

### **Note from the Guest Editor,**

*Journal of International Social Research* is proud to produce another special issue dedicated to *Woman Studies*. The idea to publish a special issue came out when I had just handed over the 10-years experience of editorial of *Kadın / Woman 2000 – Journal for Woman Studies*, which was the first one in Turkey and Cyprus to stand for an international academic arena since its publication in the beginning of the millennium.

I was so much excited to get several responses as soon as the Call for Papers for this special issue was publicised in the academic circles although the number of papers panicked me. The numbers of the articles we have received were quite high and the majority of these papers showed the enthusiasm of many scholars to write on gender issues. Although our goal was to publish this issue in March 2010, the number of articles kept us busy until recently to have them assessed by the referees so as to select high quality papers. Beside the length of the time needed for having them assessed by appointing qualified scholars from different field of scientific studies, as well as editorial work, this issue is hardly completed within one whole year. Thus on behalf of the *Journal of International Social Research*, I would like to express my acknowledgement to all authors whose works are published in this issue as well as those which did not have the chance to be included either due to premature condition of their work, or delayed for the necessary alterations or referee assessment. I regret for not being able to publish some original studies which did not perform some of the conditions required in an academic article. However I am confident that the authors would mature their paper to better academic standards in view of the feedback given to them by the referees required for publication in an international academic journal.

The number of papers submitted to this issue was over 60 and contrary to the belief that only female academics deal with gender studies, we had quite a lot of male authors who willingly contributed to this issue either with their academic works or helping us during the assessing period of the papers as referees.

Twenty seven articles selected and published in this issue cover a wide range of areas, from literature to art and music; psychology to sociology; from folklore to socio-economic matters: religious to education as well as health matters. Six book reviews and one interview are also important contributions in this issue, although this is not the ideal number in international journals. Personally, I believe that review writing is essential in academic arena to keep control over the publications and to encourage academic works. As a guest editor for this special issue where interdisciplinary academic works are published, I had the happiest time to establish academic cooperation as well as friendship with several international colleagues, and even corresponded with my instructor professors through the electronic media. Corresponding with Prof. Dr. Nebile Direkçigil, one of my instructors I could never forget, after 24 years, was one of the most nostalgic events I had experienced while I was searching for a referee. Trying to be objective and optimistic in the assessing period as well as being patient with some of the unexpected furies due to delays or rejection of papers was patiently dealt with while it enabled me to gain new knowledge on matters from all these multi-disciplinary studies.

Woman studies based on feminist theory or in fact as gender studies is a phenomenon dating back to the medieval period although the main stream begun in mid-nineteenth century in America and Europe. Earlier voices such as Christine de Pisan (1365-c.1452), a Venetian poet of medieval courtly love who gained the title as Europe's first professional writer, her most noteworthy works being *The Book of the City of the Ladies*; *The Treasury of the City of the Ladies*, or *The Book of the Three Virtues*, that was acknowledged by feminist writers of 20<sup>th</sup> century such as Simone de Beauvoir who considered her as "an early proto-feminist who had taken up her pen in defence of her sex"; Jane Anger Sophia, with her short pamphlet entitled as "*Jane Anger her protection for women*, (1589); Elisabet Brenner (1659-1724), the Swedish salonist and poet, who published "The justified defense of the female sex" (1693); Abigail Adams (1744-1818), wife of the second president of United States who contributed to the realization of women's right with her suggestions for the consideration of property ownership, education and abolishing slavery which she considered necessary in a democratic country; while Sojourner Truth, a former African-American slave, whose native name was Isabella Baumfree, was one of the important names to lead a struggle for the abolition of slavery of the woman with coloured skin with her speech "Ain't I a woman? based her past sufferings as a slave, are the ones surveyed and researched by many scholars working on feminist or gender studies. Simone Beauvoir with her book *Second Sex* (1949) almost became the idol of the 20<sup>th</sup> century gender studies. In Turkey, Zeynü'n-nisa (Zeynep Hatun) and Mihri Hatun from 15<sup>th</sup> century, and others such as Ayşe Hubbi, Tufi Hatun, Sıdki Emetullah, Zübeyde Fitnat Hanım,

Moralızade Leyla Hanım from the Ottoman era; İffet Halim Oruz, Muazzez Aruoba and Halide Edib Adivar were noteworthy woman authors who were taken as idols for later studies. However, women movements remained as philanthropic activities until 1960s it is only after 1968 to initiate movements for woman rights and gender equalities at academic level. This special issue on woman studies is expected to reflect the recent trends in Turkey and elsewhere, mainly on the current favoured trend in gender studies. However, the most upsetting topic in all these papers published were the sufferings of women in wars, one of the most humiliating action made to war captives at occupied areas even in today's modern military functions which is under the control of international treaties and regulations.

This issue is realised with the kind assistance of several academics not only from Turkey and North Cyprus, but from all over the world whose names are given in the international academic advisory board and in the list of referees for this special issue. Without them it would have been impossible to achieve high standards in this selection, particularly in such a multi-cultural and inter-disciplinary journal. My longest standing-debts are to Assist. Prof. Dr. Muhammet Kuzubaş and Prof. Dr. Hülya Argunşah, who were always ready to help with their advices for my referee enquiries and other matters. Not only for this issue, but all others are the products of the committed endeavours of Dr. Kuzubaş.

And the last word goes to the dedication of this work to my mother, Mrs. Ziver Yıldız, to my ex-Ph.D. supervisor, Prof. Dr. Nurhan Atasoy; and to the mothers of all those who contributed to this issue reserved for woman studies.

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