Nooran Slams the Door: Women’s Day in Pakistan

Roha Rafique*
Department of English, University of Gujrat, India

*Corresponding author:
Roha Rafique, Department of English, University of Gujrat, Margzar College, Gujrat, India

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Opinion

The divided opinions on the “Aurat March” which was held on international Women day in Pakistan, has given me an opportunity to chip in the war of genders and provide a subversive stance which is neither about the right-wing or the left-wing. The name may have suggested that “Aurat March” (Women March) must be about the regular agenda of feminism to raise voices of women against the patriarchal society. But the social media riot on this march has again made us realise that so-called feminism is a never fathomable fluid. Men, as well as some women, have accused “Aurat March” for using vulgar and obscene placards such as “I didn’t come out of your rib rather You came out of my vagina” and “Don’t send me your dick pics”. These placards are thought to be against the moral values of our culture and religion. The women holding these placards are tagged as vile and corrupt women [1].

Yes, they can be called vile and vicious women, but they are the same wicked, selfish, manipulative women of Henrik Ibsen whose Nora in his play, The Doll’s House slams the door, leaving her loving children and husband behind, for she got fed up with the hypocrisy of her husband. Nora of Ibsen is traditionally considered a feminist character, and Ibsen is often viewed in the light of feminism [2]. But Ibsen himself strongly condemned it and openly claimed that he was not a feminist. Such controversial opinions come handy for the deconstruction of feminism. If Nora is not the symbol of feminism and freedom for the woman then why did she famously slam the door which stands as symbolically against the male society? The echoes of her slamming the door are still heard and feared. Just like the “Aurat March”, Nora's slamming of the door also erupted a violent controversy in the 19th century. People condemned her for leaving her children and compared her with Medea of Euripides who murdered her children. Medea was also not a born evil creature, she actually developed her “appetite for destruction” when she came in contact with the hypocrisy of her husband, Jason. She left everything for her husband, but he married another young woman. Jason was supposed to protect her and his children, instead he cared for his wishes and married another woman. Jason is the actual reason who provoked his wife's actions. He abandoned his values and Medea reciprocated. She was peeved at her husband and she became suicidal. Her suicide didn't harm herself but her most precious things. She harms her children to take revenge from the patriarchy. It is hard to call the murder of her children as suicide but one must understand that suicide is too personal and subjective. In killing yourself, you may kill your most precious things. Killing yourself ends your sufferings that may seem selfish in the eyes of others but killing your precious things means that you are opening a door of eternal sufferings which will never leave you at peace. You are choosing your own punishment because you are fed up by the torture, inflicted by others [3].

The comparison of aurat in the “Aurat March” is worst. Some people have called her terrorist militant. She is worse than the “selfish, frivolous, seductive, unprincipled, and deceitful” Nora of Ibsen. But in the rescue of Ibsen’s Nora many critics came up to defend her and pointed out the manipulation being done on her by the society where her father and husband tried to confine her to a doll’s house only. The opinion of Marvin Rosenberg has been rumbling in my mind since the controversy of “Aurat March” has been exploded on social media. Rosenberg agrees that Nora took the wrong decision by ignoring her “woman consciousness” and ignored her nurturing mother nature. She ran away and left her innocent children “in the hands of a monster to be distorted in the same way as she has been”. But here comes another perspective that can support the vile aurat of “Aurat March” as well, “Nora deserted her house, she was only demonstrating a final time how the male society had corrupted her values”. She was physically and psychologically suppressed and she prefers to betray as resistance. She alienated herself deliberately in order to rise up the power structure which is in itself a vain effort because the efforts of an individual, marginalized, and suppressed can challenge the power structures, but they can never dissolve it. Power is power
because it has won its discursive war long time ago. In the wake of these power challenges, I will like to call the aurat of “Aurat March” as Nooran (distorted from Nora of Ibsen according to Pakistani names) who slams the door and demonstrates her corrupted values which are imposed on her by the patriarchal society. Her placards are reminding us that all values are manifestation of male hypocrisy and since those who enforce these values, they can corrupt them as well, therefore, these values are questionable values just like Nietzsche announced that all values and morals are man-made and we need “revaluation of all values” and Dostoyevsky retorts notably, all values are man-made, therefore, “everything is permitted”. Yes, Nooran is permitted to hold the placards which are considered vulgar and obscene. Her (Man), the punisher has allowed her to “seek offence”. She is already being punished so why she should not look for troubles and crimes?

References