

The Significance and Status of Women in the Family: A Perspective from the Poetry of Parvin E'tesami The Importance and Position of Women in the Family: A Focus on the Divan of Parvin Etesami

Hadis Bagherinia¹ -  Farzaneh Dashti² 

- ¹ .PhD student, Islamic Revolution Political Studies Department, Shahid University, Tehran, Iran.
2. PhD in Political Science and Visiting Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Humanities, Payam Noor University, Abadan, Iran. Email: farzanehdashti30@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

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Contemporary literature offers a rich source of studies on the subject of women, and the poems composed by women in this field require much more attention. Parvin Etesami is one of the prominent poets who, in her poetry, expresses desires, shortcomings, inadequacies, and the need for society's attention to the valuable and significant position of women and family. This research, conducted through a descriptive-analytical method, focuses on determining the position of women in the poems of Parvin Etesami, demonstrating that, according to her, the only weapon for women's struggle against inadequacies, the restoration of their rights and achieving their proper position in society, as well as the advancement and growth of the family, is the pursuit of knowledge. In other words, by acquiring knowledge and raising awareness, women become capable and empowered to fulfil their roles more effectively. Overall, this article aims to explain and examine the position of women and the family in the poems of Parvin Etesami, a prominent contemporary poet

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Introduction

Literature serves not only as an aesthetic endeavor but as a vital, often more precise, historical record of a society's evolution. In the context of the Persian Constitutional Revolution and the subsequent era, the discourse surrounding women's rights became central to intellectual debate. While many poets addressed these issues, female poets provided an authentic, direct perspective, having lived the struggles they depicted. Parvin E'tesami, a prominent figure of this era, stands out for her profound commitment to redefining the role and dignity of women. Influenced by her intellectual upbringing and the modernizing trends of her time, E'tesami used her poetry to challenge the passivity of women and the structural biases of a patriarchal society. This study investigates E'tesami's vision for women, exploring her specific strategies for their effective presence within both the family unit and broader society, with a particular focus on the role of education.

Method

This research utilizes a descriptive-analytical approach to examine the *Divan* (collected poems) of Parvin E'tesami. The study is qualitative in nature, relying on library research, document analysis, and academic resources to assess the sociologically informed perspectives within her work. The research aims to answer a fundamental question: "What is Parvin E'tesami's strategy for women to achieve effective participation in the family and society?" The methodology involves analyzing key poems that address gender roles, motherhood, and the transformative power of knowledge, contextualizing these findings against the backdrop of the political and social conditions of the early 20th century in Iran.

Results

The analysis of E'tesami's poetry reveals several key themes regarding the status of women:

- **Knowledge as the Ultimate Empowerment:** Parvin posits that education is the primary "weapon" against inequality. She argues

that the intellectual and social inferiority of women is not an inherent trait but a result of illiteracy and structural exclusion. For Parvin, education is essential for a woman to reclaim her rights and perform her duties effectively.

- **The Woman as the “Pillar of the Home”:** E’tesami characterizes the woman as the beating heart of the family. She argues that a home without the presence and management of a woman is structurally unsound and lacks spiritual vitality. She frequently challenges the degradation of domestic work, asserting that home management requires as much wisdom, strategy, and judgment as any public or judicial office.
- **The Sacred Archetype of Motherhood:** Motherhood is the most prominent role in her poetry. E’tesami transcends the biological definition of a mother, presenting her as the primary educator and moral compass for future generations. She asserts that all great men—philosophers, heroes, and scholars—are products of their mothers’ upbringing.
- **Equality and Complementarity:** While maintaining a respect for traditional Iranian-Islamic values, E’tesami advocates for a relationship of equality between spouses. She views the woman not as a submissive entity, but as a partner whose intellectual and emotional contribution is vital to a successful society.
- **Critique of Imitation:** E’tesami warns women against shallow imitation of Western lifestyles, advising that true progress lies in character, virtue, and knowledge rather than external adornment.

Conclusion

Parvin E’tesami’s poetry offers a compelling manifesto for the intellectual and social advancement of women. She successfully bridges the gap between traditional expectations and modern requirements, arguing that the elevation of women is the prerequisite for the elevation of society. Her strategy is rooted in the belief that an educated, self-aware mother is the architect of future leaders. E’tesami’s work elevates the status of the Iranian woman from a marginalized “second sex” to a central figure of cultural and social authority. This study concludes that her timeless contribution lies in her ability to integrate the sanctity of the family with the necessity of social agency, providing a roadmap for women’s empowerment that remains relevant today.