



Islamic Revolution's New Definition of Women's Role

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In Islam women are treated with respect and considered as humans, in contrast to non-Muslim cultures, especially the West that treat women as mere commercial and carnal commodities.

As pointed out by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khomeini, the Islamic Republic of Iran by practically implementing in society the enlightened teachings of Islam, restored to women their role and made them active in all spheres of life. In Islamic societies it is the family unit that plays the fundamental role in the health and soundness of the society. Ayatollah Khomeini thus considers the family as the fulcrum of the society and believes that if this unit remains sound and virtuous the rest of

the society will properly develop.

The Late Imam Khomeini used to emphasize respect for human dignity and rights, especially that of women, which have been enshrined in the Islamic Republic of Iran's constitution. As per article 20 all citizens, whether men or women, enjoy equal political, economic, social, cultural and all other rights, in accordance with the dynamism of the Islamic Shari'a. In article 21st of the constitution the government has been duty-bound to guarantee women's rights and pave the ground for the flowering of their talents in keeping with their dignity and spiritual rights. The 20-year perspective plan of the Islamic Republic places special emphasis on upgrading the

status of women in various fields.

Imam Khomeini believed that the real dignity of women is to build the society in a sound and healthy manner through proper upbringing of sons and daughters, rather than blindly imitating women of non-Islamic societies who have been exposed to exploitation and spiritual decline in the name of ill-defined liberties. According to him, women are the source of blessings, and both the prosperity and the misery of the society, depends upon their performing of positive roles. In his Last Will, the Late Imam has referred to women as the honour of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is evident that the Iranian women, like men, by taking into consideration their

physical and psychological characteristics, enjoy equal rights. According to Imam Khomeini, in the Islamic system women enjoy the right of education, work, ownership, voting, and all other rights. The Islamic Revolution revived the spiritual and intellectual role of women, since before that they were abused not only as a tool and commodity, but also intellectually by being reduced to thralldom by western culture. The victory of the Islamic Revolution transformed their status and they became active in all fields, in keeping with their feminine dignity, including their role behind the frontlines during the 8-year holy defense, when the US imposed an unwanted war on the Islamic Republic through Saddam.

During the post-war reconstruction period, in view of the emphasis of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Iranian women have continued to display their creativeness and innovation in scientific fields as well, as is evident by their successful presence in international scientific Olympiads. Iranian women, in the field of health too have spectacular activities.

Dr. Fatema Firouzi, a specialist in spinal cord injuries says: seeing the disabled veterans of the imposed war on wheelchair really upset me and thus my colleagues and I, decided to conduct research for their proper treatment. Our researches were fruitful and we succeeded in the first transplantation on a war disabled youth. After our success in

this field, our group followed its work more seriously, and today we have scaled new height of success in this and other arenas of medical science.

Islam has given women the right to have a legal job and a sound life. The Islamic Revolution created an appropriate atmosphere and the ground was paved for their active presence in offices as well as legal and judicial organs. The Islamic Republic of Iran's constitution guarantees support for working women. Today, women have active presence as consultants in family and children courts. Moreover, women are engaged in working in disciplinary forces, in the media, and in such professional fields, as engineering and architecture. Today women in the Islamic Iran play an effective role in economy, industry, politics and high level management. In the Iranian parliament we also witness the active presence of women. With the efforts of the female MPs some

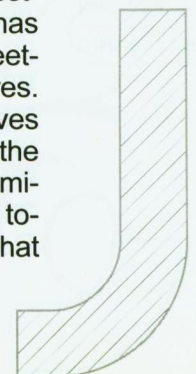
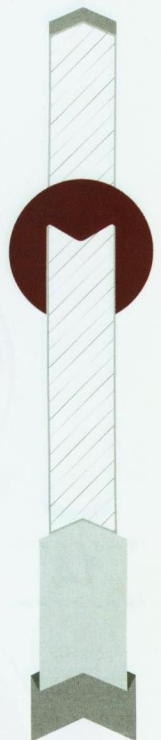
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important laws have been approved regarding the social, civil, legal and working situation of women. Several women have served as presidential deputies and advisors as well. The Islamic Revolution has presented a new pattern of women on the basis of Islamic teachings in which women inside and outside home are effective persons. Thus, unlike the exploitation of the women in the West, women in Islamic Iran enjoy dignity, respect, and freedom of the hijab. It is evident that the present problem of the western society is the type of the officials' attitude towards family which they do not consider as an important unity and view women separate from their families.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, women are considered as the axis of the family's harmony and tranquility. Of course this viewpoint has no contradiction to men's role in providing the family security. For; the role of men and women in family are considered complementary to each other. Ayatollah Khamenei believes that if these two roles of men and women are coordinated with each other, interest and affection will be created between them. This will make the outdoor problems bearable for women and they can have active role in the society. Unfortunately in the western world, a woman has turned into a tool for meeting a man's carnal desires. Ayatollah Khamenei believes that the greatest crime of the West about women and families is its wrong approach towards women. He noted that



the worst insult to women's dignity is made by western policymakers. In the West, especially in the US and in North Europe, especially in Scandinavian states, there are centers where women, like commercial commodities, are made available to provide carnal satisfaction for men, and this is advertised in newspapers and magazines. Is there any worse insult to the dignity of women than this? Therefore one should not remain indifferent towards this wrong culture. The West lives in a state of darkness despite its claim to be progressive. Islam, however, has a humanitarian approach towards woman.

Ayatollah Khamenei cites the example of such virtuous ladies as the Prophet's impeccable daughter, the noblest woman of all ages, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (peace upon her). He also mentions the Prophet's granddaughter, Hazrat Zainab (peace upon her), the lady who revived Islam after the tragedy of Karbala by carrying the message of her martyred brother, Imam Hussein (AS), through her eloquent speeches, even in captivity, in the court of the tyrant Yazid. Thus, Muslim women have worthy models to base their life upon. This is the reason that following the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, women in Iran have taken great strides in all fields. Presently, over 68 percent of those in the higher education centres are women. The literacy rate of women has increased from 34 percent prior to the Islamic Revolution to 80 percent at



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present. Iranian women are now active in science and technology including aeronautics, Nano, nuclear energy, etc. Thus, thanks to the Islamic Revolution, Iranian women with the freedom of hijab that allows them to engage in all fields, have become models of emulations for their sisters in the Muslim World, much to the chagrin of the arrogant powers, for whom women are a mere tool to be exploited.

Source: irib.ir