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The Women Discussions In The Ottoman Modernization: Example Of Fatma Aliye Hanım

Osmanlı Modernleşmesinde Kadın Tartışmaları: Fatma Aliye Hanım Örneği

Sadagat ABBASOVA

Doç. Dr.
Kafkas Üniversitesi, Fen Edebiyat, Batı
Dilleri Bölümü, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Ana Bilim Dalı,
sadagat2001@yahoo.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-3645-615X.

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ABSTRACT

The assessment of gender equality of women in Turkish novels, as well as the concept of research and discussion in this process, has already begun to be discussed in the context of Ottoman and European (Eastern and Western) cultural movements in the 19th century.

All intellectuals who usually try to solve the female problem in the social sphere have discussed this problem from different points of view. Especially from the Ottoman Empire to the present day, writers have tried to solve this problem in their novels and in their scholarly works using a method of thinking based on culture, experimentation, and observation.

In this study, we will try to identify the conflicting elements of promoting gender equality in the novels of Fatma Aliye Topuz, who is the first female novelist in Turkish literature and Islamic geography. First of all, in the aspect of these developments, the scientific solution of all the works (novels) of Fatma Aliye Khanım, based on an understanding of traditionalism and Islamic culture, will be assessed.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Fatma Aliye, Gender Equality, Modernization, Women Discussions

ÖZ

Türk romanlarında kadının toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin değerlendirilmesi ve bu süreçteki araştırma ve tartışma kavramı, 19. yüzyılda Osmanlı ve Avrupa (Doğu ve Batı) kültür hareketleri bağlamında tartışılmaya başlanmıştır. Kadın sorununu genellikle toplumsal alanda çözmeye çalışan tüm aydınlar, bu sorunu farklı açılardan ele almışlardır. Özellikle Osmanlı'dan günümüze yazarlar,

romanlarında ve ilmi eserlerinde bu sorunu kültüre, deneye ve gözleme dayalı bir düşünce yöntemiyle çözmeye çalışmışlardır.

Bu çalışmamızda Türk edebiyatının ve İslam coğrafyasının ilk kadın romancısı Fatma Aliye Topuz'un romanlarında cinsiyet eşitliğini vurgulayan çelişkili unsurları tespit etmeye çalışacağız. Öncelikle bu gelişmeler açısından Fatma Aliye Hanım'ın gelenekçilik ve İslam kültürü anlayışına dayalı tüm eserlerinin (romanlarının) bilimsel çözümü değerlendirilecektir. Bunun ötesinde Türk toplumunda var olma mücadelesinde topluma fayda sağlayacak olan kadının ahlaki, dini ve tarihi dönemi farklı ve özgür bir şekilde değerlendirilecektir. Genel olarak Fatma Aliye'nin yazdığı tüm kitap ve eserlerin ana teması sadece kadın sorunları değildir. Fatma Aliye de tüm roman ve makalelerinde kadının entelektüel kimliğini, toplumdaki modernist düşünce ve görüşlerini tarihsel bir bakış açısıyla incelemeye ve değerlendirmeye çalışmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Fatma Aliye, Cinsiyet Eşitliği, Modernizasyon, Kadın Tartışmaları

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Türk romanlarında kadının toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin değerlendirilmesi ve bu süreçteki araştırma ve tartışma kavramı, 19. yüzyılda Osmanlı ve Avrupa (Doğu ve Batı) kültür hareketleri bağlamında tartışılmaya başlanmıştır. Kadın sorununu genellikle toplumsal alanda çözmeye çalışan tüm aydınlar, bu sorunu farklı açılardan ele almışlardır. Özellikle Osmanlı'dan günümüze, yazarlar romanlarında ve ilmi eserlerinde bu sorunu kültüre, deneye ve gözleme dayalı bir düşünce yöntemiyle çözmeye çalışmışlardır.

Bu çalışmamızda Türk edebiyatının ve İslam coğrafyasının ilk kadın romancısı Fatma Aliye Topuz'un romanlarında cinsiyet eşitliğini vurgulayan, gelenekçilik ve İslam kültürü anlayışına dayalı tüm eserlerinin (romanlarının) bilimsel çözümü değerlendirilecektir. Bunun ötesinde, Türk toplumunda topluma fayda sağlayacak olan kadının ahlaki, dini ve tarihi dönemini farklı ve özgür bir şekilde tespit etmeye çalışacağız. Genel olarak Fatma Aliye'nin yazdığı tüm kitap ve eserlerin ana teması sadece kadın sorunları değildir. Fatma Aliye'nin tüm roman ve makalelerinde kadının entelektüel kimliği, toplumdaki modernist düşünce ve görüşleri tarihsel bir bakış açısıyla incelemeye ve değerlendirilmeye çalışılmıştır.

Fatma Aliye Hanım, Osmanlı tarihçileri ve edebiyat aydınları arasında rol model bir reformcu olarak biliniyordu. Kablan, yazarın kadınlarla olan tartışmalarını

Fatma Aliye çerçevesinden “Kadın” başlıklı makalesinde şöyle dile getirdi: “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun modernleşme sürecindeki zor koşulları, kadınların toplumsal hayata katılması ve eğitilmesi gerektiği fikrini beraberinde getirdi.” Ayrıca döneminde, Fatma Aliye bir kadın dergisinde kadın sorunlarıyla ilgili birkaç yazılar yazdı ve bu makalelerinde kadın haklarını savundu. Bu görüşlerinden dolayı ve hatta o dönemin resmi tarih tezlerine karşı çıktığı gerekçesiyle yazar çok uzun bir süre edebiyat dünyasından da dışlanmış. Fakat buna rağmen Fatma Aliye, ilk Türk kadın romancısı olarak tarihe adını yazdırmayı başarmıştır.

Fatma Aliye romantik yazarlığının yanı sıra felsefe, İslam, siyaset ve tarih kitaplarını da okuyarak özellikle Meşruiyet sonrası kendi kadın kimliğini tarihsel ve siyasi bakış açısıyla eserlerinde ortaya koymaya çalıştı. Ancak yazarın tarihçiliği bugüne kadar ihmal edilmiş ve ciddi bir şekilde değerlendirilmemiştir. “Fakat yazarın “halen tarih yazıcılığı hakkında değerli bilgiler içeren iki eseri var. İlk eser, 1915 yılında “Kosova Zaferi Ankara Yenilgisi Dönemi Osmanlı Tarihi”, ikincisi ise bir yıl sonra yayınlanan “Ahmet Cevdet Paşa ve Zaman”ıdır.

19. yüzyılın sonu ve 20. yüzyılın başında Avrupa’da olduğu gibi Türkiye’de de kadının sömürü ve baskıdan kurtulması, eğitim hakkı, kadının medeni ve siyasi haklarının tanınması için bir mücadele başladı. Osmanlı döneminden sonra Türkiye’de aile ve kadın konusu aydınlar ve yazarlar tarafından en çok tartışılan konulardan biri olmuştur. Türk dünyasında ve Tanzimat döneminde “kadın meselesi” konusunu eserlerinde yazan ve bu çalışmanın ana konusunu oluşturan ilk kadın yazar olan Fatma Aliye Hanım’ın da bu düşünsel çizgiye dahil olduğu söylenebilir. Hem ilim, hem filozof hem de devrin ilk kadın aydınlarından biri olan Fatma Aliye’nin ortaya çıkışı öncelikle küçük hacimli makaleler ve yazılarıyla olmuştur. Ayrıca bu yazılar literatürde Ahmet Mithat Efendi’ye mektuplar olarak da bilinmektedir.

“Muhadarat” (İstanbul, 1892). Yazarın Fatma Aliye imzalı ilk romanıdır. “Muhadarat” roman türünde yazılmış bir eserdir ve Türk edebiyatında Tanzimat döneminin bir sahne romanı olarak kabul edilmektedir. Muhadarat’ın en önemli özelliği, aile hayatını bir kadının gözünden ele alması, romanı daha farklı yapmaktadır.

Muhadarat’ın bir özlülük özetini verecek olursak, romanda annelerinin vefatından sonra yetim kalan Fazıla ve Şefik adlı iki kardeşten söz edilmektedir. Kısacası roman tamamen babalarının ikinci evliliğiyle zorlu hayat mücadelelerine başlayan kardeşler üzerine kurulu. Adı gerek tarih, sosyoloji ve hatta siyaset bilimi açısından büyük önem taşıyan yazarın, gerekse bu alanda çalışan ve okuyanlar için “Muhadarat” bu konudaki ilk eseri olarak bilinmektedir.

Romanın ana fikri, başkalarının iradesiyle yapılan bir evliliğin neden olduğu sorunları tespit etmektir. Dolayısıyla “Mühaddarat” romanının sadece kadın meselelerini ve kadının toplumdaki yerini değil, aynı zamanda kadının toplumsal sorunlarına dair fikir ve düşünceleri de içerdiği söylenebilir.

Fatma Aliye'nin yayınlanmış kitaplarından ve eserlerinden Batılı yazarların İslam ve İslam kültür dünyasına dair görüşlerini yansıtan çok radikal ve değerli fikirlere sahip oldukları açıktır. Yazar, Batılı yazarların metinlerindeki “gerçek İslam” ve tarihi gerçekleri ile 19. yüzyılda İslam-Osmanlı toplumundaki durum karşısındaki duraklama ve gerilimin nedeninin Osmanlı döneminden kaynaklanmadığını özellikle vurgulamaktadır. Aksine Fatma Aliye, Müslümanlar arasındaki bu çelişkileri ve gerilemeleri o dönemin siyasi durumları, savaşlar ve din üzerindeki kutuplaşma ile ilişkilendirmektedir.

Ayrıca, Fatma Aliye yazdığı tüm eserlerinde, kadınların zekâ bakımından erkeklerden bir fark olmadığını da iddia etmekte ve İslam'ın hurafelerden ve kişisel görüşlerden kurtulması gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Dolayısıyla yazara göre, kadın gerçek İslam inancının değeri hakkına sahip olduğu tezini tüm romanlarında her zaman vurgulamıştır.

Ayrıca Fatma Aliye Hanım'ın eğitimi ve sosyal hayatıyla ilgili varmak istediği sonuç net: “Kadınları akıllı varlıklara dönüştürün. Bunu yaptığınızda, onlar yakında iyi bir eş ve anne olacaklar”

Son olarak Fatma Aliye Hanım modernleşme ve modernleşme tartışmaları çerçevesinde kaleme aldığı eserlerinde İslami geleneklere göre, Türk kadınının toplumdaki yerini anlatmıştır. Öte yandan ise, Fatma Aliye Türk edebiyat kültürünün bir hazinesi olarak özgürlüğünü seven, ataerkil geleneklere ve yerleşik geleneklere karşı çıkan, erkeklerle hak eşitliğini cesurca savunan bir savaşçı yazar kadın imajını yaratmıştır.

INTRODUCTION

Generally, the main theme of all the books and works written by Fatma Aliye is not only the women's issues. Fatma Aliye also tried to analyze and evaluate the intellectual identity of women, their modernist thoughts, and views on society from a historical point of view in all her novels and articles. Due to the duty and work of her father, Fatma Aliye was engaged in translations for a long time. She later turned "to scientific research, publishing over 40 articles on history and philosophy. From under her pen came out novels and memoirs."¹

Fatma Aliye Hanım, was also known as a role model reformer among Ottoman historians and literary intellectuals. Kablan, expressed the author's discussions with women in her article "Woman" from the framework of Fatma Aliye: "The difficult conditions of the Ottoman Empire in the process of modernization brought the idea that women should gradually take part in social life and be educated".²

A few times Fatma Aliye has written articles on women's issues in a women's magazine and advocated for women's rights. Especially in his novels, he strove to reveal political life after the constitutional monarchy. For this reason, he was excluded from the literary world for a very long time on the grounds that he opposed the official historical theses of that period. But despite this, she managed to write her name in history as the first Turkish novelist.

In addition to her romantic writing, she also studies philosophy, Islam, politics and history. But the historiography of the author has been neglected and not seriously evaluated until now. "However, "she still has two works that contain valuable information about historiography. The first work is "The Ottoman History of a period of Kosovo victory Ankara defeat" in 1915, and the second is "Ahmet Cevdet Pasha and His Time", which was published a year later."³

Fatma Aliye Topuz was born on October 9, 1862 in Istanbul. Fatma was the second child of the family. Fatma Aliye Topuz was the daughter of late Ottoman statesmen, lawyer and historian Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, and Rabia Advıye Hanım. Apart from Fatma Aliye, there were 2 more children in the family: the eldest son of the family, Ali Sedat, and the youngest daughter Emine Semi.

¹ Репенкова, М.М., ЖЕНЩИНЫ ТУРЦИИ В ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ И ОБЩЕСТВЕ. ВЕСТН. МОСК. УН-ТА. СЕР. 13. ВОСТОКОВЕДЕНИЕ. 2008, № 2, 4.

² Nurhanım Kablan, Fatma Aliye'nin Çerçevesinden "Kadın", *Sosyal Bilimler Genç Akademisyenler Sempozyumu, Bildiriler Kitabı*; (2015), 245. www.kadimakademi.org.tr; akademigencligi@gmail.com, Date of Access: 15. 12. 2021.

³ Джевдет, Кырпык, "Историография Фатма Алие Ханым", *Bilig Journal of Social Sciences of the Turkish World*, (Ahmet Yesevi University Board of Trustees (2010),165.

Fatma Aliye Hanım is known as the first female novelist of Turkish literature and Islamic geography. The author, who has written 5 novels on Turkish, Islamic and world geography, has also revealed her identity as an intellectual who thinks, explores and asks questions in her writing. Of course, Fatma's father - Cevdet Pasha, was also a broad thinker and his daughter's interest in education and language did not go unnoticed by the father. But despite all this, Fatma Aliye could not get special education, because she did not believe that a woman could get an education at that time. Besides all this, when Fatma Aliye was very young (17 years old), she married Faik Bey and had four daughters. (Hatice, Ayşe, İsmet, Nimet).

1. CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT, FREEDOM, AND DIMENSIONS OF TURKISH PHILOSOPHY

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, as in Europe, a struggle began in Turkey for the liberation of women from exploitation and oppression, for the right to education, for women's civil and political rights. After the Ottoman period, the issue of family and women in Turkey was one of the most important issues widely discussed by intellectuals and writers. Fatma Aliye Hanım, who is the first woman writer to write the subject of "women's issue" in the Turkish world and the Tanzimat period in her works⁴ and constitutes the main subject of this study, is also included in this intellectual line can be said.

The emergence of Fatma Aliye, who was both a science, a philosopher and one of the first women intellectuals of that time, was primarily due to her articles. In addition, these articles are also included in the literature as letters to Ahmet Mithat Efendi. Later, Ahmet Mithat Bey published all these letters in the newspaper "Tercüman-ı Adalet".

"Muhadarat" (Istanbul, 1892). This is the first novel by the author with the signature of Fatma Aliye." "Muhadarat" is a work written in the genre of a novel. The work is accepted in Turkish literature as a stage novel of the Tanzimat period. The most important feature of Muhadarat is that it deals with family life through the eyes of a woman, which makes the novel different. Muhadarat is one of the "100 Major Works" of Turkish literature.

Mühaddarat is a word of Arabic origin. Of course, there are different opinions about this word.

⁴ Saliha. Pakar, *Unmuffled Voices in the Shade and Beyond: Women's Writing in Turkish, Textual Liberation European Feminist Writing in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Helena Forsas- Scott (London: Routledge, 1991), 270.

It means Muslim women who have reached the age of puberty should be covered:

However, in the Encyclopedia of Islam, “Muhadderat” is given as “to convey knowledge and experience in the presence of a community and to have a scientific discussion with them”. Therefore, it means “conversations and discussions in the form of mutual questions and answers in assemblies held in the presence of great scholars”.⁵ The first edition of this work belongs to 1892, and the second edition was published in 1908. Mühadarat ”is a work that deeply reflects the life of a well-to-do family in Ottoman society at the end of the 19th century. The troubles caused by a marriage made without her consent and with the will of others constitute the theme of the novel.

Aliye Hanım has divided her novel into four main sections, and these main sections are also composed of intermediate ones within themselves. If we give a summary of Muhadarat, two brothers named Fazila and Shefik are mentioned in the novel, orphaned after the death of their mother. In short, the novel is entirely based on brothers who began their difficult life struggles with their father’s second marriage:

All events in the novel begin with the father, Mr. Sai. The stepmother mistreats the children, and as a result of this manner, the family is faced with a great life drama.

On this topic, “Muhadarat” is known as the first work of the author, whose name is of great importance both for history, sociology and, even political science, and for those who work and read in this field.

We would like to share a few ideas about the views and values of Fatma Aliye regarding social issues, religion and, the culture of women:

First of all, I would like to say that although Fatma Ali khanım wrote more works than the writers of the Tanzimat era, with the exception of Ahmet Mithat Efendi, they were ignored in literary history until the 1980s. Studying the novels of Fatma Aliye, we see that she is a writer who is between an extremely conservative and being a feminist woman. However, given that Fatma Aliye carries deep traces from her own life, we can define her as a writer who defends and explores the social equality of women during the Ottoman period.

1.1. Traditional Marriages and the Author Attitudes and Views in “Muhadarat”

It is a work that reflects the life of a rich family in Ottoman society. The main

⁵ This article was included in the 30th volume of the TDV Encyclopedia of Islam, which was published in Istanbul in 2005, on pages 391-392.

idea of the novel is to identify the problems caused by a marriage contracted by the will of others. Therefore, it can be said that the novel “Mühaddarat” includes not only women’s issues and women’s place in society, but also ideas and thoughts about women’s social problems:

In particular, concubine, family, marriage, gender equality, polygamy, veiling, education of women and other subjects are known as the main idea of this novel;

The novel begins with a description of a wedding house. The author reveals the attitudes and the views of people in detail in the novel. The author’s detailed description of the wedding house, which is of great importance for women, is also noteworthy. Such as the act of eating at the table during a wedding; singing saz; action scenes of dynasties and others.

Also, as for the main theme and messages of the novel, “Fatma Aliye Hanım drew attention to traditional marriages including the close inspection of the bride to be in an arranged marriage discluding love and affection, which was a debated topic among Ottoman women and intellectuals at that time. In this way, Fatma Aliye aimed to unfold the misery and victimization of many women and the couple that stemmed from such traditional marriages”.⁶

Describing the wedding, Fatma Aliye tries to convey the thoughts and dreams of the people gathered here, while adding her experiences to the reader:

Whatever happens, the author somehow gives tasteful reflections on what the wedding was like, but on the other hand, he tries to introduce the two important protagonists of the novel, Fazila, by criticizing Galibe (Galibe is Sai’s wife), who is her opposite in every way.

On the other hand, while criticizing Fatma Aliye Galibe, she considers the conditions of the period. Like other works and articles by the author, this novel had a great influence on the formation of female identity in the literary world of the Ottoman period of the 19th century.

Another aspect of the author’s work is, when we examine Fatma Aliye’s novels and articles, we see that she has moral lessons given to society and also has a traditional view. In this way, Fatma Aliye praised good moral characters in her works and showed them as ideal role models for the society and with it she has loaded a social purpose to shape society on her sholder. According to Unsal “One of the issues that Fatma Aliye Hanım talked about in her writings was the concept of polygamy. The religion of Islam accepted marriage with four

⁶ Eyüp Murat Kurt, *Enlightened Fathers and Their Reformist Sibling*, Ankara: Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, Master’s Thesis 2013) 128.

women only under certain socio-economic and cultural conditions”.⁷ Yet she openly recommended monogamy as the most appropriate type of marriage for men. When the author approaches this question realistically, it turns out that Islam agrees to value polygamy in the face of an exceptional situation. Hence, it is known that polygamy was not common in the Ottoman Empire, except in cases, and the monogamous way of life prevailed there, as in today’s societies.

The first discussions and disagreements about the position of women in society have begun in Ottoman cultural life in connection with the Westernization movement. “Polygamy” (Taaddüd-i Zevcat, 1898) is a book that emerged as a result of the discussions about polygamy between Fatma Aliye Khanım and Mahmud Esad Efendi. The problem of *polygamy*, which was the most important of the discussions on this topic during the Ottoman period, has been widely discussed, especially in novels and studies, since the second half of the 19th century.

Until Fatma Hanım, enough significant studies on the history of Turkish modernization and women had been studied and incorporated into Turkish literature. However, today research conducted in the context of polygamy occupies a more important place in the history of modernization. Therefore, “Polygamy” (Taaddüd-i Zevcat, 1898) constitutes a bibliography for the demands of the orientalist (Fr. orientalisme) tradition rather than a description of reality. Based on the source of all this information, we can say that the book “Polygamy” (Taaddüd-i Zevcat,) is the first important reference on women’s studies in Ottoman sources.

Fatma Aliye, who was at the beginning of the first discussion while writing the book, made all the opinions and comments she put forward until the end between Mahmud Esad Efendi. Mahmoud Esad Efendi is a scholar who wrote works on legal, social and religious issues that were appreciated by Cevdet Pasha (father of Fatma Aliye) during the Ottoman period. Fatma Aliye Hanım, besides being a novelist and writer, is also a very competent intellectual in the field of women’s law who has worked with her father on “Mechelle”. At the same time, she is the first woman writer to address the “women’s problem” with the novels she published one after another.

“Polygamy” (Taaddüd-i Zevcat,) has allowed its readers to follow an interesting controversy on polygamy. Therefore, while analyzing the Ottoman modernization processes in Polygamy (Taaddüd-i Zevcat,), many intellectuals who dealt with

⁷ Hayrunnisa Ünsal, *Fatma Aliye Hanım’ın Esrlerinde Kadın Olgusu*, (Sakarya: Graduate School of Social Sciences of Sakarya University, Master’s Thesis 2019) 49.

this issue tried to reveal the problems from different aspects. The most important of these questions, we can say that the male-dominated views of the period were dominant and there were opinions against polygamy. For this purpose, the authors tried to show very important issues on the social position of women around the perception and images of women.

For example: Although Celal Nuri states that he is against polygamy in his book *Our Women* (1915), he still makes the following statement: “At best, a man may be allowed to take another woman in case of genuine need. For example, if a man is pleased with his wife, but this woman cannot fulfill her female duty, then this may be allowed to protect the rights of her husband, provided that he does not offend the woman”.⁸ On the other hand, Celal Nuri wanted to prevent the image of polygamy by referring to certain conditions in Islamic traditions. In addition, Celal Nuri says the following in the context of Islam and polygamy. “Islam put an end to the old situation by glorifying women and establishing rules against polygamy in order to create a truly wonderful humanity”.⁹

When we examine the recent historical studies on this subject, the famous Turkish historian Professor. İlber Ortaylı explains this issue in one of his articles as follows: “A very enjoyable marriage called polygamy in Ottoman society; it is neither immoral (it is rare in society anyway) nor illegal, but it is not welcome at all”.¹⁰

The other most important discussion topic of this book is the education of women and their rights being brought to the agenda by the intelligentsia and bureaucrats. “Educated, firmly standing on the ground, independent of anyone, disregarding the conventions and foundations that fetter her freedom, independently determining her destiny - this is the ideal of a Muslim woman, which Fatma Aliye asserts, capturing at the end of the nineteenth century. the beginning of the inevitable process of emancipation of the Turkish woman ”¹¹. Fatma Aliye’s socio-political views are also reflected in many of her articles. But Fatma’s position on the “women’s issue” turned out to be more radical. The author rejects the traditional distinction between men and women in the social sphere, insists on the right of women to participate in public life and opposes the obligatory wearing of the veil.

⁸ Fatma Aliye & Mahmud Esad. *Taaddüd-i Zevcat-Zeyl*. (Konstantiniyye: Tahir Bey Matbaası,1316) 10.

⁹ Fatma Aliye & Mahmud Esad, *Taaddüd-i Zevcat-Zeyl*, 14.

¹⁰ Fatma Aliye & Mahmud Esad, *Taaddüd-i Zevcat-Zeyl*, 16.

¹¹ Svetlana Nikolaevna Uturgauri, *Turetskaya Proza*, “Osnavnıe tendensii razvitiya”, 2004, 192.

2. THE EVALUATION OF FATMA ALIYE HANIM'S NOVELS IN TERMS OF RELIGION AND CULTURE

From the published books and works of Fatma Aliye, it is clear that Western writers have very radical and valuable ideas, reflecting their views on Islam and the Islamic cultural World. The author especially emphasizes that the reason for the pause and tension in the face of the “real Islam” and historical facts in the texts of Western writers and the situation in the Islamic-Ottoman society in the 19th century did not come from the Ottoman Empire. On the contrary, the author associates these contradictions and regressions among Muslims with the political situations of that period, wars and polarization over religion.

According to Fatma Aliye, “women argue that it is no different from men in terms of intelligence¹², and advocate that Islam should get rid of superstitions and personal views. Thus, according to the author, a woman has always emphasized in all her novels the thesis that she has the right to return the lost value of her true Islamic faith.

By the 19th century, the status of women writers in Europe and the world has completely changed. In Turkey also, (especially in Istanbul), the reaction against polygamy, mostly inter-sex relations, and marriages with several women at the same time were the most discussed issues. Fatma Aliye Hanım also, states that polygamy was not an accepted way of life in the Ottoman mentality, but such events were more exaggerated than those observed in the history of modernization.

However, in her time as a pioneer fin de siècle female writer of about a dozen books and several dozens of essays and a prominent member of charity organizations, which were at the time the main vehicle for a female political presence, she acquired fame that should be restored if we are to understand the literary landscape of the late Ottoman period in its full complexity.¹³

As far as Islam and feminists are concerned, Fatma Ali Khanım inevitably takes the discursive scene, framing them in accordance with the competing ideologies of Westernization, anti-Westernism, and Ottoman reformism and their respective moral values.¹⁴

¹² Mine Topçu, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Tesettür Tartışmaları (1908-1918)*, (Sakarya: Graduate School of Social Sciences of Sakarya University, Master's Thesis 2019), 31.

¹³ Hülya Yıldız, *Literature as Public Sphere: “Gender and Sexuality in Ottoman Turkish Novels and Journals”*, (Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy The University of Texas at Austin, 2008) 153.

¹⁴ Fatma Aliye & Mahmud Esad, *Taaddüd-i Zevcat-Zeyl*, 29.

Even beyond that, While Western movements have tried to move women's liberation beyond educational activities (such as abolishing polygamy and giving women the right to vote), Islamist movements argued that women's attainment of certain rights would undermine Islamic morality and ethics, and advocated restricting women to the private sphere.¹⁵

CONCLUSION

The name Fatma Aliye Topuz occupies an important place in the field of Turkish thought and literature. Fatma Aliye is known not only for her personal qualities, but also for her contribution to the world of literature, as the first woman writer to live in the Tanzimat period, and the first feminist thought.

As the matter of fact, Fatma Aliye Khanym is one of the writers of this period, who included the issue of "women" in her works and mainly touched upon the place of women in society. It can be said that the author evaluates this issue mostly in the context of religion and cultural values. Fatma Aliye Hanım, who argues that a woman in the family cannot be described as a being that who only gives birth to children and fulfilling the wishes of her husband, is one of the most chosen examples in the 19th-century Islamic history.

Also, the conclusion I want to reach about Fatma Aliye Hanım's education and social life is clear: "Transform women into intelligent beings; when you do it, they will soon become good wives and mothers." She described the demands for women's rights and equality as the same as Mary Wollstonecraft's ideas on the issue.

On the contrary, in the novel "Polygamy", Fatma Aliye's positive attitude towards a man who marries several women under certain conditions (albeit contradictory) is told. For example, if a woman is sick, while women with a high level of education oppose their husbands' remarriage; women with low socioeconomic status, such as peasant and tribal women, put forward the view that their husbands have a positive view of their marriage and are in conflict.

In this context, Mübeccel Kızıltan evaluates Fatma Aliye Hanım's thoughts on polygamy as follows (1990:283): "The author is against polygamy; however, she also accepts this view as a part of the traditionalist Ottoman identity, and she thinks contradictorily by stating that all Turkish women like herself are against

¹⁵ Ferihan Polat - Gündüz Derer. "Muhafazakârlık Ve Feminizm Kışkıncında Bir İsim: Fatma Aliye Hanım", *The Pursuit of History International Periodical for History and Social Research*.15(2016) . 185- 206.

the partner”.¹⁶ In addition, Fatma Aliye Khanum makes a distinction on the issue of “divorce” in relation to polygamy and argues that women who cannot reconcile with their spouses are oppressed by their spouses or have a partner have the right to divorce. Therefore, in order to enlighten women, Fatma Hanım has brought the local problems of Ottoman women to the agenda in order to advance in civilization of women who could not use the rights granted to them by Islam.

However, from the beginning of the twentieth century, she showed that she was fighting with all her might to strengthen the national self-consciousness against women’s illiteracy and ignorance, and it aroused the opinion that it was far from Western feminism, which began to transform the real Turkish woman into a social movement.

Finally, Fatma Aliye Hanım explained the place of Turkish women in society according to Islamic traditions in her works, which she wrote within the discussions of modernization and modernization. On the other hand, as a treasure of Turkish literary culture, she created the image of a female warrior who loves her freedom, opposes patriarchal traditions and established traditions, and bravely defend equality of rights with men.

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¹⁶ Kızıltan, Mübeccel. “Öncü Bir Kadın Yazar: Fatma Aliye Hanım”, *Fahir İz Armağanı, Journal of Turkish Studies- Türklük Araştırmaları Dergisi* (Harvard Üniversitesi,1990) 283–322.

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