

Vankulu Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi - Yıl / Year: 2022 - Sayı / Issue: 9 - Sayfa/Page: 86-93  
Makale Bilgisi / Article Info / Geliş/Received: 17.05.2022 / Kabul/Accepted: 13.06.2022  
Yayın Tarihi/ Date Published: 30.06.2022

**Atıf/Citation:** Rojev, A. S., ve Görmez, A. (2022). Paleolitik Çağlardan 16. Yüzyıl Avrupa'sına Kadar Kadınların Sosyal ve Siyasal Statüsü Üzerine. *Vankulu Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 9, 86-93

#### Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

**Rojev Ağıt SARI\***

\*Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi, Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü, Van/Türkiye.  
rojevagitsari@hotmail.com  
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-2458-74358

**Aydın GÖRMEZ\*\***

\*\* Doç. Dr., Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü, Van/Türkiye.  
aydingormez@hotmail.com  
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-7148-9630

## Paleolitik Çağlardan 16. Yüzyıl Avrupa'sına Kadar Kadınların Sosyal ve Siyasal Statüsü Üzerine *On The Social and Political Status of Women from Palaeolithic Ages To 16<sup>th</sup> Century Europe*

**Öz**

Temelde cinsiyetler arası eşitsizliği ele alan feminizm, kadınların toplumun her alanında maruz kaldıkları eşitsizlik ve adaletsizlikleri def etmeyi amaç edinmiştir. Elbette bu eşitsizlikler toplumların tarih içerisindeki ilerlemelerinin sonucudur. Tarih öncesi çağlardan çağdaş dönemlere kadar, toplumda hem kadının hem de erkeğin belli başlı görevleri olmuştur. Cinsler arasındaki bu görevler paleolitik çağlarda başlarda bir sınıflaşmaya sebep vermemiştir. Çünkü kadının da erkeğin de ana görevi yaşadığı toplumun çıkarlarını gözetmektir. Sanayileşmenin gelişmemiş olması, doğa kanunlarına uygun bir yaşam gerektirmiştir. Doğanın buyruklarının esas alındığı bu dönemlerde, toplumlar arasındaki ilk bozulmalar neolitik çağlarda başlamıştır. Sanayileşmeyle beraber yerleşik yaşam başlamış ve gerek toplumlar arası gerekse cinsler arasında dengeler değişmiştir. Özellikle üremede erkeğin de söz sahibi olduğunun öğrenilmesiyle, cinsler arasındaki bu bozulmalar zaman içinde erkeğin lehine gelişmiştir. Cinsler arasındaki dengelerin değişimi Avrupa'da her toplumda farklı işlemlerle sonuç erkeğin lehine olmuştur. Çağlar ilerledikçe kadınlar sosyal, siyasal, kamusal, hukuki, dini vb. birçok konuda eşitsizlik ve adaletsizliğe maruz kalmıştır. Rönesans dönemlerine doğru, tabiri caizse, aileler küçük krallıklar erkekler de ev içindeki krallar olmaya başlamıştır. Rönesans'ın başlarından sonlarına doğru artış gösteren bu erkek egemen ayrımcılıklar, 'feminizm' kavramından ilk söz edildiği dönemler olmuştur. Bu çalışma, kadınların paleolitik çağlarla 16. Yüzyıl Avrupası arasındaki sosyal, siyasal, dini, hukuki konumlarını genel hatlarıyla ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Balçıklı yerleşim sahalarında faylanma sonucunda tektonik çökme meydana gelmiştir. Sahadaki akarsuların günümüzdeki morfolojik görünümünü, Pleistosen'deki iklim değişiklikleri ile sahadaki tektonik hareketler önemli ölçüde etkilemiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Feminizm, Cinsler Arası, Kadının Rolü, Ataerkil Düzen

**Abstract**

Feminism, which basically deals with inequality between the sexes, aims to eliminate the inequalities and injustices that women are exposed to in all areas of society. Of course, these inequalities are the result of the progress of societies in history. From prehistoric times to modern times, both women and men have had certain duties in society. These duties between the sexes did not cause classification in the early Palaeolithic ages. Because the main duty of both men and women is to look after the interests of the society in which they live. The underdevelopment of industrialization required a life in accordance with the laws of nature. In these periods, when the commands of nature were taken as a basis, the first deteriorations between societies began in the neolithic ages. With industrialization, sedentary life began and the balances between societies and between sexes altered. Especially with the learning that the male has a say in reproduction, these deteriorations between the sexes developed in favour of the male over time. Although the change in the balances between the sexes works differently in every society in Europe, the result has been in favour of men. As the ages progressed, women were exposed to inequality and injustice in many social, political, public, legal, religious, etc. issues. Towards the Renaissance, families became small kingdoms and men became kings in the house, so to speak. These male-dominated discriminations, which increased from the beginning to the end of the Renaissance, were the first periods when the concept of 'feminism' was mentioned. This study aims to discuss the social, political, religious, and legal positions of women between Palaeolithic ages and 16th century Europe in general terms. ment areas of Eğribelen, Oymaklı, Yukarı Yorganlı and Yukarı Balçıklı. The current morphological appearance of the streams in the area has been significantly affected by the climatic changes in the Pleistocene and the tectonic movements in the area.

**Keywords:** Feminism, Inter Sex, The Role of Women, Patriarchal Order

## **Introduction**

Women in the Middle Ages were grouped as virgin, widowed or married. Depending on their age, they were classified as young or old. Queens, princesses, or noblewomen were separated from other women. Regardless of status, however, the word 'woman' included women of all classes. The understanding of the time saw women as physically weak, morally fragile, in need of man's care, and to avoid sin (Akkaya-Ria, 2016, p. 14). Feminism, whose main focus is on women, examines the status of women, their situation inside and outside the home, their exploitation by patriarchy, patriarchal social structure, and oppression. Feminists claim that their quest is political because they want to change the world, they live in. The world they live in must be changed so that all individuals, genders, communities, subcultures, and cultures can be treated as rational and productive beings (Bressler, 1994, p. 107). The feminist movement, which began at the local level, has over time acquired a global dimension. With the momentum it has gained, feminism has touched on the problems involving the legitimate rights of women in society and has been reflected in the perspectives of important disciplines such as philosophy, law, sociology, and politics (Taş, 2016, pp. 164-165).

In order to know where this gender inequality comes from, it is important to know the experience of women in the historical process. Although the available information is very limited, it can be argued that there was no distinction between women and men in the Palaeolithic. In hunter-gatherer societies, both women and men had duties for the interests of their tribes. In administration, both women and men had the right to speak. However, with the beginning of the Neolithic period, there were significant discoveries in the field of agriculture. It can be argued that the beginning of the transition to sedentary life and the mechanization of agriculture caused the first deterioration between the sexes. As the ages passed, it was understood that men also played a role in reproduction. Such developments weakened the role of women in societies. From feudal times to the Renaissance, with the work of the bourgeoisie, bureaucrats, and the Inquisition, women were assigned the role of domestic servants and fertility. Against the developments in favour of men throughout history, women resisted in almost every era, and towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the concept of "feminism" was introduced.

Feminism as a concept has emerged not only from the work of theory, but also from the consequences of social, political, and economic practices. These practices span a long period, from prehistoric times to modern times. From prehistoric times to modern times, it can be noticed that the position of women has been weakened over time in favour of men. Concepts such as the city, industrialization, religious factors, and politics involved in human life were notable components that formed the basis for a patriarchal order. Within this framework, the question of how women are relegated to the background in societies in terms of social and political aspects can be discussed in a broader framework. This study aims to discuss the position of women between the Palaeolithic and 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe in general.

### **1. Women's Social and Political Status Between Paleolithic Ages and the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Europe**

The period between the Palaeolithic and the Second Neolithic Revolutions is the period from which the least information is known about the status of women. Because communities at this time lived by hunting and gathering and writing, which was the turning point of civilization, had not yet been invented, preserved data are limited. Nevertheless, it is important to have information about the position of women in these eras. The study of these communities generally provides information about the dependence of women and men on living conditions and nature. While the task of women in these societies was gathering, men were busy with hunting. However, women are also known to hunt together with men. For Michel (1993), the next generation of French prehistory confirms the discoveries of Gordon Childe (p. 11).

Human relations in these communities are explained by the absence of war. The ideas of Levi-Strauss against the distribution of power between the sexes in prehistoric societies were put forward. Despite the view that women were exchanged, it is argued that men were also exchanged. In addition, women also had a say in decisions regarding the marriage of women to a member of a neighbouring or foreign tribe. Since this interaction between tribes reveals kinship relations, it is not possible to speak of an 'exchange of goods'. In this context, it can be argued that Levi-Strauss' conception of power relations has been criticized.

Michel (1993) claims that this interaction represented an alliance between exogamous foreign tribes and was the way to confirm lasting peace agreements (p. 12).

Information about the situation of women at that time can be obtained by examining cave paintings, statuettes made of stone or bone, and graves. The fact that women were prominent at that time can be explained by the fact that most of the statuettes found were female figures with obvious sexual characteristics. In the corresponding eras, the importance of women in the continuation of sex was known, but that of men was not. At this point, it is only natural that artists were influenced sexual characteristics of women. At this point, one can conclude that the woman held a superior or equal position to the man. The importance of the status of women at this time is explained by the fact that women could make decisions about the land of the clan, make and break contracts such as marriages, and determine the guardians of the treasury.

In the first Neolithic revolution, agriculture with the hoe entered people's lives along with hunting. Well-known scientists like E. Boulding and Gordon Childe are of the opinion that this kind of agriculture is an invention of women (Michel, 1993, p. 15). As agriculture became more important in people's lives, women took an active role in the reproductive cycles of seeds and grains. In addition, women had a say in milling, the discovery of new methods of preserving seeds, and the invention and development of pottery. The fact that women played a significant role in these activities shows the importance of their position in social life. It can be argued that technological developments exploded in the Middle Neolithic. For Michel (1993), inventions and discoveries such as ox, water, wind power, the plow, water, and sailing ship are technically revolutionary. In addition, the remarkable development of the chemical process and the invention of the solar calendar are also significant. These situations led to significant changes in the social structure of society. In agricultural production, men took the place of women, cultivated areas were expanded, and the woman's hoe was replaced by the man's plow (p. 17). With these developments came a significant increase in population and the transition to a settled order began. Nomadic communities became small villages, small villages became towns, and towns became cities over time. The emergence of the concept of the city brought class conflict. The city brought private property and accumulation. Therefore, the emergence of a lower class and an upper class was inevitable. Thus, the accumulation of wealth in one part led to the emergence of a concept of the state based on slavery and the formation of social classes. These developments also led to the harming of the position of women. Developments such as the increase in food sources and population growth have led to the spread of ideas within families. So, there are times when the view of woman as 'object' gains strength. Endogamy was preferred to exogamy to keep power and food within the family. These internal marriages, which increased over time, undermined peace agreements between communities and wars ensued. This resulted in the woman being reduced to the role of child-bearer and servant in the family. At this point, it can be argued that the Middle Neolithic disrupted not only man's relationship with nature and his fellow man but also the balance between women and men (Sevim, 2005, p. 11).

In this period, it becomes clear that the position of women is damaged not only in social life, but also in their superior position in religions. The idea of the mother goddess was long venerated, but statuettes depicting men were also made. Examples of the phallus as a symbol of masculinity were more common. This suggests that the role of men in reproduction increased as much as the role of women. Thus, along with the economic foundations of matriarchy, its ideological foundations were also weakened. Michel (1993) argues that the realization that both men and women were important for reproduction led to finding a husband for the mother goddess. Son, husband, and brother were initially second in line to the mother goddess, but over time they became equal to her. Eventually, in Athens and Egypt, God the Father was accepted as the absolute creator (p. 22). In short, the deterioration of relations with nature due to the technological revolutions in the Neolithic, the weakening of relations between communities and the understanding of the importance of man's role in reproduction pushed women into the background.

In the pre-feudal period, the collapse of the Roman Empire dealt a blow to institutions that opposed the emancipation of women. Although women were exempt from the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, they opened monasteries in areas inaccessible to agriculture. Nuns and monks were equal to men in terms of the land they controlled. In England and France, coeducational monasteries were leading, where women and men were subject to the same rules. It is known that the superiors of these monasteries could be women. The female superiors were responsible for the Christianization of the barbarians, the

creation of new agricultural lands, and religious education and training. An example from this period is Hilda of Whitby, an abbess who was known for her wisdom, attracted kings and founded seven monasteries and religious schools. In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the German Emperor Charlemagne forbade women to teach boys in the monastery. The women were so cultured that one could speak of wives who had a better education than a king. Only one play is known, written between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries by Hroswitha of Gandersheim, who is also known as the first female poet in Germany (Michel, 1993, p. 25).

Charlemagne created a staff of officials to manage his expanding lands and kept women out of those staffs. However, the pre-Charlemagne treasury and the administration of royal lands allowed women to conduct business. Women were only involved with treasury control and payment. In addition, non-royal women are also known to roll up their sleeves to maintain their influence. Women from all walks of life acquired property rights, inheritance, and permission to use the property without the consent of men. In the middle feudal era, parents had the right to name their children after maternal or paternal lineage. In European countries such as Spain and France, women also had a small say in land ownership, and women had the right to manage the property of their minor children.

In Byzantium, the number and quality of women engaged in science became famous. The number of women who attended university in Byzantium was quite high. The wife of Theodosius II, Eudocia, had reorganised the Byzantine university. The historian Anna Komnene, who lived from 1083 to 1153, founded a medical school in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and taught there. In addition, women were also active in self-employment and guilds. By the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the status of women was similar. Women were active and successful in many areas of social and political life. Although societies differed in language, religion, culture, and lifestyle, the status of women in social life was almost the same. Women had extensive freedoms. However, after the 12<sup>th</sup> century, anti-feminist movements gained momentum, and activities aimed at weakening the advantageous position of women became noticeable. With the Gregorian revolution that took place at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, religious reforms were implemented. These reforms removed women from their important positions in the church. The reforms also spread from the monasteries to the schools and universities. Women continued their education in the monastery, which was used by men to outdo women. The active role of women in business was weakened by these reforms. During this period, with the development of commerce, new state officials took command of many institutions. These officials were men, and women began to be pushed out of these areas. Although the church seemingly took a militant approach to implement these reforms, it cooperated with the bureaucrats who were gaining power. This was because the church wanted to maintain its spiritual and political power (Michel, 1993, p. 29). From this point of view, it can be argued that the old roles and powers of women began to weaken.

It is known that central kingdoms were established and activities were undertaken to prevent the progress of the kingdom from the descendants of women. In addition to women's political positions, their economic conditions were restricted and their inheritance rights were reorganized. It can be argued that noblewomen resisted during this period to defend their rights. An example of this is Eleanor of Aquitaine, who lived from 1122 to 1204 and was one of the most important resisters of the period. Eleanor's work in education, politics, art, literature, perception of women, and the military has earned her a place in history as a significant woman (Mark, 2019).

Women engaged in commerce were left out in the cold when the merchant guilds took over small towns. Dervish lodges, in which women had a say, were reorganized, and the number of men was increased. Women were content to protect their trading rights. Looking for a way out, women specialized in certain trades such as sericulture and lacemaking. Women, whose professional field narrowed, were disadvantaged compared to men. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, there were only 15 lodges for women, compared to 80 lodges to which men belonged (Michel, 1993, p. 30). To prevent the domestication of women in professions, male-only training was introduced in some professions. This situation limited the possibility of training female professionals. These measures have led to the disappearance of one woman after another from the commercial sector. Thus, it can be argued that women are relegated to the second row economically compared to men. It can be stated that women suffer significant losses in political, religious, and economic terms. Faced with this situation, however, women tried to resist these sanctions with practices such as love divans and heresy. They organized uprisings in the countryside and the cities under the leadership of peasant and worker women. One of the most important practices developed by women during this period was the

beguinage, that is, retiring to a convent without becoming a nun. The women who made this their lifestyle did not swear to be nuns, but prayed collectively. In this way, it was possible to escape the control of men and the church.

Women were determined to continue their resistance, and this forced the Church and the bourgeoisie to retaliate. They developed the Inquisition and new family law institutions to begin a process of normalization that allowed women to be confined to the home. The church now acted with groups with economic power. The Inquisition accused thousands of women of being witches or sorcerers and had them burned at the stake. One of the main justifications of the Inquisition was that witches preached unbelief and attacked men's sexual power and women's fertility. This situation turned into a witch hunt and then genocide that lasted until the 18th century (Sevim, 2005: 25). The witch hunts that started in the transition to the New Age began with the split of the Catholic Church after the Reformation. With this split, the revived superstition concerns the power of super-religious forces that influence people's lives. The witch hunt is inspired by passages in the Bible and Torah that refer to misogyny. It was based on the medieval priesthood and continued for 300 years (Aksan, 2013, pp. 355-356-357).

To regulate the natural roles of women, civic officials submit laws under the title of "normalization." These laws are tantamount to the 'civil death' of women in the family and society (Michel, 1993, p. 33). These laws were created specifically to end the domination of female property and aimed to remove women from the economic sphere, restrict them in business, and give all authority to men. The mainstays of the jurists were the concept of 'flagitious sexus' of Roman law, which was forgotten in the Middle Ages.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century France, we find that women were weakened in their family situation. First of all, women were deprived of the right to represent their husbands. A woman needed court authorization to obtain such power of attorney. Moreover, in the early Middle Ages, the child could bear either the mother's or the father's name; since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, only the father's name was prescribed to facilitate administrative matters and state officials. This practice is still actively continued in some societies.

In ancient Greece, women were severely restricted in terms of status. This is because a woman's scope of movement was limited to the home. There was no freedom for women. A woman was always under the protection of a man who was from her family. No matter how wealthy the woman was, she had difficulty in actively participating in social and political life. The image of women created was conservative. A woman was supposed to be virtuous and not hang around. In ancient Greece, a society where knowledge and wisdom were of great importance, women had difficulty accessing information because of the roles imposed on them. Thinking and knowledge were attributed only to men. Although there were women who had great difficulty in accessing information, over time it was the female attitudes of these women that were mentioned, not their thoughts (Akkaya-Ria, 2016, p. 18).

As mentioned above, women did not simply accept the situations in which they were condemned. They did not hesitate to raise their voices against the restrictions imposed on them by the Church, politics, the legal system and social life. One of the most notable names of these women resisters is the medieval writer, poet and philosopher Christine de Pisan (1364-1430). De Pisan believed that it was essential for women to receive a good education so that they could fulfil their responsibilities. De Pisan's book *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1405) was in the library of almost every noblewoman. It was almost a divine book for every educated medieval woman. These books brought colour into women's lives and allowed them to dream (Akkaya-Ria, 2016, pp. 16-17). De Pisan explained the educational needs of each individual separately, from noblewomen to village women. At this point, De Pisan also laid the foundation for girls' education and a peaceful social order, two notable themes that feminist theory emphasizes.

Looking at the Renaissance period, it is known that the activities of the Church and the bourgeoisie based on the imprisonment of women continued to develop. In this regard, French jurists strengthen the basis of the patriarchal family order by quoting from Roman law. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a married woman is restricted by law and cannot seek legal redress without the permission of her husband or a judge. It can be argued that the family turns into a small kingdom and the man becomes the king in the house. At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, in order not to solidify the roles assigned to women, a guide entitled *The Family Order of the Parisians* (1498) laid down the rules for educating girls to be moral and inclined to housework. The criterion that was taken into consideration was the convenience of the husband (Yazıcı, 2019, p. 191).

Studies on the limitation of women in management also gained importance. The duties of women who worked in guild and city management were restricted or they were removed from their positions. The wage gap between men and women widened, and by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century a woman could receive less than half the salary of a man. These wage disparities were shifted from the countryside to the cities. The emerging bourgeoisie's basic motto for women consisted of an understanding that glorified the idea of the "housewife," as King (1991) notes, "To bear children is a woman's privilege and a woman's burden – both" (p. 4). The roles imposed by bourgeois morality required a woman to attend only to the problems of the family, to do the housework, and to obey her husband's word. In addition, the closing of convents and the fact that women were not admitted to the universities founded by the Church literally restricted women in their work. In the Middle Ages, women had duties as wives. Women were always to be docile and obedient. The husband's word was to be heard, and the husband's family was to be loved and respected. A wife had to be faithful to her husband and love him. On the other hand, if a man loved his wife, it was considered dangerous. This is because when a man loves a lot, he can tend to commit crimes, just as Adam could not hurt Eve (Genç, 2021).

In addition to scientific, social and political restrictions, women were also deprived of artistic activities. Women were denied the right to make art. The contribution of women painters or musicians to art history was not precisely known because they had to sign their works with the names of their husbands or brothers. The contribution of Marguerite Van Eyck, who made some of her brothers' paintings, to the art of painting is unknown because art history wrote about her brothers (Michel, 1993, p. 36). From this point of view, it can be argued that women were only allowed to appear as shadows in artistic activities. Women continued to resist this disregard. The success of this resistance depended on geography.

It can be argued that the impact of the feminist tradition in Italy, which was influenced by the Muslim culture, had been on women since the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Aristocratic women were able to receive education and protect artists and writers. One example is Lavinia Fontana, who lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and went down in art history as a very famous artist. As a remarkable portrait painter, another 16<sup>th</sup> century artist, Sofonisba Anguissola, was another name that can be mentioned as an example in this respect.

In these eras, the main reactions to the restriction of the role of women came from the queen and noble women. In this context, women proved to be as successful as kings when it came to regulating administrative matters and signing treaties. Isabela of Castile endeavoured to unify Spain without the help and absence of her husband; she opened schools, hospitals and convents. In England, Elizabeth Tudor ensured England's superior position on the seas (Akkaya-Ria, 2016, p. 16).

Women are known to have supported heresy and reform movements both in England and in Europe. In this context, it can be cited as an example that the number of women who supported the Queen was higher than the number of men who protested against Elizabeth Tudor's deportation of priests who did not submit to the official church.

Women's resistance to patriarchal society in Europe is not yet over. One of the most remarkable names that can be mentioned in this context is Jeanne d' Arc. In the context of the limitless role that the female role entailed, d' Arc succumbed to the power of patriarchal society, although she resisted. Moreover, women sought solutions in education. The Order of Saint Ursula, an institution for unemployed, single and orphaned girls, was founded in 1537 by a woman named Angela Marici de Brescia.

The Renaissance message of individual rights was well understood by some middle-class women, and these women resisted being confined to their homes. Within this framework, it can be argued that the power of the pen comes to the fore. To illustrate, Marie de Gournay wrote two books, *The Equality of Men and Women* (1641) and *Ladies' Complaint* (1641). These two books convey that all good things are forbidden to women, that they are deprived of freedom, that virtues are too much for them. Moreover, Poulain de la Barre declared that sex is not recognised by the mind. De la Barre's work *On the Equality of the Two Sexes*, published in 1673, laid the foundation for pre-feminist thought (Sevim, 2005, p. 29). It can be argued that the term "feminism" entered history with the Renaissance, along with the restrictions women faced from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, the patterns they entered and their resistance.

## Conclusion

Feminism, revealed in the patriarchal family structure, argues that women should have a more equal and powerful status given the oppression, discrimination and impositions they have faced since their emergence. The concept of feminism has undergone many changes from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when it was first introduced, to the present day. Feminism focuses on women and their position in society. Male-dominated family life, social and political life and any view in which women are relegated to the background are rejected by feminism with an unequivocal stance (Akbař, 2020, pp. 2-3).

The concept of the city and the introduction of industrialisation into human life after the prehistoric period weakened the role of women in society. Women, who occupy a remarkable position both socially and religiously, suffered a loss of power with men's understanding of their role. With the concept of classification, it can be argued that the balance between the sexes was disturbed and the foundations were laid for male-dominated societies in Europe. The women who were excluded from social, political, public and artistic spheres resisted. Every woman, from peasant to noble, reacted and resisted the patriarchal order of the Middle Ages. The patriarchal order tried to make women a tool. It became impossible for women to be the subject of history. Motherhood, servanthood, fertility and housework were associated with women, and other activities of women were considered ahistorical. Women were deprived of public space and education (Çakır, 2021). So much so that the patriarchal society aimed to impose patriarchy on women with gender imbalance. Women who are subjected to this imposition can also be defined as patriarchal women. They can also be defined as women who has internalised the values of the patriarchal order, where traditional gender roles are promoted and privileges are granted to men. While traditional gender roles perceive women as emotional (irrational), weak, caring and obedient, men are perceived as rational, strong, protective and determined (Tyson, 2006, p. 85). In fact, this patriarchal conception of women was ingrained in the minds of women of the Middle Ages. Although seemingly feminine, a masculine thought or voice seems to emerge. De Pizan (1982) describes this situation in her book *The Book of the City of Ladies* just like, "As I was thinking this, a great unhappiness and sadness welled up in my heart, for I detested myself and the entire feminine sex, as though we were monstrosities in nature" (p. 5).

With the developments after the Palaeolithic Age, when there was no discrimination in social life, the imbalance between the sexes arose. This imbalance was supported by the bourgeoisie, bureaucracy and religion towards the Middle Ages, and the foundations of the patriarchal order were laid. Therefore, women were pushed into the background. Women who were deprived of their basic rights resisted at different times and places. Although resistance was suppressed by the patriarchal order, the theoretical foundations of women's resistance were laid with the concept of feminism, which emerged in Europe at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The concept of feminism has grown in importance as a discipline over time and remains a notable field today.

## References

- Akbař, F. (2020). Historical geography of feminism. *International Journal of Education and History Research*, 2(2), 77-110. <http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/eta.42969>
- Akkaya-Ria, R. (2016). Atina'daki demokrasiden Orta Çađ'a kadının dünyası ve kadın filozoflar. *Journal of Istanbul University Law Faculty*, 73(1), 7-20. <https://dergipark.org.tr/pub/iuhfm/issue/25016/264138>
- Aksan, Y. (2013). Witchcraft in Europe between 1450-1750. *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 28(2), 355-368. <https://dergipark.org.tr/pub/egetid/issue/5067/69142>
- Bressler, C. E. (1994). *Literary criticism: An Introcution to theory and practice*. Prentice Hall.
- Çakır, S. (2021, June 14). *Feminist tarih yazımı*. Feminist Bellek. <https://feministbellek.org/feminist-tarih-yazimi/>
- Genç, Ö. (2021, June 27). Orta Çađ Avrupası'nın sıradan kadınları. <https://www.akademiktarihtr.com/ortacaginkadinlari/>

- King, M. L. (1991). *Women of the Renaissance*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Mark, J. J. (2019, March 29). *Eleanor of Aquitaine*. World History Encyclopedia. [https://www.worldhistory.org/Eleanor\\_of\\_Aquitaine/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Eleanor_of_Aquitaine/)
- Michel, A. (1993). *Feminizm*. İletişim Yayınları.
- Pizan, C. d. (1982). *The book of the city of ladies*. (E. J. Richards, Trans.) Persea Books. (Original work published 1405).
- Sevim, A. (2005). *Feminizm*. İnsan Yayınları.
- Taş, G. (2016). Feminizm üzerine genel bir değerlendirme: Kavramsal analizi, tarihsel süreçleri ve dönüşümleri. *Akademik Hassasiyetler*, 3(5), 163-175. <https://dergipark.org.tr/pub/akademik-hassasiyetler/issue/27268/287075>
- Tyson, L. (2006). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide*. Routledge.
- Yazıcı, S. (2019). Gothic space in Iain Banks' The Wasp Factory novel. *Ataturk University Journal of Faculty of Letters, bilig*, 63, 183-200.

#### **Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Beyanı**

Yazarlar araştırmada ele alınan çalışmaların derlenmesinde ve yayına hazır hale getirilmesinde her türlü etik ilke ve kurala özen göstermişlerdir.

#### **Ek Beyan**

Yazarlar çalışmaya eşit oranda katkı sağlamıştır.

#### **Çıkar Beyanı**

Yazarlar arasında herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.