factor of incorporation of many native women into the Soviet production. The reveal of the heavy burden of giving birth to numerous children, taking care of them and being responsible for the housework, women were eager to utilize the benefits of the Socialist production, supported by the social and medical care systems.

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## APENDICES

### A. TURKISH SUMMARY

Bu tez 1917 ve 1953 yılları arasında, Orta Asyalı kadınların özgürleştirilmesini hedef edinen Sovyet politikalarını, Marksist teorisyenlerin, Sovyet liderliğinin ve siyasetleri şekillendiren Sovyet feminist aktivistlerinin yaklaşımları ışığında, Orta Asya'daki Bolşevik faaliyetlerinin analizinden de yararlanarak incelemektedir. Bu konu odak noktasının darlığı ve özel önemi nedeniyle seçilmiştir: Mevcut literatür ve tezler birkaç bölümü 'kadın sorunu'na (örn. Sheila Fitzpatrick (2000),<sup>354</sup>Wendy Z. Goldman (1993)<sup>355</sup>, ya da belirli ülkelere, örn. Marianne Kamp (2008),<sup>356</sup> ve daha küçük bölgelere ayırmakla birlikte Sovyetler Birliği'ni genel anlamıyla ele almaktadırlar. Bazı yazarlar ise tek bir kitabı tamamen cinsiyet konusuna ayırmışlardır (Linda Edmondson (1992)<sup>357</sup>. Bazı diğer araştırmacılar ise Sovyet lider kadrolarının odaklandığı belirli konulara yoğunlaşmışlardır ( Lynne Attwood'un (1999)<sup>358</sup> Sovyet kadın dergileri üzerinden kadın kimliği kurgusunu analizi; Amy E.

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<sup>354</sup>Fitzpatrick, Sheila, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000

<sup>355</sup> Goldman, Wendy Z., *Women, the State and Revolution. Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993

<sup>356</sup> Kamp, Marianne, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008

<sup>357</sup> Edmondson, Linda, *Women and Society in Russia and the Soviet Union*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992

<sup>358</sup> Attwood, Lynne, *Creating the New Soviet Woman Women's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity, 1922-53*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999

Randall'ın (2001)<sup>359</sup> kürtaj karşıtı Sovyet propagandası üzerine araştırması; Melanie Ilic'in (1994)<sup>360</sup> Sovyet maden sektöründe iş güvenliği düzenlemeleri üzerine çalışması). Bu çalışmalar her ne kadar, Sovyetler Birliği'ne kısıtlı ulaşım şartlarında bile, belge araştırmasına (örn: süreli medya arşivleri, mevzuat analizleri) dayansalar da Sovyetlerin özellikle de Orta Asya'daki kadın politikaları konusunu bütünüyle aydınlatmayı başaramamışlardır. Bilhassa SSCB'nin büyüklüğü ve çokkültürlü yapısı, ve bunlara bağlı olarak farklı bölgelerde aynı sonuçları elde etmeyi başaramaması meselesi bu çalışmalarda ihmal edilmiştir. Zira bölgenin tarihi, dili ve kültürel özelliklerini içeren alan bilgisinin eksikliği söz konusudur.

### **Araştırmanın Teorik Arka planı**

Bu tezde, Sovyetlerin resmi ideolojisi olan ve feminist sorunlar dahil gündelik hayatın bir çok konusunu dikkate alan Marksist teori kullanılmıştır. 1884 yılında Engels, *Ailenin, Devletin ve Özel Mülkiyetin Kökeni*<sup>361</sup> adlı kitabında üretim biçiminin değişimi ve kadının toplumdaki statüsü arasındaki bağlantıyı tartışmıştır. Engels'e göre feodalizmden toprağın özel mülkiyetine geçişin kadının statüsüne büyük etkisi olmuştur. Bu geçişin sonucunda kamusal ve özel alan ayrımı ve maaşlı işe erkekler lehine erişim ortaya çıkmıştır.

Engels kadının ezilmesinin biyolojik konumunun değil, toplumsal ilişkilerin bir sonucu olduğunu savunur. Erkeklerin, kadınların emeğini ve cinsel yaşamını kontrol etme arzusu zamanla çekirdek aileyi oluşturmuştur. Engels, kadınlara atfedilen ahlaki

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<sup>359</sup> Randall, Amy E., "Abortion Will Deprive You of Happiness!" Soviet Reproductive Politics in the Post-Stalin Era", *Journal of Women's History*, Vol.23 No.3 (2011), pp.13–38

<sup>360</sup> Ilic, Melanie, "Women Workers in the Soviet mining industry: a Case - Study on Labor Protection", *Europe – Asia Studies*, Vol. 48, No.8 (December 1996), pp.1387 – 1401

<sup>361</sup> Engels, Friedrich, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Chippendale: Resistance Books, 2008

görevleri, özellikle de cinsel saflık ve bekaretin önemini Marksist teorinin ışığında analiz etmiştir. Bu bağlamda zina cezalandırılmış ve her kadının eşine ait olduğu aşılannmıştır. Bu bakış açısının kökeni, köle sahibi sınıfın özel mülkiyeti kontrol edip bunu sadece kendi mirasçılara iletmeyi amaçladığı eski çağlara uzanır. Bu durum, erkekler arasında kadınların cinsel ve yeniden üretken yetilerinin üzerindeki denetimin sadece mülk sahibi erkeklere ait olmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır. Dolayısıyla Marksizm kadının ezilmesinin sınıfın ezilmesine benzer olduğunu savunarak, erkek ve kadın arasındaki ilişkiyi proletarya ve burjuvazi arasındakine benzetir.<sup>362</sup> Kapitalistlerin ve egemen sınıfın çıkarlarına hizmet ettiği sürece kadını ezilmesi, sınıfın ezilmesinin bir işlevidir. Egemen sınıf, erkeklerin desteğini almak için onların çıkarlarını güvenceye alırken aynı zamanda kadının ev emeğinin ücretsiz olmasını sağlar. Bu da erkeklerin kadınlardan ayrışmasına yol açar.

Lenine göre bu durumdan kurtulmanın tek yolu, kadınların ücretli çalışanlara dönüşerek, sosyalist devrimin yolunu açacak sınıf mücadelesine aktif olarak katılmasıdır. Bu anlamda ayrımcılıktan, sömürüden ve baskıdan arınmış bir toplum, etkili bir kadın erkek eşitliğinin şartı olarak görülmüştür.<sup>363</sup> Marksistler, kadın emeğinin güvenceye alınması için, çocukların bakımını sağlayacak okul ve kreş sistemlerini, kadını ‘mutfak köleliği’nden kurtaracak halka açık kafe ve restoranların kurulmasını ve başta çamaşırhaneler olmak üzere evişinin yükünü azaltacak yeni keşifleri öngörmektedir.

Bu tez Bölgenin (Rus nüfusunun varlığına rağmen), İslam, gelenekler, yerel topluluklar ve göçebe geçmişin yoğun etkisiyle Sovyetler Birliği’nin geri kalanından farklılık arzetmesine yol açan Orta Asya Müslümanlarını incelemeye odaklanmaktadır. Yukarıda bahsedilen çalışmaların aksine bu tez, izlenen siyasetlerin uygulaması ve sonuçlarını genellemekten ziyade bölgenin benzersizliğine vurgu yapmayı hedeflemektedir. Sovyetlerin tüm SSCB’de aynı

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<sup>362</sup>Vogel, Lise, *Marxism and the Oppression of Women:Toward a Unitary Theory*, Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2013

<sup>363</sup> Vladimir Lenin, *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, in *Collected Works*, 4th edition, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964 (original transcription by R.Cymbala ), Vol.3, p. 548

özgürleşme söylemini yaymalarına rağmen, bu bölgenin diğerlerinden daha çok direndiği görülmüştür. Bolşevik müdahalesinin eksikleri ve olumsuz etkileri, Komünistlere katılma eğilimi gösteren kadınların toplu katliamlarla karşı karşıya kalmasına yol açmıştır.

Tezin kapsamı olarak 1917 ve 1953 yılları arasındaki dönemin seçilmesinin çeşitli nedenleri vardır. 1917 yılında Rusya’da iktidara gelen Bolşevikler, 1950’lere kadar yeni bir devleti oluşturmaya, vatandaşları seferber etmeye ve bu tezin üçüncü bölümünde gösterileceği gibi kadınların bedenini bile içeren, aile işleri ve dini meseleler gibi özel hayatın bir çok alanında bütünüyle parti kontrolünü sağlamaya odaklanmışlardır. Bu dönemde, Sovyetler Birliğini fikirleri ve siyasetleriyle şekillendiren iki önemli aktörün, Vladimir Lenin ve Josef Stalin’in önderliği hakimdir. Stalin’in 1953’te ölmesinin ardından kamusal, siyasal ve ekonomik hayatın tüm alanlarında serbestleşmeyi başlatan çözülme ortaya çıkmıştır. İncelenen bu dönem kendi içinde ikiye ayrılabilir. Birinci dönem olan 1917-1920, *Jenotdeller* (Sovyetler Birliği Komünist Partisi’nin kadın kolları) ve *Jensovetler* (Komünist Parti’nin kadın işkolu) çerçevesindeki kurumsal faaliyetler, ayrıca aile alanında ve kadınların siyasi seferberliğinde yeni denemeler ve yeni mevzuatın yürürlüğe girmesi önplandadır. 1920’den 1950’lerin ortasına kadar süren dönem, cinsiyetsiz yeni Sovyet insanı’nın oluşturulması çabasıyla toplumun *androjenizasyonu* ile karakterize edilebilir.

Bu tezin temel amacı, Orta Asya’daki Sovyet özgürleştirme politikalarının görece başarısız olmasının etkilerini incelemektir. Bu çalışma, Bolşeviklerin çalışmalarına sekte vuran faktörleri ve sözkonusu siyasetlerin olumsuz sonuçlarını sunacaktır. Tezin teorik bölümünde gösterileceği gibi, Marksistlerin genelleştirilmiş, ütopyik ve çatışma odaklı ideolojik yaklaşımı kadın kimliğinin kendi başına analiz edilmesini ihmal etmiş, ayrıca dinin ve geleneklerin önemini içeren manevi yaşam alanını görmezden gelmiştir. Bu bağlamda tezin amacı sözkonusu yaklaşımın etkilerini tartışmak ve özellikle de Orta Asya’da, Bolşeviklerin özgürleştirme politikaları sonucunda oluşan üretim sistemi ışığında cinsiyeti analiz etmektir. Ayrıca Sovyet

siyasetlerinin sonucunu deęerlendirirken, *basmaçı* (ayaklanma) ve *Cedidler* (eęitim) hareketlerinin Orta Asya'daki etkisini göz önünde bulundurmak önem taşımaktadır.

Sovyet önderlik kadrolarının ve feminist aktivistlerin, Müslüman kadınları özgürleştirme ve yeni Sovyet kadınına oluşturma tutkularının yanında, bu insanların gündelik hayatının geleneksel ve dinsel boyutlarını görmeyi ihmal ettiklerini savunmak mümkündür. Ayrıca sözkonusu aktörler, bu kadınları kendi toplumlarında ve ailelerinde Sosyalist ideolojiyi yayacak bir araç olarak kullanmaya çalışmışlardır. Üretim ve karın ekonomik önemine dayanan, ve kadını özgürleştirmeyi öncelikle onu üretim alanına geri götürerek ekonomik bağımsızlık sağlamak olarak gören bütüncül Marksist ideoloji, cinsiyetin, ailenin ve geleneksel toplumların manevi yönlerini görmezden gelmiş, ve bu yüzden Orta Asya ülkelerinde başarısız olmuştur. Kadını üretim ve sınıf paradigmasından tanımlayan bu yaklaşım sadece proletaryaya önyargıyla yaklaşp diğer sınıfların temsilcilerini ihmal etmekle kalmamakta, ayrıca bir anne ve ev kadını olarak kadının kendisini de değersizleştirmektedir.

Üstelik Bolşevikler, önce Çarlık rejimine ve daha sonra da Bolşeviklere yönelerek Orta Asya'da Ruslar ve Müslümanlar arasındaki çatışmayı şiddetlendiren, *basmaçı* ayaklanmasının varlığını görmezden gelmişlerdir. Ayrıca faaliyetleri iddialı, spontane ve planlanmamış olduğu için sonuç vermekten uzak olmuştur. Sonuç olarak, kadınlar arasında çalışmaya başlayan Bolşevikler, bu sırada şiddet kurbanı olan kadınları korumayı başaramamıştır. Ayrıca, yeni Sosyalist değerleri kadınlar aracılığıyla empoze eden Bolşevikler, Orta Asya cumhuriyetlerindeki nüfus arasında İslam'ı değersizleştirmiştir.

## **Yöntem**

Öncelikle bu tez belge araştırmasına dayanmaktadır. Bu anlamda, 1924 ve 1936 Sovyet Anayasalarının tahliline özellikle önem verilmiştir. Ardından çalışmaya mevzuat analiziyle devam edilmiştir: Orta Asya'daki geleneksel ve dinsel düzenlemelerin yerine geçen Sovyetler Birliği Aile Yasası, kız kaçırma ve *kalym*



(gelinin ailesinin evlilikten önce aldığı para, başlık parası) uygulamalarını yasaklayan Ceza Yasası, SSCB'deki eğitim kanunları, kürtaj, çalışma koşullarıyla ilgili kararnameler, 8 Mart Kadınlar Günü kutlamaları, ve yerel yasal düzenlemeler incelenmiştir. Bunlar 1917 ve 1953 yılları arasında SSCB'de kadın, aile ve doğurganlıkla ilgili yayınlanan yasama belgelerini içermektedir.

İkinci olarak, kadın vizyonunu anlamak için önemli bir kaynak olan propaganda araçları değerlendirilecektir. Bunlar, öncelikle Sovyet feministleri Zetkin, Kollontai ve Lenin'in feodalizm ve kapitalizmde kadının ezilmesini ve sosyalist sistemin getireceği değişimleri tartışan tüm makalelerini içermektedir. Ayrıca yazar, Sosyalist ideolojiyi yayarak başarılı işçilerin ve onların kazanımlarının örneklerini sunan dergiler ve gazeteler dahil olmak üzere, süreli basın yayın organlarının arşivlerine odaklanmıştır. Bunlar *Kommunistka* (Komünist Kadın), *Rabotnitsa* (İşçi Kadın), *Pravda* (Hakikat), *Bednota* (Yoksul) gazetelerinin 1917 ve 1953 yılları arasındaki yayınlarının analizini içermektedir.

Bu tezde ayrıca görsel araçların -propaganda posterlerinin- analizinden yararlanılmıştır. Söz konusu dönemde Sovyetler Birliği'nde yayınlanan ve kadınları eğitim görmeye, doğurganlığını korumaya, çalışmaya vs. çağıran yirmi orjinal poster, birincil ve ikincil kaynakların bulgularını gösterip doğrulamak için seçilmiştir. Posterler, 'demir perde'nin varlığı, SSCB'ye dair istatistiklerin ve diğer bilgilerin gizli ya da tahrif edilmiş olması ve ayrıca varolan dil engeli nedeniyle, Rus olmayanlar için Sovyetler Birliğine açıklayıcı ve kolay erişilebilir bilgi kaynakları olarak görülmektedir.

Propaganda araçlarının önemli bilgi kaynakları olarak görülmesinin birkaç sebebi vardır. Sovyetler Birliği'nde bilgiye erişim konusundaki zorluklara rağmen, süreli gazetelere ve posterlere kolayca erişilebilir. Ayrıca bu kaynaklar geniş bir okuyucu kitlesine ulaşarak sesini duyurabilmektedir. Sovyet gazetelerinin basit dili ve posterler ile kutlamaların görsel zenginliği, Sovyet vatandaşları üzerinde ikna edici bir etki oluşturmuştur.

Son olarak, Marks, Engels ve Vladimir Lenin gibi Marksist teorisyenlerin çalışmaları, ve ayrıca Klara Tsetkin ve Alexandra Kollontai gibi Sovyet

feministlerinin çalışmaları, Sosyalistlerin kadının toplumdaki rolüne dair temel fikirlerini gösterdikleri için önemli kaynaklar olup bu araştırmanın teorik temelini oluşturmuşlardır.

Birincil verilerin analizi, Sovyetler Birliği'nde cinsiyet konusundaki uzmanların çalışmalarından oluşan ikincil kaynaklarla tamamlanmıştır. Ek olarak, Josef Stalin dönemindeki SSCB'de verilere erişimin kısıtlı olması sebebiyle, halen veri eksikliğinin bir sorun teşkil ettiğini ve bazı konuların bu nedenle daha sınırlı görüldüğünü belirtmek gerekmektedir.

### **Tezin Kurgusu**

Bu tezin birinci bölümü, kadının özgürleşmesine dair Sovyet politikalarının temelini oluşturan Marksizm teorisini tartışmaktadır. Tartışmaya, Karl Marks ve Friedrich Engels'in oluşturduğu Marksizm klasiklerinin analiziyle başlanmakta ve öne çıkan Sovyet feminist aktivistlerinden olan Alexandra Kollontai'nin fikir ve çalışmalarının tartışılmasıyla devam edilmektedir. Bir sonraki bölüm, kitle kültürü ve kitle iletişim araçlarındaki Sovyet propagandasına ayrılmıştır. Buradaki ikinci kısımda ayrıca Orta Asya ve Sovyet özgürleştirme politikalarının uygulanması konusuna değinilmektedir.

Üçüncü bölüm özgürleştirme politikalarına odaklanmakta ve bu konuları ele almaktadır: SSCB'de kadınlarla ilgilenen temel kurumlar (*Jenotdeller*, delege toplantıları vs.), kadınlara ve aileye dair temel yasal hükümler (özellikle evlilik konuları, boşanma, kız kaçırma, *kalym* vs.), eğitim politikaları, aile ve sağlık meseleleri (özellikle doğurganlık ve kürtaj konuları), istihdam ve çalışma koşulları, kadınların kamusal faaliyetleri. Çalışmada, yeni sovyet kadını rolü ve imajının kamusal ve kitlesel kültürel ifadesine özel önem verilmiştir. Araştırmaya orjinallik kazandıran nokta Sovyet posterlerinin analizidir. Bunlar, kadınları eğitmeyi ve onları evden ve ücretsiz emekten uzaklaştırarak meta üretim alanına taşımayı hedefleyen propaganda araçları olarak görülmüştür.

Tezin son bölümü temel olarak Orta Asya'yı farklılaştıran özelliklere, örneğin Sovyet aktivistlerinin faaliyetlerini etkileyen geleneklere, ulemaya ve bir inanç sistemi olarak İslam'a odaklanmıştır. Sovyet politikalarının olumsuz etkilerine de ayrıca değinilerek, bunların artıları ve eksileri incelenmiştir. Son bölüm ise tezin temel bulgularını irdelemektedir.

### **Temel Bulgular**

Tezin bulgularını toparlamak gerekirse, birçok çelişki ve noksanlıklar barındıran Marksist teoriden başlamak mantıklı olacaktır. Teori bölümünde gösterildiği gibi, özel mülkiyetin ve işbölümünün ortaya çıkmasıyla kadının ezilmesi üzerine yoğunlaşan Marks ve Engels, bu iki faktörün kadının toplumdaki rolünü nasıl minimuma indirdiğini, örneğin hane içindeki baskıyı tartışmakta yetersiz kalmışlardır. Benzer bir şekilde, yazarlar patriyarka kurumunu ve süregelen kadın 'köleliğini' açıklamakta başarısız olmuşlardır.

Marksistler kadını sadece üretim sistemi ve üretim ilişkileri aracılığıyla incelemişlerdir: Kadın sadece bir üretici olarak görülmüştür. Bu üretim ya insanlar, ya da sözkonusu teorisyenler için kritik önem atfeden metalar üzerinden şekillenmektedir. Bu durum, kadının kendi kimliğine odaklanmadaki eksikliği açıklamaktadır. Marksistler için kadın daha çok, özgürleştirilmesi ve üretim alanına taşınması gereken bir araçtır. Onun zamanı, zihni ve bedeni Sosyalizmin görevlerine göre belirlenmektedir. Ev işi alçaltılmıştır: Zira fiyatı ve değeri meta üretiminden daha azdır. Bu faydacı yaklaşım, kadın haklarına ve fikirlerine hiç bir alan bırakmamıştır; Marksistler bir kadının eş ve anne olmayı isteyebileceğini tahayyül bile edememişlerdir. Bu anlamda onlar, kadınlar ve erkeklerin amaçlarındaki farklılığı görmekte başarısız olmuşlardır.

Bu bakış genellemeye dönüşmüş olup, farklı etnik ve dini gruplar için hiç bir hükmü yoktur, dolayısıyla herkesin Sosyalist şemaya uyması gerekmektedir. Tüm kadınlar, muhtelif statülerin rağmen bu şemaya tabi kılınmışlardır. Ayrıca Marksistler

kadınların rolünü tartışırken sadece proletaryanın temsilcilerine değinerek, diğer sınıfları şemanın dışında bırakmışlardır.

Tüm bunların yanısıra Marksistler, programlarında aile içi şiddet konusuna değinmemişlerdir. Daha sonra Bolşevikler Orta Asya'da kadına yönelik şiddet gerçeğiyle karşılaşınca ilgili hükümler Parti tarafından benimsenmiştir. Yine de bu,, durumun kurbanlarını korumaktan ziyade Bolşeviklerin faaliyetlerinin tutarsız karakterini göstermiştir.

Bu tezin sunacağı orjinal katkı, sadece bir sanat eseri değil aynı zamanda propaganda aracı olarak görülen Sovyet posterlerinin analizinde yatmaktadır. Özetlemek gerekirse bunlar, Bolşeviklerin programını ve onların 'kadın meselesi'ne dair faaliyetini göstermektedirler. İncelenen posterlerde üç ortak tema yakalanmıştır. Bunlardan ilki, propaganda araçlarının en popüler konusu olan eğitimidir. Ya tek bir poster incelenmiş, ya da herhangi bir posterde bu tür unsurlar, örneğin sınıf, kitap ve defterler kullanılmıştır. Bunlar sadece Bolşeviklerin kazanımlarını değil, aynı zamanda gelecekteki kalkınma için yaptıkları çağrışı göstermektedir: Kadınların öğrencilere ve işçilere katılımı beklenmektedir. Kadın figürlerinin önemli özelliği onların basitleştirilmiş görüntüsü, hiç bir feminen özelliği, zarif giysileri ya da işveli davranışı olmayan genelleştirilmiş kaba görünümünde yatmaktadır. Kadın resimleri minimalistken, giysiler işçiyi köylüden ayırt etmeye olanak sağlamaktadır. Aynı zamanda, kadının minimalistik görüntüsü, özellikle de giysileri ve aksesuarların yokluğu, Sovyet insanının meta-dışı değerine ve işi ile fikirlerinin önemine vurgu yaparak, toplumsal ve finansal statüsünden bağımsız bir şekilde birçok yeni insanı Parti üyeliğine cezbetmeye imkan tanımaktadır. Ayrıca posterler genelde, Bolşeviklerden önce çocuklar için eğitim görülecek okulların azlığını ortaya koyan yetişkin kadınları konu edinmektedir.

Posterlerin, ihmal edilmemesi gereken ikinci teması kadınların üretime ve kamusal hayata katılımıdır. Sovyetler sayesinde o bir fabrika işçisi, köy konseyinin bir üyesi ve hatta bir pilot olabilmektedir - bu şekilde kadınların fırsatlarının geniş olduğu ve 'mutfak köleliği'yle sınırlanmadığı gösterilmektedir. Yazarlara göre bu durum sadece kadının refahını güvenceye almakla kalmayıp aynı zamanda ülkenin genel

kalkınmasını da sağlar. Victoria Bonnell'in *Iconography* çalışmasında gösterdiği üzere, 1930'ların ortalarında, Sovyetler Birliği'nde varolan boşluğu doldurmak için yeni kahramanlar yaratılmıştır.

Son olarak, yapılan analiz kadının özgürleşmesi ve serbestliği konusunun bu sanat dalında ne kadar önemli olduğunu göstermektedir. Kadın hakları ihlalleri de, bir adamın eşini dövdüğü ya da onu eve kapatmaya çalıştığı posterlerde görülmektedir. Tesettürlüleşme kampanyası da, ayrı bir konu olarak detaylı sunulmasa da, Sovyet sanatçıların çalışmaları kendine yer bulmuştur. Sanatçılar ayrıca kadınların katılım haklarına, özellikle de Sovyetlerdeki seçimlere değinmişlerdir. Eylem özgürlüğü ve kişisel güvenlik de Sovyet sanatının diğer önemli temalarıdır.

Propaganda posterlerinin önemli bir özelliği görsel monologdur. Görsel propaganda araç olarak ya kınama ya da övgüyü benimser. Yukarıdan aşağıya monolog, Komünistler Partisi tarafından kurulmuş olup, "ötekilik" kavramı da ayrıca sunulmuştur. Dahası, "ötekiler" ya asimile edilmiş ya da bir sosyal tip (işçi, köylü ve etnik ulusal) olarak kullanılmış, ve ya düşman olarak -örneğin fahişe ya da Müslüman alim- olarak etiketlenmiştir.

Sovyet propagandasının kadınlar arasındaki çalışmada kolektifin ve grubun rolünün altını çizdiğini belirtmek gerekir - böylece kadının tek başına sorunlarla başedemeyeceği ima edilir. Başka bir yön ise, Rus cumhuriyetinin öncü rolü ve diğerlerinin - Orta Asya Cumhuriyetlerinin, ikincil rolüdür. Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, bu ülkeler geri kalmış, geleneksel ve Rusya'nın seviyesine erişmesi için eğitim özgürleştirilmesi gereken yerler olarak gösterilmektedir.

Ruslara ya da tüm SSCB'ye hitap eden Rusça posterlerin aksine, Orta Asya ülkeleri için yerel dillerde yazılan posterler azdır. Dolayısıyla Sosyalist gerçekliği yerel halkların kültür ve geleneklerine entegre etmekte başarısız olup, bunun yerine sözkonusu kültürü reddetmişlerdir. Tezin dördüncü bölümünde tartışıldığı üzere, bu radikalizm, spontane tarz ve esneklikten yoksunluk, Müslüman halkın ve ulemanın şiddetli tepkisini kışkırtmıştır. Ayrıca, Orta Asya cumhuriyetlerinde kadını ana figür olarak benimseyen posterler, Gregory Massel'in Müslüman kadınların Sosyalist fikirleri yaymak için taşıyıcı analar ve araçlar olarak seçildiği şeklindeki argümanını

doğrular niteliktedir. Parti önderliği doğrudan erkek nüfusunu etkilemek yerine toplumun daha esnek bir tabakası olarak görülen kadınlara hitap etmeyi seçmiştir.

The analysis of the main organizations engaged in the work with women, particularly *Jenotdel* ve onlar tarafından kurulan delege toplantıları gibi, kadınlarla çalışan temel kuruluşların analizi, birkaç yönü açığa çıkarmaktadır: Öncelikle *Jenotdel* kadınlar için kurulan bir kadın örgütü olarak değerlendirilmemelidir. O daha ziyade, Parti doktriniyi paylaşılarak Partideki kadın çalışanlara ulaştırma hedefinde olan bir Komünist Parti bölümüdür. Bu durum Patterson'un araştırmasıyla da (2011) kanıtlanmıştır. Bu nedenle SSCB'nin endüstriyel ya da tarımsal üretime katılmayan kadın vatandaşları, toplantılara ve karar alma süreçlerine katılamamaktadırlar. Aslında SSCB'de sivil toplumun ve Orta Asya'da sosyal hareketler ve kurumlar geleneğinin yokluğu ve totaliter rejim, Parti aktivistlerinin SBKP'nin dışında 'kadın sorunu'nu ele alan organizasyonlar kurmasını engellemiştir. Bu durum Partinin kadın sorunlarını tüm boyutlarıyla ele alamamasına yol açmıştır.

Aynı zamanda, Sovyetlerin özgürleştirme politikaları belirsizliğe yer bırakmadan değerlendirilememektedir. Bir yandan, Bolşeviklerin aslında Orta Asya cumhuriyetlerini betimleme politikasının bir sonucu olarak yarattıklarını kabul etmek gerekir. Kadınlarla yaptıkları çalışmalarda kazanımları, artan okuma yazma oranlarında, dinsel ve geleneksel kurumların azalan etkisinde, kadınların üretim ve yönetime katılımında görülebilir. Kadın haklarının korunması için alınan yasal hükümler de göz ardı edilmemelidir. Öte yandan, Komünist Parti'nin amacı resmi ideolojiyi algılamayı ve sosyalizmi kurmayı başarabilecek cinsiyetsiz bireyi oluşturmaktır. Kadınlar sadece proletarya sınıfının merceğinden algılanmakta, bu yüzden diğer sınıfların temsilcileri görmezden gelinmektedir. Kadınların iş hayatına katılımı görüldüğü kadar umut verici değildir - zira düşük mevkiler ve ücretler kadınlara terfi imkanı sağlamamaktadırlar. Bu tezde gösterildiği gibi, kadınlar sadece bir son amaç olarak değil, aynı zamanda bu tür politikaların bir amacı olarak görülmektedir. Orta Asya'nın Müslüman toplumlarının, yerel kadınların özgürleşmesine direndiklerini belirtmeye gerek yoktur. Bu direniş binlerce kadının öldürülmesine neden olmuştur.

Dahası, Sovyetlerin dini evlilikleri ikame eden yasal hükümleri *de-familizasyona* yani ailelerin dağılmasına, evliliğin değerini ve kutsallığını yitirmesi sonucu kadın erkek ilişkilerinin ilkelleşmesine yol açmıştır. Boşanma prosedürünün kolaylaştırılması, argümanımızı doğrulayacak şekilde boşanma oranlarının artmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır. Aynı zamanda çocuk bahçeleri ve kreşlerin de kurulması konuyu şiddetlendirmiştir - çekirdek aile tehdit altına girmiştir. Bu anlamda devletin kendinde yurttaşlarının evlilik, doğum, çocuk bakımı gibi özel alanlarını kontrol etme hakkını gördüğünü söylemek mümkündür.

Şüphesiz ki kadınların eğitimi alanı Komünist Parti'nin olumlu bir kazanımı olarak değerlendirilebilir. Ancak, eğitimin Parti ideolojisi ve sosyalist değerler merceğinden, Rus önyargısıyla verildiği unutulmamalıdır. Bu nedenle bu politikaların olumsuz sonucu bilhassa ulusal dillerin ihmalinde ve Rusça'nın teşvik edilmesinde, İslam'ın bir bilgi, değerler ve pratikler sistemi olarak ihmalinde ve yerel ile ulusal meselelerin ikincil rolünde yatmaktadır.

Bir başka önemli mesele ise kadınların üretim alanına katılımıdır. Konuyla ilgili bölümde görülebileceği üzere bu Sovyet önderliğinin temel amaçlarından biri olmuştur. Kadınlar üretim teorisi aracılığıyla algılanarak, manipüle edilebilecek pasif bir obje olarak görülmüşlerdir. Ancak, sadece endüstriye öncelik verildiğini belirtmek önemlidir. Tarım alanı Bolşevikler tarafından ihmal edilmiştir. Ayrıca, eğitim ve nitelik eksikliğinden dolayı, üst mevkileri elde etmek kadınlar için zor olmuştur.

Tesettürün kaldırılması, kadın eğitimi ve kamusal faaliyetler Orta Asya'da farklı toplumsal gruplar arasında bir tartışma alanı olmuştur. Muhafazkarlar kadınları tekrar tesettüre girmeye zorlar ve uymayanları cezalandırırken, ulema topluluğunun liberal kanadı Parti politikalarını pragmatik meselelerden dolayı - nüfus üzerindeki iktidarlarını korumak için kabul etmiştir. Kadınların eğitimi meselesi de çeşitli tepkilere yol açmıştır. Anlaşılabileceği gibi, mollaların muhafazakar kanadı hem Sovyetlerin hem de *Cedidlerin* okullarına karşı çıkmışlardır. Özbekistan'da yerel halk okulları ateşe vermiş, diğer yerlerde ise erkekler ailelerindeki kadınların okullara gitmesine izin vermemişlerdir.

Bir önceki bölümde tartışıldığı gibi Sovyet yönetimi dinin reddedilmesini resmi bir politika olarak benimsemiş ve dini eleştirerek seküler eğitimin teşvik edilmesi için geniş fırsatlar sunmuştur. Halkın bunlara alışması Özbekistan'daki nüfus arasında yeni bir dini yaşam ve dindarlık anlayışının oluşmasına yol açmıştır.

Rus yayılmacı ve Sovyet (Ruslaştırma) politikaları, yerel halkta sonuçlar üzerinde de etki oluşturan tepkilere ortaya çıkarmıştır. Cinsiyet ve kadın erkek rollerine dair toplumda varolan farklı anlayışlar kadına karşı şiddete yol açmıştır. Dahası, kadınları geleneksel muhafazakar yaşam tarzlarını bırakmaya çağıran Parti aktivistleri, erkek akrabalarının şiddetine maruz kalanları korumakta başarısız olmuşlardır. Aslında, kadınlara dair Parti politikaları tutarsız ve tamamlanmamış gibi görünmektedirler. Söz konusu politikalarda kadınları koruyacak ve saldırganları cezalandıracak mekanizmalar eksiktir.

Ayrıca, kadın kimliğinin yeniden anlamlandırılması söz konusu olmuştur. Kadınlar, anlamlarını kimi zaman değersizleştiren dini ve kültürel pratiklerdeki rollerini kaybederek, bunun yerine mesleki statü kazanmışlardır. Kadınlar, bulundukları toplulukta dini ve geleneksel değerleri iletme rolünü kaybetmeye başlayıp bunun yerine Sosyalist ideolojinin unsurlarını paylaşmaya başlamışlardır. Buna ek olarak, yetkililer tarafından sağlanan sosyal bakım hizmetleri, birçok yerli kadının Sovyet üretimine katılmasını sağlayan önemli bir faktör olmuştur. Çok sayıda çocuk doğurup onlara bakmanın ve ev işinden sorumlu olmanın ağır yükünü atan kadınlar, sosyal ve tıbbi bakım sistemleriyle desteklenen Sosyalist üretimin avantajlarını kullanmaya istekli davranmışlardır.



## B. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☒

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

### YAZARIN

Soyadı: ALSHAIBI

Adı: NORAN

Bölümü: DEPARTMENT OF GENDER AND WOMEN STUDIES

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce): POLICIES OF WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION IN  
SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA, 1917 - 1953

**TEZİN TÜRÜ**: Yüksek Lisans ☒ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
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**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**