

Turkic Women through the History

The Turkic woman as her own special place in the history. We know many educative facts, lots of information about the bravery, motherhood, citizenship honor, wisdom, cleverness, decency, honesty, as well as of the rich spiritual values of the Turkic woman from the history.

The Turkic woman has played an important role in the life, in the fate, in the progress of the Turkic peoples inhabiting the vast territory beginning from the faraway Manchuria, Siberia up to the shores of the Mediterranean. The powerless, vile treacherous tribes helpless against the bravery, chivalry and heroism of the Turkic have all the time tried to win, to split this mighty people along the history. And all the time they have been disgraced and were made to retreat as a saber to its sheath.

The Azerbaijani Turks populating a vast territory beginning from the Caucasian Mountains up to the Persian Gulf have written many pages of heroism of mankind. Our foremothers have also left their indelible traces on the pages of this heroism. When we read the fairy-tales, eposes of the Azerbaijani Turks, particularly the heroic epos of "Kitabi Dede Gorgud" (The Book of Grandfather Gorgud), the bravery and heroism of our foremothers revive in front of our eyes. They have never lagged behind our forefathers in death and life battles, in the fights of justice waged against the alien aggressors who attempted to defeat our people. They used to arm with light weapons as arrows and bows, halberds and wear lighter jackets and helmets for protection.

In the VII century BC our sagacious foremother Tomris, the woman ruler, impeded the attack of Cyrus, Iranian shah, defeated him and his army. As our distinguished poet Nizami wrote, our foremother Nushaba, the ruler of Barda in the IV century BC, won a moral-spiritual victory over Alexander the Great of Macedonia and averted a massacre due to her wisdom and sagacity.

In 656 BC when the troops of the Roman general Pompey intruded into Azerbaijan, the local women fought against Pompey together with the men and defended the motherland.

Describing the battle the ancient Roman historical Appius wrote: "There were women among the wounded warriors, too."

In this way the Azerbaijani women have fought heroically against the strange occupants along the history.

The names of many brave, intelligent women have found their reflection on the golden pages of our history for participating in the progress, evolution of our nation, in the formation and rule of our state. As a sign of tribute and respect our forefathers added aristocratic titles khanum, khatun, beyim, banu to their names of our foremothers and treated them as holy beings. These ladies had due education, attended secular and religious schools and rendered great services in the socio-political history of our thinking.

The history has witnessed the birth of many Azerbaijani poetesses, public figures, women-of art and culture. Momina khatun, wife of Shamsaddin Eldeniz, the ruler of the state of Atabeyis of Azerbaijan in the XII century, Konuldash, wife of Gara Yusif, ruler of the state of Karakoyunlu in the XIV-XV centuries, Sara khatun, mother of Uzun Hasan, ruler of the state of Akkoyunlu, Mahinbanu Sultanim khatun, daughter of Shah Ismail, and dozens of women aristocratic and royal families helped their ruler sons and husbands in public and diplomatic affairs.

The Azerbaijani women fought together with their Turkish sisters in the First World War, took part in the movement for freedom and independence. The Armenian nationalists, who have become the puppets and satellites of the super states, have left their particular "traces" in the history in this field, too. When the Western countries and Russia waged a war against the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians gave a sign of their existence. This vile, treacherous, unfortunate nation, confident in the support of the said states, betrayed Turkey, a country which sheltered and fed them as in the famous fable of I.A.Krilov "The Elephant and the Dog". The moral of this fable is like this: knowing that he can

do nothing to the elephant, the dog barks at the latter to make other dogs think that he is strong enough to fight against the elephant. The Armenians used the arms given to them by the Russians against the Turkish, shed the blood of the innocent civilians. Because of their betrayal, thousands of people died, many family hearths were destroyed. The Armenians suffered misfortunes as a result of this betrayal, too.

It is a long and sad history. We have no chance to speak of them too much within the boundaries of this small article.

In 1915-1922 when the fate of the Turkish people, Turkey was on the brink of an abyss, the Turkic woman displayed the deeds of heroism in the battles together with their husbands and sons. Relying on the words of Kemal Ataturk about the heroism of the Turkic woman we would like to mention some facts very briefly.

The battle field is for men. But whenever there is a danger for the existence of the Turks, whenever the motherland is in danger, then the Turkish woman are by the side of their husbands ready to fight.

Here is an example. When Kemal Ataturk came to Tarsus, he saw a young lady by name of Kara Adile who fought bravely together with men. She was in the soldier's uniform. Seeing Ataturk she bent on her knees and attempted to kiss his hand. Ataturk raised her, tears filled his eyes, he said: "The heroic, brave Turkic woman, you are not worth of crawling on the ground, you are worth of being raised to the heavens on our hands!" Hundreds of woman like Kara Adile displayed courageous deeds in the fight against the foreigners, they carried ammunition to battle fields on their slender shoulders, in the capacity of nurses took away from the battle field their wounded brothers, husbands and sons, saved them from the claws of the death, were wounded and became martyrs. Aishe, Hadije, Zeynep, Gulendam, Feride, Beshire, Mehmet kizi, Hanim, Aliye, Peri, Zekiye, Najiye, Emine and hundreds of patriotic woman are remembered by the Turkic people with pride and sense of gratitude for gaining the honour and status of a ghazi.

The Turkic women have enjoyed such a highest respect and tribute through all the history. The Turkic mothers have brought up and endowed the world with hundreds of rulers, generals and commanders like Ertogrul Ghazi, Osman, Sultan Yildirim Beyazid, Sultan Murad, Sultan Mehmet, Shamsaddin Eldeniz of the Atabegs, Mahammad Jahan Pehlivan, Kizil Arslan, Uzun Hasan, Shah Ismail Khatai, Tamerlane, Atilla, Chingizkhan, Ataturk. They have given birth to heroic Turkic sons, laid the foundations of the healthy, moral Turkic families and society, been the creators of the Turkic culture and literature.

Hundreds of poetesses and women writers like Heyran Khanum, Agabeyim Aga Agabaji, Fatma Kamine, Khurshud Banu Natevan, Shahnigar Ranjur in Azerbaijan and Samiyye, Sidgi, Hebibe, Zeynep, Hubbu, Seri, Sheref, Servet, Tuti, Zefer, Fitnet in the Ottoman Turkey have left indelible traces in the history of our artistic thinking, in the Turkic poetry and prose by penning their slender, gentle feelings and desires.

In the early years of the XX century, particularly in the first years of the Democratic Republic, there was a revival in Turkey and Azerbaijan, the movement for the liberation of women gained a new scope. Women enlighteners of Turkey Nigar Khanum Osman, Fatma Aliye Khanum, Megbule Leman, Halide Edib, Ezize Heydar Khanum, Negchiliyye Khanum, Yasha Nezihe, progressive women of Azerbaijan Shafiga Khanum Efendi-zade, Hamide Khanum Gavanshir, Sekine Khanum Akhund-zade, Sara Khanum Vezirova, Rahila Khanum Hajibababeyova, Ayna Sultanova, Govhar Khanum Gajar, Umgulsum Sadig-zade, Khadija Khanum Alibeyova, Khadija Khanum Agayeva, Medina Khanum Giyasbeyli, Maryam Khanum Bayramalibeyova, Aziza Khanum Jafar-zade and many others played an important role in the struggle for the national liberation and in the development of culture and education.

The first popular women writer of Azerbaijan Shafiga Khanum Efendi-zade wrote that "a woman teacher in Turkey by name of Fazile Heydar Khanum opened schools on her own initiative where children studied in their native language. Thousands of children attended these schools. In the contemporary period of literature women writers like Halide Khanum, Nezihe

uhiddinkhanum, Ezize Heydar khanum proved that they are not inferior at all to the men writers from the point of view of their talents, skills and artistic value of their works".

It is to the point to note that in 1918-1920 during the rule of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan there was a national revival in literature, in social and cultural life, the foundations of the new progressive period were laid in the movement for the liberation of women.

The present cultural development of women in Azerbaijan and Turkey is a living proof of it.