

Moroccan woman: realities and struggles

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Morocco has seen since its formal independence until today, many economic, social and political transformations that have deepened the class disparities between a minority who dominated everything and a large majority that has nothing or that has only bits.

The semi colonial and semi-feudal nature of Morocco defined the miserable situation of most of the masses in general and particularly thorough unequal status of Moroccan women in society.

The population in Morocco now are over 36 million residents, 51.7% are women, more than half. Despite this, women remain the most exploited and most oppressed in society despite demagogic and misleading discourse of the regime. This bad situation of Moroccan woman is the result of a long process of economic, social and political transformations in Morocco.

We will try through this intervention to present an image of this situation, analyse its causes and ways to overcome it. We will try, to explain how the contradiction between the great role of Moroccan women in social production and social oppression which it is subject, helped establish a women's movement that is growing constantly. And why the bourgeois women's movement has grown while the popular women's movement is still in its stage "primitive" despite the combative role of the women workers in the popular struggle.

I - The current situation of Moroccan women

I .1- Education

Despite the great speeches on the importance of human resources development and the need to reform the education system, the situation in education shows the role played by educational institutions in a semi feudal and semi colonial regime.

Morocco has seen just after formal independence, a strong trend in enrolment in scholarship dictated by the needs of the regime frameworks to build the structures of the state, after the end of the military and administrative colonist. The comprador bourgeoisie has a great need of an army of officials to manage state affairs.

Thus, a high rate of schooling of the masses was launched after the semi teaching was reserved for children of the bourgeoisie and notables. However, as soon as the building of the state was completed, a winding chain of public education, through numerous class plans, will start from 1965. Despite the role played by education public at that time, the rate of girls attending school remained very weak because of the dominance of feudal and patriarchal way of thinking within the Moroccan society. Since then and until today, the girls' enrolment rate has grown rapidly but one that remained very low compared to the enrolment of boys.

Thus, the number of women with no education is estimated at 6,788,472. Among them, there are 178,087 girls aged between 15 and 24 and 208,090 between 25 and 34 years. The number of girls studying in primary and secondary is about 5,902,320 girls while the number of girls who manage to enter university is about 588,320.

Regarding rural girls, the figure drops to about 20 173 against 61 683 boys, about a third of these (32.70%). The situation is even worse if one considers the abandonment of schooling at different levels. The number of women who have no certificate is approximately 8,141,354, among them 4,228,798 rural girls, boys against 3,523,080 990,694 of which live in companions.

The number of girls who have had their degrees (Bachelor and over) is around 801,026 (against 1,093,323 males). This very low number of girls entering higher education is the result of many causes. Including

primarily the education policy in Morocco which is an elite political that seeks the destruction of public higher education through class plans whose latest manifestation is the "national Charter of education and training" and its drift "emergency plan" (the disappearance of the right to grant, to housing in student residences, food in university restaurants ...).

This educational policy is serving the interest of the ruling class and the interests of the labour market, since the nature of the economy in Morocco requires only labour without qualification or a qualification average by sector such as agriculture and textiles or food processing sector, but especially in farmland's.

I .2 - Employment

Women who have access to the labour market amounted to 2,817,531 while women have access to positions of responsibility in public and private sectors do not exceed 12 087 women, all are in town. This means that none of them is in a position of responsibility in companions.

Women senior city managers are among 50,752 women and there 's only 137 women senior executives in companions, while the number of female middle managers in cities of 157,201 in 4667 against the companions. The largest number of women are farm labourer's or in the sea fishing sector, 1,357,269 women in companions and 51,764 women in cities. Women in the crafts sector amounted to 239 883 in towns and 84,523 in companions.

Thus, we find the largest percentage of the female workforce in the economic sectors, which require only average skills as textiles, ready to wear, leather and agro industry.... The rate of workers working in these sectors reached 69% in cities while the overall rate of working women in the textile and clothing industry is about to bear 87%. Now these areas are considered as the most affected by the economic crisis activities in recent years. Thus, many factories are closing and laying off workers or mistreat and this increases the number of unemployed women and women as a house cleaner in the homes.

There is a high concentration of female labour in the textile and clothing sectors close to wear for export and in agriculture. It is in these areas where there is the highest operating with long workdays that reach up to 15 hours a day and without respect for the minimum wage.

Capitalism, even if he broke the prison of the women homemaker, this has not released, on the contrary, it has developed its slavery. Instead of being a slave to her husband, she became slave to their bosses.

The liberation of the working women must go, as is the case with the entire working class, for the destruction of capitalism and the destruction of gender oppression.

The woman in the companions

The French colonialists introduced radical changes in Moroccan companions and the men and women farmers in business. So after that production was for own consumption, French imperialism has introduce the capitalist mode of production in certain regions such as the Moroccan companions in the Gharb region and in the Chaouia region, where there are vast irrigated farmland appointed. The starting point was the expropriation of land for small farmers to the benefit of French capitalists. Or to pass the lands under the monopoly of the colonial state to establish a capitalist agriculture based on the exploitation of these lands and use mechanization and agricultural technologies to export the products on the market in Europe and internationally and cover industrial needs.

These imperialist interventions have radically transformed the nature of production relations in Moroccan companions and prepared the conditions for the emergence of agricultural proletarians in these companions.

The concentration of farmland appointed and the appearance of large production units in these lands was accompanied by a large spray of small land area not exceeding five hectares, and That a dangerous deterioration of the situation of farmers and poor farmers. According to the agricultural statistics for 1973 and 1974 of the "Statistics Department" in Morocco, 4% of the owners have the third fertile reclaimed land for agricultural production and two-thirds of the land used do not exceed 5 hectares cover only 6% of cultivated areas. This

situation, created by the colonial regime in Moroccan companions deepened the crisis of small Moroccan farmers. Who could not leave his land against the property owners and moneylenders and sell their labour power to the benefit of the capitalists in their large farms agricultural. They push their wives and daughters "dependent on it," to buy their labour power to the capitalist profit during periods of agricultural work alongside their work in the home and in their plots of land.

According to some statistics, payroll women in agricultural farms in 1956 was approximately 257.5 million French francs against 766 million French francs for men. Agricultural statistics from 1974 show that the rate of female labour in agriculture is stable does not exceed 3.9% against 96.1% for men, reflecting the intensification of the exploitation of women and the loss of steady work compared to men and the absence of the right to social security, retirement ...

With the eighties, we will see a significant rise in female labour. Between 1982 and 2002, the rate was be multiply by three in countryside. According to 2008 statistics, the number of women working in the companions totalled 1,484,730 among them 1,357,269 women working in agriculture and sea fishing (91.4% of women in the countryside).

Regarding the level of education of the woman's companion, it clearly shows of the woman's position in the Moroccan girlfriend and the entire society. This also gives a clear picture about the operation of the companion through the city. Women who have no education amounted to 3,984,175 (2,249,001 against men) and 1,812,439 primary level (against 2,337,766 males) and 335,968 high school. As regards higher education, there are only 20,173 women (against 61,683 men). Women who have no certificate amounted to 4,228,798 (3,390,716 against men) and the number of women in a way that companion certificate does not exceed 420,393. This figure drop to 28 509 women of the companion with a higher degree (Bachelor's degree and above) against 84,371 men.

These figures reflect the class situation in Morocco. The main causes that drive most of the families companion to deprive their daughters from school, or at best not to continue education after primary economic order are: poverty breeds unable to withstand costs of schooling is said at the official level it is free !!, but also to push girls to contribute to the family income by working as a domestic servant in the city, or work on a farm or in the piece of land that the father has.

The lack of infrastructure in the Moroccan countryside is also a factor that prevents girls attend school or continue their education. Schools are far from home and the lack of schools in several campaigns pushes farmers to stop the continuation of primary education for girls or refuse to settle away from fireplaces or where there are primary and secondary schools. Moroccan farmer considers the earth and the sanctity of his daughters as sacred. In 1992 the female enrollment rate in the country between 13 and 15 years has barely reached 15.7% against 69.3% of girls in town.

I.3 - The woman's health status

The health sector in Morocco has seen a systematic offensive since the early eighties. Alongside the application of structural adjustment programs, was carried out drastic spending cuts in public services.

The health sector has taken his share of the offensive. For example, the budget allocated to health in 2004 was 6, 2 billion dirhams of which 82% was allocated for salaries of civil servants. This has limited the development of public services meet the growing needs of the children of the masses. It is not surprising to find that most public hospitals are still using health facilities inherited from the French protectorate. Under the slogan "the right to health" for improving health services, the regime has started the privatization of health care, which has deepened the crisis of the masses. Moreover, the last bill of the Ministry of Health declared the liberation of the sector through the association of merchants and capitalists to "develop the sector."

Greed brokers in Morocco is not satisfied from the sale of all the country's wealth, but they also transform health into a commodity.

The woman remains the most affected by the health situation in Morocco and especially in reproductive health. Thus, in its Annual Report 2008, WHO recorded the death of a woman every 6 hours in Morocco due to the effects of pregnancy? In a report of the Ministry of Health, there were 227 deaths per 100,000 live births. This figure is very

high compared to a comparable group of countries such as Tunisia, where we find "only" 70 deaths per 100,000 live births, against 10 deaths in France and 6.2 deaths in Finland. This figure shows the catastrophic situation of women in Morocco.

Difficult access to hospitals - if they are - because of inability to pay the entry fees, in addition to the dominance of corruption among administrative and nursing staff (nurses, doctors, ..) in most public hospitals where the patient is obliged to distribute money from the hospital entrance (Since security officers passing by nurses and doctors arriving). If we add to this the high prices of medicines, we understand why many of the Moroccan families appealed to traditional medicine, cheaper but also includes the superstition or magic. In the case of childbirth, most of the women give birth at home. According to the Ministry of Health, 50% of births are by traditional means at home, which is a great danger to the life of the mother and newborn. Thus, there has been 40 deaths for every 1000 newborns.

I .4 - Legislation

The position of inferiority that Moroccan women are suffering more depth with the laws and legislation, which widened the gender gap and consolidate the patriarchal power. Muslim fundamentalist tendencies within society preclude all claims to improve the situation of Moroccan women. Religious ideas constituting the substrate which can most of the traditions and the reactionary laws.

The personal status code that contains the laws governing the status of women in society during 47 years, (from 1957 to 2004 with a slight modification in 1993), played a great role that consolidates patriarchal power. The last change was introduced in 2004; hence, the name of personal status was changed to "family code". This change was accompanied by a loud noise as it was considered a radical change in the status of women in society, but the reality is that all these changes, despite some points "positive", have preserved the inferiority of women.

For this act, the same woman she had advanced degrees, remains minor and gives to others, "the man," the power to decide for him. Regarding marriage, the status of the family that still raised the age of marriage from 15 years to 18 years (Article 19) allows the judge to allow a man to marry a girl who has not yet 18 by a justified order (Article 20).

Complications and conditions surrounding the act of divorce leads women to seek what is called in Arabic words «al Khoulaa", which makes it the subject of exploitation by the husband.

The new Family Code allowed polygamy. Thus, Article 39 of the Code states that "are prohibited, for temporary impediments, having both a number of wives higher than legally allowed" to be 4 women. Simply the husband presents an objective and exceptional justification. Polygamy is takes away the dignity of the woman and led her to accept very humiliating living conditions for fear of divorce. The divorce is a worse fate because of the negative image of divorced women in society.

Regarding inheritance, the family code still considers women as half of man. Thus, the daughter inherits half the share of the boy while the wife can inherit only the eighth of the inheritance.

The legal status of women affects the lives of women who live in constant fear. It is considered a woman of second degree after the man, and may be subject to violence by her husband or she is deprived of her children, or she is outside the matrimonial home without legal protection real. Legislation in Morocco prints a humiliating vision of society towards women.

The popular woman is at the forefront of the struggle and resistance. Women in Morocco living a situation that does not differ much from the situation of other women in the world, but with differences due to local specificities. His situation is characterized by injustice, inferiority, exclusion and economic marginalization and political persecution after double that of the patriarchal society and the capitalist system.

The woman is a working class that costs even cheaper, easy to operate to accumulate profits. It is a way to reproduce the labour force through his unpaid work at home; it is also a machine to produce children and a box of sexual pleasure. His image is exploited by advertising to sell consumer products and at the same time show the

private parts of her body. For fundamentalist groups, it is the source of sin, conflict and should be locked up, wrapped and hidden. In short, the woman is not a complete human being nothing but an instrument to please man or as its pleasures satisfaction instrument as husband or to accumulate profits and fortunes of man as the boss. These conditions including suffer Moroccan women is the main factor and the key instigator of the fight for liberation from slavery and persecution.

Despite the liberal discourse, whether global or local, the main obstacle of the woman is the man. Far from the class struggle, it reduces the solution of all the problems of women in her claim for equal constitutional rights and all laws. For Moroccan women, all these speeches are just screams waves without echoes that reduce hunger or poverty; practicing overcoming all these theses in the field through its participation in many popular uprisings and commitment in all struggles beside the man, she had the role of manager and leader in many cases.

II – Struggle of Moroccan women:

II – 1 - Workers and peasants

Moroccan women have conducted a series of battles in several cities such as Agadir, Casablanca and Tangier. Thus, the workers of the company "SOFACA" for drug manufacturing in Casablanca have observed an open protest sit-in that lasted more than nine months and continues because the boss sacked 46 workers of which most of are women among them there are women who have worked for 20 years in this company. The workers were not concessions and demanding their legitimate rights to return to work and regularize their situations with the social security fund (CNSS) or be compensated on the duration of their tenure in case of dismissal. The workers have observed many sit-in and made big steps. Some remote workers and they were unable to continue the fight long-term because of their poverty and their families who claim the support of the head of household while women were convinced that poverty and family support are precisely the reasons to continue the fight and not to make concession.

Same argument was behind the strength of the company's workers the "Clementine" for the production and export of roses in the town of El Jadida. The workers, the workers and union offices conducted a strike accompanied by a sit-in day and night before the company's farms to the satisfaction of their claims. Women were more resistant and participating in the sit-in and in all forms of protest with a 95% participation rate of all women in society.

The workers of the Bougart company is in the industrial area Moula Rachid in Casablanca, observed a heroic sit-in outside the offices of the Protestant society against the oppression of women in veil and miserable working conditions and the dismissal a group of workers.

The combative presence of peasant women in the Moroccan feudal farms was always very strong; they have led to great fights. This is what happened to the city of Larache (Northern Morocco), whose struggle happened to the violent repression and direct confrontation with the regime to protest against the expropriation of the land of the peasants. Same thing in the farms of the cities of Meknes and Chtouka Ait Baha where a handful of peasant led the fighting against exploitation and slavery.

It is not little detail in this brief intervention to give multiple examples scattered throughout the Moroccan territory of struggles by the women workers and peasant women. However, the weakness of the trade union and even its absence in several cities and regions makes the workers' struggle and widely scattered peasant. The rate of women members not exceeding 14% of working women.

II – 2 - Students and unemployed women graduates

The unemployed women graduates struggling rates within the National Association of Unemployed Graduates (ANDCM) and other similar groups is 40% of all young unemployed graduates' militants fighting against their unemployment.

Female graduates have shown their ability in long struggles and battles at local and national level face resistance to police repression and confrontation class of policies pursued by the regime in the field of employment. They

were the first to be created in several regions Locals ANDCM. They began the heroic hunger strikes in Taroudant, Beni Mellel, Rabat, Boulemane, ... they were also involved in very large protest marches.

Daily police repression (which results in injuries and serious injury of many unemployed women to cause abortions among them). And despite the death of a martyr, Najia Adaya, who died fighting against unemployment and repression and to the right to organize and legal recognition to a life of dignity for all unemployed graduates in Morocco, could not shake the faith of these women in the fight.

Even battle was experienced by several activists of the student movement in several universities of Morocco against the political regime that seeks the destruction of public education to privatize. The women activists, who also struggles for the release of the Moroccan people, also gave martyrs such as the militant Zubaida Khalifa, who were shot and killed in 20th of June in 1988, while she was organizing a manifestation of the National Union of Moroccan Students (UNEM) in Palestine solidarity.

The different forms of struggle of the student movement in recent years against the "National Charter for Education and Training" have contributed to bring out the great activists who were able to frame a set of fighting in several universities, among them can be cited Zahra Boudkour, communist activist who helped oversee several times Kadi Ayad University in Marrakech.

Among his fights, there is that of 24 April and the riot of May 14, 2008 where she was imprisoned and tortured physically and morally. She was able to denounce it through his testimony with his 17 comrades to Boulmharez prison in Marrakech. Other militant student of UNEM were imprisonment and torture of items such as Mariam Bahamou, Zhira and Saadia and the activist UNEM in the city of Agadir Souad Houthi who is still in prison the city of Inzane.

The student movement has always given great activists since the martyrdom Lemnebhi Saida in 1977, struggling for political and economic liberation of the Moroccan people.

II – 3 - The families of prisoners and martyrs

The families of prisoners and martyrs have formed since the 1970 anti-prison activist movement and protest for the release of political prisoners and denouncing everything that undergoes their children, namely repression and torture in many local of detention. The large number of women who established characterizes this movement and first there are the mothers of the prisoners and their wives and their sisters, second. The most striking example is the mother of the martyr Abdelhak Chbada that adopted even after the death of his son during his comrades very many years that it turned into symbolic mother of all martyrs and detained activists. There is also the mother of the martyr Saida Lamnabhi and the mother of the martyr Moulay Tahar Douraidi, as an example of militant mothers for the release of political detainee's young activists.

Les familles des détenus et des martyrs ont constitué depuis les années 1970 un mouvement militant anti-détention et revendicatif de la libération des détenus politiques et qui dénonce tout ce que subit leurs enfants, à savoir la répression et la torture dans les lieux de détention. Ce mouvement s'est caractérisé par le grand nombre de femmes qui l'ont institué et en premier lieu il y a les mères des détenus et leurs épouses ainsi que de leurs sœurs, en second lieu. L'exemple le plus frappant est la mère du martyr Abdelhak Chbada, qui a adopté même après le décès de son fils ses camarades pendant de très longues années ce qui l'a transformé en mère symbolique de tous les martyrs et militants détenus. Il y a aussi la mère du martyr Saida Lamnabhi et la mère du martyr Moulay Tahar Douraidi, comme exemple des mères militantes pour la libération des jeunes militants détenus politiques.

As during the period of the seventies and eighties, there is the constitution of new family moves after detention in 2008 of Zahra Boudkour group. This movement consists in its entirety of women conducted heavy fighting for the liberation of their daughter and son by organizing sit-in front of the parliament and the "Advisory Council of Human rights" as well as to the "High Commissioner of prisons" and the Ministry of Justice. In addition to daily battles to prisons for the right to visit their open detained children.

Another movement appeared in Sidi Ifni (South Morocco). With the certainty of the innocence of the cause of their children, a movement of families of the detainees appeared to Sidi Ifni, whose wife of the detainee Ibrahim Bara and detained Agharbi and daughter, as well as the mothers of other detainees, which helped to clarify the cause of

this group. Same situation was hired for group Jamal Ousfourri formed political prisoners of students from the University of Fez. The wife of Jamal Oussfourri and mothers of other detainees were the initiators of this movement.

Even argues for the 13 workers of the company Semisi Régie in Khouribga who dismissed 850 other workers. These 13 workers detained because of their protests against the dismissals. The families of all workers are still fighting since July 2009 for the reinstatement of the 850 workers in their workplaces. These families, their women heads began hundreds of sit-ins and protests.

II – 4 - Social movement against the high cost of living

The movement of the struggle against the high cost of living and the dismantling of public services was the area where Moroccan women showed its strength protest and resistance against police repression. This movement, launched in mid-2006 as coordination against the high cost of living and against the dismantling of public services, has spread in 90 Moroccan towns and villages, recorded the strong presence of Moroccan women because " it is the most affected by rising prices and privatization of public services.

Women were the founders of this coordination's before their appearances when they manifested their anger against the high cost of living and the deterioration of public services in 2005 and 2006 in cities like Oued Zem and Sidi Ifni. Thus, the number of women was higher than men. These women activists supported with all kinds of repression, humiliation, threats and arrests, especially in cities such as Sefrou and Sidi Ifni, and have next to militants, few satisfy the claims of authority to local level and national.

The women protest has educated the masses to build a popular resistance against the unpopular policies. With as much force and the participation of all, fighting was started in several cities such as Sefrou Sidi Ifni Aït Ourir, Marrakech, Talsint, Bouarfa, Ourika and in all regions of Morocco. A city of Ikli, women of Boulmane region have their names printed in the memory of the place through their infinite strength and sit-in 100 days before the forceful intervention of the police repression, because they refused to give up their land where they have lived for decades in land mafia working under the umbrella of the state.

II – 5 - The emergence of the bourgeois women's movement

The access of women to the labour market and the education of children played an essential role in the development of women's issues in Morocco. This issue is beginning to worry the public within Moroccan society. With claims that do not exceed the equal rights of women with men, it led to the emergence of a bourgeois women's movement.

The history of women's movement in Morocco dates from the early years of formal independence or shortly before independence, while its operational appearance dates back to the eighties and especially the years ninety following the struggle of women, which imposed the issue of women in Moroccan society.

Reformers political parties, guided by very narrow political calculations, saw in women's issues a secondary issue. Even after their trials to focus on this issue under the pressure of some associations and activists of their parties, they were concerned that the number of ways of women to reap elections.

The Moroccan Marxist Leninist movement played a large role in the rehabilitation of women's issues mainly in Moroccan universities, which was a first class left fortress, where women's issues became the heart of his cultural interests and daily policies. This led to struggles for the presentation of women's issues and the ways of liberation of women. Women activists of Communist tendency defended next to their comrades the cause of women fighting for the building of a Moroccan revolutionary party as the martyr Saida Lamnabhi (24) who was a member of the organization "Ila Al Amam "and member of the Union of Moroccan Labour.

The work of the Marxist movement in Moroccan universities Leninist left a great impact on the consciousness of future generations of students who participated in re-discuss the issue of women is in reform parties or through feminist associations.

But the end of the seventy years has experienced a decline of revolutionary organizations which has pushed the issue of women with distance Marxist Leninist militant who constituted bourgeois feminist associations and publish journal Women dominated by bourgeois vision wife. Others adhered to reformist parties and they have certainly raised the issue of women in these parties, but with a bourgeois content limited to civil rights such as equality with men.

Despite that most Moroccan women belong to the working classes, (workers, farmers, home to women ...) and despite the active participation of the working women in mass struggles, the crisis which the communist movement suffers in Morocco and absence of the party of the working class, are the main obstacle to the development of the combative popular feminist movement and giving women's issues contained his class and his tendency to abolish the conditions that imposed the persecution of women.