

About The Author

(Excerpts from an Interview with the Author)

It is now about 18 years when sister Zahra Rahnavard started her political career with the teachers' strike against the pro-American regime of the ex-Shah. Subsequent to her dismissal from the government service in education department due to her political activities, she took up the cudgels against the Shah's regime with a semi-underground life by writing with the same nom de plume.

During this period she wrote a number of books, which were either published clandestinely or could not see the light of the day due to their protracted detention by the regime's censor. They included the books entitled: "The Emigration of Joseph", "The Revolt of Moses" delineating the Qur'anic philosophy of history, "The Social Strata from Qur'anic Point of View", a politico-sociological study of the holy Qur'an and the short stories entitled "Ali and Mash Madina".

While still under prosecution, she succeeded in leaving for abroad. Several of her lectures to the foreign students were compiled in the form of books: "The Message of Hijab from a Muslim Woman" and "The Rise of a Muslim Woman" which were smuggled and published in Iran. In the last days of the Satanic regime of the Shah, when the state's sensitivity towards such activities subsided, she returned to Iran.

She produced her anthology: "Tempests and the Tulips of Shahrivar" under the nom de plume of Zaynab Boroujerdi after the bloody massacre of 17th Shahrivar (8th September) by the pro-American regime of the ex-Shah, and dedicated it to Imam Khomeini (RA). After the state authorities came to know of the real identity behind her pen name, she was again forced to return to an underground life. Throughout the Islamic revolution she took herself to delivering lectures in most of the towns and universities, thereby exposing the regime of those days, until at last the revolution was blessed with success.

After the revolution, she wrote "Imperialist Roots of the Abolition of Hijab". She soon assumed the position of the Chief Editor of the magazine "Rahe Zaynab", (The Pathway of Zaynab). During the turbulent days of the Cultural Revolution, she was the only lady who had the honour to teach at the first Faculty of Anthropology founded on the basis of Islamic guidelines. Subsequently she gave a wider perspective to her University activities and started teaching at the Tehran University, where she produced several works including "Aesthetics", "Insight into the Qur'anic Verses", "Philosophy of the

"Islamic Art" and "A Hero from the Qur'anic Viewpoint", the last one being in the press.

Sister Rahnvard is a graduate from the Faculty of Fine Arts, and is presently a Professor at the University. She has finalized the stage of writing her Doctoral Dissertation in the Department of Political Science. She is the wife of the present Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the mother of three children. Following are the excerpts from an Interview with Madam Rahnvard, published in "Shahide Banowan", No. 107 dated 1st Ordibehesht 1325/21st April 1986.

Q: Sister Rahnvard, why have you cut down your social activities after Mr. Musavi has assumed the position of the Prime Minister of Iran?

A: In fact, when Mr. Musavi accepted such a big responsibility, it added to my responsibilities at home. It is because his heavy official engagements and the vast expanse of his service to the people did not leave any time for him to shoulder his responsibility at home fully. Therefore I had to cut down my (social) activities, pay greater attention to my home and confine myself to teaching at the University and writing books. During this period I have produced my research works in the fields of "Aesthetics in Islam", "Insight into the Qur'anic Verses" and "The Philosophy of Islamic Art".

Now that my children have grown up, and my presence at home is not as necessary as before, I think I should devote myself more to the social work I used to perform during the tumultuous days of the Islamic Revolution. I hope, by the Grace of God, I shall always be successful in the performance of my service to the community of Hezbollah (The Faction of Allah's Believers).

Q. Some people believe that the Prime Minister has prevented you from social activities

A. No, it is not so. They are a bit inconsiderate. Like every other Muslim, Mr. Musavi also believes that the most honourable and dignified duty of a woman is her role as a mother. But at the same time, he is of the opinion that a woman must certainly have some activity in the society and should shoulder some important and fundamental responsibilities. I think, it would be injustice to Mr. Musavi to say that he has prevented his wife from social activities.

We are first indebted to our Leader for the Islamic Revolution, and then to the mothers who have produced men who laid down their lives for the sake of the Revolution. The Leader of the Community has also said:

"It is the lap of the mother from where man ascends the highest peaks of glory."

This is the great role of mothers which is acknowledged by all the Muslims, including Mr. Musavi himself, who is most willing to see all the ladies, including myself, undertaking various social activities in the society.

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