

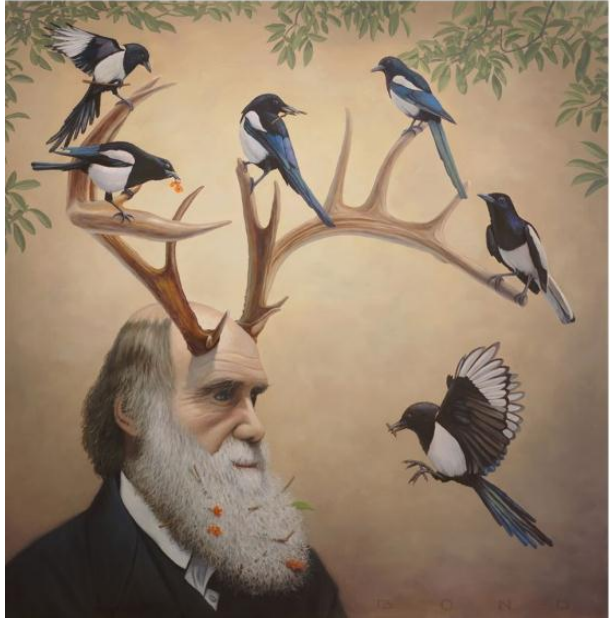
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Universidad del Zulia
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas
Maracaibo - Venezuela

Leo Tolstoy's sphere of concepts in the development of women's education

Anton Afanasev¹, Rezeda Mukhametshina¹

¹Kazan Federal University

a.s.afanasyev@mail.ru, Mukhametshina@mail.ru

Dinara Tolbayeva², Kadisha Nurgali²

²L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University

Tolbayeva@mail.ru, Nurgali@mail.ru

Abstract

The article studies the effect of Leo Tolstoy's personality and his concept sphere on the prominent Kazakh educator Ybyrai Altynsarin via bibliographical, receptive, comparative, and historical methods. Revealing Tolstoy's influence on the selfless activities of Ybyrai Altynsarin is the main result of this work, e.g., establishment of schools for boys, and then the establishment of schools for girls. In conclusion, Altynsarin's chrestomathy followed the student throughout the entire learning process, serving as a textbook and a reference book.

Keywords: Women, Education, Leo Tolstoy, Literature, Concepts.

La esfera de conceptos de Leo Tolstoi en el desarrollo de la educación de la mujer

Resumen

El artículo estudia el efecto de la personalidad de Leo Tolstoi y su esfera conceptual sobre el prominente educador kazajo Ybyrai Altynsarin a través de métodos bibliográficos, receptivos, comparativos e históricos. Revelar la influencia de Tolstoi en las actividades desinteresadas de Ybyrai Altynsarin es el resultado principal de este trabajo, por ejemplo, el establecimiento de escuelas para niños y luego el establecimiento de escuelas para niñas. En conclusión, la cretomática de

Altynsarin siguió al estudiante durante todo el proceso de aprendizaje, sirviendo como libro de texto y libro de referencia.

Palabras clave: Mujeres, Educación, Leo Tolstoi, Literatura, Conceptos.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are several remarkable studies written about women's education and social status in Russia. Among them, one work that stands out is the work of PUSHKAREVA (1996), specifically *Women in Russian History from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century* (1996), in which the author carried out enormous work, analyzing the lives of the greatest women in Russian history and their impact on the society. For instance, the author writes about girls' education in the XIX century; it was traditionally home education, and the main emphasis was on teaching manners and learning the rules of etiquette. The book by researcher RYABOV (1999) analyses women's image and feminine principles in the philosophical papers of many prominent Russian writers, poets and public figures (AMIRNEJAD, ELAHI & YAZDI, 2018).

As a rule, researchers of women's questions in Russia devote the major part of their work to analyzing the establishment of higher education. There is little information on women's education in Kazakhstan, and this topic has not become a subject of major scientific study yet. This work focuses on the rise of the elementary education system for women, a lack of which would close the access to higher education.

2. METHODS

Leo Tolstoy has had a substantial impact on women's education in Kazakhstan. The sphere of concepts reflected both in his pedagogical and fictional works has influenced the activities of Ybyrai Altynsarin, who has become the founder of women's education in Kazakhstan (TISHKIN, 1984; CARRETO, GÊGO & FIGUEIREDO, 2018). This study uses bibliographical, receptive, comparative, and historical methods to find the points of contact in the life of Leo Tolstoy, his educational concept, and the historical period in Russia and Kazakhstan.

3. DISCUSSION

It is a well-known fact that Leo Tolstoy was a speaker for universal education. As early as 1859, he founded schools for peasant children in his mansion Yasnaya Polyana, where he educated both boys and girls. Ernest Crosby was among the first to describe the classic's pedagogical experience. In his book *Tolstoy as a Schoolmaster* (1908), he shed light on the freedom given to children at the Yasnaya Polyana School: there was no punishment for coming late or any certain class timetable, homework, or punishment for naughtiness (YARMAKKEEV, PIMENOVA & SYUNINA, 2016). The methods of Count Tolstoy have become a certain pedagogical concept that covers the scope of pedagogy, developmental psychology, and literature, as the writer specifically called literature a textbook of life. Many schol-

ars, including Daniel Murphy, believed the idea of changes in current education originated in his childhood and youth (JOHANSON, 1987; KADI & CETIN, 2018).

The authors also analyse Tolstoy's concept and teaching methods to prove his innovativeness, as society regarded the methods in Count Tolstoy's concept ground-breaking, thereby treating them suspiciously. Nernan Monteiro reflected on the main concepts of this theory in the article *Rousseau's Concept of Education*, where the author, along with Rousseau, states, Education was the important business of the state, and natural education was the privilege of free men. Children should be educated together. Tolstoy's reception of Rousseau's works is hard to track, but it is known that Rousseau's works had fascinated Tolstoy since his youth, and he rediscovered them midlife. Another possibility is that the idea of establishing his own pedagogical concept came to Tolstoy as a counter to the German pedagogical system, which had become widespread in Russia in the late XIX century. Karikottuchira Kuriakose (2012) writes that Tolstoy attacked educational theory and practice both, contemporary and classic.

One year after founding the first school in his mansion, when Leo Tolstoy went on a Trip across European schools, one of the places he visited was a school in a German town of Kissingen. The author wrote in his journal, the 17th of July, I was in a school. It was awful. Pray for the King, beatings, everything is learned by rote, scared, crippled children (DAVLETBAEVA, LIMEIQI & MINJAR-BELORUCHEVA, 2018). He wrote in the same journal in August,

Montaigne was the first who clearly expressed the idea of the freedom of education. Again, equality and freedom are the main things in education. A need to establish new schools, which could educate children with this new worldview, arose after the abolishment of serfdom in 1861, as the serfs were given freedom and did not know what to do with it. Tolstoy's pedagogical dream of equality started to come true. The equality in the Tolstoy's educational concept is natural, and he regarded women's educational as something completely logical, to the extent that he never emphasized it in any of his works (VASSILIEVA & KUZMINA, 2018; AMURSKAYA, GIMALETDINOVA, & KHALITOVA., 2017).

Leo Tolstoy's publications are of immense importance, comparing the concept and determining Tolstoy's influence on Altynsarin's works. His view of education reflected in the journal was so far ahead of his time that the publication did not find a response among the public and was unprofitable. Despite this, Tolstoy continued to release it every month for a year. In Yasnaya Polyana, he described his pedagogical experience and the experience of teachers at his school, and responded to letters from readers, one of whom was Ybyrai (Ibrahim) Altynsarin, the founder of the first secular school in Kazakhstan. Even after the closure of the journal, education issues continued to occupy Tolstoy. He published his thoughts by separate articles in various periodical literatures until his death. For instance, his article *What is the Main Task of the Teacher?* was one of Tolstoy's last letters to the editorial office and concerned the tasks of students at school.

4. RESULTS

Revealing Tolstoy's influence on the selfless activities of Ybyrai Altynsarin is the main result of this work, e.g., the establishment of schools for boys, and then the establishment of schools for girls. The translation of Tolstoy's works laid the foundation for the creation of new textbooks.

5. SUMMARY

To understand the importance of the Ybyrai Altynsarin contribution to Kazakhstan education, one should follow the main stages of his life using the bibliographical method. Thus, in 1850, at the age of nine, he went to the first grade of the school for Kazakh children at the border commission opened in the city of Orenburg, a city on the border of Russia and Kazakhstan. This school was one of the first places where children learned Russian. Before such schools, Kazakh boys obtained education from the village mullah, and it was religious rather than secular. The education was not accessible; children from wealthy families were the only ones who could obtain an education. There was no systematic education for both boys and girls with common goals and objectives.

Altynsarin graduated from the school, where the main classes were Russian, calligraphy, arithmetic, Kazakh, Muslim dogma, and the compilation of business papers in Russian. The school was intended to train personnel for the local administration. Schooling lasted seven years, and Altynsarin began to work as an interpreter in 1857. In 1860, the regional government instructed him to open an elementary school for Kazakh children in the Orenburg fortification, at the same time they appointed him a Russian language teacher at this school. The work as a Russian language teacher offered Altynsarin many challenges like those set by Leo Tolstoy. They faced the following problems:

- Lack of a system – teaching programs,
- Lack of teaching methods,
- Lack of textbooks, and
- Lack of teachers.

In addition, Altynsarin had to look for students to fill the schools, since not all parents were ready to send their child to a boarding school. For the Kazakh people, sending a child to study was a new experience, although it is worth noting that their mentality helped overcome this problem. The Kazakhs of that period led a nomadic way of life and were just in the transition to sedentism; hence, long distances and forced separation from relatives did not frighten them. In addition, the cult of teachers among the Kazakhs helped Altynsarin bring children to school, since the person transferring knowledge was an

indisputable authority, and the thirst for knowledge was the best characteristic of a child.

The appearance of women's education in Kazakhstan is also associated with Ybyrai Altynsarin. After he gained some experience in the establishment of the boys' schools and teaching, he opened a special boarding school for Kazakh girls in 1887 in Irgiz. Later, he asked the imperial administration to open women's schools in all districts of Turgai region. The schools opened their doors in the cities: Turgai (1891), Kustanai (1893), Aktobe (1896), and Karabutak village (1895). By 1896, 211 girls gained an education at these schools, thanks to Altynsarin. The program included Russian, Kazakh, and natural science. In addition, Kazakh girls studied sewing, cutting out dress patterns, knitting scarves, shawls, treatment of camel hair, wool, and horsehair ribbons and belts.

Altynsarin believed these applied disciplines were very important, since a women's school, regardless of its direct purpose as a training and craft institution, would also serve as a lure for Kyrgyz (Kazakh) women who, being attracted to needlework, could learn Russian as well, and at least in this way it would be possible to lay the foundation for the primary education of Kyrgyz women. Daniel Moulin, in his book *Leo Tolstoy*, wrote about Tolstoy's role in the establishment of schools, where children were engaged in labour activities, in the chapter *Tolstoy Influence Returning to America*, Krauskopf procured some land, enrolled six students and the school he created eventually became Delaware Valley College. Ybyrai Altynsarin was

the first to put forward the idea that education is a synthesis and alternation of mental and physical labour. He also owns the idea of simultaneous education. He considered learning by rote a waste of time, especially when it came to languages.

Altynsarin believed that it was more effective to use the language in practice. For instance, girls often spoke Russian during needlework classes. The cornerstone of the educational concept of Leo Tolstoy and Ybyrai Altynsarin is the impossibility of expanding the outlook of a person and enriching him spiritually without physical labour. Guided by these principles, Leo Tolstoy allocated a land plot to be processed by schoolchildren in his Yasnaya Polyana School. Students grew flax, peas, carrots, and turnips there. As in the Yasnaya Polyana School, there were no corporal punishments in Ybyrai Altynsarin's schools, only oral disapproval. Textbook writing is what also unites Leo Tolstoy and Ybyrai Altynsarin. However, while Tolstoy wrote his famous *The ABC Book* in opposition to the existing textbooks, Ybyrai Altynsarin wrote his textbook from scratch, based on the experience of teachers from Russia, Leo Tolstoy, and Joseph Paulson.

Tolstoy's *The ABC Book* is the very first book studied by a student of the Yasnaya Polyana School, and begins with the alphabet. After mastering the alphabet, the student studied the reading book (chrestomathy). Ybyrai Altynsarin's students skipped the alphabet stage and immediately started to study the chrestomathy. In his textbook, Altynsarin borrowed Tolstoy's general principle, which is a small form. Like Leo Tolstoy, who wrote a series of stories specifically

for children to read, Ybyrai Altynsarin compiled a collection of short stories, some of which he had written himself and some he had translated. Ybyrai Altynsarin translated many short stories written by Leo Tolstoy, but this study will dwell in more detail on one small story used for teaching at women's schools: *The Chinese Empress Silinchi*, published in Leo Tolstoy's first Russian book for reading.

This work is interesting, particularly for the changes made by Ybyrai Altynsarin in the translation of the text. The intention of these changes is not in doubt because Ybyrai Altynsarin was fluent in Russian – he spoke fluently, wrote letters, and worked as an interpreter – and could not allow such inaccuracies accidentally. An analyse the translation of the story appears here. It is worth noting that Tolstoy himself defines the genre of the story as *byl* (true story), and meaning that the story was based on nonfictional events. Tolstoy's plot is ordered thus: Silinchi's husband (Emperor Goangchi) wanted to glorify the name of his beloved wife, so he advised her to watch the silkworm: Learn what to do with this worm and people will never forget. Listening to her husband, Silinchi began to observe, and noticed, when worms freeze, sometimes they are covered in web. Having the web unwound, Silinchi found the threads that she used to weave the first silk handkerchief.

Then the empress learned that the worms eat mulberry leaves, and began feeding them – that is how she discovered silk. In the finale of the work, they established a holiday in honour of the discovery made by the Empress Silinchi that has been celebrated for five thou-

sand years. In the translation by Ybyrai Altynsarin, the story title is Silinchi Degen Khanim. Upon analysis, one important change in the narrative stands out: the absence of the emperor. Silinchi, the Emperor's wife writes Altynsarin, watched the life of the silkworm. The emperor as a character and, consequently, his advice that prompted Silinchi to make the discovery in Tolstoy's text, are missing in the translation.

Moreover, Tolstoy's story mentions the emperor's name, Golangchi, whereas only the empress has a name in Altynsarin's translation. In the translation of Silinchi story, which is very important for the content, she made the decision to watch the worm herself. Altynsarin gives credit for the discovery of silk directly to the empress. The process of discovery is the exact translation of the Tolstoy's text: the silk web of a worm – a scarf – mulberry leaves, although there is an additional sentence, it was she who first discovered the silk thread. For Ybyrai Altynsarin in this translation, it was very important to emphasize that she – a woman – made this discovery. The finale of the Altynsarin's work is the same as that of Tolstoy: It has been five thousand years already, and the Chinese still celebrate in honour of the empress. Such significant changes in the text were necessary for Altynsarin to strengthen the personality of the main character.

In this story, Silinchi is an example of a woman who, thanks to her own observation and intelligence, was able to benefit her people and became worthy of veneration. The discussion of the text was an essential element of the language teaching methodology, and there is

no doubt that students of the women's school could not help but be interested in Silinchi's personality. With this story, using the Chinese empress as an example, Altynsarin could motivate students for new research. Therefore, the story of the Empress Silinchi may be called the first work was written especially for children's school reading, and, particularly, for the schools for girls, and it has become possible thanks to the story itself written by Leo Tolstoy, and significant changes made by Ybyrai Altynsarin in translation.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The starting point for the development of women's education in Kazakhstan was the activities of Ybyrai Altynsarin, which would have been impossible without the activities of Leo Tolstoy. Opening schools first for boys, Altynsarin realized the need to create textbooks aimed at a Kazakh boy, who is just discovering the world of literacy. Altynsarin's chrestomathy followed the student throughout the entire learning process, serving as a textbook and a reference book. The chrestomathy was also actively used in the newly created women's schools, and its graduates became the first female teachers in Kazakhstan. Altynsarin borrowed a lot from the experience of Yasnaya Polyana Schools: the student-orientated education, the absence of punishments, the need for a positive example, and the raising in the love of work.

The establishment of schools became a matter of his whole life for Ybyrai Altynsarin, and led to the active development of education in Kazakhstan, in general, and women's education, in particular.

When opening schools, Ybyrai Altynsarin borrowed a lot from Leo Tolstoy's pedagogical concept:

- Focus on the student;
- Education is impossible without upbringing;
- Labour is an integral part of education;
- Women's education requires a more particular approach; and
- Reading is the most effective education technique.

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