

# Mahjubah

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## Violation of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of Canada

*A Brief Review of the Violation of Women's Rights in Some Countries of the World*

**France, Britain, the United States, Germany and Canada are among the top ten countries in the world with the highest divorce rates.**

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UAE 21.00DH

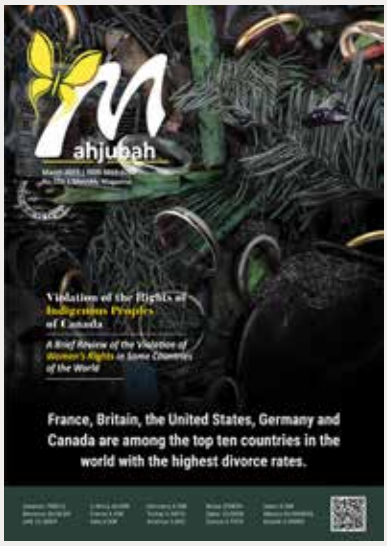
S.Africa 26.00R
France 4.50€
Italy 4.50€

Germany 4.50€
Turkey 5.50YTL
America 3.00$

Kenya 250KSH
Qatar 20.00QR
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International Women's Day;

# Enchantment of Words

## and the Mirage of Valuing Women's Status

The choice of March 8 as International Women's Day finds its origin in the struggle of women workers of a garment factory in New York City on this day in 1857. Unbearable and inhuman working conditions at low wages forced women workers, who had entered the labor market alongside men workers in industrialized countries, to fight against this injustice in an organized and systematic way. On March 1857 ,8, female workers of a large garment factory began a strike to protest their very harsh working conditions and hard economic situation and the memories of their strike continued to remain with textile workers; even though some people claim the whole thing to be a myth. However, in the following years, several European countries and America witnessed the struggle of women laborers continue in the form of demonstrations and strikes against oppression, discrimination, and suppression, as well as lack of having equal rights in society. Later in 1977, the United Nations General Assembly invited the member states to declare March 8 as the "United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace".

As regards this woman-related phenomenon, there are two issues that should be analyzed and looked at very closely. Firstly, what trends and social development prompted the international legal and humanitarian institutions to come up with the idea of "International Women's Day"? And secondly, are women's value, honor, and rights truly respected in societies that consider themselves to be heralds of human rights and equality between genders and project themselves as the defenders of human and women's rights?!

The right to life is one of the most important rights for all human beings, which has been recognized in all divine religions and contemporary international documents. Divine religions, especially Islam, recognize the right to life as a blessing from God Almighty for all human beings, both men and women, and while condemning the mutilation of girl children (a pre-Islamic practice rampant in many parts of the world), emphasize the creation of men and women from one soul, and refer to killing people unjustly as a crime against humanity. In the contemporary era, some of the world's legal systems, including universal human rights, have confined human dignity, which is one of the manifestations of the right to life, in inherent dignity. In other words, they have looked at human life merely from a materialistic aspect and have ignored spiritual life. No one doubts the fact that God Almighty is the owner of life and death, and He is the only one Who has authority over human life. The Holy Qur'an emphasizes that men and women should not merely be taken into consideration from the viewpoint of

their masculinity and femininity, but from the viewpoint of their humanity, and that the truth of a person is his soul and not his body, and the humanity of a person is his/her soul and not his/her body and not even the sum of his/her body and soul.

Even though the recognition of the fundamentality of human dignity has a long history and all religions have talked about it, human history has repeatedly witnessed the distortion and violation of human dignity in the form of massacres, wars, exploitation, slavery, oppression, and aggression. According to reliable historical narration and old documents and writings left by the predecessors, in most ancient societies, women were deprived of many of their rights including the right to trade, the right to choosing their profession, the right of ownership, the right to choosing their spouse, etc. Therefore, some contemporary western scholars have considered the greatest threat to modern western society and culture to be the depletion of women's honor and dignity.

Ignoring the personality and dignity of women, using women as instruments for the promotion of goods and services, and their sexual abuse and exploitation, which had significantly increased in the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, prompted the governments to think of solutions to deal with this tragedy, which was actually threatening the human society, by drafting and signing a number of international documents.

The western woman spent many years under the dark and terrible shadow of medieval thoughts. But today, when this shadow has been removed, they have unknowingly and with open arms surrendered to a form of captivity, the consequences of which include abortion, suicide, murder, etc. It seems that by ignoring this divine right, western imperialism, with various motives, including gaining more benefits, while abusing women, has made the slogan of defending human rights the basis for destroying this right, the consequence of which can be witnessed in most western countries. In other words, when the worldly life is driven towards absurdity and the spiritual nature of life is dishonored, its terrible consequence will be the destruction of and serious injury to the original human identity.

The other point to be noted is that although the celebration of International Women's Day in 2011 was not of any particular importance in the West, events were held in more than 100 countries on March 2011 ,8, to mark the 100th anniversary of this Day. In the United States of America, former US President, Barack Obama, declared March 2011 as "Women's Historical Month" and asked Americans to celebrate Women's Day by reflecting on the "extraordinary achievements of women" in shaping the history of their nation. In 2013, too, Hillary Clinton, the former Secretary of State of this country launched the project "100 Women of the Year Empowering Women and Girls through International Exchanges" on the eve of International Women's Day.

However fascinating, glamorous, flashy, and eye-catching these titles and actions may appear at first, a flashback reveals the mindset of people like Obama and Clinton who created the most criminal terrorist group in the world, ISIS.

# Violation of Women's Rights by ISIS with the Support of America and Its Allies

Dr. Fatemeh Ebrahimi[1]



*1. Ph.D. In Public International Law, Tehran University*

At the time when the world, and especially the West Asian region, was moving towards sustainable peace, the United States government - as confessed by Hillary Clinton, the former US Secretary of State - created the ISIS terrorist group and extended full support to it in collaboration with the Saudi government.

After getting control over large parts of Iraq and Syria, this group (ISIS) committed numerous and diverse crimes against women and children, such as murder, kidnapping, hostage-taking, torture, smuggling, the enslavement of women and girls, rape, ethnic and religious cleansing, food and medicine blockade, and forced recruitment of teenagers, many of which were examples of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and even genocide.

Although the rights of civilians, especially women and children, have been defined in the four Geneva Conventions and its additional protocols, ISIS did not adhere to any of them and committed various crimes in the region with the direct support of the USA and its allies. Studies have proved that rape, sexual slavery, human trafficking and forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization, and forced marriage were only a part of ISIS's sexual violence against women and girls having severe and heinous results such as physical and mental injuries - including infections and physical diseases - suicide attempts, severe depression, isolation, and stress disorder.

Studies have also shown that approximately 70% of women and girls who survived ISIS captivity in Iraq had been raped by its members. One of the most heinous examples of sexual violence repeatedly exercised by ISIS in Iraq and Syria had been slavery in its modern and even traditional form; the broadcasted news of which in reputable media and the memories narrated by the victims leave no room for any doubt in this regard. Moreover, ISIS has also regularly talked about participation in human trafficking and its methods in its own media, acknowledging this matter.

Female slaves of ISIS were regularly photographed and their names and photos were recorded in ISIS databases along with the names of their so-called owners in order to have control over them and make their forced return possible in case of escape. The crimes committed by ISIS have also been recorded in authentic and reliable international documents and reports presented by international organizations and institutions. For instance, a report of the UN Security Council revealed that ISIS kidnapped hundreds of Yazidi women and girls in August 2014 when they attacked Sinjar, in northern Iraq. Some of the abductees were transported to Syria and sold in markets across Raqqa to be used as slaves (United Nations Security Council, 2015, S/2015/203: para 61).

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*Qasem Soleimani*






*Agnès Callamard*

Similarly, in the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, it has been clearly stated that ISIS has subjected women and children to violence in the form of slavery (Human Rights Office, 2015: 18). The report also states that they (ISIS) killed 19 women in Mosul because they refused to be sex slaves of the ISIS fighters.

The so-called 'Jihad Nikah' (Sexual Jihad) is another story of modern slavery and how ISIS leaders used women as sex objects and how women were exploited and abused by deception and seduction in order to encourage men and attract more fighters to ISIS. The ISIS leaders had issued fatwas and widely propagated what they referred to as Jihad Nikah to exploit people's religious feelings and drag them willingly toward sexual exploitation. For example, in one such propagandist statement, it was falsely claimed that it is obligatory on women to migrate from Dar al-Kufr (lit. land of infidels), whether accompanied by a mahram (a male relative of the first degree) or not. It was stated that if a woman fears God, she should not wait for anyone and she should flee her country and join ISIS. Unfortunately, deceived by such false propaganda many women - the number of whom is estimated to be around 5,000 - traveled from western countries to Syria since 2012, to join the so-called Jihad Nikah without the permission of their husbands or guardians.

What is obvious, and as acknowledged by the United Nations Security Council, ISIS - with its terrorist actions and extremist violent ideology and the continuation of gross, systematic and widespread attacks against civilians - was a global threat to international peace and security.

It was under such unfortunate circumstances that based on their sense of human responsibility and the sense of duty for protecting the oppressed people, some free people formed an axis of resistance and began to courageously confront the crimes committed by ISIS. Under the command of Martyr Qasem Soleimani fighters from the Islamic Republic of Iran played an essential role in stopping ISIS and succeeded in creating a strong coalition, forming an axis of resistance, preventing the continuation of the terrible crimes committed by ISIS against women and children, and reinstating peace and security in the region.

Nevertheless, after the assassination of the commander of the fight against terrorists (i.e., General Soleimani), which according to Agnès Callamard, the human-rights activist, the Secretary General of Amnesty International, and previously the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Council, was a clear violation of international laws and the UN charter the US government has once again come up with a sinister plan and by falsely claiming to care about the rights of Iranian women has



started dreaming of taking control over Iran and looting it.

Surprisingly, the US has been chanting the same slogan, which seduced many Syrian women who hoped for gaining imaginary additional rights but ended up experiencing many crimes and witnessing the loss of their homes, lives, children, and national resources at the hands of the ISIS terrorist group, the protectorate of America and Saudi Arabia and their allies.

Strangely enough, US politicians - including Hillary Clinton and Kamala Devi Harris - who, by imposing illegal sanctions and adopting unilateral and coercive measures against the Iranians have - as reported by Alena Douhan, a professor of International Law and the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on human rights - violated the rights of the Iranian people, especially many women, and have been responsible for the death of thousands of innocent women and children in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, etc., as well such terrorist groups as the so-called 'Mojahedin-e-Khalq', which is responsible for the martyrdom of more than 17,000 Iranians, have started posing as champions of women's rights while they should, in fact, be prosecuted as criminals in the International Criminal Court.

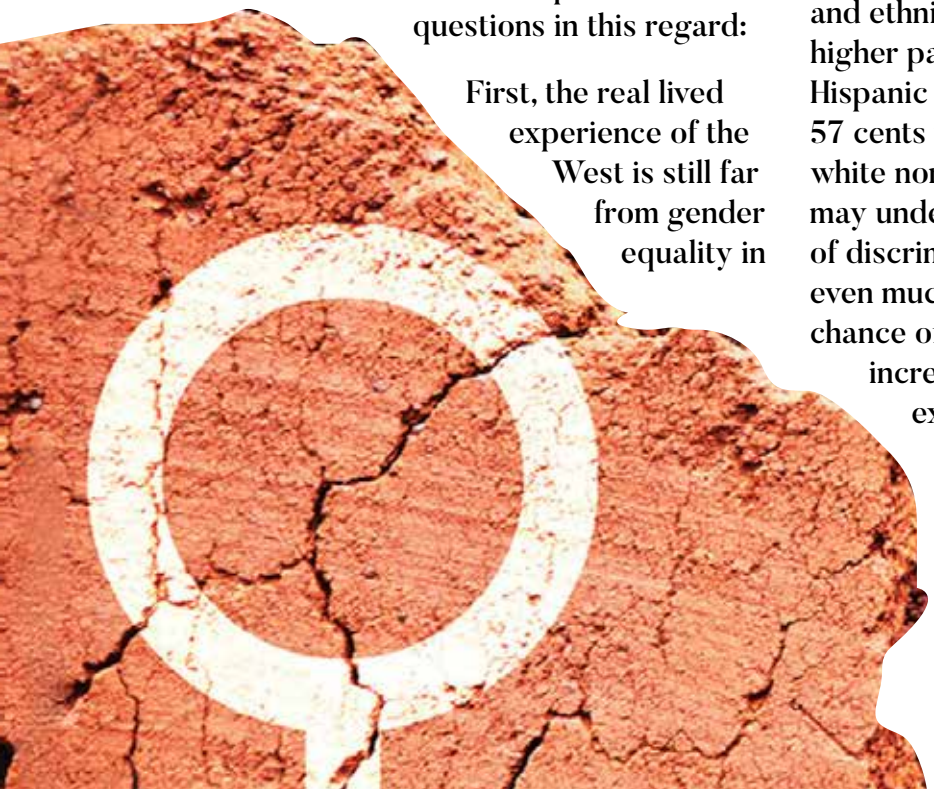


# Gender Equality

## and Active Voice of Women to be Re-considered in the West

Dr. Zohreh Nosrat Kharazmi[1]

Gender equality is a key term to understand the modern discourse of human rights. The West, in particular the United States, self-acknowledge as the leader of equality and liberty of women in a global scale. However, there is a variety of critics who believe gender equality is complex and difficult to understand, in sunstance and instance, despite its simple face. This short note would provide comments and evidences to raise some discursive and experimental questions in this regard:



First, the real lived experience of the West is still far from gender equality in spite of legal and administrative provisions. The gap in payments is the most meaningful measure regarding the prevalence of capitalism there: in the most recent estimates (Pew Research Center, March 2023[1]), the gender gap hasn't changed much in two decades as women earn 82% of the amount that men are paid for the same jobs.

Inequality in pay also matters as it indicates the intersectional nature of discrimination when taken into consideration in racial and ethnic categories: white women enjoy higher pays comparing others as black and Hispanic women respectively gain 64 and 57 cents vs. 79 cents white women/$1 for white non-Hispanic male counterparts[2]. One may understand the depth of cultural traits of discrimination when post COVID-19 even much more non-white women lost the chance of having full-time vocations in an increasing rate: when white women experienced -9.89 decline, Asian American women's full-time job decrease was of -14.14%.

These sort of figures, indicative of existing inequal status of women in the West, is being released everyday under the observation of the governments or

1. Assistant Prof, Faculty of World Studies, University of Tehran





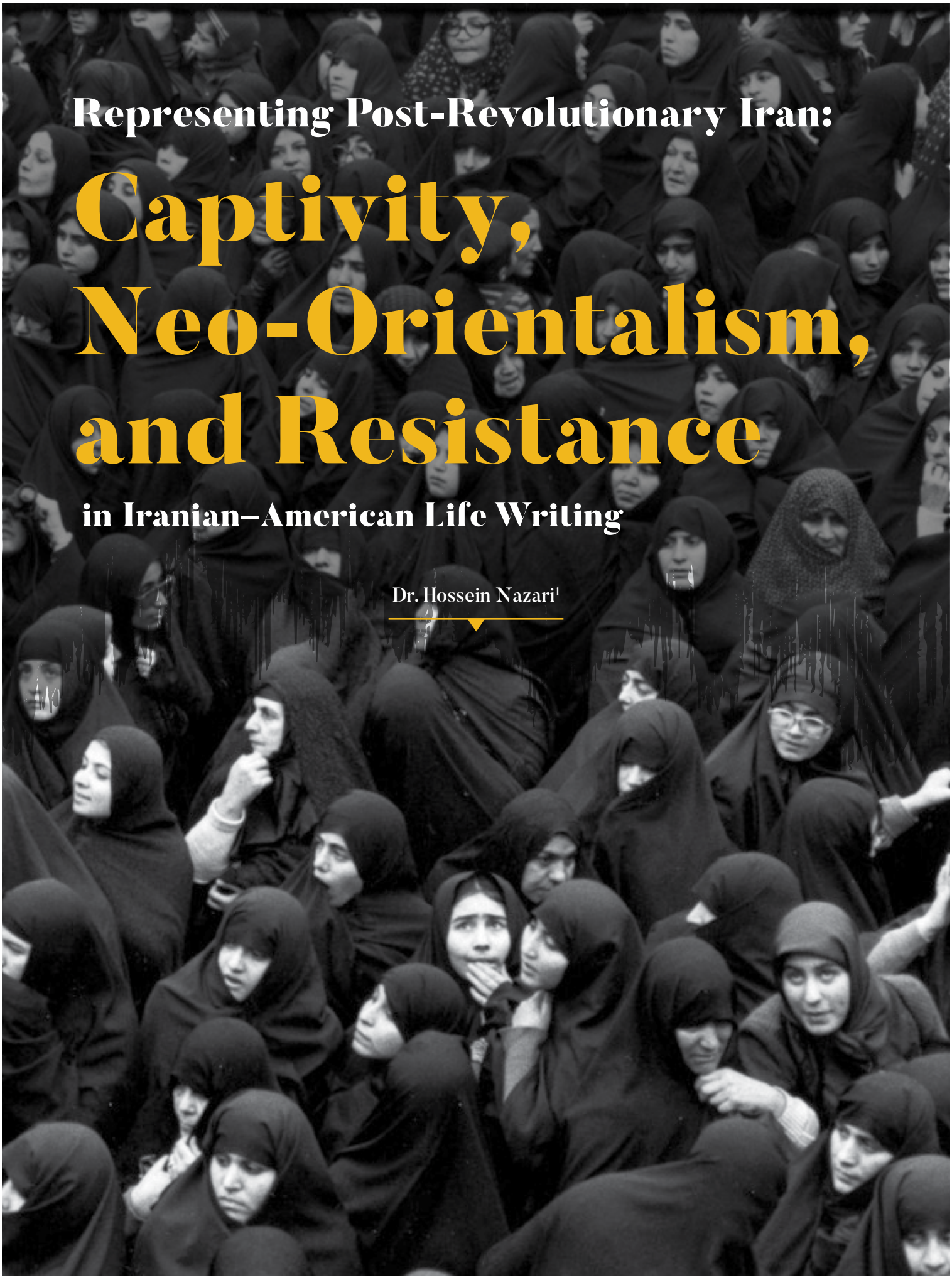
civil society organizations. Delving deeply through, though, one gets an encouraging voice to bolden women's voice and self-assertion movements such as the fourth wave of feminism mapping discrimination and violence in the virtual space. In fact, today, there is no doubt that the introduction of harsher punishments for rapists and the perpetrators of any forms of violence, including the physical, psychological or sexual abuse, is an essential requirement for the health of our social life. In intellectual realm, though, such apparently active position of women can be considered as problematic and passive.

Western-oriented outlook and its subsequent campaigns give no practical prescription, no calling for a deeper reflection on the concept of violence and mobilization to safeguard women's lives against various forms of violence. The records indicate the whole attempts done by the fourth wave movement is much concentrated on accusations, defamation and at best, lawsuits against those whom they claim to deserve punishment. The fourth wave is yet to start a discourse on the extent of women's control on defining strategies and practical techniques for making their domestic and work environments safe. They still don't elaborate on what constitutes consent and what constitutes sexual misconduct, on the controversial topic of participatory engagement in promiscuous behavior, and finally, joining professions with conventional focus on the body performance and the female beauty such as the porn industry, along with many other necessary practical provisions. It seems, similar to previous generations, the fourth-wave feminists are grappling with acknowledging the biological differences between men and women and the limits that come with it. This denial has disarmed women for the past decades and has stopped them from creatively shaping their minds and social acts for a better future. Fourth wave activists along with gender philosophy advocates have yet to base their approach on social realism, and the consequences of their strategies until now can be witnessed in the public backlash since the woman, her body and spirit, is still portrayed very passive and in service of the market when campaigns attract women busy with feminism with no real change in logics of life.

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*1. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2023/03/01/gender-pay gapfacts/#:~:text=The%20gender%20gap%20in%20pay,%2D%20and%20part%2Dtime%20workers.*

*2. https://www.americanprogress.org/article/women-of-color-and-the-wage-gap/*



# Representing Post-Revolutionary Iran:

# Captivity, Neo-Orientalism, and Resistance

## in Iranian–American Life Writing

Dr. Hossein Nazari[1]

*1. Faculty Member of Foreign Languages and Literatures, the University of Tehran*

## Book Review:

Representing Post-Revolutionary Iran is a critical review of some of the memoirs written by Iranian-American women living in the United States of America. In this book, the author critically evaluates and analyzes the post-revolution representation of Iran in these writings, the policies and process of production, promotion, and acceptance of these works in the Western world, especially in the United States, have been analyzed. The main works reviewed in this book are: "Never, without my daughter" written by Betty Mahmoody (1987), "Reading Lolita in Tehran" written by Azar Nafisi (2003), and "Jasmine and Stars: Reading More Than Lolita in Tehran" written by Fatemeh Keshavarz (2007).

A content analysis of "Never Without My Daughter" reveals that the origins can be traced back to the trope of the American captivity narrative (see white/European women in the Hands of the Enemy). The book is, in fact, a contemporary example of the classic captivity narratives, the promotion and acceptance of which were much influenced by the conditions after the siege of the American embassy in Tehran. A critical analysis of "Reading Lolita in Tehran" and some similar accounts, shows that these writings deal with the structure of Iran (and also Islam) in the same (neo)oriental framework as explained by Edward Said in the book "Orientalism". The ideological framework in which Iran and everything that belongs to it is considered uncivilized, regressive, extreme, violent, irrational, autocratic, superstitious, polluted, and, in a word, inferior. And the West, of which America is the representative in the main representative, is considered the cradle of civilization, progress, enlightenment, tolerance, peace, and freedom. "Reading Lolita in Tehran" introduces clinging to western literature and culture as the only hope and way of salvation for the emancipation of Iranian women.

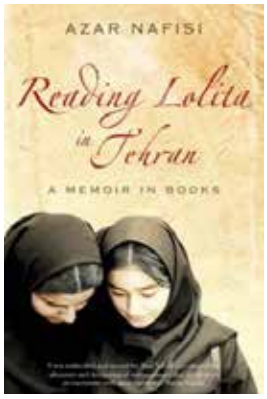
Finally, the book analyses "Jasmine and Stars: Reading More Than Lolita in Tehran" as the most important, and rather the only serious and anti-hegemonic example of resistance narrative against the dominant discourse of captivity and neo-orientalist narratives. It also explains how "Jasmine and Stars: Reading More Than Lolita in Tehran" tries to not only challenge the prevailing literary and media narratives about Iran and Islam but at the same time, in some cases, turns the finger of criticism towards the West, especially the United States.

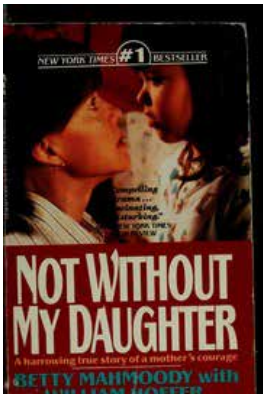
It is worth mentioning that although the literary works, biographies, and memoirs of Iranian immigrants have received unprecedented attention in the Western world over the past years, especially after September 11, 2001, Nazari's book is the first work with a critical approach to these writings. And after being evaluated several times by Western professors in this field, it has been published by one of the most prestigious publishers worldwide, (Bloomsbury Publishing, England) and praised by



*Edward Said*



## A Note on the Film

# "Quo Vadis, Aida?"

## (Endless Perplexity)



By: Dr. Setareh Kadkhodaei[1]

Quo Vadis, Aida? (lit. Where Are You Going Aida?), a war drama film written and directed by Jasmila Žbanić and produced in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a terrifying drama with a realistic spirit that deals with the massacre of defenseless Bosnians in Srebrenica. This film was nominated for an Oscar as the best non-English film in 2021 and won many awards of international level.

### The Bitter Story of War

The city of "Srebrenica' went through a bitter time in 1995 when the sinister shadow of the war spread over this city. The merciless killing of people, especially civilian Muslims, by the Serbs and the displacement and homelessness of thousands of innocent people, created a repeated image of the cruelty and callousness of human

*1. Ph.D. In Persian Language and Literature, Tehran University*



beings, such that the depth of the disaster is considered to be the same as that of the Second World War.

It is as if this bitter truth of power-seeking and avarice is a seal that has been stamped on the forehead of man, and it is surprising that man is always forced to play one of these two roles: the oppressor or the oppressed. And whatever may be the excuses for playing the role of an oppressor - whether it is a desire for power or a conflict over belief or race - the war is a losing battle anyway. Loss of humanity and degrading to the stage of destruction.

## Narrating the Drama

In the battle that the Serbs had waged against the people, Srebrenica had been declared a safe zone by the United Nations, and the Dutch soldiers were supposed to protect this security zone, but this is not what happened in reality and the story of the film narrates the existing atmosphere of this camp.

The protagonist of the story is Aida, a self-made woman and a schoolteacher who works with the United Nations as a translator. During the entire events of the movie, she is engaged in translating in the safe zone of Srebrenica, and the main focus of the story is the efforts of this woman to save her husband and two sons from the hands of the Serbs. At the same time, she has to defend the interests of her people and she is the mediator between the United Nations. the Serbian forces, and the Dutch army. In the midst of turmoil, she is the hero of her family life and appears in the role of a savior. A savior who makes every effort to take a step for peace within the limits of her own abilities. A step to reduce the sufferings caused by war. But when her humanitarian efforts for the benefit of the people of her city do not bear the desired result, she gives up the dream of being a big hero and begins to think of saving her own family. Even if her efforts, at the end of the story, do not bear any fruits and she remains helpless.

The peak of protagonism in this film comes to life with her role, and by presenting a real image of an active and strong woman and we simultaneously witness the height of the spirit of sacrifice and the tenderness of the feminine mind and soul in her.

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The director very intelligently projects the calmness preceding the storm in the form of perplexity (the sequence of her family's first view of Aida) and maintains the same level of intelligence until the end (consecutive desperation, endless running around, finding the bodies of her family members, the enmity of friend and the friendship of enemy in the sequence about the presence of the Serbian officer among the audience of the theatre hall).

Whether the viewer knows about this historical event or not, he/she can feel the depth of the terrible event on the screen. The film takes the viewer's hand and shows him/her the ugliness of war. The film is absolutely not preachy, but it has the idea of changing the world, changing the world in which peace is a bird sitting on the wings of people, and is not just a theatrical movement in the hands of children in the final sequence of the film.

He deploys all the visual tricks, from the movement of the camera to creating suspense in the story, from the good choice of actors in being absorbed in the characters to the adaptation of the historical event to the scenes, to serve the main theme and content of the film, which is the bitter display of violence and the ugliness of war and hope for a world without war. He uses the film as a tool for inculcating the whisper "Peace is better than war and judgment" for the thousandth time in the weak ears of mankind.[1]

The filmmaker's skill is proved in countless sequences. Everything



**To be brief, the film "Quo Vadis, Aida?" should be referred to as a film of "perplexity". Aida's feminine spirit of the world is perplexed by war, killing, genocide, lies, deception, and cruelty.**



Adopting a moderate approach, the director of the film depicts her as a savior and, at the same time, portrays her with social ideals, and also makes her appear as a strong hero in her personal life in order to emphasize the importance of the family and the presence of a woman as an important member of this social institution. A woman in the light of whose behavior and words the behavior of men in her life do not have much light. It is as if she is the one who has to make a move and it is she who is the angel of liberation from the storm of death.

The author has deliberately made a woman the savior of life; a woman who receives worried looks from the men in her life from the very beginning of the story. The same woman is not supposed to lose her breath on the way of saving the people of her city. And even in the final moments of the story, when she loses her family, she does not lose hope and returns to her work as a teacher. Training children who have survived the days of the war, and Aida still has hope for a world sans hatred and war and tries to keep the dim light of hope on.

### The Magic of the Image/The Mission of the Film

To be brief, the film "Quo Vadis, Aida?" should be referred to as a film of "perplexity". Aida's feminine spirit of the world is perplexed by war, killing, genocide, lies, deception, and cruelty.

*1. Am I allowed to utter a mystical word?*
*O the light of my eyes peace is better than war and judgment (A poem Hafiz Shirazi)*

is important to him and has been depicted to be effective. Even secondary characters and dialogues are all at the service of the mission of the film.

Jasmila Žbanić has preserved her artistic and feminine spirit in depicting dramatic events. For example, the scene of the mass killing of people in the shed is shown only by showing the barrels of the guns to reduce the ugliness of the crime while depicting the depth of pain. Or, for instance, painful scenes such as searching for the survivors among the corpses found in the mass graves are among the sequences that are extremely shocking.

The soreness of the war and the insecurity of the city of Srebrenica, the display of power-seeking in the villains of the film, Aida's anxiety and worry for her husband and children, the entanglement of the border of friendship and enmity that can be seen in the form of conversations between the soldiers and Aida, the fear of an unknown fate, the worry about hunger and the battle of life and death are all real parts of the life of the historical days of the city of Srebrenica, which are arranged together in this film with a suitable rhythm so that the audience finally realizes how far can a human being depart from humanity and begins to wish from the bottom of his/her soul that a day will come when "man can win over war and not in war".[2]

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*1, A Martyr who was breathing his last breaths wrote on the sand with his blood: "In the hope real victory over the war and not in war" (Qeysar Aminpour, Iranian poet)*

# A Brief Review of the Violation of Women's Rights in Some Countries of the World

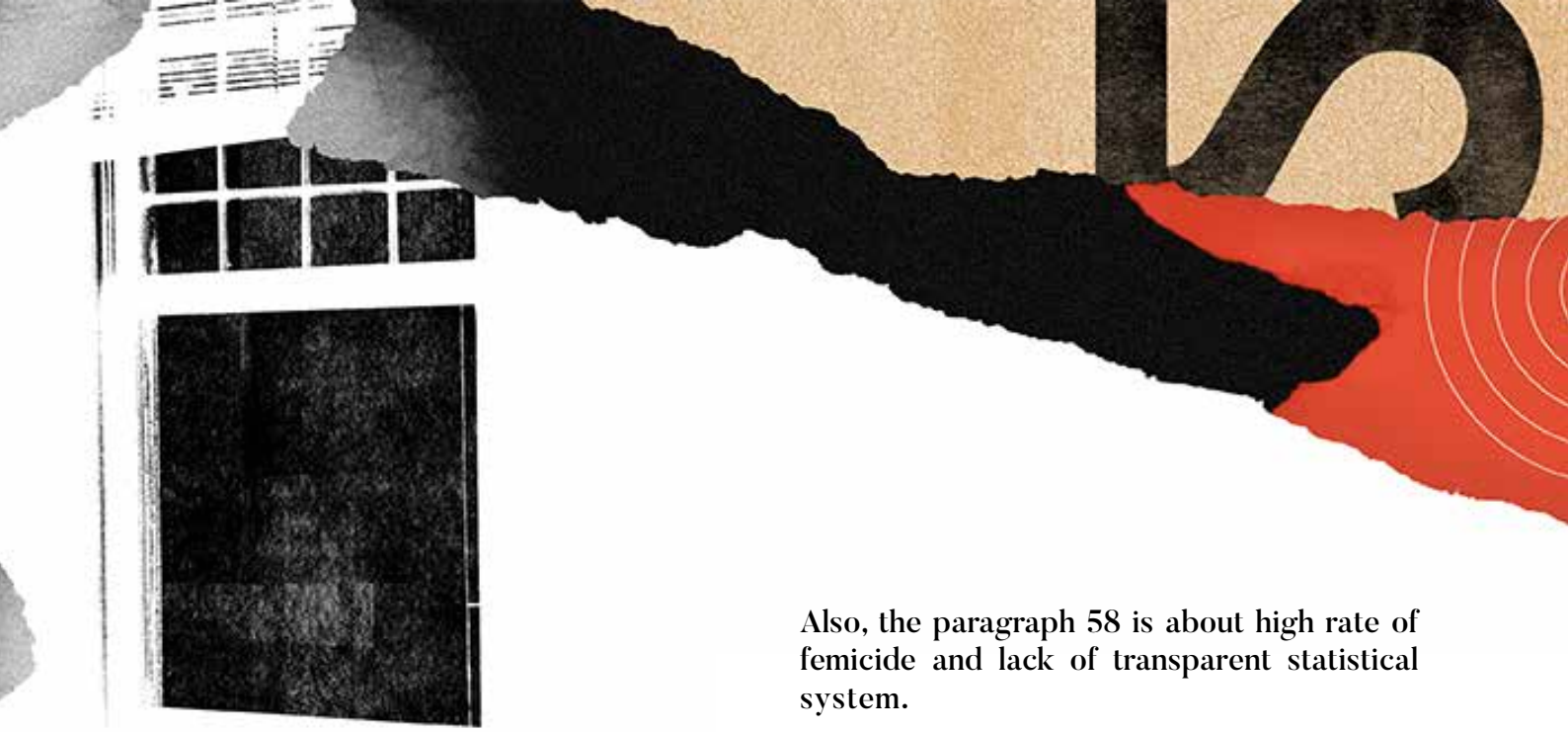


Zeinab rastegarpanah

Today many countries and international activists claim to support women's rights, while they with their silence in the face of oppressive actions make life, health and quality of living challenging in different countries, and they not only were silent against armed conflicts and war crimes in Palestine, Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria but only they are one the main supporters of these crimes, which it is a gross violation of human rights.

Therefore, for achieving to just and lasting peace and for nation's peaceful coexistence should ended to abusing from human rights and believe on humanity. A belief that do not abandon the living rights of aboriginals, colored skins or Muslims and not allowed them to live in inhuman conditions.

Given these facts, this article attempt to show the anti-human rights nature of those who claim to defend human rights and to show their dishonesty and incompetence in pursuing human rights issues especially women rights and family issues.



## Austria

20% of Austrian women have experienced some kind of sexual or physical violence since the age of 15, and 15% of women face with verbal harassment.

27% of people announced in their interviews that they at least know one person who experience domestic violence.

From 2010 till 2012, almost 9% of every 100,000 people have been victims of human trafficking. Mrs. Dunja Mijatovic' Commissioner for Human Rights of Council of Europe, after her visit from Austria announced in an interview in 2021: "high rate of femicide and appearance of new aspects of digital violence against women needs better and effective efforts in Austria." She also stated that wage inequality between men and women was 19% in 2019, but still it is 16% higher than the average wage gap rate in European Union and it is a disaster that lead to women's poverty.

Also, so far three periods of global reporting published by United Nations, which is examining human rights situation in Austria, and in the last report mentioned the following issues (January 22 of 2021):

In paragraph 57 of the report, was emphasized that despite all the advices Austrian women have low participation in decision making positions especially in macro management departments.

Also, the paragraph 58 is about high rate of femicide and lack of transparent statistical system.

## Zionist regime

**The Palestinian occupation regime is the only regime that because of wide violation against Palestinian women rights in United Nations has knew as "the main obstacle for Palestinian women to achieve women rights, progress, self-confidence and independence and...".**

Yakin Erturk, the especial rapporteur of human rights in her visit in 2004 about violence against women in occupation's lands stated that women are the direct and indirect victims of occupation. They are subjected to killing, arrest, detention and harassment, especially when they have any connection with accused Palestinian's men. Also women suffer from destruction of their homes.

Zionist regime, till today has been included in the world periodic report of the Human Rights Council three times, which the last time published in 2018. In page 8 and 9 of this document, included several issue about violation of women's and children's rights.

Therefore, in attack of June 3rd in 2021, 39 pregnant women were killed in Gaza cause of bombing by Israeli regime, which their name and their age mention in this footnote. Israel's child killing regime also started killing civilians very easily and also murdered reporters including, Shireen Abu Akleh(2022), Yaser Murtaja(2018), Simone Kameli (2014), Fedal Shana'a (2008) and Vittorio Arrigoni (2011).

## England

The report of the committee to Eliminate Forms of Discrimination against Women is one of the detailed reports of violation women's rights in England, which published in 2007.

One of the biggest women's problems in England is from institutions that protect security and law. Today women in England believe that police do not take necessary actions for their safety. In fact this problem is rooted in English culture and society. A culture that essentially is misogynist and deliberately ignorance of women would lead to wide violence against them.

In 2022, a report published about five indicators in the field of violence against women in England, which its details mention in footnote.

Wage gap between men and women in England in 2021 was 15.4%. This wage gap increase highly with increasing age.

Official statistics show the inequality in different fields as follows:

- Women's full-time employment rate is 45% while for men is 61%.
- 41% of women obligated to take care of children, grandchild, elders and disable people while only 25% of men obligated to these affairs.
- Less than a third of parliamentarians include women.
- 85% of women forced to house workings.
- Only 35% of board members in large companies include women.

## United States of America

Violation of children's and women's rights in USA have a long history which is including violation rights of aboriginals, immigrants, colored skins and even white women rights.

Some official statistics published about violence against women in USA is as follow:

a. Murder in 2005, 1181 women killed by their sextual partners. This means that on average every day 3 women have been killed. **From all murdered women in USA, one third of murders are committed by their sexual partners. According to Reuters, out of every 10 women, 9 of them killed by men who they knew.**

b. Domestic violence: depending on official report of National Injury Prevention and Control Centre approximately 4.8 million injuries and domestic violence are recorded annually. Less than 20% of these injured women get medical treatments.

c. Sextual violence: based on research of the national center for victims of violence, which also considers statistics that not reported to the police, 232,960 women in USA have been sexually abused only in 2006. This statistics includes more than 600 women in a day. Published statistics of FBI show less than these numbers because their reports are based on police and security agencies' reports. Women with law salaries and some minorities more than others are victims of violence and sexual abuses.

USA in Human Rights Council, has been periodically evaluated for three periods by UPR which the last report was in 2020. paragraph 65 and 69 of this report are about violation women's rights including attacking women with firearms, women's inequality in political and social positions, inequality and discrimination in employments and also in wages, lack of supportive laws especially pregnancy and maternity leave and discrimination about fulltime jobs for women.

## Italy

According to report of United Nations Special Rapporteur in 2012 Italy has an inappropriate situation about women.

Different economic development indicators




















in south and north Italy have adverse effect on women lives especially in southern Italy. The unemployment rate of women in south is very high, this rate in 2011 was 44.6% and it has increased in recent years to the point that Italy has the highest unemployment rate in the European Union.

In UPR's report of 2019, paragraphs of 47 to 50 are about women, which including: few women in political and governmental jobs, widespread inequality in wages, extensive crimes against women and lack of appropriate laws for supporting them.

## France

In UPR's report of 2018 paragraphs of 52 to 55 is about women that states sextual violence in this country is still high and also Muslim women in this country suffer from discrimination and Islamophobia. Sida wants from France government to end all discriminations against women which is based on race, ethnics, nationality, and religious minorities. Therefore, the Committee for Elimination of Racial Discrimination has asked the France government to immediately end discrimination against Romanian women.

Moreover, murder in France 16% has increased in 2019 and 80% of victims are women. Emmanuel Macron the president of France in 2021 announced that the 6 million Muslim population has created the danger of a self-sufficient society and the government should take a action for this Islamic separation. This action of Macron's government provoked the protests of some human rights organizations including Amnesty international and warned of the danger of discrimination and the limitation of social freedoms.

A danger for Muslim women about their Hijab that prohibit them not wearing Hijab in social fields and not working in private companies. According to the new amendment to the law, wearing Islamic Mayo in beaches is forbidden and girls under 18 are not allowed to wear Hijab in schools and their mothers who wearing Hijab also are not allowed to enter to the schools.

## Canada

In 2017, only in province of Ontario 32 case of femicide have been reported. Every 6 day a woman is killed by her sextual partner.

Annually, more than 40thousand arrests are made for domestic violence, which includes 12% of violence crimes in Canada. Although only 22% of committed crimes are reported.

From 1th January till November 30 of 2021, police had shot 87 innocent people that this rate in 2021 25% was increased.



## Violation of the Rights of

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

## of Canada (with special focus on women and families)





Dr. Bahar Akhavan



Canada is working hard to attain a leadership role in promoting human rights and women's rights in international forums by relying on the logic of global norms, and "Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations (2017-2022) extended for 2022( to 2027)", is a testimony of one of these attempts. Now it should be seen whether this country's record in observing women's rights matches with international human rights documents. Is having a role in protecting human rights and women's rights for Canada considered an uplifting and attractive element or is it being utilized as a cover to protect the political interest of this country?

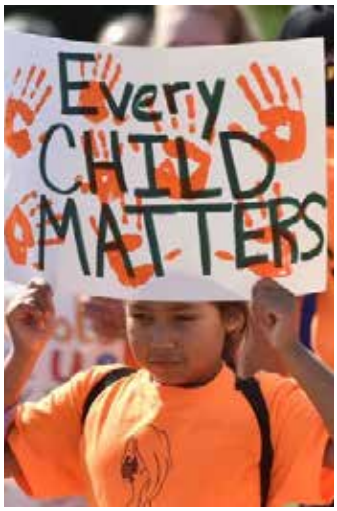
Although Canada's attempt in passing laws and implementing policies with regard to respect for human values may seem admirable to some people, a close look at realities in this multicultural country shows that Canada's history of human civilization is marked by the occupation of the lands of aborigines and violation of their rights and these aborigines have been living in distress behind the beautiful showcase of human rights projected by Canada. The indigenous people of Canada who were the true heirs of this vast land, do not even enjoy their minimum rights and face serious challenges which are the result of decades of structural and systemic discrimination against them.

In a report prepared in 2022, Human Rights Watch has pointed out to widespread discrimination and abuse against indigenous people of Canada and has referred to it as the most prominent violation of human rights in this country (see https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/canada). Moreover, in the same year and based on a report by the Native Women's Association of Canada, Amnesty International had warned about the threat of disappearance and killing of indigenous women and girls in Canada (https://www.amnesty.ca/blog/indigenous-women-girls-and-gender-diverse-people-are-humans-with-rights)

Violence against indigenous women and girls - who have faced a high level of violence and inappropriate behavior by the Canadian government and as a result of activities rooted in colonialist ideologies - is a clear manifestation of the systematic violation of the rights of Canadian indigenous families. According to local research, about 1200 indigenous women have been missing or have been killed in Canada since 1980. This is despite the fact that according to some activists, the number of victims is higher than this. As shown in the following diagram and based on statistics revealed in 2021, the homicide rate of indigenous women is significantly higher in comparison to non-indigenous people (https://www.statista.com/statistics/566294/rate-of-female-homicide-victims-canada-by-aboriginal-identity).




**Violence against indigenous women and girls - who have faced a high level of violence and inappropriate behavior by the Canadian government and as a result of activities rooted in colonialist ideologies - is a clear manifestation of the systematic violation of the rights of Canadian indigenous families.**




The enactment of some discriminatory laws against the aborigines has also affected the family and women's rights of these people. In this regard, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has called on the Canadian government to fully address and amend the long-standing gender-based discrimination in the country's Indian (indigenous) Act that continues to affect tens of thousands of descendants of indigenous women today. (https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/un-womens-rights-committee-urges-canada-amend-transgenerational). Furthermore, discrimination in fertility rights for Canadian indigenous families is a pervasive gender problem in Canada. On one hand, indigenous families in Canada do not enjoy equal rights with regard to having access to health care and, on other hand, their women and girls are forced to undergo sterilization.

One of the most important violations against indigenous families, which has so far been the policy of the Canadian government, is the forced separation of indigenous children from their own families. As per the available documents and evidences, about 150000 Canadian indigenous children were separated from their families over a period from 1883 to 1996 and were subjected to sexual and physical harassment in boarding schools. More than three thousand and 200 of these children were killed as a result of such harassment. The successive discovery of mass graves containing the bodies of 215 indigenous children in British Colombia and 751children in "Marieval Indian" and "Saskatchewan" boarding schools is another example of the violation of the rights of indigenous people of Canada and proves the crime of genocide (https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/canadas-residential-schools-were-a-horror).

*Rate of female homicide victims in Canada from 2001 to 2021, by Aboriginal identity (per 100,000 population)*





It should be noted that as per international human rights documents, indigenous people are entitled to equal rights and freedom as other people. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and article 25 of ILO Convention 169 of the United Nations specifically support the rights of indigenous people. Canadian Government, which has accepted most of these documents and has always tried to introduce itself as the founder and promoter of human rights in the world, in fact, engages in systematic violation of human rights and has failed in implementing its international obligation with regard to the rights indigenous people, especially women and children. Therefore, it would not be a false claim to say that this country basically does not have the legitimacy to accuse other countries of violating women's rights and ignoring their freedom. For instance, following recent unrests in Iran, Mrs. Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, had announced: "we are obligated to reflect the voice of women in Iran more strongly" (https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2022/10/minister-joly-to-host-women-foreign-ministers-meeting-on-iran.html). It may be necessary for the Canadian authorities to be answerable to the existing questions about the rights of thousands of indigenous Canadian women before claiming to stand for women's rights in Iran.

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# Woman for Woman



**"I was very afraid of women. But now, I have become someone that many women want to be with. What can I do? This is how it has turned out to be. This is my understanding of honor. It might be a little weird. If the enemy hears this, he will talk about me. But what they say is not important. The important thing is that I have proved myself as a man. What I mean is that the women who are with me have more privileges and they can progress in the organization."**

**These are the words uttered by the creator of the slogan of "woman, life, freedom". Abdullah Öcalan, the founder of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) is one of the people who, in the name of reviving the rights of Kurdish women, has imposed the biggest crimes on the brave and noble women of this community.**

Kurdistan, whether in Iran, Turkey, Iraq, or Syria, has undergone the oppression of colonial and imperialist governments. For years, Kurdish women and children have been witnessing the violation of their fundamental rights by those who claim to be the proponents of human rights in the world.

What follows is an interview with Dr. Hassan Rastegarpanah, the head of the Defense Technology and Security Research Center of Imam Hossein University, regarding the violation of the rights of Kurdish women by Western governments and explaining the true stands of these governments.

**■ Thank you for your time, as for the first question, how do you evaluate the crimes of Western governments against Kurdish women in general?**

There are many documents and evidences regarding the crimes of Western governments against Kurdish women and children some of which also point out certain cases in the pre-Islamic Revolution. The so-called democratic organization had defined certain rules for the entry of women into this organization, but any woman who opposed cooperation with the Democratic Party and Komalah faced severe consequences. Available reports from the pre-revolution era have recorded numerous cases of resistance by the women of Sardasht city against the immoral actions of the Komalah group and that these women were eventually martyred by this group.

Compared to the Democrats, the Komalah party had been more lenient about the recruitment of women in its organization and by adopting the slogan of girls' freedom and women's rights against the existing social Kurdish culture they tried to attract women to this party. However, what was evident was that the leaders and commanders of Komalah usually attracted women for their personal and lustful desires and in such a way that they constantly kept these women by their side and after continuous assaults when women started protesting, the only way for the leaders of these group to cover up their crimes was to annihilate these women. A number of girls

who had been sexually assaulted by the leaders of Komalah were killed in Marivan, Baneh, and Saqqez and people could not protest against what was going on because Komalah had created an atmosphere of threat and terror in that region.

Before the start of the imposed war, international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, as well as some political parties such as the French Socialist Party openly supported the groups that were active against the Islamic Revolution.

### How Did They Extend Their Support?

Well, immediately after the victory of the revolution, these organizations and parties were allowed to participate in international congresses and declare their stand against the Islamic Republic in the form of reading statements. In many of these meetings, they pretended to be the representative of the Kurdish people and defend their rights and spread false information about the situation of the Kurds in Iran and other countries. Another type of support was financial, facility, and medical support. For example, Doctors Without Borders were obliged to serve the forces of these parties. However, we do not know of any case that Western governments spoke about and condemned the atrocities and oppressions that were imposed on Kurdish people and children.

### What was the stand of these governments about the atrocities Kurdish women faced at the hands of the Baathist regime during the imposed war?

The Baathist regime of Iraq relentlessly and repeatedly attacked and bombarded the residential and civilian areas of Kurdistan and none of the so-called claimants of human rights took any stand against it. On the contrary, the Baathist regime received armaments from them. For example, England gave Napalm bombs to the Baathist regime of Iraq, and the Iraqi regime provided artillery support to the Kurdish terrorist groups who bombarded and killed innocent Kurdish people. One such unprecedented crime was the incident of 15 Khordad (5 June) in Baneh when the people of this city who had gathered in a park to commemorate the anniversary of the 15 Khordad uprising of the Iranian people, were bombarded by the French Mirage warplanes given to the Baathist regime killing more than 600 people. Surprisingly, neither the Kurdish political parties - Komalah, Democrat, and Khabat - nor Western countries, including France, which claims to stand for human rights, condemned this action. Such incidents occurred repeatedly and cities such as Baneh, Marivan, Sardasht, Saqqez, Bukan, Sanandaj, Bukan, and Mahabad were bombed more than 300 times during the eight years of war. The main targets of these bombardments were people and many women were among the victims. According to the available statistics, a significant percentage of 5,000 martyrs in Kurdistan, 7,000 martyrs in West Azerbaijan, and 10,000 martyrs in Kermanshah province comprised women and children. Generally speaking, it can be said that out of all the missiles that the Iraqi regime used



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against Iran, only about 5% hit military targets and the rest were used against people and none of the governments claiming to stand for human rights condemned these crimes. The peak of human rights violations against women during the imposed war happened when the Iraqi government started using chemical weapons it received from 17 European countries, mainly Germany, Italy, France, and England.

**Were these weapons also used in the Kurdistan region?**

Yes, and the most tragic of such attacks was the chemical bombardment of Halabja after the Iranian forces managed to capture this city with the help of the Iraqi opponents of the Baathist regime. The important point about the chemical bombing of Halabja is that Saddam did not target the military positions and bombed the Kurdish population in which more than 6000 people were martyred. Iraqis also bombarded Sardasht city and many populated areas along the border. The quantity of chemicals used by Saddam in the last three years of the war was several times more than the quantity of chemicals used during World War II.

Only a few European countries raised objections as to why Saddam had also targeted the Kurdish people. The purpose of reference to the Kurdish ethnicity in this protest was to deceive the Kurdish people and use these statements for their future purposes. However, despite enough evidence that many women and children were the targets of such bombings the European governments did not impose any sanctions on Saddam and continued to sell chemical weapons to Iraq. Even none of the groups like Khabat, Komalah, and Democrats raised any objection to the use of chemical weapons against women and children.

There is no authentic proof that they protested against the chemical attack on Kurdish cities. These groups claimed to be fighting for the Kurdish people. They claimed that they are fighting the Islamic Republic because it oppresses the Kurds, but did not utter a word against Saddam's crimes in Sardasht and chemical bombings the effects of which continue to be there.

**The activities of these gangs for recruiting girls and women have increased substantially in the post-imposed war era. How do you interpret this phenomenon?**

During the war and during the cleaning of different areas, a number of Komalah team houses, which were called benkeh, were overtaken by the Iranian soldiers in which a lot of contraceptives were found proving free sexual relations and sexual violence against women.

I consider it necessary to point out something here. Kurds have a custom they refer to as "woman for woman" according to which if a girl from one family marries a boy in another family, that family should also give a girl in marriage to the other family, even without the consent of the girl, and if this girl's husband dies, she should return to her own family. In the course of Kurdish history, the Islamic Republic is the only government that has disapproved of this custom in the Kurdish culture and has taken cultural action against it. This is despite the fact that Komalah and Democrats never objected this tradition.

Another surprising phenomenon is that Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK) has declared that it does not approve of the notion of a woman marrying and belonging to only one man and that a woman is free and, thus, there is no such thing as one marriage and having free relationships is permissible, which is contrary to Kurdish culture. The commanders and leaders of PJAK can choose any woman they desire as a result of which girls and women are sexually abused in this organization. This seemingly progressive culture was attractive to girls who were under the pressure of their families and the existing patriarchal system.

**How is women's absolute freedom defined by Kurdish groups, including PJAK?**

Absolute freedom has its own definition. If it means that every person is free to do whatever he/she wants, then a woman who wants to be in the organization and at the same time get married should be free to do so. But this is not the case. Marriage is prohibited in this organization and this is, in a way, limiting women's freedom and violating their basic rights.

## Is a woman who wants to get married allowed to leave the organization?

By no means. Even though she is supposed to leave the organization, leaving it is not an easy task at all, especially in PJAK. According to its constitution, someone who enters the organization does not have the right to leave it. There have been cases where a woman who has left the organization has been soon found dead. Especially, women who have been in a relationship with the commanders are more restricted in order to protect organizational information. Several books have been written on this issue an example of which is the book written about Abdullah Öcalan's relationships with and abuse of women.

A few years ago, a girl who had joined PJAK and committed suicide in the Oramanat had left a note behind stating that the reason for her suicide was repeated sexual abuse by the leaders of the organization and that she could no longer bear such assaults.

Such cases have also been admitted in the confessions of the heads of these organizations. For instance, Abdullah Mohtadi has confessed that Ilkhani had raped several girls. It is also to be noted that in order to keep girls and women from having access to their families they are transferred to different branches. For example, a woman recruited in Iran is sent to Turkey to undergo training.

## Would you like to make any concluding remarks?

At the beginning of the Islamic Revolution, the number of schools in the Kurdish region was very few, and girls had to go from one city to another to study, and because of this, they dropped out. Nowadays, the educational environment has changed, and Kurdish boys and girls can pursue their education in the regions where they live, and this is also applicable to higher education resulting in raising the level of awareness and culture.

Today, Kurdish areas with a population of 500,000 have their own universities and the academic growth of girls is higher than that of men. Suitable employment conditions are also provided for women in these areas. It is hoped that with this level of awareness, we will witness the activities of Kurdish groups fade.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has great respect for this ethnicity. During the time of Reza Khan's rule, wearing local Kurdish clothes was forbidden, but the Islamic Republic of Iran respects all cultural traditions and has not placed any restrictions on their lifestyle.

PJAK is openly supported by France and Germany; politically, financially, etc. I believe that they also receive the support of Mossad intelligence services. The crimes committed by these groups are known to Western governments but they are silent about the position of women in such organization and the sexual exploitation they are exposed to.





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# Presenting Women as Sexual Objects in Marketing Communications: Perspective of Morality, Ethics and Religion

By Prof. Mahmudul Alam, Malaysia



## Introduction

Sharing of information is part and parcel of marketing communication, and the marketers communicate to the customers regarding the products, services or concepts on offer through mass media, direct communication and other conventional/non-conventional means. The main concern of the marketers and their clients is to promote the intended message or perceived benefits to the target audience regardless of the actual benefits of the products or services. Media outlets oftentimes turn a blind eye to these dubious marketing activities for the sake of their own sustenance. Although high percentage of the business community are benefiting from these activities directly, the minds of the innocent people get programmed through them, and they subconsciously become affected by them.

Sexual appeal is an indispensable biological instinct of the humans. Marketers naturally have a tendency to capitalize on this weak point of the human mind. From the perspectives of marketers, "advertisements that attract attention have the increased likelihood to affect persuasion" of the target audience (Taflinger, 1996). The concept of "sex sells" is the outcome of this marketing perspective, leading to normalize the sexual imagery in the minds of people, and the imagery was once considered pornographic. The effects of the concept of "sex sells" can now be seen on primetime television programs, on the pages of well-known magazines, on billboards, websites and other means of marketing activities.

Beyond the arguments of the positive or negative impacts of using sexually explicit contents and female bodies in marketing activities and approaches, ethical issues and norms should also be incorporated strongly in the discourse. Some organizations start using and practicing the ethical message in advertising to reach their target customers successfully. However, at the same time, unethical advertising has been realized as a large element that some firms use intentionally or unintentionally to mislead consumers in the sale of unnecessary products/services (Ogechukwu, Ndubueze & Uche, 2011; Harker, 2008; Boddewyn & Kunz, 1991). Although ethics is supposed to play an important role in the marketing community, what is lacking now is a clear code of conduct for the marketing professionals and media outlets that will be acceptable to all relevant stakeholders. Therefore, by covering a wide range of papers, this study follows a systematic literature review to focus on the topic of the paper. Based on the literature review, this paper discusses the issues of ethics of using women and sexual appeals in the process of marketing activities with the objective of finding a common ground from business and social perspectives.

The current consumer culture, where the body is celebrated as a site of pleasure, is also contributing to this phenomenon of using women as sex objects in advertisements and other promotional activities. Furthermore, most of the cases, the issue of sexism is used in the ad when it has no logical relationship with the advertised product, and this is considered as incongruity. As a result, there is no logical argument for using nude or sexually exposed women in car advertisement (Yoon, 2013; Orth & Holancova, 2003; Sherman & Quester, 2005).

## Consequences of 'Sex Sells' Marketing

The phenomenon of feminism has been on rise since the First World War. The effects of the rise of the phenomenon of feminism can be felt in many facets of the society, including the attitude toward female body exposure and sexuality. In many contemporary cultures, sexual objectification of women is considered as a form of women empowerment. With the passage of time, this "liberal" attitude is becoming the norm in many societies, and the attitude was considered conservative previously.

Negative developments in media and culture are pushing many women into identity crisis. Advertising, celebrity culture and other multiple layers of media exposure are blamed for this phenomenon. The continuous exposures to these materials have lead many




people, young people in particular, to treat these things as ordinary and customary. Some of these people have also taken the models or "brand ambassadors" in these advertisements as role models and idols and they try to imitate their looks, outfit selection and style. Women are psychologically pushed to look, dress, appear and act in a certain way, which contributes to the physical, emotional and mental challenges that they face. Although these activities take place in the guise of promoting of the latest lifestyle and trends, the stress level that many celebrities often go through is seldom mentioned.

The emergence of target marketing, which is done through spontaneous dissemination of commercial messages to attract potential patronage from the public, over the recent years, has generated contentious discussions, revolving around ethical issues, such as moral and social values of the society. The impact of products advertisement on people in this era of globalization is not limited to acceptance and rejection of issues and rather it has permeated the overall conduct of the people, including self-perception, mode of dressing, eating habit, etc. Therefore, considering the pervasive influence of advertisement in public life, it has become important to ensure that advertisers, especially the mass media are conducting their business in accordance with established societal moral codes in their effort to attract potential customers for their clients.

Taking the classical perspective into consideration, one can understand the rationale why women are used by the mass media as marketing instruments to achieve their corporate goals. However, examining the issue from the utilitarian perspectives shows that the use of women as sexual object for marketing products and services is contrary to the ethical principle of producing the greatest goods for the happiness of the greatest number.

### Perspectives of Religious Ethics

Religion is considered as the bindings of most ethical borders. Moreover, religion, as an element of culture, has a great effect on shaping the society, and it contributes to individuals' various decisions, including the buying decisions (Alam, Said & Hassan, 2015; Hejase et al., 2012). Many religions are also very cautious about this matter (Kadić-Maglajlić et al., 2014; Waller & Fam, 2015; Fam et al., 2008), but Islam provides a very wide ethical guideline regarding this issue (Rafiki & Abdul Wahab, 2014; Abbasi, Rehman & Bibi, 2010; Asad, 2007). Islamic

marketing ethics combines the principle of value maximization with the principles of equity and justice for the welfare of the society (Hassan, Chachi & Latiff, 2008). Women occupy a unique and important place in Islam. They are various chapters in the holy Quran and Hadiths (documented deeds and sayings of the beloved prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him- pbuh) that strongly emphasis on the issue of modesty and chastity among women.

To underscore the importance and relevance of women in the society, the holy Quran has a complete chapter (Surah Al –Nisa) that deals with issues relating to women. In addition to this, Quran asserts that: "Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and (thus) guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Lo! God is aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and (thus) guard their chastity ...and not to display of their adornment (zinah) except what (normally) becomes apparent thereof and to draw their head-coverings over their bosoms. [And also tell them] not to reveal any of their adornments save to their husbands or their fathers or their husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigour, or children as yet unaware of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to draw attention to what they hide of their charms. And turn unto God, O believers (both men and women), in order that you may prosper" (Quran, 24:30-31; see Ali, 1983). Quran also strongly warns not to propagate shameful things among the believers, "Verily those who love that indecency should spread among the believers deserve a painful chastisement in the world and in the Hereafter. Allah knows, but you do not know" (Quran, 24:19; see Ali, 1983).

## Concluding Remarks

Many research findings indicate that the contemporary global marketing revolves around the principle of "sex sells'; as a result, women have become the focal point in the hands of advertisers and mass media. Even though the practice has been attracting serious criticisms from the many people for contributing to moral decadence in the society, most advertisement messages have continued to contain images of women in semi-nude postures that reveal their physical and natural endowments as a way of suggesting or implying their sexual attractiveness. The spontaneous dissemination of such messages by the mass media for commercial gains without considering the public interest has almost become part of its agenda setting. Thus, because of its pervasiveness, many people, especially youths are now becoming obsessed with nudity as it seems to reflect in their ways of dressing, music, movies, and daily interactions. Furthermore, the exposure of people to these immoral advertisement images by the media on daily basis seems to portray those women who are presented in a sexually explicit posture as role models, particularly for the vulnerable youths.

The continuous dissemination of the messages by the mass media, therefore, raises some basic questions about the media and its clients (advertisers) to conform to ethical standards. For example, apart from their respective professional ethics, marketing ethics in general deals with moral standards, which every marketer is expected to adhere to, and they include taking both existing and potential customers interest as a factor during planning, production stages of goods/services and also giving good consideration to environmental, economic, and other social issues. Similarly, according to Islamic marketing principles, apart from ensuring equity among the parties involved in any transaction, it is also important that issues relating to harmful products/services or offensive to public sensitivities, such as inferior or adulterated products, false or deceitful presentation of products/service, display of offensive images, such as nudity of men and women, etc. should not be presented before the potential customers. This means that customers will not be deceived or directly coerced into surrendering their independent freedom of choice and decision; consequently, ethical issues must be taken as a component of marketing strategy.




# The First International Congress for The Women of Influence, Tehran

Mrs. Alina Zaidi[1]

"You are cordially invited to attend the 'First International Congress for Women of Influence' to be held in Tehran, Iran", said the voice on the other side of the phone. The lady had just introduced herself from the Ambassador‹s office representing the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi embassy.

This was an exciting moment and it took me just a few minutes to confirm my participation. Visiting as a delegate and representing India was an incredible experience on this 6 day trip and I can't thank enough Culture House of Iran, New Delhi for nominating me as one of the two delegates from India.

*1. Poet / Author / Social Activist from India*

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In the early hours of January 18, I and my fellow delegate Dr. Arvinder Ansari left New Delhi and arrived at Imam Khomeini International Airport, Tehran after a short transit through Doha, Qatar.

This was my return to Tehran after a span of 12 years and I was excited to once again witness the progress and beauty of this great country and its people.

Beautifully covered in snow, Tehran was a sight to behold right from the time we boarded the taxi which took us to the very comfortable Enghelaab Parisian Hotel.

As we were visibly tired, our hosts made us retire to our comfortable rooms after an early dinner.

**Day 2** started with breakfast wherein we started to informally meet delegates from other countries.

After breakfast, all delegates gathered in the Lobby of the hotel and a formal introduction to the event and agenda was done by our hosts.

We realized that it was a first of its kind and a historic event where in 91 women delegates representing 64 nationalities were to attend and engage in this 'First International Congress for Women of Influence'.

Per agenda, our first stop was to attend an Exhibition at the Iran House of Innovation and Technology (IHIT).

"Creativity is thinking up new things and Innovation is doing new things" these words welcomed us to the exhibition area. As a fellow woman, It was a moment of immense pride to witness the Exhibition being led by native Iranian Women.

It was an epiphany for me to witness the progress made and the leadership positions held by Iranian women in areas of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Industrial Automation, Software Development, Artificial Intelligence, Sports, Arts & Culture, and startups were on display in the exhibition center.

Clad in hijab these women presented themselves, their products, and their ideas with elan. We interacted with businesswomen who were doing excellent work in their respective fields with great creativity and intelligence. Contrary to what the media reports, Hijab was an instrument of their dignity and pride and in no way seemed to be an instrument of suppression for these professional Iranian women.

After the exhibition, we networked with fellow delegates over lunch and exchanged business cards with these women of influence. It was a great experience to network with these women professionals. From Journalists to Ministers and from Lawmakers to Human Right Activists, Authors to Professors it was a great blend of women of influence.

Evening, we attended a 'gathering' of the invited guests where we had the honor of meeting the very humble and sweet Iran's First Lady Dr.Jamileh Alamolhoda, wife of President Ebrahim Raisi.

Hon'ble chief guest, Dr.Jamileh Alamolhoda said Iran is a homeland for spiritual women. She emphasized the importance of dignity and justice for women. She advised the gathered guests to work on the global unity of women and put thrust on taking immediate actions towards promoting sacrifice, and love for people, making common values as focus areas for the next generations, and beginning a movement of justice and spirituality.

Listening to influential women from other

nationalities was a great pleasure.

**Day 3** January 20th, was the most important day of the historic 'First International Congress for Women of Influence'.

The day started with an early morning visit to Milad Tower which was completed in 2009.

Standing at 434m Milad Tower is the tallest building in Iran.

This tourist attraction is founded on a body of symbols, myths, and ancient narratives of Iran to demonstrate the evolving process of Persian culture and civilization, extended over nine millenniums, from the great Persian Empire and the magnificent Islamic period to the present time. The installation is a concise manifestation of the history of visual signs and metaphorical wisdom of Iranians and is an immortal reminiscence of the cultural evolution of Persian civilization as the cradle of enlightenment.

Our first international congress for women of influence was scheduled for the evening. After entering the conference room, we took seats on the designated chairs where our country flag was kept.

It was indeed a moment of utmost pride to represent India in this confluence of influential women.

As per tradition, the conference started with the recitation of the Holy Quran.

The welcome speech was delivered by Dr. Mrs. Khazali, Vice President of Women and Family Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Dignitaries, heads of state, ministers, vice presidents, and parliamentarians from various countries spoke on the importance and need of founding and growing such a Congress for Women of Influence.

Their speeches aimed to appreciate women of influence, support and help them grow, and promote their creativity and ideas.

They all wanted to develop peace and justice in the world.

Later, a video was played to show the achievement of Iranian women in the field of sports, literature, Arts, and culture. Some awards were given to influential women working in different spheres across the world. The program ended with a traditional Persian Dance.

**Day 4** Visit to the holy city of Qom and poetry presentation at Al Zahra seminary.

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a.s) has said, "A Lady from my children, by the name of Fatimah will be buried in Qum. Whoever visits her (Shrine) will certainly be admitted to Heaven." Masuma E Qom had invited me and I was very happy to visit her.

The Holy City of Qom is situated some 125 km south of Tehran and houses, Jamiat al Zahra, the world's largest seminary and university for women. This institute is built as a modern complex on 21 hectares of land with a substructure of 170,000 square meters to provide a purpose-built campus. It is situated in one of the best areas of the holy city of Qom near the Holy Shrine of Lady Masuma a.s and Qom city center.

By Allah's grace and blessings of Masuma E Qom, I got the opportunity to recite my poetry dedicated to Spiritual women.

Iranian women and media liked my poetry and took my interview.

Later, we visited the shrine of Masuma E Qom. This was the second time that I had the privilege to pay a visit to Masuma. We all performed ziarat and prayed for the well-being of mankind. After visiting the shrine we also visited the Museum of Masuma E Qom and returned to our hotel in Tehran by evening.

**Day 5** On our way returning from Qom to Tehran, I was now yearning to go to the holy city of Mashhad and pay a visit to our 8th Imam, Imam Ali Reza a.s.

Due to extremely cold conditions, the number of flights to Mashhad and the availability of seats were limited. It seemed difficult to make a same-day return trip, however, Maula Imam

e Reza did a miracle overnight and called me to Mashhad for 1 day.

I was blessed to be in the shrine for close to 4hrs performing ziarat, praying for everyone, and writing poetry sitting in the shrine. It was a different experience to write poetry sitting in the shrine which is way too difficult to describe.

By evening I was back in Tehran, content and fulfilled.



**Day 6**

As they say that all good things come to an end, day 6 was the day of return to India. We were back in India by midnight.

Alhamdulillah, I learned many new things on this 6 day trip,

- Respect every woman of all religions, and always thank Allah, God, for everything you have.
- Every woman is an influential woman in her family in her own way, and always tries to promote, empower and support women in her family, neighborhood, country, and in the world.
- Women, be the change you wish to see in this world.
- Poem written and recited at Jamiat al Zahra World's largest Seminary and University of Women.




## Spiritual Women

Spiritual women are endowed with unique qualities by nature, pleased in the presence of the Almighty, and shrouded in humility and dignity. She resembles a budding flower with a pleasant scent that survives among increasing thorns.

She is a mother, a poet, an attorney, an Alima, and a social worker.

Every day, she triumphs in her own war.

> Finds a way to be cheerful while transforming sorrow and suffering into power. From her experience of deprivation, tears of pain, and sadness, It gives her greater satisfaction than laughter and happiness.



O' women of strength, love, and leadership. O' women of grace and influence. Leaders in social and cultural activities, assist the less fortunate with your guidance.

Surah Nisa of the Holy Quran discusses the Worth of Women.

Allah's creations include spiritual women like Hzt Khadijah a.s. & Hzt Fatima They are 'Women of influence' for our current and future missions.



# Colonialism, Occupation, and the Rights of Palestinian Women

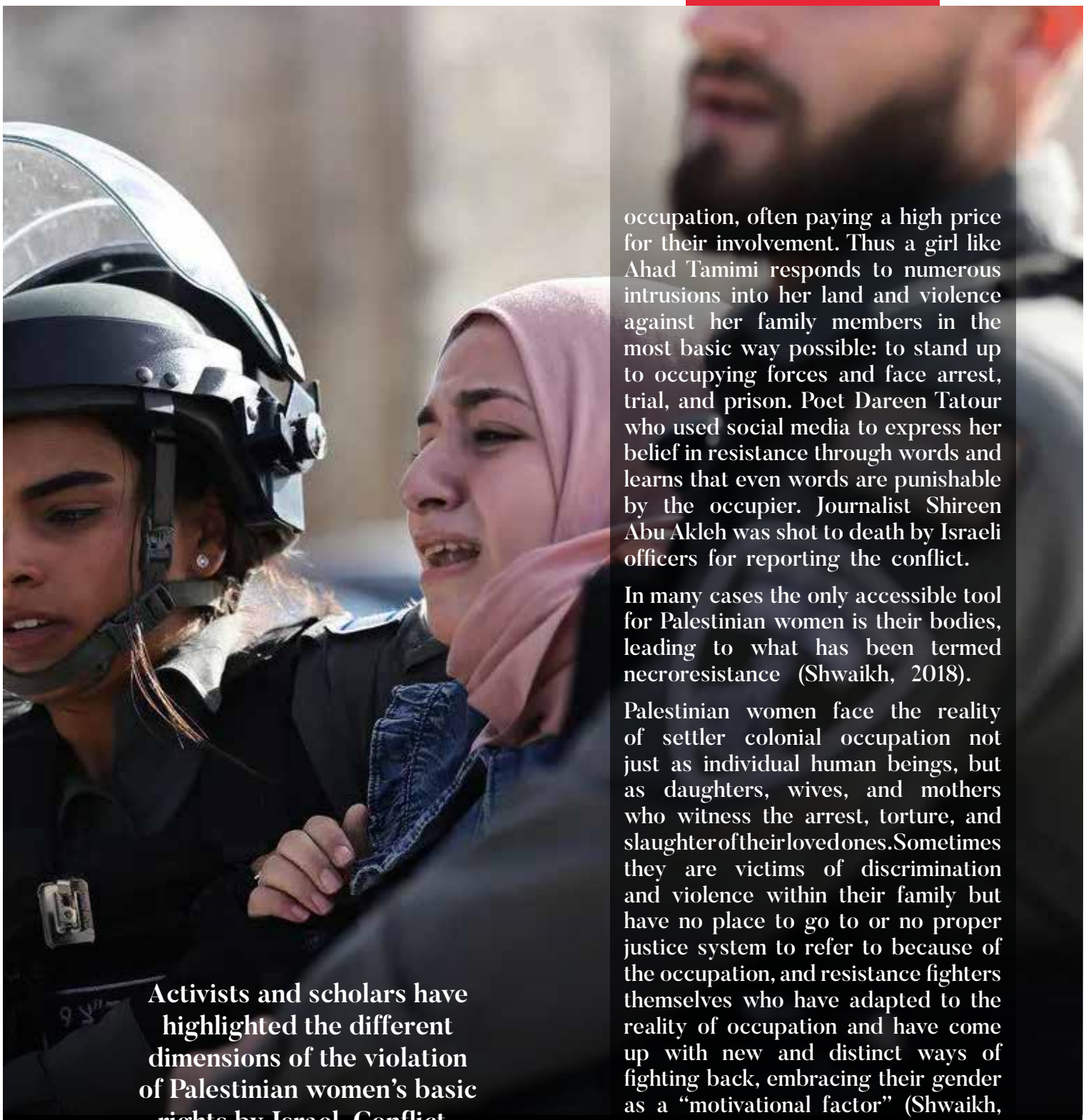
Dr. Elham Kadkhodaee

One of the main elements of Israeli Hasbara or whitewashing, and part of its quest to appear normal - meaning conforming to Western values and norms -has been to portray itself as an oasis of gender equality; a place where the rights and dreams of women are unbounded. Whilst critics have come to question this idealistic depiction of the situation of Jewish women inside Israel (see (Zughayar, 1995), (Chazan, 2018), the reality of how occupation has precipitated a wretched/miserable life for Palestinian women shatters the rosy image that Israeli propagandists want the world to believe.

The other side of Israeli normalization propaganda is to depict Palestinian society as an underdeveloped, patriarchal one where the most basic of rights are denied to women and girls; another reason to prove the necessity of the Zionist march and takeover of the land in the name of civilization (or western civilization, to be more precise). In this narrative, Israel becomes the normal Self whilst the irrational Palestinian becomes the strange Other. But what needs to be mentioned here is the patriarchal nature of colonialism, and Zionism is undeniably a continuation of colonialism. Although in the setting of Israeli settler colonialism the entire Palestinian population; male/female, young/old, civilian/military, becomes the feminine that needs to be ruled, governed, and controlled, like all other conflicts women suffer a significantly higher amount of discrimination and violation. Obviously, such discrimination and violation have a sexual nature in too many cases.

One factor that makes Palestinian women more vulnerable compared to other conflicts is the sheer pervasiveness of occupation; the fact that it has influenced every aspect of their lives (including familial relations, economic aspects, and even healthcare[1]) on a day-to-day basis, for generations. This means that Palestinian women cannot live without being influenced one way or another by Zionist occupation, without being reminded every day of its existence, and without being forced to react to its reality. In other words, Palestinian women use any tool and method available to them to actively negate and resist

*1. Refer to (Salhi & Khalil, 2020) for a discussion on how occupation effects unproportional death rates related to breast cancer in Palestine.*



occupation, often paying a high price for their involvement. Thus a girl like Ahad Tamimi responds to numerous intrusions into her land and violence against her family members in the most basic way possible: to stand up to occupying forces and face arrest, trial, and prison. Poet Dareen Tatour who used social media to express her belief in resistance through words and learns that even words are punishable by the occupier. Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was shot to death by Israeli officers for reporting the conflict.

In many cases the only accessible tool for Palestinian women is their bodies, leading to what has been termed necroresistance (Shwaikh, 2018).

Palestinian women face the reality of settler colonial occupation not just as individual human beings, but as daughters, wives, and mothers who witness the arrest, torture, and slaughter of their loved ones. Sometimes they are victims of discrimination and violence within their family but have no place to go to or no proper justice system to refer to because of the occupation, and resistance fighters themselves who have adapted to the reality of occupation and have come up with new and distinct ways of fighting back, embracing their gender as a "motivational factor" (Shwaikh, 2020, p. 507).

**Activists and scholars have highlighted the different dimensions of the violation of Palestinian women's basic rights by Israel. Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is one aspect; the most damaging type of violence that takes place in checkpoints and prisons, among other environments. Women are strip searched, and threatened with sexual violence and rape.**

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The Zionist regime is even known



to abuse women's vulnerabilities in its recruitment of collaborators, a policy which is referred to as 'isqat'[2] by the Palestinians. The policy is defined as "a form of sexual blackmail by which Palestinians are caught in "immoral" situations – allegedly lured by Israeli agents or other collaborators – photographed, and then pressured to collaborate under the threat to publicize the photographs" ("Israel: Division of labor and mandates of the Mosad and Shabak", 2001, para. 18). Palestinian director Hany Abu-Assad accurately conveys the desperation of female victims of this policy in his recent film, Huda's Salon, a despair that is magnified by the fact that virtually all aspects of Palestinian's life, including their ability to travel, is controlled by the occupier.

Another more discreet abuse of Palestinian women by Israel takes place in the regime's quest to normalize and present itself as a tolerant multi-ethnic society. Karkabi names Lucy Aharish and Mira Awad as Palestinian women who have been presented through Israeli media as evidence of the regime's compatibility with western liberal democratic values. These representatives of the success story of female Palestinian citizens of Israel (so-called Arab-Israelis) perform the role of

> ...liberated "Israeli Arab" women, their criticism of "ethnic" inequality in Israel is tolerated to confirm Israel as a democracy, as long as they operate within the domestic(ated) framework of citizenship rights. Thus, instead of using their public exposure to draw awareness, these women become a voice that obscures Israeli violations of Palestinian collective rights. (2021, p. 974)

As the discussion above demonstrates, Palestinian women have been facing extreme and unique forms of violation of their rights, whilst at the same type developing innovative forms of resistance. This is happening in a context of neglect by international media and women's rights activists (see (Hawar, 2019), (Shalhoub-Kevorkian et. al, 2022) and (Werleman, 2022)), again revealing the existence of double standards and lack of genuine concern about the well-being and basic rights of women. Whilst any incident in countries that do not fit into the pro-west camp receives utmost attention and is transformed into a crisis in need of global reaction, the plight of Palestinian women is neglected, no matter how many of them are unduly arrested, beaten, harassed, and killed. As the recent events in Iran following the death of Mahsa Amini and the lack of comparable concern regarding Palestinian women demonstrated, women's rights, like many other supposedly humanitarian causes, is practically weaponized in the quest to subjugate countries that stand up to occupation and arrogance.

*1. Meaning downfall in English*

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Patriarchy and the prioritization of men over women exist in Western civilization and capitalism.

2

Women are taken advantage of and paid lower wages than men in a similar work position.

3

Women are a tool for men's pleasure.

4

Men and masculine works are set as role models for women.

5

Irregularities exist in places regarding the marriage of men and women.

6

All moral and human boundaries have been broken in the West.

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Families have been broken up or are merely a family on the outside, without having an inner core.

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There is a just view of men and women with both genders enjoying various kinds of privileges.

1

There is equality between men and women in terms of human and Islamic values.

2

There are different but balanced rights for men and women.

3

The male and female nature has an impact on their types of responsibilities.

4

The Quran sets women as role models for human beings.

5

Rules and laws have been set down for the marriage of a man and a woman.

6

Similar duties but different roles exist for men and women in social obligations.

7





## Islam defends women's rights

Islam's purpose in defending women's rights is that women should not be oppressed. If a woman does not have a safe, secure environment to study, work and possibly earn money, this is oppression and cruelty. From Islam's perspective, if a woman has a talent, for example if she has a talent in science, in making inventions and discoveries, or in politics or social work, but if others do not allow these talents to be used and cultivated, this is an act of oppression.

Imam Khamenei | Oct. 22, 1997

