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Women and the Reformation in Germany

Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks is a famous professor at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee whose primary focus is on women, gender and sexuality within these. In her article, she has discussed the major restrictions women faced before the Protestant Reformation. In Germany, these restrictions were related to the social and political status of women and had limited choices regarding preaching and marriage.

Independence of women was not an acceptable practice at the beginning of the 16th century in Germany and most of the women were under the authority of their fathers and their husbands. They were compelled to follow and practice the religion of their husbands. But the Protestant Reformation changed everything and the first and foremost thing that changed was, women were permitted to read and study the Bible(ccmustangs2001). Catholic church allowed many of the nuns and sisters to get married. It was a beneficial movement for women as it helped them to get an education and by the end of Reformation, more than ninety percent of women were educated. The impact of religious changes on women and their role in the movement wary throughout Germany.Though this movement was a revolutionary step towards the development of women's kind, it has its flaws and restrictions.Even during the Reformation period in Germany, women were only allowed to marry the reformers because they feared that if women marry someone else other than a reformer, they will start preaching to their husbands because at that time husbands were supposed to lead wives.This aroused tensions in Germany and resulted in severe protests againstthe Reformation and the strong female who ere leading this protest were the convents(Harris).

Thus, this Reformation did make women strong as wives and mothers but it also cut off women’s opportunity to express themselves spiritually and after the 17th century, the religion for all the women in Germany was tied to the household.

Work cited

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Harris, Barbara J. “A New Look at the Reformation: Aristocratic Women and Nunneries, 1450-1540.” *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2, 1993, pp. 89–113.