

„New Woman”? The Life, Personality and Activity of Alexandra Kollontaj (1872-1952)

Summary

My doctoral dissertation is focused on the phenomenon of Alexandra Kollontai (1872 – 1952), an eminent Russian activist of socialist and feminist movements, the first female minister and ambassador.

The structure of the dissertation is problem-based. This solution definitely distinguishes the project from the existing biographies of Alexandra Kollontai. This structure of the biography can even be regarded as unique. The initial chapters devoted to the activity of the protagonist with special consideration of the particular stages of her life and her everyday activities. The essence of the dissertation, however, are the chapters dealing with Alexandra Kollontai's psycho-physical state, erotic life, ideological attitude, education and evaluation of the protagonist in the contemporary world. The material was organized according to the structure: one chapter – one research problem.

In effect, I am able to prove, that Kollontai was unusual person in her times. She rejected social norms, alike in private and professional life. She has participated in many events important for the twentieth-century world, like The Russian Revolution of 1917 and Second World War or The Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR. The Kollontai ideology influenced not only the then socialist movement, but also a feminist in the 60s of the twentieth century. Her activity in politics and diplomacy broke the "glass ceiling" blocking women's access to high positions, but she actively supported the totalitarian Communist regime founded by Lenin and Stalin. After the death of Alexandra Kollontai, the leaders of the USSR created her image in publicity of their homeland, but she is also a symbol of women's emancipation. Kollontai as a politician and a woman tried to remain faithful to herself, although not always succeeded. Her figure was prominent, but also ambiguous.



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