Al-Islam.org
Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project
Published on *Al-Islam.org* (https://www.al-islam.org)

Lady Nusrat Beygum Amin

Tayyebeh Cheraghi[1]
Translated by Sayyedeh Zahra Mirfendereski

Abstract

Sayyida Nusrat Beygum Amin was one of the most outstanding female jurisprudents and theologians of the 20th century. After being given the permission of ijtihad by prominent scholars, thus entitled mujtahida, she in turn granted permission of narrating hadith of ijtihad to future renowned female and male scholars.

For example, she gave permission of narrating hadiths to the grand Ayatollah Mar'ashi Najafi. This paper offers a brief account of Lady Amin's academic and spiritual standing, along with her lineage, teachers, and works. Her ardent love for God led her to fervently study in a variety of Islamic disciplines, leading her to moral excellence and reaching the level of ijtihad.

In addition to her academic scholarship, Lady Amin displayed firmness in her movement against the emergence of modernism and false propaganda against Islam when she rose against the misleading ideologies promoted by Reza Khan. In a generation bombarded with celebrities that entice today's youth to overlook true exemplars, Lady Amin is an example of a woman with notable achievements in which people can apply to their modern lives.

****

Lady Nusrat Beygum Amin, commonly known as Banu Amin, Nusrat Amin, or Lady Amin, was born in 1274 SC (1895 CE) in Isfahan to a noble Sayyid family[2]. After marriage, she was homeschooled under Ayatullah Najaf Abadi and Ayatullah Zafareh'i. She achieved the degree of ijtihad[3] and was granted the permission to transmit hadiths from Ayatullah Sheikh Abdulkarim Ha'iri Yazdi and other prominent Shi'a authorities. After a lifetime of endeavor in self-purification and training students, she passed away in 1362 SC[4] (1983 CE).

Introduction

History has shown the great achievements of committed Muslim women in the fields of culture and literature, and they have proven to be worthy role models of endeavor and self-devotion. Appreciating the position of women and doing justice towards them according to the glorious Qur'an and the conduct of the noble Prophet (s) and Infallibles (a) has always led to Muslim women's progress in Islamic society. Examples of such great women in the history of Islam are Khadija (a), Fatimah al-Zahra (a), Zaynab-e Kubra (a) and Sakinah (a), the daughter of Imam Husayn (a).

Throughout Islamic history, there have been many devoted, knowledgeable, and pious women who excelled in educating society and in doing so have trained prominent men. Such women in the history of Shi'a Islam were the mother of Sayyid Radi and Sayyid Murtada, the daughter of Sheikh Tusi, and the daughter of Muhammad Taqi Majlisi.

After the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Iranian women who were well- trained under Islamic values demonstrated the great status of Muslim women to the world. The mothers and wives of the martyrs of the Iran- Iraq war displayed noble attributes of abstinence and piety, and were responsible for celebrating the achievements of great Muslim women. In this paper, we will take a brief look at the personality of one of the finest exemplars of the society who held a high spiritual and academic status, making her one of the luminaries of the Islamic world.

This honorable and modest mujtahidah[5] lady is Sayyida Nusrat Amin, about whom Ayatullah Khamene'i stated, "Celebrating this Isfahani lady [Lady Amin] and introducing mystical, jurisprudential, and philosophical aspects of such a woman in our country is a cherished action that will revive the Islamic values in women."[6]

The academic level and piety of this scholar demonstrated that faithful Muslim women who pursued high levels of knowledge are able to greatly contribute to academic and cultural services and set themselves free from deprivations imposed on them and upon Islam and Muslims by the enemies' plotting and friends' unawareness of Islamic and Qur'anic rulings.

Biography

Hajjiyyah[7] Sayyida Nusrat Beygum Amin (with the penname "the Iranian Lady") was born in 1276 SC (1897 CE)[8] in Isfahan. Her father, Hajji[9] Sayyid Mohammad Ali Amin al-Tujjr Isfahani was a pious and generous man, and her mother was a respectable and benevolent woman. Hajji Sayyid Mohammad Ali was the son of Sayyid Husayn and grandson of 'Allamah Sayyid Ma'sum Husayni Khatoon Abadi[10] whose mother was from a noble lineage.[11]

Lady Amin's maternal family - the Jinabi family - were pious descendants of the Prophet (s) (Sayyids) from Isfahan and were great scholars, poets, and artists during the Safavid era.[12] Lady Amin was born

after three sons. At the age of four, her mother sent Lady Amin to Khadijah Beygum's Qur'an School during a time when very few families allowed their daughters to go to school, due to the unIslamic atmosphere of most of the schools at that time.[13]

Thus, Lady Amin pursued her education until the age of thirteen, when she married her cousin, Hajji Mirza Aqa, known as Mu'in al-Tujjar. During all the years she lived with her parents, they raised her well with utmost love and care.[14]

After marriage, though Lady Amin managed her domestic chores and trained her children, her responsibilities as a wife and mother did not prevent her from pursuing her education in Islamic sciences. She gave birth to eight children, although seven of them underwent early death

with one son remaining. As hard as it was, Lady Amin displayed patience and interpreted these events as Divine trials.[15] She passed away after a lifetime of devoted service on the 23rd of Khordad, 1362 SC (13th of June, 1983).

Ma'sum. Recently, one person sought help from his blessed soul and his need was fulfilled. So, he made a tombstone for his grave and craved some verses on it which narrated the story of seeking help from Mir Ma'sum's soul and fulfilling his need. (see: Nahid Tayyebi, Ibid, p. 28 quoted from Muhammad Ali Mudarrisi, Riyhanatul Adab, vol. 5, p. 266.)

Academic Degrees

Banu Amin involved herself in a variety of academic disciplines at home from qualified teachers. She dove into spiritual sciences and achieved honorable qualities along with her practical spiritual journey and her great efforts to learn Qur'anic sciences:

She grew up in a very spiritual way, and as she herself wrote in Nafahat al-Rahmaaniyyah, she was so thoughtful of God that she was able to hear the glorification of God by the flowers and plants. Until the age of forty, she practiced self-refinement and self-discipline, and passed through stages of spiritual journey.[16]

After learning Arabic conjugation, syntax, rhetoric, exegesis [of the Qur'an], hadith studies, jurisprudence (fiqh), principles of jurisprudence (usul), and Islamic philosophy, she continued her studies of fiqh and usul at higher levels until she achieved the degree of ijtihad.[17] She was known for her fervent determination, as she once said, "Even the death of a child would not stop me from attending my classes."

One of her teachers, the late Ayatullah Ali Najaf Abadi,[18] said, "I was amazed at her passion for learning. When I heard the news that her child had passed away, I thought she would not attend class anymore. On the contrary, two days later, she sent someone to ask me to come over and continue her lessons."[19]

Her Achievement of the Level of Ijtihad

Her giftedness, endless efforts, strong determination, and infinite patience with obstacles bore positive outcomes after years of education and hard work. She was almost forty when Ayatullah ‘Abd al-Karim Ha’iri Yazdi[20] and Ayatullah Muhammad Shirazi evaluated her; after her achievement, they granted her the authority to practice ijtihad.[21] Ayatullah Estahbanati and Ayatullah Sheikh Muhammad Reza Abu al-Majd Najafi Isfahani also granted her permission to do so.[22]

The great academic and spiritual level of Lady Amin is clearly mentioned in the permission letter of Ayatullah Abu al-Majd Najafi to transmit hadiths:

I authorize this learned and noble Sayyida, the priceless hidden gem, one of the best children of Lady Zahra (a), the sagacious woman, the perfect gnostic and theologian, to transmit from me what I am authorized to quote from commentaries of the Qur’an, supplications, hadiths, and jurisprudence.[23]

The outcomes of her great academic efforts originating from her piety and renunciation from the material world was so outstanding that even grand scholar Ayatullah Mar‘ashi Najafi requested permission from her to transmit hadiths. In a part of the permission letter she wrote to Ayatullah Mar‘ashi,[24] she said, “After doing istikhara,[25] I authorized him to transmit from me what I am authorized to transmit from commentaries, supplications, hadiths, and Islamic rulings from Shi‘a works and non-Shi‘a reports in every way they have been transmitted.[26]

She was considered the unique mujtahidah of her time since her academic and mystical position rose so high that great scholars and mystics considered it a blessing to be in her presence and took advantage of her knowledge and wisdom. These scholars include ‘Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba’i (author of al-Mizan), ‘Allamah Sheikh ‘Abd al-Husayn Amini (author of al-Ghadir), and Allamah Muhammad Taqi Ja’fari (author of Sharh-e Nahj al- Balaghah)[27] who said:

Upon studying her available works, [I can confirm that] Banu Amin is undoubtedly one of the most celebrated scholars of the Shi‘a world. Her academic method is quite comparable to other scholars. Because of her high spiritual status, she is considered one of the outstanding scholars who are born again in their lives [al-hayat al- tayyiba].[28]

Her Great Teachers

1) Ayatullah Aqa Sayyed Abu al-Qasem Dehkordi:[29] This great faqih[30] and famous mujtahid was a distinguished professor of jurisprudence and principles of jurisprudence who lived in Isfahan. He learned Islamic sciences in Isfahan from great teachers such as Mirza Abu al- Ma‘ali Kalbasi, Hajj Sheikh Muhammad Baqir Masjid Shahi, and Aqa Mirza Muhammad Mohsin Najafi.

2) The late Aqa Mirza Muhammad Hasan Shirazi in Samarra: she studied with him until she was able to

independently derive a rule of divine law from the Qur'an (ijtihad).[31]

3) Hujjat al-Islam Mirza Ali Asghar Sharif:[32] He was son of Hajj Muhammad Baqir, an Arabic literature teacher who taught other basic courses in the Seminary of Isfahan. There, he also was the prayer leader in a mosque. He lived a long life;[33] when he passed away, Lady Amin was eighty years old.[34]

4) Ayatullah Mirza Ali Aqa Shirazi:[35] He was one of the outstanding people of his time, mastering in jurisprudence, exegesis, spirituality, morality, and Arabic literature. He was the son of Ali Akbar Shirazi and a student of great teachers such as 'Allamah Sayyed Muhammad Baqir Dorcheh'i, Hajj Aqa Husayn Borujerdi, and others in Isfahan Seminary.

He also studied philosophy under distinguished philosophers such as the Jahangirkhan Qashqa'i and Akhund Mulla Muhammad Kashani, and physics under Muhammad Baqir Hakim Bashi. In Najaf al-Ashraf and learned from Grand Ayatullahs Sheikh al-Shari'ah Isfahani, Aqa Sayyid Muhammad Kazem Yazdi, and Akhund Khorasani and achieved great degrees in knowledge. Afterwards, he went to Isfahan where he taught until the end of his life.[36]

5) Hujjat ul-Islam Hajj Sheikh Abu al-Qasim Zofreh'i:[37] He was known as "Hajj Akhund" a pious man who taught in the Seminary of Isfahan.[38] Lady Amin was 48 when he passed away.[39]

6) Hujjat ul-Islam Hajj Aqa Husayn Nizam al-Din Kachu'i.[40]

7) Sheikh Zayn al-'Abedin Mazandarani and Hajj Mirza Husayn Nuri in Iraq.

8) Ayatullah Mir Sayyid Ali Najaf Abadi:[41] He was a mujtahid who taught Islamic sciences in Isfahan Seminary. He was also Lady Amin's most influential teacher, playing the leading role in several stages of Lady Amin's education[42] as he taught her jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, and Islamic philosophy.

He once said, "My uncle taught me Islamic philosophy, but there is nobody I could teach it to. I was sure that if I taught it to this lady, it will be remembered."[43] His quote implied that apparently there was no one who could comprehend sophisticated concepts of Islamic philosophy at that time other than Lady Amin. When she wrote 'Arba'in-e Hashemiyyeh and scholars of the Najaf Seminary read it, they greatly admired it, and Ayatullah Najaf

Abadi said, "Whatever Lady Amin has written in her book is originated from her own thoughts; it was not the outcome of my teachings."[44]

Her Reaction to Banning Hijab in Iran

Lady Amin's efforts and achievements were exhibited during a time when women were not permitted to leave the house. Naturally, because she spent most of her time studying, she was often at home,

leaving the house only on necessary occasions, such as educating and guiding women of all ages. Except for the Qajar period, the era of Reza Khan was almost contemporary with the emergence of modernism and propaganda against Islam, and this wave was particularly rampant in Isfahan.

At the beginning of that period, Lady Amin was 35, and Isfahan had several seminaries. After Tehran, Isfahan was a target for modernist activities by some women. Ms. Seddiqeh Dolat Abadi was one of those who conducted such activities about whom it is reported that, "She publicly uncovered her head-scarf (hijab) years before Reza Khan banned hijab. Obviously, there were other women such as Dolat Abadi and other women who thought they would be deemed "modern" if they participated in such ceremonies. The wave of modernism prevented the spread of religious thoughts, especially amongst women, and for this reason, Lady Amin is seen as influential as she established a great movement.

Reza Khan promoted his own flawed ideology, such as promoting modernism based on the radical nationalism that had two major goals: to debase and destroy Islamic civilization, and to return to the pre-Islamic period of Iran.

Counter to Reza Khan's radical nationalism, Lady Amin wrote under the pseudonym "Iranian Lady" particularly because Reza Khan wanted to return Iranian women to the pre-Islamic period and bring back the culture of that time. On the contrary, Lady Amin wanted to say, "Today's Iranian woman is she whom began her life since the appearance of Islam. Women did not have an identity or nobility before Islam; the true identity of Iranian women was formed since Islam spread to Iran and Iranians became Muslim."[45]

When the dictatorship of Reza Khan stood against Islamic values and Qur'anic rules, in addition to her studies, work, and family responsibilities, Lady Amin defended religious standards. The ban of wearing of hijab in public was decreed in 1310. In 1311, the Congress of Eastern Women attended by Mrs. Dolat Abadi took place, and afterwards, hijab was officially banned.

As a result, Lady Amin wrote the book Rawesh-e Khoshbakhti (The Way of Achieving Prosperity). She quotes: "If a body limb becomes sick, other limbs would not remain healthy" and "Women are the pillars of society; if they are unethical, the entire society will become corrupt, especially if their immoral deeds are open to the public."[46]

In another part, she writes:

O you woman who have uncovered your hijab! and in such a shameful way display your finery in the streets and passages in the public while you claim that you are a Muslim! Do you not realize that through this action, which you should not consider unimportant, that you inflict great damage on religion? O Europeanized woman! Do not consider this sin unimportant. If you are truly a Muslim, this is not Islamic. If you do not believe in Islamic teachings, declare your disbelief, so that your wrong action does not encourage others to do the same. And if you are not interested in the religion, why do you incur enmity? The holy Prophet (s) did not do injustice towards women during his time. He (s) granted them rights and

gave them an equal position to men in all social affairs at a time when women were considered worthless in the society.[47]

Her Moral Virtues

Lady Amin was not unaware of the society's needs. She was also precise in abiding by general rules of good conduct and being considerate towards others, and this had a big influence on her students. Her students say that she was very dignified, yet humble and decent, and she had spiritual charisma.

Lady Amin established a school in Isfahan called Maktab-e Fatemiyyeh, a place where many students quenched their thirst for knowledge and became prolific authors. She taught her Rawesh-e Khoshbakhti, a work based on moral beliefs, in a simple, sweet, and pleasant way. She devoted the rest of her life to teaching, researching, writing, and managing the school. Piety and self-confidence were amongst her qualities. Her love for the glorious Qur'an was apparent as depicted in her commentary of Makhzan al-'Irfan (15 volumes).

Concerning her discipline, management, and spiritual grandeur, one of her students says:

With regards to the life of Mrs. Amin, she managed her time efficiently. She arranged her programs in a way that she could do all of her work properly. She never dreaded any troubling event as she constantly put her trust in God. She welcomed guests unpretentiously. She attracted youths to Islam through reasoning and without compulsion. Now that I have passed the sweet days of youth, I see that I have received no affection deeper than her genuine kindness, and I did not take anyone's hand warmer than hers, which taught me the alphabet of the Word of God [i.e. the Qur'an]. I cannot accurately describe her; my tongue is unable to describe her and no pen is able to write it completely… I encourage others to read her works to familiarize themselves with her character. She inspired us – people who were unable to do efficiently and well – and she filled our dark minds with thirst for knowledge. She flied our souls from lowest point of misery to the peak of honor. She forever remains in our memories.[48]

All of her students and those who enjoyed her company learned wisdom first and then academic issues related to Qur'anic sciences. Her manners and lifestyle was the most impressive factor in appealing to her students.

Another one of her students says:

The first time I visited her, I was like a spiritually sick person. I deeply felt pain inside myself and I needed to see a qualified [spiritual] physician. Her sayings were effective treatments. That physician, gnostic, and theosophist diagnosed my illness very soon. As she herself said, the medicine prescribed by a physician is bitter, but the result – its cure – is sweet. I talked about my problems and she found out that I needed help. She had the power of insight, and through an in-depth look, she understood others' needs. Then, she suggested teaching Feyz Kashani's Haqayeq to me. She said, 'I have studied this

book several times and I think this would definitely work for you.' I accepted her suggestion and the class was started. Besides that book, she taught me The Spiritual Journey (Seyr wa Soluk), Morality (Akhlaq) and Resurrection (Ma'ad).

She also said, 'The understanding of resurrection originated from my own mind; I have not taken it from anywhere. I wrote what I myself have understood from it on paper.' If one day I did not go to her, she would send her servant to ask why I had not gone to see her, and I managed to go to her in any way I could. When her servant once came to me and said, 'The Lady has become sick and would like to see you,' I went to her, and she said, 'Recite the surah Fatihah [the chapter The Opening] for me!' I answered, 'I am not in a position to recite it for you!' She said, 'Recite it to make my heart bright!' I sat beside her bed, took her hand, and began to recite it seventy times. As I was reciting, I thought that I am not qualified to do so; after all, she taught mysticism and spirituality; she was a true monotheist. Suddenly, I glanced out the window. I took the trees to witness and implored God, 'O God! You know that all of these trees will bear testimony that this Lady has prayed so much to You.' Then I felt that all the trees were praising God. My body began to shiver and I told the Lady what I had seen. She sighed, put her hand on her heart and said that she felt well and calm. Then she recited the surah of Qadr from the Qur'an and got up and told me, 'Your heart is brightened to some extent. Be careful not to darken it. Follow your heart.'

She was very humble and wished to help everyone good-heartedly, to help people in thought, knowledge, and moralities. She emphasized on acquiring higher education with the intention of having knowledge complemented with action:

[One must acquire] knowledge accompanied with action, purified action together with enlightenment. If one's knowledge is not purified, it would make vanity and veil its possessor. For such a person, ascent is impossible and his fall is inevitable. She said: 'Purify your soul, since the Prophets (s) were sent for this.'[49]

Her lineage reached Imam Ali (a) after 30 fathers. She made efforts to establish the status and position of the family of the Prophet (s) in her talks, so much that her love for them is manifested in her work Makhzan al-La'ali fi Manaqib Mawla al-Mawali Ali (a).[50]

Banu Amin and Imam Khomeini

Banu Amin was a supporter and believer of Imam Khomeini and the Islamic revolution of Iran. Accordingly, one of her students said:

In 1359 SC (1980 CE) when she could not leave her house, she kept up with the news of the revolution. When Imam Khomeini spoke on the interpretation of the surah of Fatihah on television, she was captivated by his speech and lessons and asked me to bring his books for her to study them, which I later did. The next day, after she had read the books, she told me, 'The Imam's knowledge of God is at a

high level. If anyone wants to – God forbid – smear his reputation or insult him, tell that person on my behalf that a calamity awaits him. Beware! Do not ever – God forbid – insult him, since it is due to his great knowledge that he can do extraordinary things.' A goldsmith knows the value of gold, and a lapidist knows the value of gems.[51]

Likewise, Imam Khomeini respected Banu Amin, as he would ask about her at times. One of the seminarians in Isfahan says accordingly, "Now and then I went to visit the Imam and he asked about Lady Amin's health and work, and when I went to the Lady Banu's house, she would send her regards to him, and would pray for his health and success in achieving Islamic aims."[52]

Lady Amin's Works

Her works reflect her refined soul. According to a quote from one of her relatives, "She did not have any slip of the pen when she took pen to write" and this signifies unseen divine assistances to her. She wanted to remain unknown and signed her books with the pen name of "Iranian Lady" or "Isfahani Lady." Her published works are as follows:

1. Arba'in al-Hashimiyyah

Her first valuable work in Arabic[53] includes forty hadiths in monotheism, Divine attributes, ethics, and religious rulings with philosophical, mystical, and jurisprudential themes. The book's accuracy motivated the scholars of Najaf and religious authorities to assess the Lady in the areas of fiqh, usul,[54] and other disciplines [mentioned in her book]. She passed all exams successfully and gained her the degree of ijtihad.[55]

2. Jami' al-Shitat

This book, compiled by Sheikh Murtada Mazahir, consists of Lady Amin's detailed answers to questions asked by scholars such as Muhammad Ali Qadi Tabataba'i, Sheikh Muhammad Taha Hindawi Najafi Zadeh and Sayyid Hasan Husayni.[56]

3. Ma'ad ya Akharin Seyr-e Bashar

This book, consisting of nine articles, pertains to the spiritual aspect that people inevitably encounter in the course of perfection to move towards the Hereafter and Resurrection.[57]

4. Nafahat al-Rahmanryyah fi al-Waridat al-Qalbiyyah

This book is about the mystical experiences of the author had in her journey towards Allah. In the Nafha (impression) no. 21 of this book, she states:

On the ninth night of the month of Muharram 1359 SC (1980 CE), I was sitting and thinking to myself as

to whether I love the world or not? How much do I love the world? And I was preaching to myself. Suddenly, an unseen voice told me, 'You love the world not because of the world, but because the world is a manifestation of the beauty and glory of God, the Exalted, and every corner of the world you look, you find your Beloved.' When I heard this, I found that my love for the world is not for the sake of it, but it is because the world is the place of emanation of the beauty and glory of God. Thus, I prayed God to bestow me a life long enough to see His beauty and glory, to hear His attributes from scholars, to speak of His beauty and glory for people, to write about His beauty and glory, to serve Him, and to wholeheartedly work to bring awareness to the people.

In Nafha, she stated, "Then, God granted me forty years to write a commentary on the Qur'an to guide people."[58]

Nafahat is her only book in Arabic among her books that have not been translated to Farsi. The reason for this is mentioned by one of her students:

She hesitated to give the book to anyone when she was alive, because it was about her own mystical experiences. I can remember that a woman had written a letter and asked for the book Nafahat (Impressions). She said, 'I fear to hand this book to everyone because they may falsely label me.' But eventually, she sent the book to that woman. After two months, a letter came from that woman which made her very sad. She told me, 'Do you see what happened? I am labeled a Sufi.

That is why I did not want to give the book to everyone.' That is why the book is not translated yet.

5. Akhlaq (Morality)

This book is a commentary on Ibn Miskiwayh's Taharah al-Akhlaq, a part of which has been translated and Lady Amin's comment about that part has been added to it as marginal notes. The book is both scholarly and practical.[59]

6. Tafsir Makhzan al-'Irfan

This book is a comprehensive commentary of the Qur'an published in 15 volumes in Farsi. After writing a commentary on the first two sections of the Qur'an, Lady Amin continued writing a commentary until the last section (the 30th juz') as she feared having a short life, and she finished that commentary near the end of her life. This way, this

noble mujtahidah became the only female exegete of the Islamic world who has written a complete commentary on the Qur'an from the beginning until the end.[60]

7. Ravesh Khoshbakhti va Towsiyeh beh Khaharan-e Imani

In this book, the meaning of happiness and prosperity and the way to achieve it has been clarified using

beneficial advice to sisters in faith. In doing so, she first explains the two elements of happiness, i.e. “comfort and health” and “mental health, free-mindedness, and peace of the soul” which are achieved by observing the two essential principles of “true beliefs and faith in the origin and the Hereafter” and “good moral conduct.” In this way, she explained the principles of religion. She ends the book with a discussion on entreating the Imams (a), fighting with superstitions and obsession, some advice to the sisters, privileges, characteristics and dignity of women, moral refinement, and principles of good conduct.[61]

8. Makhzan al-La’ali fi Manaqib Mawla al-Mawali Ali (a)

This book studies the virtues of Imam Ali (a).[62]

9. Seyr wa Suluk dar Rawish Awliya’ wa Tariq Seyr Su‘ada

This book discusses intuition, illumination and journey towards Allah. About finitude and perpetuity, Lady Amin mentions in a part of this book:

…unless you die from your self, you would not become eternal to Him; and unless you lose what you have, you would not enter the realm of divine; and unless you begin a very long journey with hope, you would not settle down in the dwelling of safety and calmness; unless you take the trouble of ascesis and worship, you would not achieve peace; unless you taste the bitterness of separation, you would not taste the sweetness of reunion; unless you extinguish the fire of your anger, you would not receive divine mercy; unless you be patient on hardships, you would not be pleased with the sweetness of eternal blessings; unless you abandon unreal natural pleasures, you would not become the beloved of God; you would become king of the kings if you wear the necklace of servitude; If you practice ascesis and depart towards God, you would reside in the closeness of God…[63]

The same theme is found in most of Lady Amin’s works, which mostly include advice on educational instructions and methods of self-purification, described in Seyr wa Suluk, regarding intuition and journey towards God. She explains the stages of the spiritual journey as follows:

The one who journeys towards God and is thirsty to reach closeness to Him must first fully struggle with the self by preventing it from pleasure-seeking, and fueling one’s carnal desires. He or she must also be

contented with what is necessary in this world and wear the necklace of obedience and servitude to God.[64]

In reply to the question, “What is the best jihad for women today?” Lady Amin answered:

Currently, the most important action of a woman is that they fight with their worldly temptations and pleasure- seeking soul regarding jewelry, clothes, and new fashions. Although this may seem difficult at the beginning, with practice, they soon will achieve spiritual excellence. In other words, the best jihad for

them is to modestly cover themselves.65

In a message to young women, she said, “Among the most significant attributes of women is modesty; so much so that the scholars of ethics have said: ‘The greatest dignity of women before the wise of the society is in their modesty.’”

Conclusion

In a generation infiltrated with mainstream figures that lure today’s adolescents and young adults to disregard true exemplars, Sayyida Nusrat Beygum Amin is a model of a woman in the modern era with remarkable accomplishments.

As an exceptional jurisprudent and theologian in the 20th century, she was given permission of ijtihad by scholars and in turn granted permission of ijtihad to imminent distinguished male and female scholars.

With her avid love for God as an incentive to study in a variety of disciplines to reach higher levels of spirituality and moral fineness, she was a prolific author in the fields of literature, Islamic law, Qur’anic interpretation, and ethics, and she demonstrated her sociopolitical activism in the movement against Reza Khan’s false propaganda.

Upon glancing at her lifetime of devoted service to Islam, she is indeed a role model people can apply to their modern lives.

1. A researcher graduate of Jami‘ah al-Zahra Seminary
2. Descendants of Imam Ali
3. In Islamic law: a scholar’s independent interpretation or use of reason to derive a rule of divine law from the Qur’an, hadiths, reason and scholarly consensus.
4. Solar Calendar
5. A female religious jurist, competent enough to apply private rulings in offering answers to legal questions.
6. Women’s Center for Cultural Studies, collection of articles and lectures of first and second congress of celebrating Sayyida Nusrat Amin, Center for Cultural study and research, 1374, p.
7. A woman who has performed the pilgrimage is titled as “Hajjiyyah.”
8. Nahid Tayyebi, Biography of the Iranian Lady, Sabequn publication, 1380, p. 26.
9. A man who has performed the pilgrimage is titled “Hajji.”
10. Mir Ma‘sum Hussayni Khatoon Abadi was a pious scholar from Isfahan. He passed away in 1155 (AH) and was buried near mausoleum of Aqa Muhammad Bid Abadi in Takht-e Fulad, Isfahan. It is said that Aqa Muhammad Bid Abadi saw a strange dream which proved spiritual greatness of Mir Ma’sum. Because of this reason, he wrote in his will to be buried near Mir.
11. Nahid Tayyebi, Ibid, p. 28; Naser Baqeri Bidhendi, Banuy-e Nemooneh, Jelweh hayi az Hayat-e Banuy-e Mojtahedeh Amin Isfahani, Qum, Islamic Office for Propagation, 1377, p. 29.
12. Ali Akbar Dehkhoda introduced the family of “Jenab-e Isfahani” as follows:

Jenab-e Isfahani

A: Abu Talib, son of Mirza Nasir who was a poet and calligrapher at the time of Sultan Hussein Safavi and the penman of the Supreme Court. (In Tadhkirah al-Qubur by Muslih al-Ddin Mahdawi, the date of his death is recorded as 1105 AH)

B: Fathullah, a poet who rose to the rank of supreme at the time of second Shah Tahmasb Safavi and was ordered by

Nader Shah and was killed by his order 10 years later (1146 or 1148). (Dehkhoda Dictionary, Tehran, Tehran University, vol. 3, p. 7861)

13. Women's Center for Cultural Studies, Ibid, p. 11; Sayyid Mostafa Hadawi (Shahir Isfahani), Yadnameh Sayyedeh Nusrat Amin, Isfahan, p. 9.

14. Nahid Tayyebi, Ibid, p. 32.

15. Ibid, p. 39; Women's Center for Cultural Studies, Ibid, p. 11.

16. Iranian Woman: Introduction to morals and happiness, Isfahan, Council for supporting families without a guardian, 1371, p. 5.

17. Interpretive and independent reasoning

18. Ayatullah Hajji Mir Sayyid Ali Najaf Abadi

19. Sayyid Mustafa Hadawi, Ibid, pp. 13, 14.

20. The founder of Qom Seminary.

21. Nasir Baqeri Bid-hendi, Ibid, p. 36.

22. Ibid, p. 36.

23. Sayyid Mustafa Hadawi, Ibid, p. 20.

24. Written on the 1st of Muharram al-Haram of 1358 AH [21st February, 1939 CE]

25. Entrusting Allah with the choice between two or more options.

26. Ibid, p. 22; Women's Office for Cultural Studies, Ibid, article of Muhammad al-Hasun, p. 296; Nahid Tayyebi, Ibid, p. 285; Naser Baqeri Bidhendi, Ibid, p. 141.

27. Naser Baqeri Bidhendi, Ibid, p. 36.

28. Iranian lady, Ibid, p.4.

29. 1272- 1353 AH [1856 – 1934 CE]

30. An expert in Islamic jurisprudence

31. Naser Baqeri Bidhendi, Ibid, p. 30.

32. d. 1384 AH [1964 CE]

33. Sayyed Mosleh al-Din Mahdawi, Seiri dar Tarikh-e Takht-e Foolad, Isfahan, Assembly of public libraries of Isfahan, p. 87.

34. Nahid Tayyebi, Ibid, p. 35.

35. 1294 – 1374 AH

36. Naser Baqeri Bidhendi, Ibid, p. 33.

37. d. 1352 AH [1934 CE]

38. Ibid, p. 34.

39. Nahid Tayyebi, Ibid, p. 35.

40. Naser Baqeri Bidhendi, Ibid, p. 35.

41. 1275 – 1362 AH [1859 – 1943 CE]

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid, p.35; Women's Office for Cultural Studies, Ibid, p. 14.

44. Sayyid Mustafa Hadawi, Ibid, pp. 13- 14.

45. Women's Office for Cultural Studies, Ibid, (Dr. Shabestari's speech), pp. 254-255

46. Ibid.

47. Lady Amin Isfahani, Rawesh-e Khoshbakhti, Isfahan, Muhammadi, p. 34.

48. Women's Office for Cultural Studies, Ibid, (speech of Ms. Ghazi), p. 158.

49. Ibid. pp. 162 – 163.

50. Muhammad Husayn Riyahi, Nazari bar Shakhsiyyat va Zendegi Banu Amin, Saheb Tafsir Makhzan al-Irfan, Ettela'at Daily, No. 20019, p. 7.

51. Majmu'ih Maqalat Farhangi Banovan, ibid., (Dr. Ghazf's Speech), p. 164.

52. Sayyid Mustafa Hadavi, ibid., p. 47, quoted from Hujjat al-Islam wa al-Muslimin Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani

53. Translated to Persian by Ms. Homayuni, her student.
54. Principles of fiqh.
55. Capability of making a religious judgment.
56. Ibid., Nasir Baqeri Bidhendi, p. 40.
57. Ibid., The Deputy of Research of The Center for Management of Seminaries for Sisters, pp. 38 – 57.
58. Office for Cultural Studies of Women, Ibid., p. 159.
59. The Deputy of Research of The Center for Management of Seminaries for Sisters, p. 58
60. Ibid
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid. p.59
64. Office for Cultural Studies of Women, Ibid., Ms. Zahra Shoja'i quoted from Seyr wa Suluk dar Rawish Awliya' wa Tariq Seyr Su'ada, p. 146.
65. i.e. their hair and the curves of their bodies.

Source URL:
https://www.al-islam.org/message-thaqalayn/vol-13-no-3-autumn-2012/lady-nusrat-beygum-amin-tayyebeh-cheraghi/lady-nusrat#comment-0