



al-raida

BEIRUT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

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Do you have senile symptoms?

I met her after 30 years of absence. Thirty years she spent in a Western city where a mixture of cultures and races and a variety of dynamic activities contributed to make of it an international cultural center.

Her face and figure did not carry the fingerprints of time. The quiet, ironic smile that I knew still hovered over her lips. That is a good sign, I thought, but what do these appearances indicate? A youthful mind behind the youthful face? What impression did the thirty years of intellectual contact leave on her soul?

No signs of change could I detect in her personality. The woman who sat before me still had the same accent, the same manners that she had thirty years ago. She repeated the same expressions, the same traditional compliments, discussed the same old topics dealing with the weather, marriage and birth, disease and death, good health and poor health, beauty and ugliness and other hackneyed, commonplace subjects. Her head was still filled with news concerning her brother, her sister and their progeny. They are still for her, as they were in the past, an object of pride. She herself had no identity, no personal existence. If she had been married, she would have enumerated to me her husband's achievements and those of her children, just as she does when she talks about her brother, her sister and their progeny. She remembers, however, her old friends and acquaintances. She likes to hear about them, not because she is really attached to them but out of curiosity and a desire to kill time.

What was she doing in emigration land? She occupied herself with a job which filled most of her time. In her free hours, she evoked stories and news items about her brother and sister and their progeny. She inquired about the new acquaintances she acquired over there, enjoyed hearing their news items, moved by the same desire to kill time.

This woman is one of thousands who live according to a stereotyped way of life. They move in a space not exceeding a few meters, though they may have crossed thousands of miles during their life time. They live on the margin of society, not knowing what goes on around them, personifying those groups that ruminate about their past because of inertia or because they are afraid of the effort required for the acceptance and assimilation of new ideas. In other instances, static individuals may cling to their past as a means of preserving their interests and maintaining traditions that ensure for them legal or illegal privileges, allowing them to lead an easy, passive life.

The woman I met after 30 years of absence carried in her soul, not in her face, the signs of senility. Many are her likes, who deceive other people with a modern, elegant appearance and intense physical energy, while their minds are fossilized and their ideas obsolete.

Senility is a disease that may attack young men and women as well as old people. Each person is called to examine himself from time to time, to see if he has unknowingly contracted senile symptoms, or entered the stage that characterizes people on their way to deterioration and decay.

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RECENTLY RECEIVED
BY IWSAW 14-16

Edna Kahla, a poet of loneliness and nostalgia

In *Anthology of Lebanese Authors in the English Language*, (1) compiled in 1948 by Munah Racy and Rushdi Maalouf, Edna Kahla (Mrs. Khabbaz) is said to be an English-born poet of Lebanese origin, who published a collection of poems that were well received by the British public. This brief introduction is followed by a few examples of her poems. Nothing is said about the year of her birth, the date of publication of her poems, the year of her death and the kind of work she performed besides writing poetry. The photocopy of her poems, sent to us by a friend visiting England, makes the same mistake of neglecting dates. A careful reading of the poems gives us, however, a certain information about the author. She must have lived in the early quarter of this century, when Lebanese emigrants referred to Lebanon as Syria, i.e. before the proclamation of Lebanese independence in 1925. She seems to be a lover of beauty, nature, music, children, all the idols of the Romanticists. She travelled a lot because her poems tell about her visits to Lebanon ("Aley", "Syria" pp. 7 & 8), Italy (The Appian Way p. 19-20), France (p. 16, 17-18, 62) and her longing to return to her birthplace, England, whose "loved simplicity" she preferred to the "gilded city" of Paris, where she lived as an exile (p. 17-18 "From Exile", p. 62 "Banishment").

A good many of her poems relate sad, personal experiences: "Loneliness" p. 25, "Nightmare" p. 5, "Hunger" p. 63, "After Denial" p. 45, "Diffidence" p. 10, "Poet's Calvary" p. 32, "Menace of Dreams" p. 14. They tell about a soul in pain seeking refuge in poetry and in prayer. Some of her poems express nostalgia and longing to the dreamland of childhood: "The Return" p. 59, solitude and estrangement "The Estranged" p. 2. They all carry a note of romantic emotionality and charm.

In musical performances, the poet detects sadness and agony, ("Agony of Music" p. 44). Music reveals to her betrayal "When sorrowful lips are dumb"; despair "for the days that never come"; "remorse for the bitter sins of pride", and "in the song most passionate, the cry of the Crucified." The moon of Lebanon sheds on Aley her wan, white wistfulness amidst a poignant, sad music (Music-Aley, p. 8). In Debussy's music, she is attracted by the romantic, pale-haired girl (Fille aux cheveux de lin, p.15), who, slight and still, sits idle at the sill, whose still lips can only murmur half-intended words.

Most of the topics treated in the collection are those of the Romantic 19th century poets: nature, travel, religious themes, medieval tales, children, dreams, ruins, scenery, trees and flowers are tenderly described or evoked in her poems about places seen or visited: "English May" (p. 14), "In Syria" (p. 7) "Sea's Edge" (p. 26), "Thrift" (p. 34), "Unforgotten Spring" (p. 36). Throughout a

wayward wandering, having trod "the battered grass with heavy and with heedless feet", she suddenly feels sad and tremulous because she has hurt the gentle moss. Then, with great dismay, she stoops to gather the gentle objects and heal their wounds (Earth-Wounds, p. 9).

Her religious poems resemble humns of mystic love addressed to "The Madonna of the Shrine" (p. 21), whose eyes are "blue as the pools of heaven" and "her raiment white as chastity"; of penitent adoration to "Christ of Sorrows" (p. 37), to whom her prayer says: "If I might see thee only once, I think I could not sin again."

Her poems on children recall Shelley's and Blake's idea that their innocence and their dreams are remnants of remembered Paradise (p. 11-13). Children are the brothers of angels, their hearts silently worship while they tread the green fields. Knowing heaven, they know the eternal All, for what is Heaven but Infinity?

Evoking the medieval tale of Elaine and Launcelot (p. 58), she tries to imagine what would happen if Elaine died before her lover. From the gate of Heaven, she would look back to Earth and yearn for him. Then Elaine turns to Launcelot and asks him: If you could see me unconsoled beyond the farthest star, would your heart grow tender and bring you up the skyward path, to clamour at the gate?

Simple and personal, her experiences are clearly and simply expressed in fluent, graceful language. The verse form is semi-regular. It occasionally adopts a certain freedom in the use of irregular measure and rhyme, a form of free verse which preceded the prose poem. The following poem, "The Return", p. 59, exemplifies a successful rendering of the poet's intimate thoughts.

*We will go back to day-dreams,
And pull wild flowers again,
And gather shells at the sea's edge
And linger in the rain.*

*We will go back to nursery days
To learn forgotten art
Of trivial things most intricate
And how to pull apart
The scarlet jaws of snapdragons,
The velvet jaws of snapdragons.*

*We will turn back to yesterday
And roam the lone lanes through
Between the banks where harebells blow,
Where windy harebells blow and ring
With a still song of blue,
We will lay by this wisdom,
To pull wild flowers again,
And trail dim dreams about the streets
And linger in the rain.*

(1) Beirut, Lebanon, 1948. The poems were kindly photocopied by Miss Arminée Choukassizian.

Cultural Values and Population Action Programs in Turkey(1)

Readers will notice a striking similarity between Turkey and the Arab World regarding cultural values and problems of social change generally faced by Eastern countries nowadays. It is this similarity which has induced us to condense this valuable report in the following pages.

Social change, considered almost an everyday matter for people in Turkey, is most noticeable in the waves of rural to urban migration occurring increasingly since the early 1950's. While the rural population counted 81% in 1950, it shrank to 75% in 1960 and to 66% in 1975.

In Turkey, rural society may be considered roughly to correspond to traditional society, urban settlements to modern society, and semi-urban settlements to transitional society.

To understand the process of social change, we need to examine the socio-cultural aspects of traditional society, which, by protecting and carrying over old belief and value systems, is the main source of cultural values in society. For this purpose, certain prominent aspects of rural, social and family structures will be examined on the grounds that they form the social context out of which cultural values develop.

Family Structure

Though it was generally assumed that the typical traditional family was an extended family, a study made by Timur (1972) has shown that even in the villages nuclear families comprise 55.4% of all the families. In the three metropolitan areas: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, nuclear families reached 67.9% in 1968.

Between the two above structures, there exists the so-called transient-extended family, i.e. one in which some members of the older generation are living in a potentially nuclear household temporarily. In the 1968 survey, the national figure for transient-extended families was 13.1%.

The increasing spread of nuclear families does not mean, however, complete separation between the older and the younger generation. Kinsmen are still called upon to provide material support when needed. This function of the family may be expected to continue as long as other institutions such as social security system, insurance, cooperatives, etc. are not well established that they might replace the family in providing security.

Extended family type is the ideal that is commonly valued, especially in rural areas. According to recent statistics, 61% of the men in nuclear families preferred to live with their sons. In the eyes of the villagers, the extended family may be identified with wealth and prestige. Living with the married son, in contrast to living with the married daughter, provides the elderly with financial and psychological security; thus it is highly valued.

Marriage and Inheritance

In Turkey polygamy is rare, monogamy is the rule. Civil marriage is practiced with or without an additional religious ceremony. Marriage between members of different sects is rare and not encouraged. Arranged marriages are quite common though there is an increasing tendency to get the consent of the young people.

Marriage in the traditional rural context appears to assume more of a social than an individual character. It is instrumental in strengthening existing kinship ties or in increasing the number of relatives and friends who are potential sources of aid. For those reasons, arranged marriage is preferred to other type of marriage; for the same reasons, abduction and elopement are not, generally, condoned.

Marriage implies an economic importance symbolized by the bride price which serves various functions. One of them is to ensure the rights and status of the young bride in her husband's family. Another is to serve for the preparation of the bride's trousseau. A third function is providing support for the wife in case of divorce. Research has shown, however, that divorce is quite rare in rural Turkey.

Bride price can also be considered as a security for the woman who in the old system of religious code got no share in inheritance. Under the new laws of to-day, inheritance is shared equally by men and women. Attitudes toward arranged marriage, bride price and inheritance vary a great deal. In some areas, the more modern minded class condemns arranged marriage and bride price and favors an equal share for women in inheritance, while continuation of traditions is observed in many areas.

Kinship and Community

In traditional rural areas, family and kin often take the place of friends and public services in providing support and security to the individual. More than any other kin, brothers are thrown together by the social system. With increased mobility and outmigration from the village, this pattern of lifelong daily contact and mutual services is becoming less common.

The positive functions of the kinship system are at times discredited by blood feuds, strife and competition between families, clans and tribes. In spite of still commonly practiced endogamous marriage within kin, negative attitudes toward it are also found. In some cases, it is believed that more conflict is involved in marriages with relatives.

Group Loyalties and Respect for Authority

Loyalty to the in-group: family, kin, community, symbolized by respect for it and for its elders, is a traditional social value in Turkey. It is strong even among young people in the urban setting. Out of loyalty to the in-group stem loyalty and respect for state authority,

(1) By Dr. Cigdem Kagitcibasi, a report prepared for UNESCO, October, 1977, Bogazici University, Istanbul.

manifested in the strong value that Turks put on nationalism and patriotism (1970, 1973 research).

In Arab countries, however, if loyalty to the in-group is still considered a social value, especially in rural areas, it is doubtful that it has already evolved into respect for state authority and its derived sense of nationalism and patriotism. Loyalties, responsibilities and respect in the family kinship and the community extend to people in the established positions of power, such as the father in the family, the landowners, the wealthy people, the political leaders and the descendants of prestigious families in rural districts.

Community Religion

"Religious affiliations often intermix with group loyalties and religion is more of a community religion than an individual affair. It involves identification with a community and acceptance of its ethics and rules of conduct" (Kagitcibasi p. 37).

Religion tends to perpetuate tradition and to sustain separation of the sexes. Social change involves a weakening of religious ties and generally leads to a set of reactions which attempt to avoid tension and satisfy frustrated needs.

Sex Roles

The "second class status" of women in the Middle East applies to Turkey especially in the traditional rural society, as shown by a large number of research studies carried out between 1973 and 1977. "In the traditional context, the social status of women is still evaluated in terms of age and child-bearing (Kagitcibasi p. 40)." A woman accepts her inferiority as part of the metaphysical order. A clear division of labor based on sex both helps the woman face the status difference and yet, at the same time, serves to perpetuate this difference.

Woman's work in the home, to which she often adds rural work in the fields, is of no less importance than man's work and even requires more time. Yet it does not receive social recognition, probably because it does not bring in cash income and, when it does, it is often irregular. Another important reason is the belief that man should be the bread-winner and that it would be degrading for him to have his wife share with him this task.

Family Honor

At the basis of woman's subordination is the double standard imposed on her by the concept of "honor". This term, in general use, may denote keeping a promise, showing respect for elders, honest dealing, etc., but sexual honor, which means that men completely control the sexuality of their women, is by far the most important sphere and shapes the whole structure of sex-role relations and related values. A young girl has to be constantly watched and protected from any possible attack on her virginity, "her most precious possession". Early marriage for a woman is preferable as a safeguard of her chastity. Honor is far from being a private or individual affair. The "reputation" or "honor" of a girl or woman has to be protected by her husband her father or brother. "An insult to honor" is a most serious matter and is often the reason for vengeance, killing and blood feuds. (Kagitcibasi p. 46)."

(To be continued in next issue)

THE IMAGE OF WOMAN IN EGYPTIAN MASS MEDIA⁽¹⁾

In preparing this study on the image of woman in Egyptian feminine mass media, the researchers chose the women's magazine "Hawwa", a weekly periodical, as a medium of research. "Hawwa" has a wide circulation in Egypt and other Arab countries, addressing itself primarily to the average woman. They limited their study to the fiction material, comprising 28 short stories that appeared in 14 numbers, issued in three consecutive months: November, December, January, 1975-1976. Of the 28 stories chosen, 11 had an Egyptian background and were written by Egyptian women, 8 were written by non-Arab women and 9 by unknown authors. They chose fiction as a subject of study because fictitious narrative forms a homogeneous, informative source of material and is widely popular among women readers.

ANALYSIS OF THE STORIES

The analysis of the short stories meant to the researchers the separation of each into its component parts; 1) the theme or main topic; 2) the axis (plural: axes) which means "the concept or event forming a turning point in the action of the story and leading to a new stage in its development;" 3) the elements, details or partial events. The terms "theme, axis, element" are not clearly defined in the tables presented in the study but it should be possible to identify them if we consider the axes as the larger components of the theme and the details or elements as the minor ones.

The stories were analyzed from the following angles:

1 - The behavioral dimensions of the heroines or the ways by which they respond to their problems, which could be:

- a. negative or positive
- b. emotional or rational
- c. altruistic or egotistic

2 - The social roles played by the heroines.

3 - A comparison between the Egyptian and the foreign stories in content and tendency.

A. NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE ATTITUDES

A negative attitude means that the heroine refrains from taking any positive step in handling her problems. 1) She relies on outside help, 2) or follows a traditional

(1) Abstract of a study prepared by Dr. Nahid Ramzi, Ms. Safiyya Majidi and Ms. Salwa Amiri, from the National Center of Social and Criminal Research, under the sponsorship of Dr. Mustafa Suwaif, Psychology Department, Cairo University, July 1977. The study was originally written in Arabic.

method of treating them, like resorting to patience, submissiveness, self-depreciation and acceptance of the accomplished fact, 3) or falls into despair and goes through a nervous depression.

Examples of Negative Conduct:

- The wife refuses to forsake a husband who has ill-treated her.
- A heroine collapses before a crisis.
- A woman laments the passage of her youth.

Proportion of negative conduct in the analyzed stories:

In 5 themes out of 28, the heroines showed negative conduct, i.e. in 17% of the stories. The same attitude was shown in 7 out of 53 axes contained in the stories, i.e. in 12.8%. Also negative conduct was noted in 27 out of 115 minor elements or details, which means a proportion of 23.4%.

A positive attitude implies the ability of the heroine to confront her problems by her own personal initiative without waiting for outside help.

Examples of Positive Behavior:

- A young girl considers the choice of a husband as her sole business.
- A wife has the right to dispose of her wealth notwithstanding the husband's objection.
- An educated girl thinks that marriage should be based on love.

Proportion of Positive Behavior

Positive action was shown in 1) 5 out of 28 themes, in the proportion of 17.9% of the whole; 2) in 16 axes out of 53, i.e. in 30%; 3) in 19 elements out of 115, in the proportion of 16%.

B. EMOTIONAL VERSUS RATIONAL BEHAVIOR

Emotional behavior, as defined in this study, is one motivated by an emotional condition or an inner feeling like love, hate, jealousy, greed. It is complete submission to such feelings and inability to overcome them.

Examples of Emotional Conduct:

- A romantic young girl indulges in day-dreaming about her prince charming and later discovers the fallacy of her dreams.
- A devoted wife who has discovered her husband's unfaithfulness falls into despair.
- A young girl deprived of love tries to attract other people's attention by feigning chronic sickness.

Proportion of Emotional Conduct:

The proportion of emotional conduct in the 28 stories was 13/28, i.e. in 46% of the themes; on the axis level it was 39%; on that of the minor elements it reached 20%.

Rational Conduct

"It is a form of conduct dictated by reason. It is an external look into the self, which is considered as a variable, attended by an attempt to eliminate the personal, emotional element."

Examples of Rational Conduct

- A practically minded woman who prefers a marriage based on economic stability to one based on love.
- A woman with a strong and independent personality who is able to face her difficulties and carry out responsibility after her husband's death.
- A militant woman who succeeds in combining school work with a job that permits her to earn her expenses.

Proportion of Rational Conduct

Rational conduct among the heroines of the stories does not exceed 9.3% of the themes, 9.6% of the axes and 6.8% of the details.

The nature of their behavior within the three levels is restricted to the sphere of their emotional and family life.

C. ALTRUISM VERSUS EGOTISM

Altruism means that a person is inclined to give freely and to consider other people's interests before his own. Egotism, on the contrary, is a selfish attitude which overlooks the interests of others.

The study showed that the heroines were motivated by altruism in 10.7% of the themes, in 11% of the axes and in 8.7% of the details.

The egotistic attitude pervades the themes in the proportion of 14%, in the axes it is 9.4% and in the details 8.7%.

Social Roles

The main role played by women in the 28 stories is that of housewife at a proportion of 60% in the main topics, 40.4% in the basic axes and 32% in the minor details.

These proportions reveal the importance of marriage in woman's life. The details show the importance of love to her and the suffering she goes through at her husband's infidelity. Her main occupation is to try to keep her husband's affection by giving birth to children, especially male ones.

The mother's role is manifest in 5.8% of the 52 axes. This small proportion, however, helps us to conclude that a mother's happiness depends on her children, especially the males among them. She identifies with them, plans their marriage and tries to make them fulfill her wishes.

The other roles played by women characters in the stories are those of daughter, grandmother, friend, worker, etc. but these roles are insignificant and are not worth considering, according to the authors of the study.

A comparison between woman's image in the Egyptian stories and in foreign ones showed no outstanding

difference, except that her role as wife covered 45.5% of the Egyptian stories while in the foreign ones this role was limited to 25%.

Concluding Remarks

The general results of this study about woman's image in the 28 stories published by "Hawwa" magazine, show a good deal of equality between the negative and the positive attitudes of the heroines. The same similarity appears on the level of altruism and egotism. But the preponderance of **emotional** over rational behavior is evident from the following figures:

Emotional

46% of the themes
39% of the axes
24% of the details

Rational

9.3% of the themes
9.6% of the axes
6.8% of the details

Safiyya Majdi, one of the three researchers who participated in the study, commented on the results by saying (pp. 112-114) that the behavior patterns which define the Egyptian woman's roles in the light of the analyzed stories are limited to her relationship with man. In most of them she essentially appears as a follower, not a complement to her husband. Her role is to serve and please him, and to derive her happiness from his approval of her conduct. He is in the family the center point of interest while her role is secondary. Her only care is to provide him with male children and to prepare her daughters for marriage by making them duplicates of herself, playing the same role that she and all her ancestresses played before. Her image is on the whole a traditional one, a stereotype.

Safiyya Majdi protests against this image by saying: "It should be appropriate to inquire about the absence of the integrated woman from this image, the active, productive woman in the educational and social fields. Where is this new woman in the fiction of Egyptian feminine media? Though she has been duly presented in the first report on the changing social role of woman in Egypt today, she seems to be totally absent from the above stories."

European Women in the Political Field

Women who, during the last thirty years, occupied leading political positions in their countries, did not belong to the Western hemisphere but to countries of the Third World: Indira Gandhi, Indian prime minister; Golda Meir, minister of foreign affairs in Israel; Isabel Péron, president of Argentina and S. Bandaranaike, president of Sri-Lanka.

The present generation witnesses the rise of European women to positions of power. At least five of them have recently succeeded in snatching positions that used to be the exclusive rights of men.

In no. 9 of *Al-Raida* we published an article about Margaret Thatcher, the first woman prime minister in England.

On July 17, 1979, Mme Simone Weil, the first woman in France to occupy the secretariat of the Higher Judicial Council and the first to serve as minister of health, was elected president of the European Common Parliament by universal suffrage. Her

election took place in the second electoral round of the opening parliamentary session.

For the first time in Portugal, a woman has been asked to be prime minister and form a transitional government whose function will be to prepare the general elections of next fall. She is Dr. Maria de Lurdes Pintassilgo, 48 years, who in 1975 represented her country at the UNESCO and in 1974 was the first woman to become minister of social affairs.

In the Parliament of European Communities, another woman occupies a position of leadership: Mme Danièle Demarch, a member of the Communist Party who has been elected vice-president of the said Parliament.

In Italy, Mme Nilde Iotti, associate of one of the founders of the Communist Party, was elected last June to the presidency of the Italian chamber of deputies. She thus

occupies the third political rank in her country, immediately following those of president of the republic and head of the senate.

It is worthwhile to recall here that Simone Weil, who has been elected president of the European Parliament, was a fellow student of Simone de Beauvoir's at the Sorbonne around 1927. In her autobiography, "Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter", (translated by James Kurkup, Penguin Books, 1959), the author of the *Second Sex* refers to her as one who had "a great reputation for intelligence and her bizarre get-up... A great famine had broken out in China and I was told that when she heard the news she wept; these tears compelled my respect much more than her gifts as a philosopher. I envied her for having a heart that could beat across the world." "To her only one thing mattered in the world today: the revolution which would feed all the starving people of the earth" (ibid. p. 239).

Environmental and Economic Conditions of Arab Children: Health, social & educational needs (1)

It is a plain fact that children's conditions and needs in Arab countries are greatly affected by social and political conditions. Population increase at an annual rate of 3% impedes all efforts for economic development and implementation of public services. The high proportion of non-working groups (women, children, and old people), compared with that of providers or working force, added to the high rate of illiteracy which in 1970 reached 73% in some Arab countries, contributes to the lowering of the standard of living and thus to affect the living conditions of the child.

Other factors affecting the child's conditions:

1. Polygamy

Arab countries differ in their laws concerning marriage. In Tunisia, polygamy has been strictly forbidden. Other countries have submitted it to certain conditions like the financial capacity of the husband and the agreement of the first wife. It is a fact that the rate of polygamy is lower where the cultural level of husbands is higher.

2. Divorce

In many Arab countries, divorce remains the sole privilege of the husband, for example in Egypt and Sudan. Other countries, like Tunisia, Iraq and the Yemen People's Republic, restrict the husband's freedom by obliging him to refer it to the authorized courts which possess the exclusive right to decide.

Easy divorce leading to family disruption creates the problem of children's custody and its duration for boys and girls. Opinions and laws do not agree about this question but the general trend is to let the judge decide in compliance with the accompanying circumstances while giving priority to the interest of the child.

(1) Arab League General Secretariat, Cairo, Oct. 1978.

3. Health and Nutrition

The health and nutrition needs of the child begin in the prenatal period, during the first months of pregnancy. In developing countries, a small number of mothers, not exceeding 15% in rural areas, receive adequate hygienic and nutritional instruction. The lack of necessary services results in:

- A high death rate among babies and children
- Easy exposure to physical malformation and contagious diseases.

Families in general and especially in rural areas, lack the necessary information on child care & nutrition. Mothers keep nursing their babies until their first or second year, using no other additional food, and not knowing that this habit is harmful to both mother and child.

Education

A general increase has been recorded in the number of children enrolled in elementary schools. In 1974-75 their number in Arab countries reached 15,535,000 as compared with 11,620,000 in 1970, thus realizing an annual increase of 6%. But out of every thousand enrolled students only 355 remain and complete the elementary stage.

The rapid rise in the number of students, especially in the elementary stages, creates the problem of securing an equivalent increase in the number of teachers. The problem is felt particularly in Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Algeria and Tunis where the number of students for every teacher ranges between 35 and 40 or more. This situation interferes with the general educational level. In addition, teachers in the elementary and intermediate classes limit their training to the elementary training colleges and rarely attain a university degree.

New Egyptian Law Restricts Divorce and Polygamy

The "Egyptian People's Assembly" approved on June 3, 1979, a law amending individual rights to the effect that divorce and polygamy will be henceforth restricted.

A law concerning these questions was established half a century ago. All efforts to amend it were opposed by existing traditions.

The new law is expected to arouse definite reactions on the social level,

more particularly because divorce cases in Egypt are evaluated at 75000 per year, besides those of polygamy which so far have evaded all evaluation. From now on the husband will have to meet certain financial and legal conditions before he decides to divorce.

("An-Nahar" daily, Beirut July 5, 1979)

IYC Activities at BUC

Besides the yearly dramatic performance offered for children by Beirut University College (see accompanying picture of the "Wizard of OZ", presented this year), two important projects connected with the International Year of the Child were initiated at BUC during the summer of 1979. The first was a workshop on good books for children held in cooperation with Goethe Institute, during the week of July 2-6. It was presided by Dr. Hans Helby, director of Gutenberg Museums in Mainz and author of books for young people. Dr. Helby emphasized the importance of picture story-books for children, discussed the criteria of a good story and read some examples as an illustration. He demonstrated certain ideas by experimenting with a group of children to whom he had distributed books for reading. He also showed an exhibit of picture story-books brought from Germany for the occasion.

One of the recommendations approved by the responsible committee was the creation of a national section of the IBBY (International Board for Books for Youngsters) which would engage members from Lebanon and other Arab countries.

The second project initiated by BUC on the same occasion was a training course for nursery and kindergarten teachers, lasting two months (July 3-Sept. 8) and executed by Dr. J. Abu Nasr, Mrs. Randa Khoury & Miss Leila Jarrar. It included lectures, participative activity by the attendants of the course, introduction of modern equipment and methods of handling it, explanation of recent theories on child development, planning preschool activities and kindergarten programs.

This training session aroused a good deal of response. About 80 teachers from Lebanon and other Arab countries asked to subscribe but only 60 could be accommodated by the College.



"CHILDREN REQUISITION ADULTS"

A play called "Lebanon, my love", was presented in June 1979, at al-Bustan Hotel in Beit-Mery, a Lebanese mountain village. Eighty school children formed the majority of the actors. They addressed questions to the older group of 6 actors, one of whom symbolized history and faithfully answered their questions regarding the history of their country. The other members of the older group answered questions regarding the present crisis. The children proceeded to a requisition, or a court plea, in which they accused their seniors of neglect and betrayal, urged them to reflect over the situation and try to redress their errors.

With songs, dances and a poetic dialogue, the play took the form of an operetta in 2 acts.

1 - "The IYC National Committee" in Lebanon organized in May 1979 a competition among song-writers for the best three songs dealing with the theme, "War and Children". Four thousand pounds were to be distributed to the winners. As none of the eight songs presented met the conditions set by the committee, it was decided that one thousand pounds would be awarded to each of the two authors whose works were considered of some relative value. The remaining sum, 2000 pounds, would be reserved for another contest of the same type but with different conditions.

2 - "The Institute of Research and Development" connected with the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts has organized a competition for the best six stories written for children ranging from K.G. to the 5th elementary. Important prizes have been set aside for the winning stories. The results will be known in the fall of 1979.

3 - In May 1979 The Arab Cultural Club in Beirut devoted a whole week for lectures and discussions on children's literature. A competition for the best three stories for children aged 10-12 was organized. A puppet show was presented by the group of children who regularly attend the daily children's programs presented by the Club. The puppet show was created by the children under the guidance of the supervisors in charge and it proved to be a successful one.



A Child's Prayer:

Our Father

*Our Father, who art every where:
See how the world has despoiled itself.
Look down on the sea polluted by petroleum*

*There's water in the wine,
Who knows what's in the oil?
Our daily bread-how often does it taste peculiar?
But you know how many people
Have no bread, have nothing at all.*

*Give us this day a better world
where there is more love in our hearts and minds
Where money takes second place to
loving care and thoughtfulness of others*

*The highway takes us to far distant places
But no one understands his neighbour*

*Every one talks about Peace on Earth
But on every side there's always
some war or other.
Always war.*

*We, your children, pray
Show us how to be better:
To sit quietly, to learn our lessons
and not be enticed away by television.*

*And deliver us from greed, whims
and all untruths,
And deliver us from smog. Amen.*

UNICEF Information Bulletin. Issue no. 19, p. 20. This children's prayer was originally sung by Italian school children at a gala concert to celebrate UNICEF's 30th anniversary

AN OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF WOMEN'S CONDITIONS IN ARAB COUNTRIES

Dr. Muna Hammam, an American of Egyptian origin and assistant professor of sociology at the American University of Washington, made a survey trip to seven Arab countries in May 1978 and gave several lectures on the conditions of women in the countries she visited. The Arabic magazine *Al-Majal*, published in the States, interviewed Dr. Hammam and published in its issue of November 1978 no. 92, p. 8, an article expounding her impressions concerning the Arab woman. The following paragraphs include excerpts from that article.

Comparatively speaking, the Arab woman is ahead of the western woman in some respects and behind her in other respects, mainly in the field of technical training. From the point of view of equal pay for equal work, the Arab woman is in a more favorable position than the Western woman who

is still struggling for a fairer treatment in the way of salaries.

Educated Arab women occupy technical positions in a much higher proportion than educated western women, particularly in the fields of medicine and engineering. Their proportion in some Arab countries like Syria, Egypt and Maghreb reaches about 23% while in the United States it does not exceed 2% in medicine and 1.5% in engineering... The Arab woman is equally privileged in the fact that she enjoys complete freedom to manage her properties and possessions while the western woman is apt to meet certain restrictions in this respect. Moreover, the Arab woman has the advantage of stronger adherence to family ties, which helps her to coordinate her outside work with home duties.

Dr. Hammam presumes for the Arab woman good prospects for

further progress and complete obtainment of her rights provided she continues and follows up her struggle. In this case it should be necessary to try to awaken Arab men as to the justice of woman's claims and the necessity of supporting them.

As a conclusion Dr. Hammam expressed her great satisfaction with progress so far achieved by Arab women, especially in Bahrain where her attention was called by the Bahraini women's activity, awareness and desire to learn. As an example, the television program in which she took part was entirely projected and produced by women. She did not meet completely veiled women in that country. She thinks that it is the only Arab region where nursing is considered as a highly respectable feminine profession. The proportion of women who are government employed is around 50%.

AWP

NEWSLETTER

AWP (Association for Women in Psychology) Newsletter Feb. — March 1979, announces the midterm World Conference of the U.N. Decade for Women which will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in either June or August 1980. The purpose of the Midterm Conference is to review the progress made since 1975 and to adopt a program for the remainder of the Decade. In addition to the Decade's three goals of Equality, Development and Peace, the conference will have three subthemes: education, health and employment.

WOMEN UNDER COMMUNISM

This is the title of a book by Barbara Wolfe Jancar, published by the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, and reviewed by Diane L. Simpson in AWP Newsletter, Feb. March 1979, p. 8.

According to the reviewer, it is an "interesting and readable survey, showing that while women in communist countries have indeed made rapid social and economic gains, the prevailing definition of equality as the opportunity for women to enter the labor market as well as work at home on the second shift, means that women in those countries are faced with intolerable physical and time demands. Traditional sex-stereotyping continues to influence women to value home over work and serves to reinforce ideological and political

barriers which prevent women from attaining power in business or government."

Jancar views equality as a developmental process independent of capitalism or socialism, which depends on the stage of modernization and the degree of authoritarianism in a given society. "Jancar's conclusion is straightforward: The Soviet and Chinese variants of marxism have demonstrated that feminism cannot rely on male ideologies for its rationale, motivations or goals. Throughout history women have served the patriarchal establishment, whether as supporters of the status quo or as revolutionaries seeking to replace one variant of the male political order with another."

Excerpts from the Writings of Women Feminists

Aminah al-Said speaks⁽¹⁾

If we look at women as a group which represents half the Arab nation, we cannot help but admit that this group is the weakest area of our social body. Why? Because women have been subject, more than men, to the pressures of ignorance, poverty, and general backwardness. These pressures in turn reduce the total value of the society and delay or retard new movements in our national life.

I do not think I am exaggerating if I say the general situation of women as a group forms the greatest obstacle to national progress to be found in our country today. I say this, despite the great efforts made in the cause of emancipation of this group and despite what has already been achieved for women in the past ten years in some of the Arab countries (I will not say all of them) where the achievement of rights seems almost complete. Many years and much effort lie ahead of us before we are able to reach women of all classes in all Arab countries and raise all socioeconomic levels to a standard suitable for the twentieth century. It is true that Arab men, too, have a long way to go before they are raised to a higher level, but, with all their problems, they are farther ahead than women. To begin with, the percentage of illiteracy is much lower among men than among women. This is because men in our society have always had a better lot than women. From past times, our society has traditionally favored men and given them opportunities denied women. Further, society did not enslave men with the veil, a custom which has continued to hinder our civilization until very recently and which is still preventing the progress of our sisters in more than one Arab country.

As a result of this obvious difference in the situations of men and women, a strong imbalance between men and women is found in the percentage of trained persons. This imbalance only increases the burden of the progressive Arab governments who are struggling with development. Because of the great diversity of socioeconomic levels throughout the Arab lands, different plans and approaches to reform must be developed which answer the needs of each level. And the needs of the weakest level, that is, women, call for a different approach as well. We should remember, as we plan, that this backwardness of women as a group is not a part of all our traditional history.

Women enjoyed a reasonably good status in our ancient civilizations, under the Pharaohs, the Assyrians, the Babylonians. In these periods, women sat on thrones and exercised positions of importance in religion and politics. Then Islam arose, and in its time Islam appeared as a great social revolution in the history of women's position, not only for us in the Arab nations but also for the whole world.

Just before the rise of Islam, thirteen centuries ago, woman was scarcely a human being; she had no rights, and no respect was accorded her as a person. But this new religion, which arose in the desert, among people who lived with nature, managed to reverse the situation of women at that time. Islam restored to woman her total humanity; it armed her with weapons of independence and freed her from the domination of the male by giving her (a) the right to education, (b) the right to buy and sell property, and (c) the right to

hold a job and go into business. She was even drawn into participating in managing affairs of religion and politics.

While the European woman was still living on the margin of life, as a follower of the man, we find her Arab sister, daughter of the empty sands and the primitive desert society, enjoying her existence as a person and exercising the same basic rights as man, with the same obligations as a man to her duties on earth. Islam did not differentiate between men and women except in giving the woman half of the man's share of inheritance, in return for the fact that the man was to be responsible for the woman's material needs. **At the time this was a gain, but it is now considered a curse.** For with the decay of Arab civilization reactionary forces gained ascendancy, and these forces used inheritance as an excuse to lower the entire status of woman to that of half the man or even, in some cases, less than half.

I am not pursuing this point simply to defend Islam. But I do want to emphasize that Islam, as far as codifying laws is concerned, was the first religion to give woman a status as an independent person. And the rights given to women by Islam, 1,300 years ago, did not appear in the western world until many centuries later. Economic independence of women, particularly a fixed right to inheritance, equality in earning an independent living, these rights were not found in Europe until the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century.

Thus Arabs were innovators in the field of woman's rights. We may be proud of this, but we must not

(1) Quoted from "Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak" ed. by Elizabeth W. Fernea & Basima Bezirgan, pp. 375-378, from a lecture entitled "Al-Mar'ah al-Arabiyyah wa tahaddi-l-Mujtama'", delivered in Beirut on Dec. 12, 1966 & published in *Muhadarat al-Nadwah* (Les Conférences du Cénacle) 21, nos. 11-12. Trans. by the Editors.

deny the fact that the Arabs stopped at this magnificent beginning and did not develop the situation of woman as time passed. Nor did they make any attempt to conform their spiritual and social values with the changing of the circumstances of life. European women's emancipation began at the point where the Arab women's emancipation ended. We were the predecessors, they, the successors. They moved with the times, but we stayed in one place. The result was that the procession of civilization passed us by and has been ahead of us in many areas.

Why, one may ask, did the west move forward while we did not? The dogmas of the west were envisioned only as a set of rules created by man to achieve the common good. Why not? I see no reason why men cannot change their dogmas and their sets of rules when necessity demands such change. Our society did not do this. With the decline of all civilizations which came upon our countries, the reactionary thinkers were encouraged to protect the old social beliefs

and dogmas, and they did so by surrounding them with an aura of holiness which prevented the dogmas from being touched or changed in any way, except by a society open enough and strong enough in its own pride and culture to challenge such reaction. And during that period we were not strong enough to overcome these forces. This situation is hardly unique in world history. One of the basic characteristics of a backward society is an inability to adapt to new situations. This in turn creates an imbalance between what is happening in the society and the society's perception of it, and such imbalance influences spiritual values so that in time they diverge from their original meanings. History is full of many examples. During the Dark Ages, Europe committed great mistakes in the name of Christianity; human mistakes which had nothing to do with this great religious belief, based on peace and love, mercy and forgiveness. Galileo, as well as other scientists and philosophers, were concerned to death; the Inquisition fostered horrible deeds, and nothing

in these acts expressed anything of the spirit of Christianity. The situation stayed this way generally until European civilization began to mature; then the reaction was slowed, and the Christian church managed to raise the flag of peace and mercy once again.

The Arab world offers a similar case. Here, too, backwardness and reaction have cast dark shadows across our own spiritual values; it is hardly necessary to say that woman was the principal victim, and until now she has continued to suffer from the effects of reactionary thought, which is still rooted deeply in our collective mind. Even in those countries which have established laws to facilitate the emancipation of women, we find that the implementation of those laws is quite a different matter; in practice, the new idea of emancipation clashes with the static attitudes of thought so prevalent in our society, attitudes remaining from the inherited traditions which have militated against women in general over the centuries.

They all pass by Lebanon

The apostles of peace in the world place Lebanon first on their list in their international anti-violence campaign.

"The Pilgrim of Peace" Edmund Khayat, carrying his traditional cross, handed over to the Apostolic Delegate in Beirut a message addressed to the Pope John Paul II, asking him to remember Lebanon in his forthcoming speech before the U.N. General Assembly, on Oct. 3, 1979.

Paolo Aceto, the Italian humanitarian artist, a specialist in mural frescoes, deeply moved by the sight of a little girl, Amal, who had lost her leg in the Lebanese war, decided to paint the mutilated girl on the fresco of the

façade of the silo in Beirut International Port. The picture will seem to say to those who look at it: "Do not forget! I want to live!"

(Le Réveil, Oct. 5, 1979)



The future painter of silos:
"I am a sniper of Peace"



The Pilgrim of Peace

Real Freedom is Freedom from Harmful Stereotypes

The process of awareness regarding woman's problems and demands has not achieved any significant progress, either on the cultural or on the social level. Her claims have received a restricted response which consists in the recognition of her right to education, work and suffrage. Her oscillation between the traditional role of wife and mother and her new roles in the fields of education and work has blocked her ambition and forced her to be contented with secondary responsibilities in the private or in the public sector.

In spite of her success in both education and work, she is still enslaved to stereotypes which create in her an inferiority complex, a state of diffidence favoring the habits of cowardly submission, faith in fate and fear of adventure and defiance.

Within this negative philosophy, the patriarchal system works to assert man's superiority and arrogance. Inherited myths affirm that she was created out of man's rib, that she was born to be a wife and mother because, biologically and socially, she is unable to achieve personal independence. Without marriage and motherhood, she is reduced to a state of nothingness. The same sources pretend that it is better for a woman to marry a mediocre, worthless fellow than to remain unmarried; that barrenness is a shame and a result of an inherited or acquired curse, that it is a woman's duty to seek motherhood at the expense of her health and life.

Among the generally accepted stereotypes is the one which imposes chastity on woman but not on man. Though adultery and sexual intercourse outside marriage are condemned by developed religions, public opinion tends to overlook man's amorous adventures and even to admire them, while a woman who sins against chastity is said to defile her honor and that of her family; therefore she deserves to be killed and her blood would wash off her shame.

According to popular tradition, a woman "was born" to please others

and be a source of enjoyment to the eye and to the ear. Hence her constant worry about her appearance, her huge efforts to embellish her face by treating it with cosmetics, to dye her hair, hide her age and her physical defects. Of equal importance is her endeavor to acquire a sweet tongue, to learn dancing and singing by which she could win her husband's favors.

A similar tradition says that a woman "was born" to be a source of blessing for her family, seeking their interest before her own, following the path of women saints and martyrs who sacrificed themselves for the benefit of their family or clan, their group or their community (Esther, Judith, Joan of Arc, etc.)

A woman's life, whether she is a wife, a mother, a sister or a daughter, has to revolve around a man. If she claims any of her rights, she has to obtain his agreement. If she works, it is for him that she reserves the fruit of her work. If he monopolizes his parent's inheritance, she excuses his greed out of weakness and cowardice or out of goodness and leniency. If she practices a job or a profession, she hopes to lure with it a prospective husband. If she participates in elections, she does it to add her vote to his, increase his prestige and give a new evidence of her enslavement.

As a housekeeper, she readily accepts overwork because she was made to believe that the home is her kingdom, her reason for existence and her main source of happiness. She devotes her time and energy for her family without any return except food and lodging. If she reaches old age and becomes unable to work, she is tormented by the idea that she has to require help and become a charge for those whom she served all her life. She feels like a burden which her family has the right to reject and throw off. It never occurs to her that now she has the right to claim an indemnity or a pension, like other workers who retire after a long period of effort.

Surely the kind of liberation achieved by the woman of to-day is no more than a farce. It has given her the right to wear trousers, to smoke and to hunt a man, but it has failed to change her mentality or that of society regarding her status. Educated or not, old-fashioned or modern, she is still enslaved to the above mentioned traditions and feels unable to eliminate their impact on her life and personality.

A young girl is usually obliged to accept an inconvenient marriage because she is afraid of living alone. If she chooses single life, she is over-ridden by worry and is apt to develop a variety of complexes. Her problems are neglected or superficially treated because those who deal with them lack faith, seriousness or honesty.

One might think that the above description is negative and pessimistic. It could not be otherwise because it is a natural result of the persistence of traditional methods used in the upbringing of children in both family and school. These methods are at the root of the **distorted personality** which characterizes both men and women, since injustice toward the latter results in spoiling both groups.

The troubles suffered by Lebanon and other Arab countries are a clear evidence of the defective training which tolerates and encourages in youth a number of primitive traits such as: jealousy, rivalry, emotionality, aggressiveness, greed and money worship, flattery and lack of frankness, duplicity, tribal fanaticism, nepotism, sectarianism, favoritism of the strong against the weak.

According to our traditional beliefs, a country is only a farm whose tenants compete and fight over its products, each trying to obtain the lion's share in profits. Everything becomes a tool used to satisfy the appetite of the greedy. **Woman is one of those tools.**

Against this entrenched way of life, a **cultural revolution** must be waged by a group of honest and experienced leaders who would plan for the formation of really freed men and women, freed from the blemishes of the past, intent on developing a totally renewed personality, and on building up a modernized nation.

From an article
by the Editor

FROM BAHRAIN

1) A set of publications dealing with socio-economic development, recently issued by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, listed as follows:

1 - **Social Indicators for Bahrain** June 1977, a publication, in both Arabic and English, presents statistical tables and reports on the population, housing, education, employment and social development. In introducing this study, Faiza al-Zayani, Social Development Section superintendent, says: "Comparing data of 1971 with those of 1976, the reader will realize the rapid social change and the dynamics of the different variables interacting in the process of change which the Bahraini society is going through at present."

2 - **Al-Nshrah al-Dawriyyah** (the Periodical), a quarterly reporting on the activities and achievements of the Directorate of Social Affairs in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Bahrain, (no. 17, Oct. Nov. Dec. 1978.)

3 - **The Local Pioneer's Guide**, a booklet (in Arabic) intended to instruct women engaged in pioneering social service in Bahrain on the basic principles of their work and the various roles they should play as leaders, counselors and promoters of change in feminine groups and organizations.

4 - **Kindergarten Teachers Guide** (in Arabic) an illustrated booklet expounding the role of kindergarten and nursery school teachers, the needs and capacities of the preschool child, the organization and equipment of K.G.'s, the interaction between K.G. teachers and the children's families, also the main programs of work that may be used.

5 - **Social Workers' Guide**. This booklet (written in Arabic) gives the meaning and development of social work, its various stages and services, the qualification of a social worker, the various fields of social service: in the family, in rural and

urban areas, in medical work, among the delinquent and the handicapped.

2) **Al-Bahrain between political independence and international activity** by Amal Ibrahim Zayani, 2nd. Ed. 1977; an historical study in 392 pp. (Arabic), presented by the author for the master of arts degree in political science at Cairo University; a masterly work based on wide research and scientific methodology.

3) **Al-Bahrain Society: influence of migration on the change of its social structure**. A study in 363 pp. (in Arabic), Cairo 1977, by Faysal Ibrahim Zayani, a specialist in international law from Oxford University. The author of this systematic and well-documented work discusses the problem of migration into and out of Bahrain, its factors and influence. "The proportion of foreigners residing in Bahrain reaches 36.6% of the inhabitants. It is one of the highest in the world (p. 299).

Churches and States - The Religious Institution and Modernization -

Edited by K.H. Silvert
224 pp; N.Y., 1967

A collaborative study of Judaism, Catholicism and Islam, and the institutional processes of modernization, based on a conference on "The Religious Institution and Modernization," sponsored by the American Universities Field Staff and held at Indiana University, Oct. 1966.

In his foreword to the book, Dr. Kenneth W. Thompson says: "The collaborators have shown an unmistakably unified interest in bringing methodological order to the study of religion and national development."

The concept of "modernism" which dominated the said conference is expressed by the editor, Prof. Silvert, who has characterized it as "attitudes, social devices and traditions which permit orderly, institutionalized change... and which

assume that public decisions must be secular, pragmatically derived and subject to empirical change."

In his conclusions, Silvert reaffirms the principle of **separation of church and state** which.. promotes modernization by opening areas of civic freedom, thereby immediately fostering economic and other forms of development.

Ahd min al-Quds (A Covenant from Jerusalem) by Najwa Qawar Farah

This collection of short stories taken from real life reveal the author's flair for the choice of details that create the particular atmosphere of the story and bring out the personality of the characters. Imagery is sparingly and naturally used, the expression is rhythmic all through, thus giving the story an emotional tone which heightens its effect. Variety is another characteristic of the author's style. She moves from monologue to dialogue, from prose to verse, from describing people to depicting natural scenery. The stories are strongly permeated with local color, they faithfully reproduce the author's experiences, her concerns and those of Palestinian youth during the period of struggle which preceded the revolution of 1967. They relate the clash between old traditions and new ideals; characters are indirectly analyzed through their actions, their reflections, their flash-backs and their conversations.

In the younger group we sometimes detect a chivalrous attitude recalling Cyrano de Bergerac and other romantic heroes. The frustrated lover is led to act as a mediator between his beloved and the young man of her choice. Moved by pity, he decides to marry the girl who tried to commit suicide because of her failure in love. Another unsuccessful lover courageously accepts his fate and sublimates his passion by enrolling in the Resistance Movement where he suffered martyrdom. Love and loyalty to the Fatherland and to the Palestinian cause act as a binding covenant and a haunting image for each of the characters. It makes them triumph over the temptation of escape into another country. It helps them drown their petty conflicts in the higher struggle for national liberation.

"The Hosken Report: Genital and Sexual Mutilation of Females"

A voluminous report prepared by Fran P. Hosken, a philanthropist and militant against the degrading and harmful tradition of mutilating woman's genital organs. The report compiles case histories from five countries in East Africa and seven in West Africa, states the reasons given, compares between male and female circumcision, concludes by saying that "the politics of genital mutilation represents the conspiracy of silence. The conspiracy of silence must be broken. The shameful practices of concealment, of withholding the facts on genital mutilation that have allowed these practices to continue and spread for 2000 years, must stop. Women in Africa have a right to know about their own bodies and to make their own choice. Women all over the world have a right to health and a right to their own sexuality.

**Women's International Network News
187 Grant St. Lexington Mass. U.S.A.**

"From under the Debris" (English)

**A personal viewpoint
by Nuha Salib Salibi
Beirut 1978**

Dedicated "to our children who in spite of the hardship of war taught us the meaning of existence and gave us the impetus to survive", this booklet of 40 pp contains poignant descriptions and thoughtful reflections inspired by the Lebanese war which the author describes as "a war of decadent principles, of senseless, ceaseless fighting".

The tragic condition revealed by the war is treated in the article entitled "a bowed generation", where she says: "We are bowed with worry about the future, bent with the guilt of a pathetic living... The easiest route is escape and many of us have already taken that way... We sadly look around at the many monsters surrounding us: the monsters of political squabbling, of avaricious

gain, of religious disintegration... What war is it but an artificial one created by war-mongers, fanned into flames by the hatred of people for each other, a hatred so irrational and senseless that sooner or later it will lash out at every one around."

The Muslim Mind

**Waddy, Charis. (Eng.) 205 pp.
Longman, London and New York,
1976**

"The book provides a clear introductory explanation of Islam, especially but not exclusively presented for non-muslims. It includes much material from personal interviews and correspondence with ordinary Muslims, as well as Muslim scholars."

With copious quotation from Islamic literature and modern Islamic writing, the book gives a symposium of Muslim attitudes and thought, especially on topics of immediate importance, from family life to internationalism.

**Women in the Arab
Lybian Republic:
A brief view of their economic
and social status (Arabic)
Research Center,
Benghazi University, 1975**

This booklet opens with a brief statement of the general rights and privileges granted to woman by the Islamic religion. The second chapter states her equality with man in the right to work and to equal salary for equal work, except that she is not legally allowed to perform strenuous tasks. This is followed by details about the number of her work hours per week, her maternity leave, her right to social security, comparative tables of women's working conditions in other Arab countries.

Statistics on woman's education show a marked increase in the number of elementary girl students between 1955 and 1975. From 11195 the number rose to 234360. The same proportion applies to their

number in normal training schools. In Benghazi University, the number of women students is also on the increase. From one student at the Law School in 1962, the number rose to 52 in 1975. In the same year, the number of women students at the School of Arts reached 550, those majoring in business were 107, in medicine 53, in science 18, in dentistry 8.

The Tripoli University, 5 years younger than Benghazi University and more specialized in science, counted in 1975, 12 women students in the sciences, 6 in engineering, 3 in agriculture, 27 in education.

The last chapter gives some statistics on the number of Lybian working women, which is still quite low: 2% of their whole number in 1975. The majority of them were employed in agriculture, where they formed about a fifth of the whole number of women in the country and 47% of the number of working women.

The booklet gives no definite laws concerning the personal status or family laws of Lybian women.

"Al-'Anbar no. 13"

**(The Compartment no. 13)
Edwick Y. Shayboub
Naufal Publishers
Beirut 1979**

A collection of short stories inspired by a series of old and new experiences, carrying a strong touch of realism.

Though many of them have been inspired by the Lebanese war, the tragic element is totally absent from them. They generally end with an optimistic, trustful note. The author does not fail to see the light through the darkness, and foresee the calm succeeding the storm. In one of these stories we read a touching description of little Samar's homesickness in Paris, where she spent a year as a refugee with her family during the Lebanese war. Samar is Edwick's four-year old granddaughter who was unable to adjust to the absorbing Parisian environment nor enjoy its wonderful amusements, because she kept thinking of her Lebanese home and friends. Only when she was back in

Lebanon, was she able to recover her peace and resume her normal activity.

The stories reveal a stage of maturity in style and thought. They reflect a period of struggle and serious meditation which, in the author's life, followed a period of painful recollections of frustrated hopes.

Child-to-Child Programme

Edited by Audrey Aarons
and Hugh Hawes with Juliet Gayton
Published by Macmillan Press Ltd 1979

Child-to-Child is an international programme designed to teach and encourage school children to concern themselves with the health of their younger brothers and sisters.

It publishes programmes of activities that help children to better understand their younger brothers and sisters and try to improve their standards of health and their quality of life.

Child-to-Child has been suggested by the International Year of the Child. It aims to bring a change in the health and development of the world's children not only in 1979 but as a continuing and growing improvement.

This issue ends Vol. II of *Al-Raida*. Beginning with Vol. III, No. 11, the yearly subscription will be raised from \$5 to \$10 including postage. The size of the publication will be increased in return.

Your generosity and financial support are urgently needed if you want us to continue with the publication. Do you know of friends who might be interested in receiving *Al-Raida*? Encourage them to subscribe or send us their names and addresses so we may contact them.

Pithy Sayings

"For myself I can say that, having had every good thing that money can buy.. I could part without a pang with every possession I have. We live in uncertain times and our all may yet be taken from us. With enough plain food to satisfy my small appetite, a room to myself, books from a public library, pens and paper, I should regret nothing."

Somerset Maugham
from "Personality Development"
by Henry Clay Smith,
N.Y. 1961,
p. 64.

"The criterion of development in people is their aspiration to creative knowledge in science, art and all other forms of culture. They believe that this aspiration is the means of self-realization, of personality development and integration. Material results of knowledge are of secondary importance. Utilizing knowledge for purely material or destructive aims is the greatest calamity that may befall mankind."

Anonymous

"Murder and suicide, like war and oppression, may be desperate attempts to compel the gods to come down to earth, to protest, to dispense even, some insane idea of justice. Individually and collectively, the oppressed rebels perpetrate acts of terror in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity. The crimes against them may have been monstrous, but theirs are monstrous too and, in a hundred years, the human situation is the same as it has always been."

Peter Gray
Introduction to "The Sun is Silent"
by Rima Alumuddin
p. 13

Copies from the study on May Ziadeh by Ms. Rose Ghurayyib, formerly advertised in *Al-Raida*, No. 6, nov. 1978 are available at the Institute or at Three Continents Press, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Suite 1131, Washington, D.C. 20036, U.S.A.

Looking forward to the coming publication of the English bibliography on Arab Women prepared by Mrs. Samira Meghdessian and published by Mansell Publishing, 3 Bloomsbury Place, London WC1A 2Qa, England.

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