

## #2

Anonymous. "The Letter of One of the Ladies." *Tamaddon*, 30 Apr. 1907. In *Modern Iran: A History in Documents*. Ed. Negin Nabavi. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2016. 84-86.

First of all, our fathers, whose daughters we were, used to send us to *maktabs* [schools] from the age of five – that did not even happen to all girls. Sometimes when we reached the age of nine, they would remove us from the *maktab*. At that age, other than the love of play, we did not think of much else, let alone our studies. Secondly, if we could read or write, our dear fathers would reproach us, take the book or pen from our hands in extreme anger, tear or break it up and throw it away, saying what does it mean that a girl know how to write? ....

Such was the story of us girls in our fathers' homes until they gave us away in marriage. If we were among the elite, we would be assigned several servants so that we wouldn't tire ourselves out working [at home], and give orders instead. If we were among the poor, then we would have to do nothing other than housework and childcare. If one night, our husband could not provide the little amount of bread for sustenance, we women did not have the ability to pay for the cost of the food for one night. We, Iranian women, did not know anything other than giving birth. And that was because you were our fathers, you brought us up in this way....

After all, we, too, are your compatriots. We, too, are your co-religionists. You who speak of the rights of the nation, you who speak of laws, you who claim to have a sense of honor and dignity, we, too, are part of this nation. We too have a share in these rights. Which school did you open for women that they withdrew from? Which field of learning and which skill was made available to women that they did not take advantage of? Don't women have rights in this country? Let us lament our misfortune since there is no one more unfortunate than us Iranian women. It is our fellow brothers and high-minded fathers who share our religion, that have made us into objects of mockery. They have made us women into a laughing-stock.

This is what you have done. This is a misfortune that you have created for your children. Don't say this is for the best.