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## The issue of women's equality in the intellectual legacy of Turkism: a historical-cultural analysis (late 19th — early 20th century)

At the end of the 19th — the beginning of the 20th century, the women's movement, an important part of global social changes, had its own characteristics, determined by the socio-cultural level and political situation in different countries: in European countries, it was based on feminist ideas, in Russia, it was linked to revolutionary changes and acquired a socio-political character. Under colonial influence, in Kazakh society, it became an integral part of the collective struggle for social renewal and the preservation of national identity. Novelty of the study: In the intellectual heritage of Ziya Gokalp and Ismail Gasprinsky, the ideas concerning the issue of women's equality and their influence on Kazakh society have been analysed. The results of the study indicate that the ideological influence of the leaders of the Turkism movement was reflected in the works of the Alash intelligentsia, with due consideration of local particularities, playing a significant role in the process of shaping national consciousness. Thus, it can be argued that the issue of women's equality became an important element of modernization in Turkic peoples, combining Islamic principles and traditional values, which led to the creation of a unique model of gender equality, reflecting national characteristics.

*Keywords:* Turkism, women's rights, Kazakh society, national identity, intellectual heritage, religion.

### Introduction

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked an era of significant political, social, economic, and cultural transformations in world history. This period laid the foundation for the formation of the modern political map, the rise of social movements, and the development of cultural trends. Among the notable changes were movements aimed at expanding women's rights, including the right to vote, access to education, and economic rights, which took place across the United States, Europe, and Asia, becoming a global phenomenon. For example, between 1830 and 1920, the first wave of the women's movement in the United States [1; 106] saw women fighting for their rights, including the right to participate in elections. Meanwhile, in Europe, especially with the 11th March 1850 law in Prussia, women's participation in political organizations was prohibited, as women's political activism was perceived as a threat to the stability of the traditional patriarchal society [2; 200]. Similarly, in 1921, despite the principle of equality of citizens enshrined in the Polish Constitution, "celibacy laws" significantly restricted women's access to public office [3; 52].

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, an active movement for women's rights began in Russia, and its influence spread into Kazakh society through various channels, including cultural exchanges, the education system, the press, and contacts with Russian intellectuals. During this period, the ideas of Turkism also gained significant traction, and their impact notably affected the rights and social roles of women in Kazakh society.

The key feature of Turkism ideology was its aspiration to reconstruct society through the revival of national consciousness, with the issue of women's equality being regarded as an essential component of these changes.

However, in domestic historiography, the connection between the ideology and the issue of women's equality has not yet been sufficiently explored as an independent research field. This issue is often discussed only in the context of social renewal and changes during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In this regard, by analysing the relationship between women's equality and the Turkism ideology, we can gain a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of the social, cultural, and political transformations of this historical period. Moreover, the primary objective of this research is to analyse the views of Turkism reformers on women's equality within the context of the Turkism revival at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, identify the ideological continuity within Kazakh society, and examine their significance within the historical and cultural context.

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The relevance of the research topic can be demonstrated from several perspectives. Firstly, the issue of strengthening women's roles in society, ensuring access to education, and guaranteeing social rights remains pertinent today. This topic is not only significant in the context of past centuries but also plays a crucial role in contemporary discussions about societal development. Given the important role played by public figures and intellectual leaders in the Russian Empire at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in the modernization of local Muslim Turkic societies, their views on women's issues reflect the impact of global social changes during that historical period. Taking this into account, examining gender equality through the lens of historical experience can provide valuable insights into contemporary challenges. Such studies, by learning from the past, can help in finding effective ways to address gender equality issues in modern society.

Secondly, since the research focuses on analysing the important role of women in the formation of national consciousness and the changing social positions of women in societal development, it provides an opportunity to understand the internal dynamics of national and ethnic processes within Turkic societies. Additionally, it contributes to a deeper exploration of the interconnection between gender relations and these processes. Studying the role of women in the formation of national identity and changes in ethno-social structures helps to identify key factors in the transformation of national consciousness.

#### *Materials and Research Methods*

The source base for the research topic primarily consists of the works of Turkic intellectual leaders. A key source for this study is the work of Ziya Gokalp, the main ideologist of Turkism, titled "Türkçülüğün Esasları" (The Principles of Turkism) [4]. In this work, the author analyses the history of women from ancient Turkic times to the early 20th century, aiming to highlight their significant roles in the political, cultural, religious, and social spheres. He also provides an in-depth examination of the behaviour and worldview of women in the indigenous cultures of Turkic peoples.

Additionally, I. Gasprinsky's work "Ob uravnenii nasledstvennykh prav zhenshchin i muzhchin" (On Equalizing the Inheritance Rights of Women and Men) [5], along with his literary works "Francuzkie pisma" (The French Letter) [6] and "Arslan kyz" (The Lioness) [7], were also studied. In the former, the author argues that expanding and securing women's material rights in inheritance is far more beneficial than mere "freedom and liberty". In "The French Letter", I. Gasprinsky discusses the importance of education for the modernization of Muslim society, the role of women in society, and the necessity of interaction with European culture. He emphasizes the positive aspects of European lifestyles, such as freedom of thought and respect for the individual. In "The Lioness", the main character's courage and bravery are compared to that of a lion, symbolizing a woman's inner strength, the importance of education, and the ability of women to make better decisions than men when necessary.

In studying the continuity of the ideas of Turkic reformers and their influence on Kazakh society, the primary source material consists of the works of Kazakh intellectuals. This allows for an analysis of how Turkism ideas influenced the worldview and reformist activities of the Kazakh intelligentsia, as well as providing insight into the intellectual connections within the process of national renewal.

Among the works of Kazakh intellectual A. Bokeikhan, the novella "Molodaya nevolnica" (Young slave girl) [8] provides important insights into the issue of women's equality, while his article "Sailau quqy" (Right to vote) [9] offers a deeper understanding of his political views aimed at equalizing women's roles in society. Additionally, the novel "Baqytsyz Jamal" (The Unfortunate Jamal) [10] by Kazakh intellectual M. Dulatuly sheds light on the forced fate of women in Kazakh society and provides a critical view of the negative aspects of patriarchal customs and traditions.

In terms of the chronological scope of the study, the work "Obychnoe pravo kirgizov" (Customary Law of the Kyrgyz) [11] published in 1902 by Russian author N. Malyshev is of particular significance. In this work, the author analyses the influence of Sharia law and Russian legislation on the customary law of the Kazakh people. Additionally, the work provides valuable data on the actual fate and societal position of Kazakh women, offering a deeper understanding of their roles and legal status within the traditional legal system.

The analysis of contemporary researchers' works in the course of the study allowed for a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the topic. This strengthened the theoretical foundation of the research and facilitated a holistic approach to examining various aspects of the issue. Accordingly, a number of domestic and foreign scholars' scientific works, both directly and indirectly related to the topic, were utilized.

Specifically, works directly related to the topic include studies that delve deeper into I. Gasprinsky's views on the women's issue and his educational activities. For example, Sh. Hablemitoglu's "İsmail Bey

Gaspıralı ve Kadın Hareketi” (İsmail Bey Gaspıralı and the Women’s Movement) [12], E. Abibullaeva’s “Rol zhenshchiny v videnii Ismaila Gasprinskogo” (The Role of Women in Ismail Gasprinsky’s Vision) [13], S.N. Abduramanova’s “Zhenskij vopros” v ocherkakh “Kadylnar” i “Probleski kulturnogo dvizheniya Tatar” I. Gasprinskogo (The “Women’s Question” in the Essays “Kadylnar” and “Glimpses of the Cultural Movement of the Tatars” by I. Gasprinsky) [14], U. Bilgin Topçu’s “Gaspıralıda Kadın” (Women in Gaspıralı) [15], G. Selcan Sağlık Şahin’s “İsmail Gaspıralı, Türk Kadını ve Alem-i Nisvan Dergisi” (Ismail Gaspıralı, Turkish Women, and the Journal *Alem-i Nisvan*) [16], and L. Chubukchieva’s “The Women’s Question in the Ideology of Jadidism” [17]. Additionally, L. Sh. Davletshina’s article “Charitable Activities of Muslim Women in the Educational Sphere” [18] highlights the active participation of early Muslim Tatar women in public life and further details the contributions of I. Gasprinsky’s family members in this field.

Among Kazakh scholars, M. Koigeldiev’s monograph “*Kazakh Eli: The Struggle to Preserve National Identity (19th Century — Early 21st Century)*” [19] is considered a significant academic source in studying the activities of the Alash intellectuals. In this work, the author provides a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the efforts and struggles of the Kazakh people over the centuries to resist external and internal threats and preserve their national identity. Among studies in this field, A.I. Kasabekova’s foundational work “*The Issue of “Women’s Equality” in the 1920s and 1930s (Social Aspects, History of the Issue, Women’s Participation in Public Life)*” [20] holds a special place. Based on archival materials, this research covers the women’s issue in Kazakh society from the early 20th century to the 1930s under Soviet rule. The author analyses the social aspects of the women’s equality issue, its depiction in the press, its historical development, and the integration of women into public life. Additionally, the article “*The Evolution of the Representation of Women’s Issues in Kazakh Periodicals*”, co-authored by Sh. D. Seidigazimova, S.E. Tapanova, and M. Toplu, examines the role and contributions of women in Kazakh journalism. This study analyses the peculiarities of how women’s issues were covered in Kazakh periodicals, their historical development, and their place in society [21].

As mentioned above, in the process of forming the theoretical foundation of the research, several relevant secondary scholarly works were analysed comprehensively. These studies provide a theoretical basis for a deeper understanding of the main issue and allow for a multifaceted exploration of the topic.

Specifically, one of the early researchers of Islamic feminism, American historian Margot Badran’s article “*Between Secular and Islamic Feminism/s: Reflections on the Middle East and Beyond*” [22], was utilized. In this work, the author notes that the late 19th century is regarded as the formative period for secular feminism, while the late 20th century marks the clear emergence of Islamic feminism. According to the author, these two forms of feminism are social and cultural phenomena that arose in Muslim-majority societies. Additionally, Russian historian O. Yu. Kurnykin’s article on P.A. Stolypin’s views on the “Muslim question” in the Russian Empire examines the perspectives and political strategies of the imperial government during that period [23].

Additionally, sociologist Z. Zh. Zhanazarova’s article “*The Sociocultural Aspect of the History of Kazakh Women*” analyses the condition of Kazakh women not only from a historical retrospective perspective but also in the context of contemporary issues. The author’s research demonstrates that the living conditions of Kazakh women, compared to those of Uzbek and Tajik women, remain more complex [24]. Similarly, N.P. Rushanina also notes that due to the underdeveloped civil society in Russia and the low level of legal and social development of women, the ideological leaders of the women’s movement were primarily men [25].

Meanwhile, Russian cultural scholar T.P. Matiash’s article “*Women’s Emancipation and Civilizational Shift*” offers a critical and reflective analysis of the phenomenon of women’s emancipation and the moral values associated with it. The author examines historical changes influenced by women’s emancipation in Western and Russian cultures, noting that this process led to a loss of respect for motherhood among European and Russian societies, which in turn resulted in a crisis not only of moral and ethical values but also of demographic decline [26].

Additionally, in the sociological study “*Kobiety w przestrzeni dziewiętnastowiecznego społeczeństwa. Rekapitulacja*” (Women in the Space of 19th-Century Society: A Recapitulation) [1] by Polish scholar Anna Wójtewicz, the women’s movements in 19th-century Europe and America and the changes in their social status are analysed. The author highlights that considering the historical context and socio-political characteristics, phenomena such as women’s emancipation occurred alongside modernization processes, leading to fundamental and long-term changes in both women and society’s lives. Furthermore, Polish historian Agnieszka Szudarek’s article “*Mieszkańskie stowarzyszenia kobiece w Niemczech wobec zniesienia zakazu przy-*

*należności kobiet do partii politycznych na przykładzie Szczecina (1908–1914)*” (Bourgeois Women’s Associations in Germany and the Abolition of the Ban on Women’s Membership in Political Parties: The Case of Szczecin (1908–1914)) [2] and Polish legal scholar Beata Goworko-Gwadaneck’s *“Ewolucja zasady równości kobiet i mężczyzn aktywnych zawodowo — ujęcie prawnohistoryczne”* (The Evolution of the Principle of Equality between Professionally Active Women and Men: A Legal-Historical Approach) [3] examine European women's movements.

In the process of exploring the content of the research topic, the following methods were applied: 1) A historical-analytical method was used in the analysis of historical events, perspectives, and their development. This method allows for the examination of the influence of Turkic intellectuals’ views on women’s equality within the context of national identity. It facilitated an understanding of the importance of women’s roles in society through the works of Z. Gokalp, I. Gasprinsky, and other intellectual figures, as well as an assessment of women’s place in national revival; 2) The method of cultural studies was employed to analyse the cultural and social aspects of the issue of women’s equality within the framework of Turkism ideology. This approach enables the study of women’s roles and equality across different Turkic societies, as well as an identification of the impact of national traditions. 3) The gender analysis method is applied in the study of issues related to gender equality. It was used to examine the rights of women and their roles in society within the framework of Turkism ideology. Through gender analysis, the legal status of women and the impact of the Turkic movement on gender policy were investigated. This method contributes to understanding the ideology’s perspectives on women within a social and cultural context;

4) The comparative analysis method allows for the comparison of the views of intellectual leaders such as Z. Gokalp and I. Gasprinsky. It enables the identification of ideological similarities and differences regarding the issue of women’s equality among intellectuals, as well as the comparison of the situations of Muslim Turkic women with those in other countries. This method was also used to examine the characteristics and intersections of gender issues in Turkism and European discourses; 5) The discourse analysis method facilitates the examination of the writings of intellectual leaders such as Z. Gokalp, I. Gasprinsky, A. Bokeikhan, and M. Dulatuly. This method helps to explore their views on women’s equality, as well as how these views were accepted in various social and political contexts; 6) The historical-sociological method was applied in the analysis of the ideas of reformers such as Z. Gokalp, I. Gasprinsky, A. Bokeikhan, M. Dulatuly, and A. Baitursynov regarding women’s rights and social status. These figures considered women’s education to be one of the most important issues in their ideas. Their views became a catalyst for social changes aimed at increasing women’s literacy. In particular, reforms implemented in the field of education opened new opportunities for women’s social and cultural advancement, allowing for a reassessment of their roles in society and the expansion of their limited rights.

#### *Discussion and Results*

At the beginning of the 20th century, the power structures of the Russian Empire faced a number of political, social, religious, and cultural movements aimed at preserving religious and cultural identities and defending national interests. One of these was the ideology of Turkism, which emerged in the second half of the 19th century and sought to promote the unity of Muslim Turkic peoples. Within this ideology, significant issues concerning women were also raised.

Here, the thoughts of researcher Margot Badran on ‘Islamic and secular feminism’ can be historically and culturally linked to Ziya Gokalp’s ideas regarding “democracy and feminism” in Turkish society. M. Badran identified two types of feminist movements: secular feminism and Islamic feminism. She associates the development of secular feminism with the advent of print media and the rising literacy rates among women. The author highlights that women’s movements, particularly within the framework of Islamic modernism, emerged in the context of new nationalist discourse. She also noted that this trend, characteristic of certain parts of the Middle East, was observed in other Asian societies as well [22; 7-8].

Z. Gokalp stated that “the ancient Turks were both democratic and feminist” [4; 160]. This assertion underscores that women actively participated in public life, rooted in the foundational principles of Turkic culture. Additionally, he highly valued the historical role of women in Turkish society, describing them as equal to men and actively involved in key areas of social life. According to Z. Gokalp, in ancient Turkic societies, women were akin to Amazons; military skills, the use of weapons, and heroic qualities were not exclusive to men but were shared by women as well. Women played direct roles in political and public life as rulers, fortress defenders, administrators, or envoys. For instance, while secular feminism aimed to expand

women's social roles and legally protect gender equality, Islamic feminism prioritized defending women's rights based on religion and tradition.

In this context, Z. Gokalp's return to the ancient democratic and feminist foundations of Turkic culture highlights shared values between the two strands of feminism. In his essay "*How Should Family Ethics Be?*" Z. Gokalp attributes the loss of ancient traditions and the subjugation and legal degradation of women to the influence of Iranian and Greek civilizations. He emphasizes the need to recall the principles of old traditions when reviving the national spirit and cultural heritage of the Turkish nation. In this regard, Z. Gokalp interprets the development of feminist ideas alongside the Turkic movement as embodying the two core principles of democracy and feminism within Turkish society (4; 165).

He also noted that among the Turks, "a man showed respect to his wife by seating her in a carriage while he walked behind it on foot" [4; 162]. This statement underscores not only the issue of gender equality but also the importance of enhancing the dignity of women within the family and society. Here, we can observe a connection between Turkism and the protection of women's rights, highlighting the intersection of feminism and national revival. Z. Gokalp concluded that for the development of Turkish society, the core principles of democracy and feminism should evolve alongside the values of nation, homeland, and family [4; 166]. This idea can be further linked to Ismail Gasprinsky's views on expanding women's rights and promoting their active participation in society through education while remaining within the framework of traditional life.

In this regard, it is worth highlighting the work of researcher Sh. Hablemitoglu. He notes that the formation and development of the women's movement among the Muslim-Turkic peoples of the Russian Empire were significantly influenced by the efforts of two prominent figures. This underscores that reformist ideas were implemented through the initiatives of specific individuals. One of these figures was Hasan Bey Melikzadeh Zardabi, and the other was Ismail Gasprinsky. According to Hablemitoglu, the contributions of these two individuals converged in their opposition to Russian chauvinism and imperialism, their efforts to strengthen Turkic identity and solidarity, and their dedication to enhancing the quality of education [12; 72].

These reformers sought to implement their ideas through concrete actions. Among these, I. Gasprinsky's efforts in improving women's rights were one of the significant steps in this direction. It is well known that his wife, Zuhra Akchurina, made a substantial contribution to the realization of his reformist initiatives. Zuhra, the daughter of Asfandiyar Bay Akchurin, a wealthy factory owner in the Simbirsk province of Russia, married I. Gasprinsky and sold all her dowry and jewelry to fund the publication of the *Tercuman* newspaper. [18; 107]. This newspaper not only served an educational purpose but also gradually became an important tool for advocating ideas related to the protection of women's rights and strengthening their role in society. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the *Tercuman* newspaper on April 10, 1893, I. Gasprinsky organized a special meeting, inviting his like-minded associates along with their wives. Some researchers regard this event as the beginning of the "Turkish women's movement in Russia" [16; 213].

The participants of this event discussed the role of women in public life and adopted important initiatives aimed at expanding their rights. Ismail Gasprinsky's like-minded associates believed that educating one girl would benefit society more than educating several boys, and they viewed the girl as a future mother, emphasizing her important role in raising and educating children [17; 45]. Thus, in 1905, under Gasprinsky's leadership, the first Turkish women's publication, *Alem-i Nisvan*, was launched. This publication aimed to promote women's education, rights, and social roles. The editor of this publication was Gasprinsky's daughter, Şefika Hanım [13; 219].

Therefore, it can be stated that Gasprinsky's family played a crucial role in the formation and development of the Turkish women's movement through their educational and reformist activities.

Ismail Gasprinsky wrote "Children grow up under the mother's care", acquiring important concepts such as moral values, honor, respect for elders, and a love for labor. Education is a duty for both Muslim women and Muslim men. Education is necessary to become a human being" [14, 208]. In this regard, researcher U. Bilgin Topchu also pointed out, that I. Gasprinsky, using European women as a model, demonstrated that "women, through faith and education, can rise to an equal status with men". He noted that I. Gasprinsky adapted this concept as a utopian model for Muslim societies [15; 60].

Between 1887 and 1889, I. Gasprinsky's most famous novel, "French Letters", was published in the *Tercuman* newspaper. The author introduces himself under the pseudonym Molla Abbas Fransowi. In the novel he writes: "Great Allah! He allows women many things. This is not so evident in our Turkestan, but here, in the land of the Franks, it is clearly visible" [6; 21]. Through this statement, I. Gasprinsky highlights the difference in attitudes toward women between Muslim societies and Western Europe, while also drawing

attention to the fact that the rights granted to women in Islam are not fully realized for women in Turkestan. Thus, in his works, I. Gasprinsky sought to portray the role of women in society and their potential. For example, in his short story *"Arslan Kız"*, through the character of Gul-Djemał Bikyach, who saves the entire city from invaders, he reveals women's ability to influence social processes, their capacity to be equal to men, and their potential to make significant contributions to the development of society [7; 281–300]. In this story, he attempts to convey to the reader that a woman's strength and independence are closely linked to her consciousness, education, and critical thinking skills. However, it is important to note that in 19th-century Europe, the education system for women began to develop only in the second half of the century. These changes mainly involved the professionalization of the traditionally female roles in household management and caregiving. The opportunity for women to pursue higher education was only available at the end of the 19th century, and even then, it was limited to certain professions [1; 109].

Similarly, in his article "On Equalizing Inheritance Rights for Women and Men", dated September 20, 1888, I. Gasprinsky expresses his views on expanding women's rights [5; 36-37]. If we link this to Z. Gokalp's proposal to return to the ancient traditions of the Turks, we can see the role of women in public and national culture. I. Gasprinsky viewed the expansion of women's rights as the highest act of justice, while I. Gokalp explained the issue from the perspective of cultural development, emphasizing the parallel development of democracy and feminism. Thus, both intellectuals recognized the need to change the role of women in society, presenting these changes in different social and cultural contexts.

The ideas of these reformers not only inspired the protection of women's rights in the Muslim Turkic regions of Russia but also motivated the struggle for women's rights in the Kazakh steppe [24; 116]. In early 20th-century Kazakh society, information regarding the education of Kazakh women and their involvement in various public activities reflects the influence of ideological continuity. Specifically, during this period, Kazakh women actively engaged in public life, understood the importance of education, and strived to contribute to social changes. A clear example of this is Mariyam Tugisova, the publisher of the *Alash* weekly newspaper, which was published in Tashkent from November 26, 1916, to the middle of 1917 [20; 14].

The complexity of women's issues in the Kazakh steppe is also noted by contemporary researchers. According to researcher Z.Zh. Zhanzarova, the condition of women in nomadic societies was more difficult compared to women in other Eastern cultures. As she points out, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the social status of Muslim women in Central Asia, who were considered to be without rights, was somewhat higher than that of nomadic Kazakh women [24; 113]. One of the examples supporting this view can be found in the work *"The Usual Family Law of the Kyrgyz"*, published in 1902.

The author of this work, N. Malychev, emphasized, that the tragic fate of Kazakh women begins at birth and pointed out that proverbs such as "Do not trust your wife at home, and do not trust your horse outside", "A frog has no tail, and a woman's mind is lacking", and "No deceit in a dog, no loyalty in a woman" are all expressions of disrespect and discrimination against women [11; 12]. The abundance and variety of such examples demonstrate that the legal status of women in Kazakh society was complex and multifaceted.

Thus, the situation of women in Kazakh society could not escape the attention of the national press, as these publications had become tools for the awakening of the nation and the struggle for social justice. In this regard, the first Kazakh publications, particularly *"Aiqap"* journal and *"Qazaq"* newspaper, openly addressed the issue of gender equality and published relevant articles and works on the subject [21; 27].

*"Aiqap"* paid special attention to discussing social issues related to women through literary works. The magazine featured poetic works such as S. Toraighyrov's *"Neke qiyar"* (to get married) and A. Galiyev's short story *"Beishara "qyz"'"* (The Miserable Girl). In Galiyev's story, the difficult fate of Kazakh women in that era is depicted through the character of Altynai. The story explains how her parents had already taken her dowry when she was still a child, and as a result, she was forced to marry at the age of 16 [20; 11].

In 1917, in issue No. 229 of *"Qazaq"* newspaper, an article titled *"Saylau quqy"* (The Right to Vote) was published under the pen name *"Qyr balasy"* (The Steppe Youth), which raised the issue of women's participation in public and political life. The author criticizes the limited rights of women in Kazakh society by citing the example of a female member of parliament in the Australian colony of England. The article draws attention to social inequality, stating that "women are denied the right to vote in committees, and they have no rights to take or expect anything from others" [9; 353-354].

The issue of gender inequality within the Kazakh intellectual community was also reflected through literary works. For example, M. Dulatov's *"Baqytsyz Jamal"* stands out as a unique piece that highlights women's inequality and social injustice in Kazakh society. To demonstrate the social consequences of gender inequality, M. Dulatov portrays the tragic fate of a Kazakh girl through poetic lines: "Behold, you made

me weep, Sending forth your wrath, You made me inferior to my equal, Such sorrow, there is no other like it, I succumbed to fate's will!" [10; 75].

In his 1907 work "*Jesir dağwaları haqında*" (On Widows' Claims), M. Dulatov expressed opposition to the practice of parents arranging marriages from infancy, stating, "The civil rights of women define the social status of Kazakh society and guide the nation toward civilization" [20; 13].

Similar themes can also be found in the works of A. Bokeikhan. In his novella "*Molodaya nevolnitsa*", published on February 1, 1914, in *Musulmanskaya gazeta*, the author narrates the fate of Rabiga, who was married off at the age of 14 against her will, thus exposing the violation of women's rights and freedoms [8; 287–295].

In conclusion, the ideas of Turkish reformers had a significant influence on the issue of women's equality in Kazakh society. Kazakh intellectuals, in particular, focused on family relations and the role of women within the family. This indicates that they addressed the issue of women's equality not only from legal and social perspectives, but also in conjunction with changes in the family institution, presenting a more comprehensive approach.

Thus, the stance of Kazakh intellectuals on women's equality signalled the beginning of irreversible and profound changes in Kazakh society.

Several internal and external factors influenced the social movements among the Muslim Turkic peoples of the Russian Empire. On one hand, as researcher O.Yu. Kurnykin pointed out, the Russian authorities at that time were unable to fully control the internal affairs of Muslim communities and the Muslim education system. On the other hand, the educational and reformist aspirations of Muslim intellectuals, shaped by European Enlightenment influences, conflicted with the centralized control policies of the Russian Empire [23; 54]. In addition, feminist movements in Western Europe and revolutionary processes in Russia contributed to the formation of new perspectives on the role of women in society [25; 78]. In this context, the role of reformist figures among Muslim-Turkic intellectuals, who supported women's education and participation in public life, was crucial. Through advocating for women's equality, they sought to contribute to the development of the entire Turkic people.

In this regard, researcher T.P. Matiash argues that the subordinate position of women was considered a normal phenomenon not only in medieval Europe, but also in modern European culture. He notes that this phenomenon was widespread in Russian society as well, and that it influenced the role of women. The author here attempts to highlight that the emancipation movements of women in Europe and Russia were initiated and led by men [26; 34–36]. However, there are aspects that complement and to some extent correct this view, as it is impossible to overlook the movements that were initiated and implemented by women themselves.

In this regard, we believe that the point of intersection between T.P. Matiash's research and our topic lies in the fact that, at the turn of the century, the individuals who raised and supported the issue of women's equality among the Muslim-Turkic peoples were primarily men. However, within Turkism, there was an attempt to maintain a balance between tradition and modernization. In this context, the issue of women's emancipation became a crucial element of the Turkic movement. Intellectual leaders tried to approach it from various perspectives. For example, Z. Gokalp's views on the women's issue can be seen in national, religious, educational, social, and family aspects. Each of these directions had different priorities depending on regional peculiarities. This demonstrated the flexibility of these concepts.

Within the framework of Turkism ideology, the right of women to education was viewed as a key condition for their comprehensive development and for increasing their significance in society. This idea, initiated by Z. Gokalp and I. Gasprinsky, was ideologically continued in the works of Kazakh intellectuals. Educating women was seen as important not only to strengthen their social roles, but also to fulfil the task of preserving and developing national and cultural values. In this context, the need for education was aimed at rethinking the role of women in family and public life, while harmonizing the progressive development of society with its traditional foundations.

In this regard, the Kazakh scholar M. Koigeldiev rightly pointed out that "European Enlightenment paved the way for the formation of the national literature, scientific language, national consciousness, and culture of nations such as the French, English, and Germans. However, for the Russian Turks, the situation developed differently. The spread of enlightenment ideas among the Russian Turkic peoples was driven, firstly, by their economic and cultural lag behind leading nations, and secondly, by the intensification of various forms of discrimination and oppression by the colonial authorities" [19; 331-332]. As he rightly emphasizes, these peoples were under strict colonial control, which hindered their national and cultural devel-

opment. This situation led to a particular focus on the development of women's education within the framework of Turkism. In the Kazakh steppes, this movement was not only limited to social reforms, but was also closely tied to the process of building national unity and establishing national states. Thus, enlightenment played a key role in fostering national identity. A clear example of this is the Torgai Provincial Kazakh Congress, held in Orenburg from April 2 to 8, 1917, which was attended by 300 representatives (from Ak-molinsk, Semipalatinsk, Syrdarya, the Bukei Horde, Kazakh Muslim representatives, the Orenburg Muslim Bureau, the Ufa Committee, and Muslims from Aktobe).

At this congress, it was stated that women, along with men of the required age, could be elected to the local committees. Additionally, the congress raised the issue of co-education for boys and girls and made universal education mandatory [20; 16]. Similarly, at the First General Kazakh Congress, held from June 21 to 26, 1917, the issue of women was discussed as one of the key topics. In the 9th point of the congress agenda, the following resolutions were adopted regarding women: "Men and women should have equal political rights. The practice of paying a dowry should be abolished. No engagement should be arranged for girls under the age of 16. No marriage contract should be made for girls under 16 years old to boys under 18 years old by a religious official. At the time of marriage, both the bride and groom must be asked for their consent and affirm it verbally. Widowed women should be allowed to remarry. If a man takes a second wife, the first wife's consent is required. If the first wife does not consent, the man may marry another woman only if the first wife leaves him or remarries. No marriage should be arranged between close relatives beyond the seventh generation" [20; 17].

Furthermore, at the urging of Kazakh intellectual A. Baitursynov, proposals were introduced to abolish the dowry system and levirate marriage. Many such resolutions highlighted the changes in Kazakh society, particularly in the fields of social issues and education, and underscored their crucial role in the formation and development of national unity and state structure.

The adoption of such decisions at the First General Kazakh Congress was largely due to the significantly limited legal and social status of women in Kazakh society, as well as the neglect of their rights. According to the data of N. Malychev, the legal status of women in Kazakh society at that time was equated to that of "property". In this regard, certain customs and social practices concerning women were far removed from legal and ethical norms. For example, cases occurred where widowed women in their 40s or 50s were married to young boys aged 12–15, or where a 15-year-old widowed girl was married off to an 80-year-old man [11; 19]. Similarly, as researcher Z. Zh. Zhanazarova noted, "While Western and Soviet sociologists prioritized the full emancipation of women and comprehensively addressed gender equality, Muslim intellectuals placed particular emphasis on preserving national characteristics and traditional values" [24; 116].

In conclusion, the following key results can be highlighted: 1) In the European perspective, the issues of women's equality focused on their legal rights and participation in public life, whereas Turkism aimed to synthesize modernization, Islam, and national traditions. Through this, it developed a unique concept for protecting women's rights within the context of the national movement; 2) Although intellectuals supported the elevation of women's status and their education, paradoxically, women were assigned the role of preserving tradition and were seen as a tool for strengthening the national struggle.

Thus, from the standpoint of national identity and social progress, Kazakh intellectuals aimed to establish a new perspective on the role and position of women in society, which, in turn, became one of the essential prerequisites for the development of the national state.

### *Conclusions*

The issue of women's equality exhibited distinct characteristics depending on the region. In imperial European countries, women's equality was considered primarily at the level of individual legal and social issues, while in the colonial context of Kazakh society, it was framed as an integral part of the collective struggle for independence, the preservation of national identity, and societal modernization.

The question of women's equality in the intellectual legacy of the Turkic movement can be viewed from several perspectives. First, women were seen as the foundation of societal development. Given that women were responsible for raising future generations, their education was viewed not as a means of personal development, but as a way to strengthen the cultural and intellectual potential of the nation. Second, emphasis was placed on the familial role of women. Since women's traditional role was to ensure the stability of the family, their responsibilities within the family were harmonized with their public activism. Third, women's political rights and roles were not seen as individual issues but were considered within the broader context of the collective struggle for societal renewal and the achievement of national independence. By in-

volving women in political life, the aim was to unite forces and strengthen national unity. Fourth, women's religious freedoms were addressed within the framework of Islamic law. While there was a focus on expanding women's rights to education, inheritance, property, and marriage, these changes were not made at the expense of Islamic values.

Thus, while the women's movement in other countries aimed at balancing political, economic, individual, and social rights as a separate ideology, in Turkism, the focus was on women's role in preserving national identity and shaping national consciousness. Their role was often linked to the family.

The views of the Turkic reformers were clearly reflected in Kazakh society. Women's rights were not considered in isolation but were viewed as a crucial part of the collective struggle for independence and cultural preservation, as well as the foundation for the renewal of public consciousness and social progress. In the colonial context of Kazakh society, the primary goal of this movement was to preserve national identity and achieve independence.

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## Түркішілдіктің интеллектуалдық мұрасында әйелдер теңдігі мәселесі: тарихи-мәдени талдау (XIX ғасырдың соңы — XX ғасырдың басы)

XIX ғасырдың аяғы мен XX ғасырдың басында жаһандық әлеуметтік өзгерістердің маңызды бөлігіне айналған әйелдер қозғалысы әртүрлі елдердегі әлеуметтік-мәдени деңгей мен саяси жағдайға байланысты өзіндік ерекшеліктер иеленді: атап айтсақ, Еуропа елдерінде ол феминистік идеяларға сүйенді, Ресейде революциялық өзгерістермен байланысты болып және әлеуметтік-саяси сипатқа ие болды. Қазақ қоғамындағы отаршылдық ықпал жағдайында ол қоғамды жаңарту және ұлттық бірегейлікті сақтау үшін ұжымдық күрестің ажырамас бөлігіне айналды. Зерттеу жаңалығы мынада: Зия Гекальп пен Исмаил Гаспринскийдің зияткерлік мұрасындағы «әйелдер теңдігі» мәселесіне қатысты идеялары және олардың қазақ қоғамына әсері талданған. Зерттеу нәтижелері түркішілдік қозғалысы жетекшілерінің идеологиялық ықпалы Алаш зиялыларының шығармашылығында жергілікті ерекшеліктерді ескере отырып көрініс тапқанын көрсетті, бұл ұлттық сананы қалыптастыру процесінде маңызды рөл атқарды. Осылайша, түркі халықтарында «әйелдер теңдігі» мәселесі ұлттық ерекшеліктерді көрсететін гендерлік теңдіктің бірегей моделін құруға алып келген исламдық қағидағар мен дәстүрлі құндылықтарды үйлестіре отырып, жаңғыртудың маңызды элементіне айналды деп айтуға болады.

*Кілт сөздер:* түркішілдік, әйел теңдігі, қазақ қоғамы, ұлттық бірегейлік, интеллектуалды мұра, дін.

Г. Кушенова, Р. Дрозд, Е. Абдраимов

## Проблема равенства женщин в интеллектуальном наследии тюркизма: историко-культурный анализ (конец XIX — начало XX века)

В конце XIX — начале XX века женское движение, ставшее важной частью глобальных социальных изменений, имело свои особенности, обусловленные социально-культурным уровнем и политической ситуацией в различных странах. Например, в странах Европы оно опиралось на феминистские идеи, а в России было связано с революционными изменениями и приобрело социально-политический характер. В условиях колониального влияния в казахском обществе женское движение стало неотъемлемой частью коллективной борьбы за обновление общества и сохранение национальной идентичности. Актуальностью исследования являются идеи, касающиеся вопроса о равенстве женщин и их влияния на

казахское общество. Они проанализированы в интеллектуальном наследии Зии Гекальна и Исмаила Гаспринского. Результаты этого исследования показали, что идеологическое влияние лидеров движения тюркизма, учитывая местные особенности, отразилось в творчестве Алашской интеллигенции. Это сыграло значительную роль в процессе формирования национального сознания. Таким образом, можно утверждать, что в тюркских народах вопрос о равенстве женщин стал важным элементом модернизации, сочетая в себе исламские принципы и традиционные ценности. Это привело к созданию уникальной модели гендерного равенства, которая отражала национальные особенности.

*Ключевые слова:* тюркизм, равенство женщин, казахское общество, национальная идентичность, интеллектуальное наследие, религия.

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