

Why a Women's Liberation Movement?

When asked about her opinion regarding the Women's Liberation Movement, one of our Lebanese social leaders said: «I do not think we need it here. Our constitution gives women equality with men in all fields».

From a scientific point of view, this answer may be called a generalization or a sweeping statement which requires revision.

In the first place, the Lebanese constitution, according to an experienced woman lawyer, contains 13 articles which disadvantage women, including article 562 of the penal code which allows a minimum penalty for men committing «honor crimes» but excludes women from the same right. In the second place, laws which have been officially ratified are not always readily enforced nor do they consider all women's needs. A recent study on the employment status of women in Lebanon⁽¹⁾ reveals the high rate of illiteracy among working women, their lack of vocational training, their need for child care centers and for opportunities of promotion. Rural women and those who head households need special attention and help from both the public and the private sectors.

In the third place, the personal status laws, including inheritance and family-laws, are unfair to women and incompatible with the needs of the times. They require up-dating which favors the establishment of civil marriage and the promotion of unity and understanding between the various communities which constitute Lebanon and other Arab countries.

Discrimination against woman is not limited to the legal field. Traditions imposed by society on her upbringing and socialization encourage her treatment as an object. They require her to be good-looking and to try to lure others by her looks, her dress and her smooth manners. Any talk or discussion relating to woman spontaneously brings out the following questions: «Is she pretty, or ugly? young or old? well-dressed or shabby-looking?» This kind of attitude on the part of the public is apt to create in her a morbid self-consciousness and a painful anxiety regarding her appearance. Her physical charm seems to be the primary condition required by a prospective husband or employer. It is the carte blanche ensuring her success in society and in any occupation. «Beauty contests» which have become a confirmed tradition in our civilized world are a flagrant proof of the deficient amount of progress achieved by women since the start of their liberation movement 200 years ago.

This movement has yet a long way to go. Those who criticize it or regard it as futile or unnecessary are sadly misinformed. They need to be more enlightened and less superficial in their judgement.

(1) Women and Work in Lebanon, Monograph Series of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, No. 1, 1980.

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CESA NABARAWI

Cesa Nabarawi, the doyenne of Egyptian Feminist militants celebrated her eighty-eighth birthday on January 31st 1981. She was one of the first Egyptian women to dare to «show her face in public» more than half a century ago, when «decent» young girls and ladies were supposed to be heard but not seen.

Madame Cesa is still actively campaigning on issues ranging from women's rights to nuclear disarmament. But she is worried about what she sees as evidence of regression in the movement for women's emancipation in Egypt.

«Everywhere», she protests with mixed anger and dismay, «I see veiled girls and women, peering at life through narrow slits in Ku Klux Klannish hoods, reverting to the humiliating, alien custom my companions and I discarded nearly sixty years ago. It is incomprehensible.»

Cesa Nabarawi was twenty eight, in 1923, when she and Hoda Shaarawi, founder of the Egyptian Women's Movement and fifteen years her senior, caused a social earthquake by appearing in public sans veil.

The momentous event occurred on their return from attending an International Conference of Women in Rome.

She recalls with mischievous glee, that, on the train journey from Alexandria to Cairo, she and Madame Hoda conspired to take the plunge then and there.

At Cairo Central station, where their families, friends and a large crowd awaited their arrival, they stepped off the train unveiled, smiling, radiant.

The sight of two pretty female faces shamelessly revealed outside the hareem caused a furore. Madame

(1) This article is based on an interview by the author, Irene Beeson.



Cesa Nabarawi decorated in 1972 by Aisha Rateb, Minister of Social Affairs.

Shaarawi's husband divorced her. There were outraged denunciations from religious and bourgeois circles.

Yet, Cesa Nabarawi explains, the gesture was symbolic. Several years previously, at the time of the 1919 revolution, Egyptian women had joined the men in demonstrations and on the barricades, in protest against British occupation. When the British army was called out to put down the revolt, the women had refused to budge, had torn off their veils and waved them as banners of independence.

In those early days, she explains, Egypt's pioneering women were deeply involved in politics. «For how could women hope to gain their freedom when Egypt herself was not free?»

1923, year of the Rome conference, was the year Hoda Shaarawi established the Egyptian Women's Movement. The Women's Union was formed a year later and «L'Egyptienne», the first Egyptian woman's magazine, appeared in 1925. Published in both French and Arabic, it informed Egyptian women of their rights and of the aims and activities of the women's movement. These were linked with international organizations and movements: campaigning for women's rights, world peace, conventional and, later, nuclear disarmament, free trade unions, democracy etc.

Looking back, Cesa Nabarawi considers that the most important achievements in the field of Egyptian Women's rights, in the early days of the movement was the granting, in 1925, of equal rights of education

Gibran's Year A message

1981, besides being the year of the Handicapped, is also the year of Gibran, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of his final «sleep».

Just as the year of the Handicapped carries a message of renewed hope to a large number of suffering people, so does Gibran's year carry a message of reevaluation and deeper understanding of his works by his numerous readers.

It is characteristic of the work of art that it continues to live and grow after the departure of its author. Advanced study and further criticism may shed new light on the artist and bring about a new interpretation of his message.

During the dark years which we have had to face, many of us have recalled inspiring passages from the Prophet, such as: «Your pain is the breaking of the shell

that encloses your understanding»; «You shall be free indeed when your days are not without a care nor your nights without a want and a grief. But rather when these things girdle you and yet you rise above them, naked and unbound.»

The great thought emanating from the whole text is the one stated by Mary Haskell who understood Gibran more than any of his friends: «You are far, far greater than you think and all is well.» It is a forceful call to self-reliance, to a firm belief in our potential as individuals and as groups. When we are abandoned by every one, we still have ourselves to seek and to rely upon. We are thus compelled to search deeper into ourselves and exploit our latent capacities. Like our ancestors who had to confront barren soil and bare rocks and to extract from apparent barrenness good fruit and living water, we are bound to strive and find our own road to salvation. This road lies within us, shaped by our history, our heritage, our moral values, our constant endeavor. Material wealth is of brief duration. Ours is a more lasting wealth.

The message of Gibran's Year is one of optimism, endurance and universal prospects

for Egyptian girls and raising marriage age of girls to sixteen. «They used to marry girls off at twelve or thirteen», she adds. «We succeeded because there was no parliament in those days. Had there been, the traditionalists and reactionaries would have voted overwhelmingly in opposition. Further reforms in laws governing personal status, marriage and divorce were, however, blocked for many more years — as was Egypt's own «emancipation».

The great leap forward came with the 1952 revolution. Women were granted the right to vote, to be elected to the National Assembly, of membership of the Arab Socialist Union (the official political «party»). In 1962 the first woman cabinet minister (of social affairs) was appointed, Al Azhar university was «persuaded» to admit girl students and all stages of education were opened to women, free of charge. «Bait el Ta'a» (The House of Obedience) regulation was abolished. This had empowered a husband to compel his estranged or runaway wife to return home and cohabit with him, resorting, if necessary, to the police to drag her back by force. Woman was granted the right to divorce a polygamous husband. Female circumcision was outlawed. The veil vanished totally.

The current Muslim «nouvelle vague» started with the regime's switch from the (Arab) socialism of the Nasser era, towards capitalism and «Americanization». It is actively encouraged by the religious establishment and, apparently, acquiesced in by the regime.

Public protest and demonstrations are strictly banned in Egypt. Yet, in 1974, a procession of several thousand students and members of the Al Azhar staff marched unmolested to the People's Assembly, in protest against long-debated reforms in the marriage laws. Their slogan was «no to socialism, no to nasserism, yes to Islam».

That year the Sheikh of Al Azhar sought to wreck the national family planning programme by proclaiming in the government-controlled Al Ahram that birth control was forbidden by Islam. Yet, when the programme was launched in the mid-sixties, the previous sheikh had affirmed that, not only did Islam not forbid birth control, but actually recommended it in certain cases — to protect a woman's health and to ensure the happiness and welfare of the couple and family.

Regression in family planning meant regression in all aspects of women's rights and emancipation, the Egyptian Women's Movement protested in 1974.

It was at that time that the great leap backward first became apparent, with girls and women concealing and «separating themselves from the world of man» behind veils and slit-eyed hoods. The trend has since gained momentum.

So, while she and her fellow activists look back with pride and a sense of achievement, Cesa Nabarawi celebrating the fifty eighth year of her own release from purdah, wonders with some apprehension whether their movement is being systematically undermined by male chauvinists, traditionalists and the religious ghouls. Is Egypt going the way of Saudi Arabia? Of Iran?

Irène Beeson

Jehan Sadat



The First Lady of Egypt, a militant feminist and an active social leader, answers in an interview with a reporter from "Marie-Claire" (1) some important questions regarding woman's status in Egypt.

Jehan Sadat, wife of the Egyptian President, has been, since her husband assumed the leadership of Egypt, a prominent figure in international mass media. Appearing always next to her husband during his frequent official trips, she gives the impression of being to him a faithful helper and a qualified inspirer.

At the age of 40, she resumed her education at the University of Cairo where she obtained a degree in English literature. She is currently assistant professor at the same university and a member of the Supreme Council for Family Planning in Egypt; she also occasionally publishes poems under a pseudonym.

In defining her attitude toward woman's liberation, she says that she admires strong women leaders like Margaret Thatcher and Indira Gandhi, but she is equally proud of the fact that her country produced great queens⁽²⁾. At present, the Egyptian woman is trying to recuperate the rights she lost during the period of decline. Since 1960, Egyptian women have occupied ministerial positions. The year 1980 saw the promulgation of new laws which improved woman's condition in the family (restriction of divorce and polygamy), in politics and in development⁽³⁾. Mrs. Sadat declares that she waged a real struggle to bring about these reforms. Through her intervention, the number of women in the Egyptian parliament was raised to over thirty.

When asked about the recent reactionary wave started by Iran, she declared that she is very much against it. «If any of my students should come veiled to my class I would send her out.» About the Iranian Revolution she said: «In that country they are acting against Islam. But Egypt is not Iran. We have the Nile which unifies us.»

Concerning the capital punishment ordained by Muslim law against adulterers, Mrs. Sadat said that «adultery is a condemnable practice not only in Islam but in all religions. Yet nobody thinks to-day of executing an adulterous man or woman. This law is not applied in Egypt.»

She severely condemns women's sexual mutilation or circumcision, still widely practiced in Sudan and in certain parts of Egypt. «It is not likely to be accepted in educated society. My aunts, my cousins, my daughters and myself did not go through it. This practice does not really trouble me. It will disappear by itself.»

To Katie Breen, the interviewer, this conclusion is not convincing. According to her a tradition which is not intensively fought will not disappear by itself.

(1) Interview by Katie Breen, Marie Claire, no.336, Aug.1980, p.56.

(2) Like Nefertiti and Hatshepsut in the Pharaonic period, and the Mamluke queen Shajarut-ud-Dur in Islam (Editor's note).

(3) See Al-Raida, vol. III, no. 14, Nov. 1980, p.9.

Continuing Education for Women⁽¹⁾

Under several names like Adult Education, Extension Programs, Lifelong Learning, Continuing Education is the topic of the day, especially in the intellectual centers of the Far East.

Accompanied by a travelling team of experts in education, Mrs. Lily Badre, wife of BUC President, Dr. Albert Badre, visited nine colleges/universities in six Asian countries, to share in consultations on Continuing Education for women, instigated by the Asian Women's Institute.⁽²⁾ The team included Dr. Eva Shipstone, Sister Mary Braganza and Dr. Thelma Adair.

Why this interest in «Continuing Education»?

Because «formal liberal arts education, as offered in some of our colleges and universities to-day, is seen as irrelevant to the needs of the society we profess to serve». Most of the graduates of liberal arts colleges in Asia are not equipped to seek well paid jobs or to hold leadership positions in their respective countries. Besides its value as a means of personality development and intellectual growth, Continuing Education can prepare women for paid employment outside their homes. In supporting the movement, President Sumiya of Tokyo Women's Christian University said in his closing speech: «In order to stay young in this graying society, we must constantly rejuvenate ourselves through cultivation of up-to-date knowledge».

Continuing Education which in Europe and America, especially in the United States, has been attracting millions of women and offering all kinds of extension courses, has to be more comprehensive and diversified in Asia where it starts with the basics. Its function is to make women conscious of the new status and roles and opportunities which are open to women and help them take advantage of these roles and opportunities. It includes basic literacy education, education for community development, education to respond to new demands of social change and, very particularly, to help women achieve fuller development, so that they may participate fully in the world of work, in decision making and in society».

Mrs. Badre says that she was impressed by the activity going on in the field of Continuing Education in practically all the Asian countries she visited, particularly in Korea, the Philippines and India. «Programs are being offered by governments as well as by voluntary agencies of all kinds, ranging from women's organizations and men's clubs to educational institutions, churches and business concerns».

Her consultation in Korea was «hope-inspiring». Continuing Education programs are flourishing there. Offered by both government and

voluntary agencies, they involve almost every college and university in the country, and are directed towards a specific target group, rural or urban, depending on the location of the college/university. Ehwa woman's University in Seoul, South Korea, has a number of Continuing Education programs besides a popular Women's Studies course, attended this year by over 150 students. Another important program is offered to teachers who wish to up-date their knowledge or earn a higher degree while continuing working in their teaching jobs.

In Japan, the consultation was «thought-provoking». The division of roles between men and women is rigid and complete, thwarting progressive ideas regarding woman's role. Japanese women need Continuing Education to help them fill the leisure that rapid changes in society and technology have put at their disposal. Efforts are being spent to popularize women's studies and acquaint women with fundamental problems, such as studying the needs of the widowed woman, the single woman and the married woman whose children have grown up. These three categories of women need employment and must be trained for it.

In the Philippines, programs of Continuing Education abound, primarily those intended for the rural population. They include social and medical services, cottage industries, sanitation, health education, nursing, home arts and others.

In India, consultations were made at three colleges: Women's Christian College, St. Christopher's College and Izabella Thoburn College, Lucknow. The developed programs presented by the speakers were bound to wait because of the extreme poverty and ignorance of the rural population where 80% of the women are illiterate and living in slums. Encouraging signs, however, are not lacking. As an example, Izabella Thoburn College has adopted three rural villages where it is carrying out a social welfare program. If every college and university in India would do the same, this large country would move a long way towards solving its problems.

At Kinnaid College, Lahore, Pakistan, the needs of Pakistan's women as identified by consultation participants were: 1) sanitary and transportation services, 2) alleviation of women's frustrations caused by family situations or male dominance in the home, 3) providing job opportunities for women, 4) removing inhibitions to women's progress. Further studies on women's needs are expected from the Pakistan Women's Institute at Kinnaid College, which would be made possible through a women's studies course.

(1) Selections from a report, given in a workshop, by Mrs. Lily Badre on November 20, 1980, about the trip she made to the Far East during September 1980, as a consultant for AWI on Continuing Education.

(2) About the Asian Women's Institute see *Al-Raida*, September 1977, No.2, p.8 and May 1, 1980, vol.III, no.12, p.10.

On the whole, the basic factors responsible for the present depressed status of women in the Asian countries she visited are, according to Mrs Badre, more or less similar: traditional attitude toward women in Japan and Korea, the economic factor in the Philippines and India, the lack of training for work among educated women, their little concern about women's issues, the poor response of rural and slum women to the programs prepared for them, the little interest shown by men in women's needs and problems. All these trends call for extensive study and create two general challenges for colleges and universities to consider:

1) How to reconstruct current college courses for city women and Continuing Education courses for the urban housewife so as to motivate them to become contributors in their society.

2) How to make Continuing Education programs more challenging for the rural woman in order to motivate her to accept change and to seek to improve her situation.

A New Census of the Handicapped in Lebanon.

A «Commission of Statistics for the Handicapped in Lebanon» has been recently created with the aim of obtaining detailed information about the handicapped all over the country, to whatever category they belong. For this purpose, ninety centers will be established and equipped to receive the handicapped who will be registered and, accordingly, will have to fill a formulary reporting their personal and family conditions.

The project which will try to evaluate the aid that would be offered to the handicapped by national and international organizations during IYDP, will be carried out in four stages permitting a careful study of the results and conclusions of collected data and, lastly, the edition and publication of final reports.

Three hundred young people are already being trained for the execution of the project. Ninety of them will work as guides, 25 as team leaders, 10 responsible for the administrative districts. They will form itinerant teams, whose leaders will be free to decide about the starting point of their activities. Unregistered handicapped persons will be liable to home visits from team members inquiring about the causes preventing their cooperation.

The Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Dr. Abdul Rahman Labban, is the director of this officially recognized organization.

(L'Orient-Le Jour,
31 Jan. 1981)

Seminar of Arab Women Journalists: An effort to stimulate and promote feminine journalism in the Arab World

The Seminar of Arab Women Journalists held in Beirut, February 3-8, 1981 at the Riviera Hotel, grouped about 40 participants from Lebanon and other Arab countries. Besides women delegates representing the Arab press in Lebanon, Tunis, Morocco, Iraq, Egypt and Syria, it included delegates from UNESCO and from the French Press. Also present were the general director of the Moroccan Agency, Mr. A. Fanjeero; Mr. Hanna Muqbel, General Secretary of the Union of Arab journalists, Dr. Fareed Ayyar, General Secretary of the Federation of Arab News Agencies, the last two being the chief organizers of the Seminar. Among the participants were the Lebanese Ministers of Information and Tourism, Mr. Michel Edde and Mr Marwan Hamadeh, and the Acting General Director of the Ministry of Information.

The aim of the seminar, as stated by Dr. F. Ayyar, was to discuss and seek the ways by which women journalists in the Arab world could receive further recognition and obtain proper promotion in the social, economic and cultural fields.

Several lectures were given about Arab women pioneers in journalism in the early part of this century. One of the lecturers was the late Mr. Wafeeq Teebi, director of the National Institute of Journalism in Lebanon. Another lecturer on the same topic was Mrs. Ghandour Qaddoura, director of the Department of Information and Documentation at the Lebanese University, who gave a long list of feminine magazines founded by women in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria between 1898 and 1940. Feminine journalism, said Mrs. Qaddoura, contributed to the awakening of feminine cultural consciousness, gave women a chance for self-expression, helped the development of talented feminine pens and tried to influence public opinion in favor of woman's liberation.

Several women journalists spoke of their experience and pointed out the obstacles they met because of the hostile attitude of their men colleagues toward them. Fatima Na'oura Sardouk (Lebanon), said that during the sixties, she was advised to use a male pseudonym in order to avoid possible difficulties. «To the other sex, journalism and specifically political journalism is not a woman's field. Her salary is generally lower even when the quality of her work is equal or superior to that of her men colleagues. She is deprived of the opportunity of occupying leadership positions and the number of women who take journalism as a career is thus highly restricted».

Some speakers argued that women themselves are responsible for their unfavorable positions because they do not persist in the profession. Other delegates pointed out the efforts displayed by Palesti-

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Women and Work in Lebanon⁽¹⁾

Between 1972 and 1975, women in Lebanon represented 48.1% of the total population. The economically active women represented 17.5% of the female population and 18.4% of the total labor force⁽²⁾. According to a later survey no change in these figures has occurred since 1975.

Female occupations in Lebanon are generally traditional and reflect women's tendency to choose those that befit their sex. Seventy-seven percent of the professional women, according to the 1972-1975 report, were employed as teachers; 61.6% of the women working in the commercial sector were secretaries and typists; 66.9% of those working in services were servants and 69.5% of the women industrial workers were working in the textile or tailoring industries. In the agricultural sector, women were classified as agricultural laborers or unskilled workers. Though these women have always contributed to agricultural production, the majority are still considered as «family aids» and are not remunerated for their work.

The low-rate activity of the female population can be explained by cultural, demographic, educational and economic factors. The cultural factors discourage women from joining the labor force because of the high value that society places on marriage and raising a large family as a result of traditional en-

couragement of high fertility. The lack of education, in general, and the lack of vocational training in particular, keep the majority of women in low status jobs.

Recent demographic data and studies in development planning imply the following predictions for the future:

1) The rapid population growth will increase the active portion of the population which will number around 2 million in 1985.

2) The large scale rural-urban migration will drain the rural areas of a large number of its male members who will seek gainful employment in the towns and cities, thus leaving the rural areas with fewer hands to work the land.

In view of these factors, the questions to be asked are: Will there be enough jobs for the potentially active? Will they receive enough education and training for the more specialized occupations? What kind of jobs will be left for women?

Two monographs, one in English and one in Arabic prepared by IWSAW on women and employment in post-war Lebanon, will try to answer the questions regarding the current of working women and future projections of their work.

The Employment Status of Women in Lebanon

The pressing social problems of Lebanon and of the Middle East necessitate the maximum contribution by all members of society to general reconstruction programs. They should heighten an awareness of the need for creating educational and employment opportu-

(1) **Monograph Series**, No.1, Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, Beirut University College, Beirut, 1980.

(2) **Al-Raida**, Aug. 1979, vol.II, no.9, p.10.

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nian women journalists in the field of national struggle. The Iraqi delegate paid tribute to the liberation movement led by the Iraqi Women's Federation and stressed the impetus given women journalists by the present Regime. Rashida Naifer, the Tunisian delegate who, in view of her seven years of successful journalistic work, has been recently elected president of the Journalists' Syndicate in her country, spoke about the problems of the Arab woman journalist, resulting from the strictly patriarchal and static condition of Arab society. As a result, she is continuously torn between her work as an active member in public life and the traditional role of housekeeper which requires her confinement within the home.

The UNESCO delegate, Margaret Calahan, introduced the General Women's Studies Program initiated by the UNESCO and the Arab Studies program which will be integrated with it. She said that women's concerns and problems are poorly covered in all information media. In Lebanon, for example, information on women during the last forty years did not exceed 4% of

the total. International news agencies do not give women more than 1-1.5% of their news areas. According to her, a new information system should be adopted, using other sources of information than the present one.

The Seminar closed with a number of recommendations including: 1) Creation of a committee of Arab women journalists whose function would be to further discuss and give a complete picture of their problems and demands; 2) Asking the General Information Directorate in the Arab League to call for a conference grouping men and women journalists with representatives of the Union of Arab Journalists and the Federation of Arab News Agencies, for the purpose of discussing the common problems of journalistic work; 3) Asking women journalists of the Arab countries to support the Offices of Information Service on Women, which are being organized by the Federation of Arab News Agencies; 4) The UNESCO should be asked to share in the financial support of the said Offices; 5) The Journalists' Syndicate and the information media in the Arab world are also expected to contribute to and support the project.

nities for women, a relatively neglected element in planning schemes.

To meet this need, we have to recognize the urgent necessity of preparing occupational information pertinent to career counseling for secondary school and college bound students.

The following information on the current employment status of women and future trends is based on a study project carried out by Mrs. Evelyn Richards, Guidance Office Counselor, BUC, and the IWSAW in 1979. She used a sample of 240 large organizations in Beirut and its suburbs, considered the largest industrial area in Lebanon.

The findings may be summarized as follows:

A. Sex Distribution of Employees

- 1) The female employees constitute 20.43% of the total of employees.
- 2) The highest number of females, 33%, is found in the administrative category and includes 99% of the secretaries and typists employed.
- 3) In the commercial category, 29% of the workers are women and nearly all of them are employed as sales-persons.
- 4) In the service category, 24% are women, 90% of whom are employed at the lowest level.
- 5) The professional category includes 20% women, mainly employed in the educational professions: 67% of secondary school personnel and 93% at the elementary level.
- 6) In skilled and semi-skilled categories, 15% of the employees are women, the majority of whom are found in traditional women's occupations, i.e. in textile, embroidery, tailoring and rug-weaving industries.

B. Marital Status of the Female Labor Force

The results show that 82% of the currently employed women are single.

The commercial category employs the largest percentage of married women (49%), as sales-persons:

In the service category 98% are single women.

In the professional category, 69% are single women.

In the administrative category, the single women number over three fourths of the whole.

In the skilled and semi-skilled category, only about 8% are married.

C. Response of Employers

Employers prefer to employ women in traditional occupations. They all prefer female elementary school teachers. Over 95% of them prefer female secretaries and typists. Over 50% prefer female workers in textile and rug-weaving industries. As to the marital status of employees, there is no outstanding difference between those who prefer single workers to married ones except in tailoring and rug-weaving where the majority of employers prefer single female workers.

D. Starting Age

Employers expect nearly two-thirds of their workers to be between 19 and 30 years of age. Thirty-four percent prefer them between 21 and 25.

E. Educational Preparation

All employers require in their employees a minimum amount of preparation, represented in college and university degrees for professional employment, and in brevet and baccalaureat part one for the commercial category. In skilled and semi-skilled employment, 55% require a technical degree (Baccalaureat technique).

F. Conclusions

As shown by the reported findings, employers prefer women only in a few traditional occupations. They generally prefer them young and single because in this case they expect them to leave upon marriage and thus lose the chance of development and promotion.

According to the UNESCO survey (1973) «the development of trade, tourism and industry is opening new jobs for women and the requirements are for more technical or vocational education.»

For the purpose of guiding women in their vocational plans and encouraging them to choose non-traditional jobs or careers, Mrs. E. Richards and the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, in collaboration with the «Contact and Research Center», have sponsored the publication of a brochure entitled Careers. This 15 page booklet informs women regarding the many possibilities open to them in choosing an occupation in Lebanon.

Career information is undoubtedly one of the powerful methods of influencing career development.

Other methods are:

- 1) Career counseling for secondary school and college students. The «Guidance Office» at BUC is one example.
- 2) Using the mass media to counteract stereotyped attitudes toward woman's roles and potentials.
- 3) Providing more accurate and up-to-date information on women in school and college curricula.
- 4) Further research is needed to obtain additional occupational data and test the effect of occupational information on the career choice of women in Lebanon.

Finally the above study does not include women who are self-employed in professions like medicine, dentistry, nursing and midwifery, child care, dress-making, educational projects, catering, commercial and administrative work, free-lance writing, handicrafts, tutoring and the arts. More research is needed to obtain data on self-employment among women, their work in smaller organizations, their recent employment in journalism, air-travel companies, broadcasting and television programs, computer science and other technological jobs.

Demographic Aspect of Family Planning⁽¹⁾

«In studying a population increase, the rule is to regularly follow up the increase resulting from the excess of the number of births over that of deaths in a certain year and within a limited geographic area.»

In Lebanon, statistical and demographic data, which are a prerequisite for an accurate analysis and interpretation of any demographic aspect, are at present very inadequate. The last population census took place in 1932. The principal information available along this line consists in two recent studies. The first is a sample study of the labor force effected in 1970 by the «Statistical Center». The second, a study of the demographic situation in Lebanon made by Youssef Kirbage and Philippe Fargues in 1974.

According to a survey made in 1974, the ratio of annual population increase in Lebanon reaches 24 per thousand, while in developed countries it is 4 to 5 per thousand. The causes of this high proportion are: 1) The high annual birth rate of 33 per thousand; 2) the lower annual death rate (ca 9 per thousand) which is a result of recently improved medical treatment and sanitary conditions in the country. It is presumed that a persistence of this condition will lead to a duplication of the population within less than 30 years.

Lower Fertility Rate

In spite of the high birth rate, a gradual lowering of the fertility rate has been recorded during the last ten years⁽²⁾. The average number of children per single marriage has been 3.6. This condition is due to various factors such as the immigration from rural to urban areas, the high cost of living, the higher average age of women at marriage and the increasing number of women seeking higher education which imposes on them a postponed marriage.

Demographic Investments

Demographic investments include money invested with the purpose of facing rapid population increase which creates for the state a number of economic problems. Recent research has shown that a population increase reaching 2.3% per year permits only two thirds

of the percentage of savings available under a stable population policy where the annual increase is zero per cent.

A Family Planning Program

For many reasons, it is very difficult to carry out a family planning program and evaluate its results in Lebanon under the present conditions.

On the other hand, data obtained regarding fertility rates similar to ours in other countries, permit us to infer that fertility rates are lower in areas where the program was carried out and response to it was positive.

One basic demographic principle should be here emphasized. It is the importance of the woman's age at the birth of the first child and of the other children as well. It has been medically established that the ideal period of child-birth for a woman is between 20 and 30. Earlier than that, childbirth may carry a potential risk for her health. The same risk lies in unscheduled births and in those occurring between 30 and 40. In the latter case, the quality of the offspring is apt to be impaired.

Recommendations

Two preliminary steps should prepare for a successful implementation of a family-planning program. First, an understanding of the distinguishing practices governing the general fertility of the Lebanese family. Second, an assimilation by the family of the basic demographic principles and the readiness of its members to apply the family-planning program.

A general census is necessary, accompanied by demographic studies regarding the fertility rate and a reorganization of the registers of the civil status.

Moreover, an extensive information campaign regarding family-planning must be carried out. It should mobilize all the available information media and take into consideration the social and cultural backgrounds of the Lebanese families. The information plan should be extended to the young generation which must be enlightened regarding its future role and the attitude it would adopt toward this question. The public should be convinced that any social program will remain defective if its demographic implications are not anticipated.

Finally, demographic thought cannot be improvised. It should rest on long term planning and on a vision inspired by an adequate knowledge of the positive and structural human experiences recently gained.

(1) Abstract of a lecture presented by Dr. Francois Farah at the Lebanon Family Planning Sixth Week, Beirut, 1-7 December, 1980.

(2) See *Al-Raida* Feb. 1980, vol. III, no. 11, p.5.

Lycée Girl Students of Oran Between Tradition and Modernism⁽¹⁾

The study prepared by Yamina Bentabet on «Lycée Girl Students of Oran Between Tradition and Modernism» raises two problems: the problem of acculturation and that of the social promotion of women. By acculturation, she means the modifications occurring in native culture as a result of contact with Western ideas, and constituting a central point in sociological problems of education in Algeria.

It is a fact that contact of Algerian young women with modern culture, offered by the official lycées where this study was carried out, is a powerful factor in the process of transformation occurring in the status of Algerian women.

An Algerian young girl receives her socialization from two major sources: the family and the school. The family represents a traditional means of education characterized by the persistence of the extended family system and the division of labor between the sexes. Traditional education imposes on young girls a number of values and virtues considered authentically feminine such as docility, chastity, obedience, modesty and self-sacrifice. On the other hand, the school education proposes new values like responsibility, initiative, competition, effort and success.

The two systems do not form two distinct entities dividing Algerian society into two separate groups, but rather an extremely complex interpenetration between two cultures, an interpenetration resulting from a long and intensive contact in addition to various borrowings effected by both systems.

Algerian Lycée girls are irreversibly led to undergo a change in their conduct, their plans and their models of consumption which are no more compatible with old social and economic values dictated by traditional stereotypes.

The present research has shown the willingness of Lycée students to participate in the economic life and development of Algerian society. Their answers regarding their future plans indicate a break with traditional norms. Out of 218 senior class students included in the study, a majority (91%) intend to take higher studies; a minority (9%) envisage entering professional occupations. In making their plans, the majority of these girls (78.5%) declare having obtained the approval of their families. The rest have met ambiguous or negative attitudes.

The favorable attitude of parents toward insuring for their daughters a wider range of future security depends on a number of factors like the educated milieu to which the student belongs, her urban origin (90% of those included in the sample come from urban districts), the impact of diffuse acculturation which is characteristic of the city of Oran.

The choices made by the respondents are motivated by their cultural and social environment. Twenty-four percent of them plan to major in literature; 29% in science; 13% intend to study law, while 4% have chosen medicine and 21% are yet undecided about the nature of their future studies.

The differences in the students' choices are easy to explain. Literary studies have always been considered as a woman's field. Scientific studies represent a break with traditional norms which require the formation of a submissive personality, entirely opposed to the pragmatic and critical attitude of scientifically trained minds.

Economic factors stand behind the students' evident interest in science. In view of the importance of scientific education for the economic future of Algeria, the school system has greatly contributed to motivate this interest by means of grants, scholarships, increased salaries and wider opportunities for work.

The reduced interest of students in medicine is due to economic as well as to cultural motives. The relatively long and costly effort required by this major, the competition waged by men doctors who consider medicine as their own field, are some of the dissuading motives, to which may be added the technological orientation encouraged by economic experts.

Economic and cultural conditions of the students are more likely to determine their access to their chosen careers. Daughters of upper and middle classes tend to prepare for university studies requiring the investment of intellectual and cultural values, (literature, law, medicine). Those whose parents do not practice intellectual activities are more inclined to choose science majors.

For Algerian Lycée students the process of change in the scale of values has not been limited to school programs and occupations. It has also affected their choice of hobbies and extracurricular activities. As a result, they show particular interest in practicing sports and they indulge in various cultural activities like reading, theater and movies. In choosing their dress, the majority of them: 94% for the upper class, 82% for the middle class, 89% for the rest, declared being free from their parents' control. Nearly the same proportion reported taking an autonomous decision concerning the choice of their future spouses.

In many instances, however, ancient cultural patterns still persist in the behavior of these students, particularly on the occasion of social rituals and ceremonies favoring the resurgence of traditional customs: feasts, weddings and the like. A majority of the respondents report their participation in housework (93%), in traditional handicrafts like embroidery, knitting and sewing. Some of them wear the traditional costume at home and the veil on certain solemn occasions. About 30% said they received religious training in Koranic schools, while others obtained it directly and in its modernized form from their family environment. A minority group, espe-

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(1) Abstract of a study on the above topic, by Yamina Bentabet, published in *Cahiers du C.D.S.H.* (Centre de Documentation des Sciences Humaines), «Actes des Journées d'Etude et de Réflexion sur les Femmes Algériennes», 3, 4, 5, and 6 Mai, 1980, no. 3, Oran, Algeria.

Women in South Yemen⁽¹⁾

Recent studies on Arab women have shown the existence of two factors in bringing about a change in their status. One is evolutionary and attributed to the spread of Western culture. The other is revolutionary and imposed by leaders with leftist or anti-capitalist tendencies. According to Maxine Molyneux, author of the article here condensed, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) is the only Arab country attempting to implement a policy of revolutionary socialist development, in contrast with those states in the Muslim world which have attempted to improve the position of women while retaining a capitalist economy.

Since 1967, the Republic has been governed by the National Liberation Front (NLF) which in 1968 declared itself committed to the goals of Marxism and Leninism and to the complete support of the principle of sexual equality.

During the guerrilla struggle against the British Army, women played an active role. In the post-independence period, the General Union of Yemeni Women (GUYW) was organized as a political arm to the Party. The Yemeni Constitution included its commitment to the mobilization of women to participate in development and the raising of their political consciousness.

The Family Law of 1974⁽²⁾ directly confronted traditional and religious practices, removed the worst inequalities which they contained without openly attacking religion itself. Maxine Molyneux summarizes the most important changes introduced as follows: 1) Prohibition of polygamy except under certain circumstances such as the disablement or barrenness of the first wife; 2) Abolition of divorce by repudiation and of men's exclusive rights over property and children; 3) Limitation of the bride-price; 4) Prohibition of compulsory marriage and of the marriage of minors.

(1) Condensed from «Women in South Yemen» by Maxine D. Molyneux, *Peuples Méditerranéens*, (Mediterranean Peoples), no. 12, Paris, Juillet-Septembre 1980, pp. 33-49.

(2) See Al-Raida, Nov. 1980, Vol. III, no. 14, p. 11.

The restriction of divorce is intended to reinforce family structure and to protect children in a thinly-populated country. A campaign waged against women's illiteracy succeeded in increasing female participation at all levels of education. However, the number of girls in the total school population does not exceed 31%, the most marked differential appearing in the rural areas.

Serious efforts have been made to encourage women's participation in wage labor, considered a necessary step for executing the development program. Women are now largely represented in industry and agriculture but restricted to lower paid jobs: clerical labor, factory work, teaching and nursing. As in other countries, working women have to face the problems of child care and of the double burden of work in and outside the home.

Considering the short lapse of time between colonization and independence, we may assert that the women of PDRY have achieved a marked improvement in their overall situation, but obstacles to their full emancipation there, as in other socialist countries, derive from two factors: 1) prioritization of economic development and subordination of all other areas of social policies to this goal; 2) reliance on reforms from above, i.e. from the ruling party, to bring about the desired changes.

Interviews made with a few women engaged in feminist activities serve to clarify the advantages and disadvantages of women's situation in their country. In answer to a question regarding the abolition of the veil, one of them said that political struggle should come before a campaign against the veil. Both the veil and the sheidor, she said, will start to disappear by themselves as a result of social development.

When asked about female circumcision, a practice widely spread in Yemen, the interviewee said: «it is degrading», yet no one thinks of issuing a law against it. A similar problem, prostitution, should be fought, according to these women, through a struggle against poverty and economic dependence. «The oppression of women cannot end unless oppression in the whole society is eliminated.»

LYCEE GIRL STUDENTS OF ORAN

Continued from page 9

cially from the working and commercial classes, are apt to experience the clash of modern and traditional pressures around them. In school, they enjoy complete freedom of adaptation, but outside the school, the impact of the past is more pronounced.

Conclusion

The transitional period which Algerian society is presently going through, imposes on Algerian young women the confrontation of contradictory influences. The school education of Algerian girls does not affect them in a uniform manner. It tends to be modified by the cultural influence of their families.

Two categories are likely to emerge from this double confrontation. The first is the more westernized type represented by the daughters of the intellectual or mid-

dle intellectual élite. The second is the more traditional type including the daughters of those social groups who received a more or less exclusive Arab culture, which also has its own character.

The response of these girls to the complex cultural types to which they are exposed depends on the historical and socio-economic conditions surrounding their acculturation. Conservative groups like merchants, craftsmen and magistrates do not usually favor the modern economic system nor the ethics derived from it, while the working class is largely made up of an «up-rooted» population recently engaged in radical change.

In spite of cultural heterogeneity, the schooling of young Algerian girls marks a break with tradition and remains the most efficient and rational means for the emancipation of Algerian women which is a decisive condition of economic reconstruction.

IYDP (International Year of Disabled Persons) at Abu-Dhabi

Following a modern educational principle which affirms that light cases of mental retardation among children need not be isolated from other normal children, the Ministry of Education in Abu-Dhabi Emirate opened in 1979, five classes each including nine children suffering from mild mental retardation, incorporated in five government schools. They were taken care of by specialists who applied recent methods of rehabilitation and succeeded in preparing those children to join the classes of their fellowmates.

A specialist in the education of abnormal children in the Social Affairs Department of Abu-Dhabi, Mrs. A. Haidar, asserts the existence of three types of mental retardation which may be identified by referring to a responsible committee of psychiatrists the cases of abnormal behavior among children. The mild type is

easily detectable and curable. Students belonging to this category should not be isolated from the group. Those of the second type, who show moderate symptoms of retardation should also be kept in ordinary schools and be made to join courses that fit their mental capacities especially those which prepare them for manual occupations.

Finally, the severe cases of mental retardation need special treatment given in institutions created for them and provided with trained specialists and modern therapeutic equipment.

The successful results achieved by those in charge of mentally disabled children in Abu-Dhabi testify to the progressive attitude adopted by this Emirate in the field of social welfare.

*From: Zahrat-ul-Khaleej, a weekly
women's magazine, Abu-Dhabi, no. 81
Oct. 1980, pp. 22-25.*

Marguerite Yourcenar, First Woman Member of the French Academy

Following the admission of Yvonne Choquet-Bruhat as a member of the Academy of Sciences⁽¹⁾, the French Academy decided last March 1980, to elect Marguerite Yourcenar as its first woman member in replacement of the late Roger Caillois. The inauguration ceremony took place on January 22, 1981, at the palace of the «Institut de France», in presence of the President of the Republic, the Ministers, the representatives of the Diplomatic Corps and members of the five classes of the French Institute.

Daughter of a French father and a Belgian mother, Marguerite Yourcenar did not settle in France nor in Belgium but decided to travel between Greece, Italy and Switzerland and finally settled in a mountain island on the northeastern coast of the United States. Deeply versed in Greek culture, she wrote a series of biographies and novels inspired

from historical erudition as well as from her travels and her diverse culture.

In his welcome speech, Jean D'Ormesson, one of the 40 academicians, presented an evaluation of Yourcenar's works, emphasizing her contribution to universal values as shown by the following quotation from her biography of the Roman emperor Hadrian: «I never felt that I completely belonged to one particular place, not even to my dear Athens, nor even to Rome. Everywhere a stranger, I never felt isolated anywhere.»

To her, he said, we may apply the definition given by Jorge Luis Borges of a true intellectual: «A cosmopolitan who feels at home in any country and sees in any religion a possible form of worship.»

In conclusion, he suggested the following as the best description of her literary achievement: «It joins the magic of expression to erudition.»

*(Condensed from Le Figaro,
Jan. 23, 1981, p. 28)*

(1) See Al-Raida, Aug. 1, 1980, Vo. III, No. 13, p. 11.

«Women: The Fifth World» by Elise Boulding⁽¹⁾

Head of the Sociology Department at Dartmouth College, member of the U.S. Commission for UNESCO, author of several works on the status of women, Elise Boulding declares in this essay her faith in international women's organizations.

According to the author, the so-called Third World includes two worlds: one containing a few countries richly endowed with oil, which are leaping forward into rapid economic development. The other, which may be called «the fourth world», is still lagging behind and suffering from extreme rural and urban poverty.

There is still a fifth world, the world of women, whose neglect by the experts who planned the Development Decade of the 1960's, is one of the main reasons why the world community failed to achieve an improvement in the economic and social well-being of the poor.

«The fifth world exists invisibly, uncounted and unassisted, on every continent, in the family farms and kitchen gardens, in the nurseries and kitchens of the planet».

«Imbued with the entrenched, universally accepted myth that woman's place is in the home, development planners failed to notice the members of the fifth world who, by the hundreds of millions, in addition to their work as mothers and housewives, continue to double as field hands on the small farms and plantations of the world».

In prehistoric times, women participated in men's agricultural and hunting activities. Slowly and gradually a division of labor took place when women tilled the fields and men went away to hunt, to find new provision resources and new trade routes. Their mobility helped them to spend less time caring for and nurturing children and more time acquiring surplus resources and means of power, while women who stayed at home had to take almost complete responsibility for the children and household activities, besides performing traditional farming tasks.

The separation, however, was never complete especially in agricultural areas where the farming way of life is a partnership. In pre-industrial societies of the 20th century, women are typically engaged not only in farming and craft work but also in trade, handling of money, credit transactions, savings and investment. They have the opportunity to accumulate and invest capital in the form of land, livestock, gold or other commodities.

With the growth of cities and manufacturing centers, the intrusion of cash cropping into the life of the farm tended to disrupt the family production partnership and lead to male dominance. Women in industrialized areas were detached from their rural means for production and obliged to live resourceless in urban tenements, with children to raise and, all too often, no means of feeding them. Especially in what we call to-day the

middle class, the role differentiation at the expense of women has been most evident. In middle class families, boys were educated and sent out into the world while girls were not.

An alternative to woman's subordinate role as wife/mother in a male-headed household, was a life of celibacy in convents and monasteries which flourished in Asia, the Middle East and Europe, particularly during the Middle Ages. Nuns and abbesses enjoyed freedom and self-realization in their chosen life. Their contributions ranged from the organization of manufacturing enterprises to the production of important intellectual works, the composition of music and poetry, service to the poor, and, occasionally, influential intervention in politics. They continued to flourish in the 19th and 20th centuries. Today there are approximately 2 million nuns in the world, coming from all the major religious traditions.

Women Turn to Internationalism

Socialists who emerged in the 19th century, decided that women should be freed from slavery to household duties and care of children and that domestic functions be taken over by the state. The limited implementation of socialist theories did not improve the status of women as long as imperialist and totalitarian systems required the subjugation of women to their plans of domination and expansion. Feminists of the 19th century thought that they should turn to internationalism as a factor in their liberation because the injustice they suffered was part of the general world injustice inflicted by traditional male domination and projected in war, world power and chauvinism. In order to reach their goals, women should cooperate on an international basis and work to change the existing economic systems which require the permanent presence of business and industrial men in office and, consequently, chain women to their housekeeping functions.

In 1852, «Sisterly Voices», the first international women's publication, was issued. The first «La Voix des Femmes» was born as a socialist paper in Paris in the 1840's. By the 1880's and 1890's, Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg had made clear the vision of an international socialist community based on non-violence and the repudiation of nationalism. Austrian Bertha Von Suttner persuaded Alfred Nobel to found the Nobel Peace Prize in 1889. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was founded in 1915, focusing on the effort to create alternative institutions for war.

Frances Willard, an American who founded the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, expressed her point of view as follows: «We are a world republic of women — without distinction of race or color — who recognize no sectarianism in politics, no sex in citizenship».

Women realized that as long as they accepted their

(1) Headline Series 248, Foreign Policy Association, N.Y., February 1980.

traditional underside nurturing roles, they would make it easier for men to perpetuate war and injustice. International women's organizations multiplied between 1880 and 1900. They sought a larger audience and more extensive support.

The Women's Movement Becomes Global

During the 19th century, the women's movement was extended beyond the Western Community and succeeded in achieving a truly global reach. Western women were able to contact women of Asia and Africa and, with the regression of colonialism, women of the Third World could speak with their own voices and their own cultural experience. The liberated class among them were at last being noticed and listened to. In 1967, a «Declaration of the Elimination of Discrimination against Women» was adopted by the General U.N. Assembly. The International Women's Year, held in 1975, gave women of the international community further opportunity for raising the issues of women's rights and status.

The World Plan of Action, elaborated in the same year, consists of guidelines for national action for work to be achieved in favor of women by national governments and international agencies during the years 1975-1985, declared as the U.N. Decade for Women.

Need for Statistics

To gain an understanding of women's status and needs, we have to have statistics collected by national governments and forwarded to U.N. statistical offices about the number of women in the labor force, what occupations they are in, what salaries they receive, how much schooling they have completed, how many are illiterate and how many elective and appointive offices they hold. Information is also needed regarding their marital status and the numbers of children born to them.

In many cases woman's work is invisible and fails to be recognized in statistics. The home maker is considered «not economically active». The same consideration applies to the unpaid family worker, the self-employed, the unpaid woman farmer and other women who share in their husbands' jobs and activities.

Systematic counting is wanting, accurate interpretation of data is often questionable. It is of great importance to work for the development of new statistical measures that will tell us more about the quality of life for both women and men, in relation to equality, development and peace.

Recent Statistics

In 1978, one-third of the world's labor force — as counted by the ILO — were women. The official figure today would be about the same. Women hold half of the world's service jobs, three eighths of the professional and technical jobs, substantial percentages of clerical, sales, farming and production jobs. Women are doing a very substantial share of the labor publicly labeled as «work», in addition to their domestic labor which is not counted.

Only 10 percent of the world's administration and managers are women. Women, in fact, are concentrated in the bottom rungs of each occupational ladder. For example, in teaching, they are half the world's primary school teachers but only one-third of the world's secondary school teachers and less than 1 percent of college professors and educational administrators.

Since women are in the lower occupational ranks, they earn less than men, even when they do identical work. Not all working women have husbands who share their financial responsibilities. According to 1976 statistics, 38 percent of them are unpartnered, (never married, widowed, divorced or separated). Many of them are teenage mothers who have to take care of their offspring. Their low earnings mean that their children are reared in poverty.

In the political field, women have remained largely absent. In socialist countries, women have a relatively more rapid political success than in capitalist countries. Of the six countries with 10 percent or over of women in parliament, five are socialist. Although parliaments in one party states may not wield the same influence as in multiparty states, women's participation in them can be taken as one index of their political activism.

Women of the First World

Owing to the higher population growth in most developing countries, women in developed countries are shrinking in number and their share of the world's female work is consequently declining.

North America has led the way in conquering illiteracy among both sexes but, so far, it has not succeeded in applying the principle of equal pay for equal work. In 1976, the median money-income of U.S. female income-recipients over 14 years of age was 36 percent. Among public school teachers, women get as much as 25 percent of men's earnings, women professionals about 60 percent. In spite of efforts made by ILO and the Council of the European Economic Community, wage reports for 1976 and 1977 show the old disparities continuing.

Women of the First World in spite of their frustration regarding equal remuneration, are privileged when compared to Third World women who suffer from hunger and overwork.

These women are receiving some help from their more fortunate sisters through the Percy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1973. But both groups need further knowledge on the meaning of development and women's integration in it. Available data on earlier times in specific Third World regions suggest that the standard of living and opportunities for women were higher a century or more ago than they are now. Perdita Huston in her book *Message from the Village*, writes: «For most of the women I encountered, change — whether seen in their lifetime, or as compared to the lives of their mothers — seems to hold a negative connotation.» Both women and men suffer from «Bureaucratization», or struggle between central control and local autonomy. They complain that only an exclusive minority, continuing the authoritarian palace

temple regimes of the earliest city-state, has benefited from the fruits of technology. The benefits of electric gadgets, television and frozen foods represent a too heavy cost to millions of women with highly limited wages.

What Should Be Done?

«It is time to learn from third-world women what they want... it is also time for women in the U.S. to reflect on what they want.» Building on existing skills and the tiny surpluses at the bottom rather than on imported resources decided upon from above... will bring women into development as partners with independant bargaining power and autonomous social goals. Third-world women should develop the capability to produce their own appropriate technology.

In the United States and Europe, women's skills are going into the establishment of all-women's workshops of all kinds. Every week, journals announce new all-women enterprises (printing presses, factories, consultant firms), new communes, new networks, new newsletters for women only; women's banks, women's cooperatives and credit associations, child care communities, etc. These movements are not «anti-male» but have a strong task orientation to helping women. They belong to the century old Western tradition of women's self-help organizations initiated by the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Young Women's Christian Association.

The Third World, too, boasts organizations of women for self-help purposes: the All African Women Conference, the Association of African Women for Re-

search and Development, the Pacific and Asian Women's Forum, The Latin American Association of Women Social Scientists and, in 1979, the Arab Social Science Women's Association.

What About the Future?

For the future «we need dialogues between rural and urban women, between working and middle class women, between craftworkers and headworkers, about what «development» might mean for human beings. We need the knowledge and ideas of third world women about their own situation and needs.

The author concludes by declaring her faith that «the new international information order» now being debated at the United Nations, might make things different. She thinks that the large number of women engaged in journalism and various communication media forms the «beginning of a journal — newsletter — radio — TV network of women, which can be used to create a multiplier effect for every experiment that is worth sharing.» She enumerates the 52 significant women's international non-governmental organizations whose cooperation with parallel structures existing in the bureaucratic world (32 UN agencies and the regional and international UN Research and Training Centers for Women), might help to solve world problems which techno-bureaucracy has created and so far has failed to solve.

«Women over and over again through the centuries have done the invisible work of reconstruction and repair for warring male societies.» Their future service will be public and their ingenuity may be the most precious resource the human race has left.

Project of a «Charter for the Defense of Women»

The «Commission of the European Parliament for Women's Rights» spent two days preparing the «Charter of 130 million European women», to be presented to the Assembly next February.

Written by Mrs. Johanna Maij-Weggen (Democratic Christian Party, Netherlands), it consists of 50 articles, subjected to 230 amendments. A final version of it will be ready during the next few weeks.

The text deals not only with women's condition in the European community but with that of other women as well. It warns against the acceptance of Greece, Spain and Portugal in the Economic European Council before obtaining from these countries definite pledges for improved treatment of their women.

African states and other countries connected with the European community are urged to give up archaic practices such as female circumcision and dowry. It is advocated that these questions be the subject of a new

conference between those states and the European Council.

The text claims for the European Community itself a reduction of the hours of work and a priority of employment for women and young people, considered as first victims of present unemployment. It condemns vocational discrimination, proposes a complex system of maternity — and paternity — leaves, and of cure for sick children. It claims vocational training and apprenticeship for women without any age limitation, and the establishment of nurseries in universities. Contraceptive methods are recommended provided a scientific study be made of their application.

Several articles are devoted to the migrant worker's wife who, in some cases, belongs to the European community but is unjustly treated in case of divorce, when the children keep the husband's nationality.

(Le Reveil, Beirut, Dec. 4, 1980)

WOMEN'S WORK IN JORDAN

During the last decade several factors have helped to integrate the Jordanian woman in national development. Besides the international woman's movement sponsored by the United Nations Organization, there has been the economic factor created by the country's need for woman's participation in the implementation of the five-year plan of economic and social development (1975-1980). Woman's work is particularly needed in replacement of male workers emigrating to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries in search of higher wages.

In 1975-76, a series of conferences presided over by His Highness, Prince Hassan, were held with the aim of encouraging woman's integration in development and deciding on the most efficient methods to carry it out. A department for women's work was created in the Ministry of Labor in 1976. Since the end of the sixties, the Jordanian Labor Code requires for women the right to equal pay for work with men and a fair treatment for women with maternity leave and for nursing mothers.

Between 1961 and 1976, a general development in the educational status of the Jordanian woman is shown by the following figures:

In 1961: number of girls aged 11 registered in government schools, was 55 % of the whole. In 1976: their number rose to 97.2%.

In 1961: girl students between 15 and 18: 11.8%

In 1976: girl students between 15 and 18: 64.9%

Mention must be made of the lower proportion of girl students in rural areas as compared to urban ones. For example, in 1976, the percentage of literate women in urban areas was 58.9% while in rural ones it was only 33%.

In 1977-78, the numbers of registered students of both sexes in all schools and universities were as follows:

Elementary-secondary:	233,552 girls 335,853 boys
Vocational Education:	2,831 girls 5,995 boys
Post-secondary:	3,396 girls 5,465 boys
University and higher Studies:	2,970 girls 5,388 boys

The above figures represent the proportion of female to male students in a country of 2,018,000 inhabitants, where women constitute about 50% of the

population.

Women's participation in development in 1975 reached the following proportions:

- 35% of the workers in rural areas were women;
- In the urban sector, women employed in non-rural occupations formed 13.9% of the working force, distributed as follows:
- 71.2% of all the working women were employed in administrative and general services, including teaching and nursing.
- 50.4% of the teaching personnel were women.
- Women also formed 20.4% of the industrial workers.

Woman's participation according to districts

The proportion of working women is higher in urban than in rural areas, and among Christian than among Moslem women, who are still more hampered by local traditions disapproving their contact with men.

The district of Amman, including the capital, which groups most of the industrial and commercial organizations, in 1970 accommodated 85% of the total working forces and 97% of female workers. In 1975, due to the efforts made by the government to generalize education, the proportions dropped to 70.9% and 70.8% respectively.

Woman's work in relation to category

Women participate in about 40 occupations, divided according to differences in training, into four categories:

- The first includes occupations requiring a university degree.
- The second is that of technicians, requiring two years of training after the secondary diploma.
- The third is that of skilled workers, requiring a secondary school diploma.
- the fourth, that of workers with limited skills, requiring an indefinite level of education.

The first category included: 1) women employed as librarians and curators, representing 33% of those employed in this field; 2) women dentists: 17.2% of the entire group; 3) women pharmacists and economists: 10.9% of the whole.

The second category includes women in medical and chemical fields, the highest being 8-11% and the lowest, 4-1, covering assistant engineers.

In the category of skilled workers (No. three) the highest proportion is represented by women employed as shorthand-typists: 41-67% of the whole. Next come those working as dress-makers and seamstresses: 45-61% of the whole. The lowest proportion is represented by workers in specific occupations like manual skills and electronics.

In non-traditional occupations, i.e. other than teaching, nursing, midwifery and social work, the proportion of women in 1975 was the following:

6% of the whole of those employed in scientific professions.

(1) Abstract of a study prepared for the Institute of Women's Studies in the Arab World by Dr. Kamel Abu Jaber, Dean of the Economics and Commerce Department at Jordanian University, 1979.

- 5% of those working in leiterary fields.
- 2.5% of workers in technical areas.
- 9% of secretarial employees (skilled occupations).
- 13.7% of manual labor employees.
- 3% of workers in limited skills

Between 1970 and 1975, the proportion of women working in urban districts increased from 9.6% to 13.9% more particularly in professions requiring technical training:

Obstacles faced by working women in Jordan.

Though the disappearance of the veil has permitted women to move about freely and to work side by side with men, the traditional belief still prevails «that a woman's place is at home», and continues to influence a large number of the population.

Information regarding women should cover two objectives. The first consists in developing woman's faith in her capacity for self-realization. The second implies the ability to change public opinion, which still considers woman as an object or an appendage to her husband and children, with no personality of her own.

Other obstacles to woman's work consist in the reluctant attitude of business and industrial organizations towards woman's employment. They show little faith in her ability and consider her as a temporary employee who will quit upon marriage. The inadequate training provided for working women and the shortage of day-care nurseries for the children of working mothers are additional obstacles.

Conclusions

1. Statistics published in 1976 show the preponderance of unmarried women in all fields of women's work: 73% of the whole. The average age of marriage for the Jordanian girl has lately risen to 21.5 instead of 18-20, which means that she has been able to benefit from a relatively longer working period. Efforts should be made, however, to eliminate the obstacles that prevent married women from a larger participation in development.

2. There is a positive correlation between woman's educational level and her attitude toward work. Over 60% of working women in 1975 were graduates of secondary schools. Woman's education equally affects the demographic situation because it generally leads her to practice birth control.

3. Woman's work tends to be concentrated in skilled occupations while among men, the majority of workers are employed in fields requiring restricted skills.

4. The highest proportion of working women exists in the sector of public administration, general services and education, where they attain 23% of the total number of workers. Next comes their proportion in the industrial sector: 22.8%.

5. The proportion of self-employed women increased between 1970 and 1975 while that of self-employed men showed a certain decrease.

6. Though the Labor Code requires for women equal pay for equal work with men, this regulation is not strictly applied. A certain degree of sexual discrimination exists; for example, in occupations requiring scientific training like medical and chemical employment, nursing and elementary education, women receive higher pay while men are better paid in the other fields.

7. Traditional occupations like teaching, nursing, dress-making, typing and secretarial work attract more women than non-traditional ones. In addition, the number of women occupying leadership positions is highly limited. On the other hand, women are not adequately represented in occupations which do not require physical exertion, like work in wireless and telephonic communications.

In vocational training centers, women have access to 14 out of 43 vocations. The proportion of women graduates of these institutions did not exceed 32% of the whole in 1976-1980.

As a conclusion, we may affirm that woman's work in Jordan has greatly developed within a relatively short period. A rational handling of the problem has favored successful solutions and a steady change. The wise guidance of the State, reflected in its social planning, information programs and continuous efforts to encourage woman's all-round liberation, leads us to be optimistic regarding the future of woman's work in Jordan.

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