

## MAHĀPRAJĀPATI AND MODERN FEMINISM

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### Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to draw attention on the MahĀprajĀpati as an ideal character of Feminism. On the other hand I am paying my attention on the women revolution with MahĀprajĀpati and comparing with modern feminism.

### Methodology

The data for the study has been collected from the both primary and secondary resources and the relevant monographs and in fields of both religious and non-religious texts. Ethnographic study has been conducted using observations and interview methods, including Buddhist nuns, two presidencies of international women associations and few sociologists.

### Discussion

The Buddha gave the world a teaching that will bring happiness to all if chosen to be practiced. Those who follow it from the Buddhist society and that society as enunciated by the Buddha consists of the following four components namely 1) Monks 2) Nuns 3) Laymen 4) Laywomen. The Order of Bukkun was the first women association in the world which established by the Buddha at the specific request of his foster-mother *MahāprajāpatiGotami*. Nuns Ordination was started after five years of monks Ordination; in other words, after five years from the Buddhas Enlightenment. The first request to enter the dispensation came from *MahāprajāpatiGotami* when the Buddha was at Kapitavattu in the Banyan monastery. But the Buddha rejected it. In the same way *MahāprajāpatiGotami* requested it from the Buddha three times. But the Buddha rejected it in the same way. At that time

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*Mahāprajāpati Gotami* departed with an afflicted, grieved, tearful crying face, thinking that the Buddha does not allow women to get ordination. But in the fourth time the queen along with *Sākya* princesses having cut hair, having worn robes arrived to *Vesāla* where the Buddha was staying. Because of long journey her feet were swollen, limbs covered with dust, with tearful face, all the princesses were crying out of the gateway with *Mahāprajāpati Gotami*. Even though Venerable Ānanda attention on this matter, the Buddha rejected the fourth request from *Mahāprajāpati Gotami*. Finally Venerable Ānanda asked from the Buddha whether the women are able to realize attainments having becoming nuns. The Buddha's opinion was if the *Mahāprajāpati Gotami* accepts the eight strict rules (A garudamma) that may be ordination for her. *Gotami* was so happy and accepted these eight rules and she promise to never to be transgressed during her life. After she accepted eight rules Venerable Ānanda inform to the Buddha that women are ready to get ordination with the strict rules. This is the result of *Mahāprajāpati Gotami*'s huge journey to get female ordination from the Buddha. Because of the *Mahāprajāpati Gotami*'s determination and effort all the women in the India as well as the world got revolution for their lives. We can see many examples at Terigātā how the ladies feel after entered to the Buddhist community as a nun and after realizing the reality. But get right to enter the Buddhist community done by *Mahāprajāpati Gotami* with the loving-kindness, non-violence and humanity. *Mahāprajāpati Gotami* is the first lady who works for the feminism in this world. When *Mahāprajāpati Gotami* started this journey the Indian women had a low place in the society with the Brahmanic influence. Most of the women in Asian countries were suffered with many law statues, because of the patriarchal society. Especially in India. India had lot of eras in their history. Most of the eras the women discriminated highly in the society. According to the Brahmanic ideas, by a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house. In childhood a female must be subjected to her father, in youth to her



husband, when her lord is died to her sons; a woman must never be independent'. Normally, a widow was not allowed to remarry. It is said that a widow had to kill herself by jumping into the funeral pyre of her husband. Women did not have educational freedom. Education was not considered as being of any importance to women. Their religious freedom, too, was restricted. As they had only little freedom, their chances of performing meritorious religious rites, too, were very limited. But *Mahāprajāpati Gotami* was agents to that and created a revolution in a peaceful manner.

In present world also we can see many associations are talking about the feminism. According to the present definitions the feminism is a range of political movements, ideologies, and social movements that share a common goal: to define, establish, and achieve political, economic, personal, and social rights for women. This includes seeking to establish equal opportunities for women in education and employment. The history of the modern feminist movements is divided into three "waves". Each wave dealt with different aspects of the same feminist issues. The first wave comprised women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, promoting women's right to vote. The second wave was associated with the ideas and actions of the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s. The second wave campaigned for legal and social equality for women. The third wave is a continuation of, and a reaction to, the perceived failures of second-wave feminism, beginning in the 1990s. But most of these feminist movements was radical and with lot of arguments. Wilhelmina Drucker (1847-1925), Louise Weiss 1935 and many other ladies were started many journeys about the feminism and because of the behaviors there were in the jail. Even though there are many associations for feminism, still women are suffering with many reasons. In presently we can see most of the women are so agents to the patriarchal society. Because of that some women are rejecting to feed children, look after children and give birth to the children. For an example AudreLorde

from United Nations was rejecting having babies because of the concept of feminism.

### **Conclusion**

There should be positive attitudes regarding the feminism in the world without gender discrimination. Women have to stand for the rights and needs with suitable limits. The female leaders who are leading to the feminism must understand the ultimate goal of the female. Taking *MahāprajāpatiGotamiasan* example is indeed to success the modern feminism. She won the feminism journey by doing duties and obligations. She was a role model with perfect women qualities. Because of her qualities and loving-kindness she got many higher places as attending liberation. The present feminism associations must take *MahāprajāpatiGotamias* a role module. Because her nonviolence feminism journey was fully success, with many result. As *MahāprajāpatiGotamidid* women have to request proper place, not equal place. It will lead to solve many problems of the females.

**Keywords:** MahāprajāpatiGotami , Modern Feminism , SuccessJourney, Rights, Ideal character

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