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Research Article

The Hegemony of Feminist Discourse in the International Human Rights System and Its Representation in the Critical View of the Martyr Leader of the Islamic Revolution on the Crisis of Women in the West

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Introduction

The claim of defending women's rights has become one of the primary focal points of human rights in international mechanisms since the adoption of the United Nations Charter in 1945. The objective of the international human rights system is to establish universal norms, with a particular emphasis on the three principles of "equality," "non-discrimination," and "prohibition of violence against women". However, the fundamental question that arises is whether these principles are neutral and universal norms or whether they have been transformed into instruments of Western discursive hegemony (feminism). The objective of this investigation is to address this inquiry and elucidate the correlation between the critiques of the Martyr Leader of the Islamic Revolution (Ayatollah Khamenei) concerning the status of women in the West and these three principles. The primary hypothesis of the study is that these three principles are not inherently hegemonic; rather, they have been transformed into tools of hegemony as a result of the monopoly of interpretation in Western-centric institutions, selectivity in implementation, politicization of human rights institutions, and the rejection of alternative cultural-religious interpretations. The critiques of the Martyr Leader are not a negation of the essence of these principles from this perspective; rather, they are a critique of their hegemonic interpretation and selective application.

Literature Review

This review of the existing literature demonstrates that published works can be assessed in two primary categories: The initial category encompasses works that have conducted a critical or comparative analysis of women's rights in regional and international human rights systems, either in their entirety or in detail. The second category comprises works that have investigated the position of women within the thought system of the Martyr Leader of the Revolution. These works have primarily concentrated on the positive effect of women on the realization of the "Third Model" and have disregarded the Martyr Leader of the Revolution's critical perspective on the status of women in the West. A review of the works reveals that, to date, no work has

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specifically and focusedly evaluated the critical approach of the Martyr Leader toward the principles of women's human rights. This research is innovative in two respects: The first step is to establish an analytical framework that allows for the identification of the "hegemonization" of a legal principle without undermining its normative essence. The second step is to systematically formulate the relationship between the three principles of the international system and the three critical interpretations of the Leader of the Revolution (captivity, objectification, and violence).

Research Method

The current research is based on library and documentary sources and was conducted using content and thematic analysis, as per the Braun and Clarke model. All human rights mechanisms, documents, and procedures of institutions associated with women's rights have been examined in the international dimension. All of the Martyr Leader of the Revolution's statements from 1987 to 2025 that contain the keywords "women in the West," "women's rights," "violence against women," "captivity of women," and "feminism" have been collected and thematically analyzed in relation to his views. Basic themes (textual codes), organizing themes (combined categories), and global themes (higher-order themes) have been extracted using this method. The research's conceptual framework is predicated on Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony. The application of his theory to international law entails that dominant actors establish interpretive frameworks in a manner that reflects their specific interests as universal values.

Research Findings

The findings are presented in two main sections:

1. The Mechanisms of Hegemony of Feminist Discourse in the International Human Rights System: The three principles of equality, non-discrimination, and prohibition of violence have been transformed into tools of hegemony through four mechanisms, as evidenced by the analysis of documents and procedures: A) Monopoly of interpretation in Western-centric institutions: The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is primarily composed of individuals from Western countries or those who have received legal training in Western countries. The General Recommendations No. 28 and 35 of this Committee have expanded discrimination to include "gender stereotypes" and violence to include "economic violence," which are in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of Islamic jurisprudence, including inheritance. B) Selectivity in implementation: Although certain states, such as the United States, have not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), they are perpetually exempt from monitoring. Conversely, Iran is more susceptible to accusations than any other state as a result of its non-accession and the application of reservations (double standard). C) Politicization of human rights institutions: The instrumentalization of human rights in accordance with American hegemony and the utilization of the phenomenon of "pinkwashing." D) The marginalization of the proposal of "gender justice" by defenders of religious rights at the Beijing Conference

(1995) and the labeling of cultural relativism as a tool for suppression: rejecting alternative cultural-religious interpretations.

2. The Martyr Leader's Critical Perspective on the Status of Women in the West: Three global themes were identified through thematic analysis of his statements: A) Objectification (commodification of women): The most frequently occurring critical axis, which refers to the transformation of women into instruments of sexual gratification and male sexual exploitation in the Western capitalist system, has resulted in the destruction of the family institution and moral values. B) Women's Captivity: A critique of the "masculinization" of women and their economic exploitation in the neoliberal system; the West has distanced women from their gender identity and transformed them into cheap labor by imposing masculine roles. C) Violence against women: This term encompasses physical violence (such as being beaten), psychological and structural violence (such as the imposition of beauty standards, forced nudity, prohibition of chastity and hijab, trafficking, and sexual trade), which are a consequence of sexual liberalism and the commodified view of women.

Conclusion

The research demonstrates that the prevailing interpretation of the three principles of human rights defines equality as "similarity" and disregards gender differences, non-discrimination as the extermination of any cultural-religious differentiation, and the prohibition of violence as the challenge to patriarchal structures. The Martyr Leader of the Revolution's critiques and the three principles of the international human rights system are not in "fundamental opposition" or "complete alignment," but rather in a "interpretive confrontation." His critiques pertain to the selective application and hegemonic interpretation of these principles. In other words, by citing the actual performance of the West, he demonstrates that these principles have in practice resulted in the "objectification of women," "violence against women," and "captivity of women." Consequently, the relationship between these two systems is a confrontation between the "dominant hegemonic interpretation" and the "alternative interpretation based on human dignity." This confrontation is not at the level of the principles' essence, but rather at the level of meaning, interpretation, and implementation.

Keywords: Equality, Feminism, International Human Rights System, Martyr Leader of the Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei (May God Sanctify His Pure Soul), Non-Discrimination, Objectification of Women, Prohibition of Violence.

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