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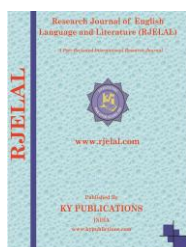
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DEMOLISHED WOMEN STRUGGLE TOWARD SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT: PERSIAN FOROUGH FARROKHZAD

RAFAT HAJIZADEH¹, FARZANEH HARATYAN²

¹PhD. English Department, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Islamshar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran Email: rft_hajizadeh@yahoo.com

²PhD. Assistant Professor, Department of Social Sciences, Garmsar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Garmsar, Iran Email: hartyan@gmail.com



ABSTRACT

This article intends to represent marriage as oppressive to women resulting from the gendered inequities which relegate one partner to immanence and the other to freedom and transcendence. Over the centuries, the theme of love amidst cultural and social traditions has been one of the most complicated issues of Iranian women, particularly female writers and poets. Women are required to function solely as wives and mothers engaged in domestic chores in the private sphere of home. Farrokhzad's speakers display what men offer the engaged woman is indeed not love but a life of immanence and repetition which confines her within the circle of herself. For Farrokhzad, love is one of the prominent elements of transcendence not only in her poetry but also in her own personal life, which considerably contributed to the construction of her poems. When the world seems trapped in immanence, love is also impossible to find a way to transcendence of the individual. There is always a specific space in her poetry in order to establish the wish and urge for a transcendent love. Although rejecting social ideals and conventional standards become another obstacle in the path of the feminine individual to self-transcendence, the alienation of the individual as the consequence of their decision has not stopped Farrokhzad from exposing how women have been oppressed through the traditional description of love and marriage. Beauvoir's notions of transcendence and immanence applied to this study show the traces of oppression of one gender and empowering the Other. Marriage enables men to have extensive opportunities for transcendence and pleasure. Traditional forms of marriage afford men to produce, create and attain advances while sustain women to life at home, Beauvoir emphasizes that life of a woman indicates the marginalized and victimized immanence. Therefore, the more the poet was struggling to face the passive, defined expectations of conventional society in her early poetry, the more able she becomes in overcoming those sufferings in her later poetry. For she is a free, transcendent feminine individual establishing her identity based on her own individuality not what male-dominated culture has defined for her. Criticizing women's condition in the patriarchal society, Farrokhzad sees women as the victim of a system that relegates them in the realm of passivity and immanence. They suffer themselves as a victim of that system and felt alienated.

Key Words: Farrokhzad, Freedom, demolished, freedom, oppressed women, victimized, transcendence, immanence

On the day when it will be possible for woman to love not in her weakness but in her strength, not to escape herself but to find herself, not to abase herself but to assert herself—on that day love will become for her, as for man, a source of life and not of mortal danger. (Simone De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 669)

Introduction

Love is giving without expectation for something in return. Neither party should sacrifice anything. For love to proceed, women should transcend themselves by giving up their immanence and gaining transcendence in a reciprocal relationship with their lovers. Beauvoir acknowledges that through mutual understanding, both man and woman can transcend. According to Beauvoir:

Genuine [that is, authentic] love ought to be founded on the mutual recognition of two liberties; the lovers would then experience themselves both as self and as other: neither would give up transcendence, neither would be mutilated; together they would manifest values and aims in the world. For the one and the Other, love would be revelation of self by the gift of self and enrichment of the world. (SS 667)

The poems of Forugh Farrokhzad are analyzed in terms of the way love and marriage is depicted. It is discussed how love and marriage act as emancipatory that women cling to gain self-consciousness, freedom, and ultimately transcendence; how love and marriage enact and maintain women or female personas into immanence; how female speakers resist against this subordination, enslavement, and immanence caused by love and marriage; how both male and female react to love and the significant differences between them; and finally, the way Farrokhzad diverge or converge in her depiction of the above-mentioned angles of love and marriage in her poems.

In the course of analysis of the poems, focusing on Beauvoir's concept of transcendence and immanence, love from different angles such as

feminine, masculine, self and other, and sexuality, it also provides clues of how her conceptualization of these themes are responded by Sartre's notion of universal love, absolute freedom and absolute being, and Irigaray's intersubjective relationship of wonder.

Complexity of Love: Rejecting Traditional Standards

Transcendence of the feminine individual requires one to analyze and refuse socio-cultural conventional lifestyles, to make a decision about being out of limitations of immanence, and to invent her own identity in the outside world considering her own individuality and feminine standards rather than the fixed male-centered culture. However, rejecting social ideals and expectations becomes another obstacle in the path of transcendence of the female individual. This article, intends to analyze Forugh Farrokhzad's love poems as the representatives of complexity of traditional patriarchal standards that constrain feminine individual. Simone De Beauvoir illustrates the concepts of feminine and masculine love according to socio-cultural norms in the society:

Men have found it possible to be passionate lovers at certain times in their lives, but there is not one of them who could be called 'a great lover'; in their most violent transports, they never abdicate completely; even on their knees before a mistress, what they still want is to take possession of her; at the very heart of their lives they remain sovereign subjects; the beloved woman is only one value among other; they wish to integrate her into their existence and not to squander it merely on her. For woman, on the contrary, to love is to relinquish everything for the benefit of a master. As Cecile Sauvage puts it: 'Woman must forget her personality when she is in love. It is a love of nature. A woman is non-existent without a master. Without a master she is a scattered bouquet.' (SS 608)

Beauvoir investigates women's oppression through the concept of love in her theories of transcendence and immanence. She asserts that love never embodies the same meaning and significance for

men and women and that is why it brings about serious misinterpretations and misunderstandings between the two sexes. Farrokhzad wears the mask of love to condemn the restricted conventions of womanhood and wifehood which block her path toward transcendence and perpetuate her passive domestic status in the sphere of immanence. Her poems illustrate that male-centered tradition do not only stereotype women as soft, obedient and dependent constrained in the realm of immanence, but also serve to inhibit them from expressing her love.

Fallaciously normalized socio-cultural constraints actively serve to further the subjugation of the individuality and independence of women. "In frustrating women, by depriving them of all erotic satisfaction, in denying them liberty and individuality of feeling, marriage leads them toward adultery by an inevitable and ironical dialectic" (SS 524). As such, her portray marriage as being a snare that traps a woman's life and subdues her independent individuality. To quote Suzanne Juhasz (1976), women are caught in a "double-bind" paradox: when they deviate from the social clichés of "angels," they are seen as "unwomanly" (2). To be constrained in the mere role of a wife will render women powerless and unable to break away from the male that governs the fast bounds of marriage.

This article attempts to maintain that in Farrokhzad's poetry, patriarchal ideology not only represents women as immanence and men as transcendence in expressing issues of love and sexuality but also prescribes power relations between men and women through traditional marriage. The speaker in Farrokhzad gives voice to conventional ideological marriage which determines the husband as the dominant, authorized self and the wife as the passive, silent, non-resistant and submissive other, hence there is a performance in marriage institution which is naturalized in the course of socio-cultural value construction and tradition. Specific social restrictions of gender inequities, sexual orientation and politics re-enforce women's imprisonment in the passive roles of immanence.

To oppose this "double-bind" dilemma and to criticize "womanhood" as immanence, Farrokhzad, in her depiction of love and marriage in poetry, challenge the conventional confinement of the social expectation of "womanhood" and "wifehood." Beauvoir also ridicules and questions the traditional "soft" and "submissive" femininity and fiercely denounces marriage as an obstacle and frustrating bond. In their creative process, Beauvoir as a woman philosopher and Farrokhzad as a women poet construct a female individual that defies the social and literary convention of femininity which doom women to the duties of immanence and hinder their ways to creativity and transcendence.

Farrokhzad's Concept of Love: An Impediment to Feminine Self-Realization

Over the centuries, the theme of love amidst cultural and social traditions has been one of the most complicated issues of Iranian women, particularly female writers and poets. The most common criticism of Iranian feminist poetry is due to common misunderstandings, the one-sided nature of sexual norms, and the dogged inability to accept this poetry on its own terms. A general excuse given for such limiting criticism is that too much consideration is given to sensual and erotic themes. Male-dominated criticism drawing from male-based beliefs and meanings regards Farrokhzad's poems insignificant as she dares to express the sexual pleasures in detail. It is a long-established field of criticism. While there has been little limitation for male writers to speak about their sexual experiences, for female writers not only in Iran but in most developing Asian countries it is still taboo, despite the fact that people in the West are being overwhelmed by all sex-related issues.

Only a small group of women have succeeded in escaping from being completely forgotten among which are the female Iranian poets Tahereh Korratel'ayn (1819 - 1852), Alam Taj Zhaleh Qa'em Maqami (1884 - 1946), Parvin E'tesami (1907 - 1941), Parvin Dowlatabadi (b. 1922), Simin Behbahani (b. 1927), Lo'bat Vala Shaybani (b. 1930), Mahin Sekandari (b. 1940), Frough Farrokhzad (1935 - 1967), and Tahereh

Safarzadeh (b. 1936). Analysis of literary works in Iran is an established male dominion. The works of female poets have been unjustly overshadowed or disinterestedly misunderstood. Gender-biased assumptions reinforce patriarchal culture to oppose female poetry with its own individuality. Male-centered tradition rarely has responded to the women's creativity with sensitive souls who are on a self-quest for inspirations and individuality.

Gilbert and Gubar's *Mad Woman in the Attic* (1979) discusses how women writers are suffering from the anxiety of authorship in the male-dominated city as they control the voice of women. Women fear writing and creation for then they are ridiculed by men as being unfeminine. They are confined in a desperate zone where they earn contentment only by serving men as Freidan's *The Feminine mystique* (1963) claims women are imprisoned in the socio-culturally constructed gender roles and stereotypes as goddesses of sex and beauty and there is no guilt or shame if a woman wants to pursue her goals. Cixous, in *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1981), also discusses that *Écriture féminine* is heavily influenced by history of silences which if explored can transform phallogocentric social structures and free women.

What has been attributed to female poets and writers is essentially disturbing, but the great consideration such as time, space and quality, has devoted toward male writers and poets. Indeed the history of Persian literary works is filled "not only with contributions of many unacknowledged poets but also with painful silences that speak of the systematic attrition of female literary talent" (Milani 1985, 23). Hence, the predominant critical passages in the reading of women's poetry indicate a severe misunderstanding. The rejection of female poets led to a diminishing number of poets among whom only very limited ones survived as exceptions and unusual phenomenon. As Gubar and Gilbert (1979) were concerned, the male were dominating the pen and the press and the whole power of voice.

Farrokhzad is assumed to be a clear case in this point. Raya Abbasi the Iranian scholar asserts that "In singing of love, Farrokhzad is the most skillful poet" (Abbasi 2001, 200). Her love is human,

not divine. "For woman, love is a supreme effort to survive by accepting the dependence to which she is condemned [...]" (SS 668). Farrokhzad's general description of modern love is that "today people measure love by means of the clicking of their clocks, by writing it down in their notebooks to be respectable, by writing rules for it [...]. But the feeling which is within me is different; it forges me and makes me perfect, I know" (Tahbaz 1997, 31). Farrokhzad has had the audacity to explicitly display her sensuality and desire for genuine love. Love for Farrokhzad is exalted, pure, natural, and a cause for growth. It is a source of transcendence, joy, and creativity.

In 1955, Farrokhzad's first collection of poems, *Captive*, was published embodying a female speaker who stays lovely, sociable, outstanding, and a demanding, speaking, caring and fun-loving throughout the poem. Seemingly nature images are fused with love and the giving. The speaker fantasizes her moods: inspiration, alienation, sorrow, doubt, regretfulness, happiness, pleasure, and sometimes fantasy. According to Farrokhzad, love is essential for a woman as it brings heart aches along with satisfaction toward the course of moving from immanence to transcendence.

She wishes for fusion, unification, or reciprocity based on friendliness. Yet the unification is one-sided: she merges into her. "She is another incarnation of her loved one, her reflection, her double: she is *he*. She lets her own world collapse in contingency, for she really lives in him" (SS 653). The female always experiences the self as Other, as object. Her erotic experience has always been an experience of passivity, of immanence as she was alienated from her body through objectification, pregnancy, and menstruation (SS 62); therefore, as Firestone in *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970) asserts, she is forced to lose her agency, autonomy and individuality and gains solidarity *with* and *through* men. As independent individuals engaged in transcendence, Farrokhzad's speakers do not set their values on the society's expectations and are not concerned with the society's approval of their behavior. When Farrokhzad talks about love as it is an important approach toward transcendence, she "shows a strong feminine feeling. She is a woman

that sees herself well when she is in love and regrets that she has not been before in love in such way" (Dastghaib 2001, 83). Ignoring the conventional social expectations of marriage, Farrokhzad's speakers never conform to the traditional forms of marriage and stand against society's notions of perfect woman.

To Irigaray, "transcendence is thus no longer ecstasy, leaving the self behind toward an inaccessible total-other, beyond sensibility, beyond the earth. It is respect for the Other whom I will never be, who is transcendent to me and to whom I am transcendent" in other words, she expresses that I am able to go toward transcendence while remaining myself, without mistaking transcendence as spirit or soul. But since I will never reach the Other, he or she forces me to remain myself, thus retaining and respecting the differences between us (*I Love To You*, 104). As Milani the Iranian scholar asserts, "Farrokhzad not only had the audacity in poetry, but also the tenacity to act them out in life" (Milani, 1985, 124). In an interview with Saedi and Tahbaz, Farrokhzad declares:

I believe in being a poet in all moments of life. Being a poet means being human. I know some whose daily behavior has nothing to do with their poetry. Then it is finished and they turn into greedy, indulgent, oppressive, short-sighted, miserable, and envious people. Well, I cannot believe their words. I value the realities of life and when I find these gentlemen making fists and claims – that is, in their poems and articles – I get disgusted. (Milani 1985, 124)

There has always been a particular place for love in the poetry of Farrokhzad as she double emphasizes on its role toward emancipation and transcendence. As a matter of fact, the theme of love sits comfortably and consistently in the center of her poems as an essential and inseparable constituent that evolves from her early to later poetry. Her poetry writing carrier does not simply deal with love as the concept of being sensuous but a distinct from of socio-historical dictation. She deliberately ignores the enforced normalized rituals

that consider woman's depiction of bare love as taboo. As a consequence of male-centered culture that reasons a denial of a feminine world; Farrokhzad's love poems contribute to a misinterpretation which constrains Farrokhzad's intuition as it is occupied mostly with the sexual desires that leads to the sense of one-dimensional love. "She is not spared such critical misinterpretation – her work either hastily assigned a single interpretation or subjected to biased approaches leading to overworked generalities" (Milani 1982, 118). Farrokhzad's early poetry manifests an entirely novel, healing, invigorating, and straight-forward examination of love particularly feminine one. *The Wall* published in 1956, a year after *Captive* (1955), is all about the portrayal of love. Love is a defiance or rebellion against the walls of immanence; far beyond a personal expression of union with a beloved. She expresses the tense and competitive nature of sex, the emptiness of a purely physical relationship. In these poems, Farrokhzad's dealing with love has a ground-breaking nature that demands transformation to be in control with women's emotional requests.

She seeks genuine love and not merely sexual adventures and erotic escapades. Hillmann states that "[Farrokhzad's poetry is about] love moments, wishful thinking about love, lover's complaints and the like. A woman's love for a man that makes the heart ache and that can satisfy all needs" (Hilman 1987, 29 and 16). Love is no more than a dimension of everyday struggles and emotions that are the ordinary focus of her poetry. According to Sartre, lovers can *never* become one for they come from very different backgrounds and personalities. There can never be a coherent fitting without friction or grinding as every individual demand self-assertion and self-definition (Sartre 1984, 474 and 475). In "Sorrow of Loneliness" (F CP 120), the poet expresses the despair in love:

After him, what is there to look for?
After him, what is there to stay for?
I look for a cold tear to shed
I look for a warm grave as a bed. (36-40)

Although *The Wall* is an expression of love as much as *Captive* is, the emphasis shifts from a woman's plight in passivity and immanence as an individual in *Captive* to her sense and state of captivity in *The Wall*. It is the exposition of gendered-biased passivity and immanence imposed upon women that relegates them to captivity and immanence. According to Sartre, love finally fails to be profitable as it may end with masochism when one is trapped in immanence and suffers as an object or the so-called slave for the Other. She restlessly tries to convince the Other that she is worthy of love but this causes self-damage or masochism (Sartre 1984, 517). In *Captive* Farrokhzad's speaker mainly experiences "the nature of love, not just idealized love but sexual intimacy and romantic enjoyment" (Zubirrazeta 1992, 421). In "Farewell" (Farrokhzad 2001, 81) she expresses her disappointment in physical love:

By God I was a happy blossom
The hands' of love came to pick me from
the branch
I became the flame of sighs, alas
That my lips didn't reach yours. (17-20)

In her early poetry, Farrokhzad's speaker is satisfied and fulfilled by expressing love and sensuality yet it becomes a primary source of immanence, pain and disappointment as it does not fit the conventional standards and norms that constrains women in immanence. "A woman passionately in love usually strives to unite with a sovereign subject to whom she has attributed the highest value. If she effaces herself totally before her, her attitude of love shifts to masochism" (Lundgren-Gothlin 1996, 200). It is masochistic because on losing him, she thinks she has lost all her values and self-worth. Once locked into love, a woman cannot escape due to financial and psychological reasons. Later in the path of love, she concludes that he is not the god she assumed as he is flawed, mediocre, and far less than absolute. On her awareness and consciousness, she wins the game and destroys her idol. As a feminine individual who seeks for transcendence of her own individuality, she is not content to establish her standards based on patriarchal culture yet tradition is observed as essential constraint for the individual's path to transcendence.

The sphere of action opens to her is ordained by the social role expected of and available to her, since she has internalized the standards of her restrictive society, and since her true capacity and potential have remained for the most part unrealized, the young Frough must focus all expectations on love." (Milani, 1982, 121)

Most poems of *Captive* (1955), as the earliest ones, have a special boldness in expressing love and sensuality. No female poet had the courage to write about these types of subjects during that time. This is what gives Farrkhozad's works its uniqueness for she was successful in smashing all the constraining immanence imposed women through her poems conforming this characteristic of Farrokhzad's works Karachi in *Frough A Melancholy Rebel* (1997) points out that "*Captive* is the product of the intensity of an adolescent girl's emotions in a traditional society that love has given her courage which is a prominent feature toward transcendence" (93). For example, in "The Bitter Myth" (F CP 83), men are portrayed as physical creatures led only by their sexual desires:

Nobody spoke to her but of lust
No one saw in her but for satisfaction
Anywhere she went she was told
Woman is created for men desires. (17-20)

Irigaray, in *I Love To You* (1995), theorizes love in terms of social relations instead of a focus on genital sex. For Sartre, touching and caressing are modes of seduction; for Irigaray, touching invites teaching—wisdom—on how to continue becoming so that the lovers can approach each other in wonder. Sartre can only see pleasure as an act of power. For Irigaray, [t]he caress is a gesture of freedom and "integrity" between two subjects creating a relationship between the two. The caress is a "reciprocal gesture capable of bringing about an awakening to another level of intersubjectivity" (*Why Different*, 2000, 165). The speaker is torn between the traditional demands of a woman and the desire for her own freedom and the freedom of others, to reach to transcendence she desires. She yearns for a time when women will get the chance to take advantage of a broad and considerable range of social activities and transcendence. The poems in

this period are filled with the senses of oppression and rage which provides the poet's courage to be outspoken. In *The Wall* (1956) and *Rebellion* (1958), the concept of transcendence and independence is clearly evident. She is totally critical of her own life and desires to escape immanence where a limited life is imposed on her. She says: "I wanted to be a woman; that is, a human being. She is denied of the very basic desire of being treated as a human being. I wanted to say that I have the right to breathe and cry, but others wanted to silence my cries on my lips and my breath in my heart" (Tahbaz, 1997, 78).

Sartre's sadistic concept of love occurs when one tries to subjugate the Other and achieve his own goals and prioritizing his issues of transcendence by demanding the Other's to give up her self and freedom (Sartre 1984, 512). In the struggle between social conventions and personal perspectives, Farrokhzad chooses the latter. In describing Farrokhzad's early poetry, Milani puts emphasis on how Farrokhzad speaks of:

[A]lienation rather than communication, of loneliness rather than gratification, of constraint rather than freedom. For every successful love affair there are several bitter and agonizing experiences. Poems lamenting the despair of love far outnumber the ones celebrating its joy [...] her discontent and dissatisfaction with her failure to reconcile the demands of relationships with her desire for independence and autonomy. The outcome is a keen portrayal of the psychological and social trap in which she finds herself and the poisonous effects of rigid social codes on human relationships. (Milani 1982, 122)

Farrokhzad on the platform of poetry writing completely grew and developed mentally and emotionally. She started her poems while trapped in immanence and gradually progressed toward maturity and understanding. With her mental growth and maturity, the theme of her poems also enhanced with far significant insights which vividly expressed her journey from immanence to transcendence. Her poetry though courageously displays erotic concept of love, is the only approach

for the poet's fulfillment and the only channel for her transcendence. Her first three collections illustrate failed love affairs and fragmented unions. But the desperation of love in her early poetry gives way to hope in her later poetry. Undoubtedly most of the poems in *Let Us Believe in the Beginning of the Cold Season* (1974) and *Another Birth* (1965) are best examples for modern Persian poetry which symbolizes the most enthusiastic and delicate love poems shattering the male-constructed paradigms of female-confinement.

Milani (1982) believes that "The need for love and relationship with men remains a focal theme in Farrokhzad's poetry to her last day" (122). Beauvoir notes that "the woman in love feels endowed with a high and undeniable value; she is at last allowed to idolize herself through the love she inspires. She is overjoyed to find in her lover a witness" (SS 612). There is a broad perspective and much growth in her later poetry in which she no longer explores the "self" in relationships and approaches love from a multidimensional point of view that is the result of change, transcendence and self-awareness. Moreover, she explores her sensuality, sense of love and identity. According to Irigaray in *This Sex Which Is Not One* (2001), on the other hand, love brings self-consciousness as a female self gains self-awareness in the presence of the Other, a form of knowing shaped switching back and forth between self and Other where no mutual recognition takes place. Irigaray asserts that man has always seen woman as the Other, but more importantly, it is *his* other, "and not as Otherness, as difference in her own right" (208). Farrokhzad sees freedom in the union with the Other and depicts the innocence of human beings. In these poems, love is not guilt-ridden and oppressed but liberated.

It is not a question of loose bond between
two names

Or copulation the worn out pages of a
registry

I am speaking about my fortunate hair
With the feverish poppies of your kisses
[...]

It is the question of the life of a silvery chant

Sings by a little fountain at dawn. ("Conquest of the Garden," 16-19, 23-24)

In her late poetry, she is gradually liberated from an earlier sense of victimization, alienation and immanence. She doesn't want to perform conventional roles prescribed for women by the society. What the speaker desires is "a roof over her head, walls that prevent her from feeling her abandonment in the wide world, authority that protects her against her liberty" (SS 611), because she has discovered that commitment to poetry requires an independent life-style rejecting conventional roles of immanence. She comes "as close as she ever came to complete harmony with her inner compulsions toward personal, social and artistic freedom" (Zubirrazeta 422). She repeatedly in her poems questions the patriarchal enforced ideologies and conventions that treat women ruthlessly.

It is not a question of terrified whisper in darkness

It is a question of day light and open windows
And fresh air

[...]

And a land fertilized for cultivation of new seeds

And birth and evolution and pride. (39-41, 43-44)

There is a marked shift in Farrokhzad's literary life, a desire to break away from old conventions and what Beauvoir calls immanence that "bear[s her] up and lead[s her] gently and lovingly toward perfection" (SS 611), which is not as easy as it appears to be in her poetry. "Despite their victimizing nature, these conventions had deep roots in the poet's existence and prevented her from pursuing her career as a poet with ease of mind" (Mannani 2001, 60). Her anti-patriarchal poetry sets forth themes and issues that did not exist in Persian literature until that time. In classical literature, female writers are expected to be unassuming, write didactic and modest poetry, and employ a poetic character similar to the masculine character of classical literature. As their poems were evaluated with masculine standards and parameters, they had to conform to their style and features of writing otherwise their poems remained

unknown and constrained to immanence; nonetheless, they were isolated from their own identity in their poems that bitterly struggled to gain freedom of transcendence.

Female poems were demanded social conformity controlled by masculine rules and principles extended to all walks of their lives. They were expected to be passive, simple and humble as socio-cultural structures desired even though they were not genuine and real representative of feminine values. Therefore, reading a female poem simply revealed the imposed features of male governed pressures; hence, Farrokhzad's success in expressing her true and honest self to the reader caused controversy over her poetry. Her activist poetry differs dramatically from the conventional. In her explicit and unconventional style, she displays her feelings, desires and ideas which push her toward transcendence and individuality.

Perhaps it is her feminine voice in relating forbidden subjects that makes her poetry rebellious. Some of the aforementioned female poets have also discussed similar taboo topics in their poems but were not silenced as occurred to Farrokhzad because they employed a masculine tone and language rather than a feminine voice. Unlike traditional poetry in which love and sexuality are expressed through metaphors and figurative symbols, Farrokhzad's poetry is filled with delicately vivid and frank images, which makes her poetry unique among her contemporaries. "The erotic experience is one that most poignantly discloses to human beings the ambiguity of their condition; in it they are aware of themselves as flesh and as spirit, as the Other and as subject" (SS 402). He can do anything he wants to do as she is always serving him. If she leaves, he can move on. She, however, cannot do so because she has already dedicated her life to him.

Feminine love regards love for its own sake though masculine love is mostly concerned with sex. Love, for Irigaray, does not entail a sexual relationship. Irigaray asserts that lovemaking through sexual difference does not entail an acknowledgement of corporeality in both partners, but a kind of love that could redevelop the whole

culture (*I Love To You* 1995). As is seen in "My Lover" (F CP 415) a big gap is bridged between classical Iranian poetry and the present world of Farrokhzad's time.

My lover, with that brazen bare body
 Stood on his mighty legs
 Like death
 Vibrant Slanting lines
 Follow his rebellious limbs
 In their strong design
 My lover
 As if belongs to forgotten generations
 As if a tartar
 Is in constant ambush of a horse rider
 In the depths of his eyes
 Is transfixed from the warm blood of a prey
 As if a barbarian
 In the fresh flash of his teeth
 My lover, has a frank inevitable meaning like
 nature
 He confirmed the honest rule of power by
 overcoming me. (1-21)

Here as Beauvoir acknowledges, cultural definitions and traditional masculine interfere with the individual's standards and challenge women's attempt to transcend the limits of embodiment and immanence which constrains women's positions in assumed gender roles. Gender and the attribution of specific features to it is thoroughly a false construct that is devised by patriarchal structures. Farrokhzad's speaker who was affected by exalted interpretation of masculine values describes her lover's "brazen bare body" and praises his potential and strength and associates him with the classical heroes of the Iranian epic such as (Ferdosi's *Shahnameh*).¹ In so doing, she does explicitly

¹The Epic of *Shahnameh* (*The Epic of Kings: Hero Tales of Ancient Persia*) created by Hkimi AbdolAbdol-GhasemFerdosiToosi (940 - 1020) World famous Iranian poet. *The Shahnameh* is one of the definite classics of the world. It tells hero tales of ancient Persia. The contents of the poet's style in describing the events takes the reader back to the ancient times and makes he/she sense and feel the events. Ferdowsi worked for thirty years to finish his masterpiece. An important feature of this work is that during the period Arabic language was known as the main language of science and literature Ferdowsi used

exemplify traditional roles of hero, with the uneasy design of his "rebellious limbs." In this part of the poem, the man symbolizes classical masculinity as the beloved. Here he "stands [...] on mighty legs" and the speaker with her explanation reminds us that her lover is connected to classical masculinity.

She also continues that he "belongs to forgotten generations, as if a brute Berber is transfixed from the warm blood of a prey in the fresh flash of his teeth" (12-17). But it seems the last three lines of the above stanza are the most ambiguous section of the poem which make it difficult for the feminist critics to fully examine the issue addressed unless in terms of condemnation. Milani declares that "the 'beloved' in this poem transcends sexual roles ascribed by literary tradition" (Milani 1992, 140-141). However, here the speaker emphasizes that her lover overcomes her by the law of power which is the prominent feature of glory and transcendence for men as the power shuns fear associated with immanence. The speaker "hopes that he will give her at once the possession of herself. [...] she asks her lover first of all for the justification, the exaltation, of her ego, [...] sometimes the love shown traditionally [her] is enough to arouse [her] love" (SS 611). Beauvoir discusses how women justify their behavior in chapter eleven titled as "The Woman in Love" in *The Second Sex* and disagrees with Sartre's ideology concerning love where women's happiness is controlled and recognized as part of a man which in fact imprisons women in their immanence.

Women idealize love and view their beloved as an absolute god who gives them a sense of meaning and being. They are enslaved, alienated and objectified by sacrificing themselves to him. Women observe love as a religion and a necessity. Gothlin in "Simone De Beauvoir's Notions" (1999) emphasizes, "For Beauvoir, desire and the sexual union is not a sadomasochistic dialectic, but is more of a merging with the Other" (88). Women let

only Persian in his masterpiece. As Ferdowsi himself says "Persian language is revived by this work". "I am deadless, I am the eternal Lord/ For I have spread the seed of the Word" (*The Shahnameh*, 940 - 1020).

themselves to be possessed, dominated, and objectified through marriage which brings subordination and in-depth constraint in the immanence besides perpetuating patriarchal hegemony. The woman transfers her transcendence onto her lover in order to preserve it. Beauvoir's "woman in love" depicts the woman as submissive to her man when she gives her transcendence to him. Debra Bergoffen looks at Beauvoir's idea and asserts and interprets that "[t]he conditions of the couple require that men, against the patriarchal myth, be recognized as contingent, and that women, in opposition to patriarchal gendering, be recognized as transcendent. These conditions, if realized, would undo the power of the modern romantic myth" ("Simone De Beauvoir" 2003, 199). As clearly seen that gender is a "social artifact," through which the individual could fluidly act out of his/her gender. The physical, biological body as a matter of socio-cultural constructs of gender is under huge influence of what Judith Butler's performativity suggests and therefore associates the gender performances with praise or contempt engaged in transcendence or immanence.

Conclusion

In illuminating the underling structures of oppression, the concept of traditional love and marriage as defined by male-dominated tradition embodies the division between masculine transcendence and feminine immanence. Although rejecting social ideals and conventional standards become another obstacle in the path of the feminine individual to self-transcendence, the alienation of the individual as the consequence of their decision has not stopped Farrokhzad from exposing how women have been oppressed through the traditional description of love and marriage. Beauvoir's notions of transcendence and immanence applied to this study show the traces of oppression of one gender and empowering the Other. Marriage enables men to have extensive opportunities for transcendence and pleasure (See SS Esp. 429-430, 447-448, 451, 454, 478 and 480), while harnessing any progress in female transcendence. Criticizing the traditional forms of marriage that affords men to produce, create and attain advances while sustain women to life at home,

Beauvoir emphasizes that life of a woman indicates the marginalized and victimized immanence.

Beauvoir observes marriage as oppressive to women resulting from the gendered inequities which relegate one partner to immanence and the Other to freedom and transcendence. Women are required to function solely as wives and mothers engaged in domestic chores in the private sphere of home. Farrokhzad's speaker displays what men offer the engaged woman is indeed not love but a life of immanence and repetition which confines her within the circle of herself. For Farrokhzad, love is one of the prominent elements of transcendence not only in her poetry but also in her own personal lives, which considerably contributed to the construction of her poems. When the world seems trapped in immanence, love is also impossible to find a way to transcendence of the individual. There is always a specific space in her poetry in order to establish the wish and urge for a transcendent love.

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