

Women Rights in the Poems of Behbahani

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Abstract: The rights of women are inseparable from the human rights so that in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Declaration of Islamic Human Rights and Iran Constitutional Law it has been emphasized on observing women rights. Today, Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the only declaration accepted by most of the countries and nations. This paper aims to investigate the women rights mentioned in the works of Behbahani.

Key words: Woman, Women Rights, Support, Poetry, Human Rights, Convention, Discrimination, Behbahani

Introduction

Numerous studies have been conducted on the place and rights of women. Quran describes woman as peace maker of the man: And among His Signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect (Holy Quran). It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and (then) He has created from him his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her. When he had sexual relation with her, she became pregnant and she carried it about lightly. "Women constitute half of the world population and they have rights like men. Unfortunately, these rights were denied in the past in some societies; but in Islamic civilization and legal system particularly in Iranian culture that is combination of Islamic and old Iran cultures, the poets, artists, film makers, legislators and religious leaders have written about the beauty and love of the women and have offered many works in different styles. The Islamic legal system has compiled women rights and everybody has to observe these rights" (Asadi, 2012).

Every human has two rights:

a) Natural right

Natural right is concerned to the ultimate goal of creation and nature and according to this goal, there are capabilities in the creatures so they have natural right in this regard. The way to recognize this right is refer to creation. Any natural talent is a natural document for a natural right.

b) Acquired right

Human being has specific rights that called human rights and all women and men have these rights without considering gender. But acquired rights are different depended on the person status and job. These rights have two sources:

- a. Divine rules that have been expressed by the prophets and religious texts like Quran, Bible etc.
- b. Human regulations and codes: the first rules were the law of Hammurabi and the chart of the great Cyrus (Asadi, 2012).

Nowadays the only law that was accepted by all religions and societies is UN Human Rights.

In contemporary literature it has been referred to human rights and women rights particularly in the works of the poets such as Simin Daneshvar, Frough Farrokhzad, Parvin Etesami and Simin Behbahani we can find the subjects on the women rights.

In this paper we introduce Simin Behbahani briefly and then refer to some codes and articles of human rights and elimination of discrimination against women.

Women rights

The article 25 of Human Rights empathizes on the mothers and women. The poems of Behbahani depict that she is one of the advocates of the women rights. She talks about a dancer and expresses her difficulties and problems:

Dancer

Her eyes were drunken and feverish
Her drunkenness was bitter and painful
She was exciting and warmth by drinking wine
She was regret for happy life
She brought happiness in the life
But her heart did not beat happily
She pleased us for long time
Alas, she was not happy for a while (ibid)
She was whom her groans were not sorrowful
She was like a candle that was burning while dancing (Behbahani, 2012)

Then she expresses the feelings and problems of the some women. She talks about a prostitute. In our society a few people listen to the speeches of a prostitute, but Behbahani expresses difficulties of all classes of the society and support them.

The songs of a prostitute
Give me that box of make up
Till I dress up my face
Give that cream to refresh my faded skin
Give me that cup to be drunk
To laugh on my misery
Create a charming face on my sad face
I am alone although there are many people around me
I have no sympathizer even for a moment
Though there are many adorners
I have no bed no husband
No child no lover
To make me happy
O, who is knocking on the door?
Perhaps my husband!
Oh, sorrow, release me
Since happiness comes (Behbahani, 2012)

In this part she describes feelings of woman that has a rival and she expresses her status beautifully.

She never slept at night
She was awake until morning
Her heart filled with hate
Like flood of melted lead
In her painful vessels (Behbahani, 2012)
She left her bed like an agile snake at midnight
Came to the bed of the woman
Who was sleeping in the arms of her husband
Under the ceiling of the dark and narrow house
Leaving with enemy was difficult
I am miserable, sad and bored
Her heart filled with love and this is difficult (Behbahani, 2012)

In the poem of Letter she expresses the feeling of a woman that receives a letter from her loyal husband. Before opening the letter she forgives her husband and considers his letter as message of his return and finally the woman is left dependent” (Dehbashi, 2000).

Letter

This is his letter that left me
Breached the promise and went
Who was singing the song of love and restlessness
He never found that
What eats and what wears his wife
He never found that his child
Drink milk from the breast of pain
What is in this letter?
Oh, that is verdict of my separation
The sign of my suppression
The letter of divorce (Behbahani, 2012)

Simin never complains about misery and oppression on the women but she could not keep silence and she defense the women rights and she expresses the status of a woman that her husband has dismissed her from her home in the winter and she is helpless.

Tomorrow in the small nest of love
With a long wishes a woman
Made effort and her effort was useless

And that nest became her palace

“In this part she talks about the pain of a divorced woman and her effort in richness of her husband” (Dehbashi, 2000).

Her former bed fellow is a man
With capital and benefit
But no one knows that this woman
Accompanied him and never rested for a moment (Dehbashi,2000).
That man and that palace and that warmth heart
Today leave her and the doors are closed for her
Tomorrow another woman with lace garment
Come to her former home
She is the legal widow of a rich man
Is litigating trial and
The law has put trivial amount of wealth
Called marriage settlement
Of that wealth and capital (Dehbashi, 2000).

In spite of this fact the future of the woman is imagined dark and highlighted her dependency on the man:

O, the warm homes and the kind hearts
There is no place for her in the corner of your heart
In the purity of the eyes washed in the tears
There is nothing except impurity of her future
Again the woman is bored and alone and astonished
Walks on the soft snows
Every step in the direction of this street
Has traces of hundreds story of doubt (Dehbashi, 2000).
She goes her way without good and bad destination
She passes distracted and avoids her destiny
She trembles and faded with a shadow of dust on the snow (ibid)

“The gypsy cannot be imprisoned at home and she is not prisoner and the meaning of ideal woman. She never insists on the traditional privacy between man and woman. She is agile and her dynamicity offers her attendance” (Dehbashi, 2000)

The plain was awaked by the steps of the gypsy
The lake was waving by her look
The galaxy was shined when she opened her lips
The sky was dark when she put her hair on her face

She was begun fight with the heart of the mean
The mane of her horse
Combed the wind
The slaps of her horse shoe
Were dance of the Tat tar (Behbahani, 2012)

In the following poem Behbahani expresses the difficulties of women in the society. Here the woman has no right and she should serve the man and she is a slave. The rights of women were recognized in the first conference held on the Seneca River in New York and Declaration of women rights was published in 19th July 1848 and the equality of men and women rights was emphasized.

The father began to despise: your hometown is ashamed of the offspring such you
I replied: My hometown is the hometown of the veil of the daughters and patience of the mothers
The mothers cry for their past when their daughters go to their home and whisper on their ears to be patient that they take you with veil and you live there with shroud (Behbahani, 1991).

Conclusion

According to the above witnesses and issues on the women rights in the works of Simin Behbahani it can be said that she was sensitive on the women and she was interested in women issues and defended the women rights. In her poems the articles of human rights are seen and she has emphasized on the women and children rights, freedom of speech and religion and ownership right. She has emphasized on the women rights and it can be said that she is one of the advocate of the women rights.

Fortunately, women play an important role in the contemporary Persian poetry. Simin Behbahani has made effort and gained experiences in this way. It is obvious that in the Persian poetry scope there is possibility of any effort" (Yusufi, 1992).

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