

BEIRUT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

February 1, 1987, Vol. VIII, No. 39.

WOMEN AND WORK

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Art, Science and Women

I shall try to simplify this intricate heading by recalling a casual talk I had, about this same topic, with Dr. Salwa Nassar, the well-known Lebanese physicist, as we sat on a hillside in her village, Dhour-el-Shweir, one summer afternoon. Instead of admiring the beauty of the landscape, we started a somewhat serious discussion about art and science. We were still students at the American Junior College (A.J.C.). I was going through a period of infatuation with science... the fad, the idol of the time. Everybody thought he had the right to declare, in an ostentatious manner, that "science leads the world, all other knowledge is trash!" When I first met Salwa at College and told her about my perplexity regarding the major I would choose, she encouraged me to take a science major and promised to help me solve math problems. But I was afraid of venturing into a field for which I was not thoroughly prepared in high school. I was not sure that I was really talented for it.

- I have found out, I said, that art and science have to meet in the long run. I have heard a philosophy teacher say that advanced philosophy and art require a deep knowledge of mathematics.

- True, said Salwa, mathematics is at the basis of all knowledge. Art and science interdepend, but I would not consider one of them superior to the other. They both depend on one important element: imagination or creativity. Both scientists and artists have to be creators, otherwise they have little or no credit. A scientist creates new methods for solving problems, just as an artist creates new ways of expression. They both see what other people don't see. They both must have original ideas.

- I know that you like to encourage women to major in science. Why?

- Because I like to fight the myth that women are not capable of taking science majors. Why? I believe that science and art should have the same requirements, the same preparation. One who is capable of majoring in art should be capable of majoring in science and vice versa.

Following that conversation, as I knew Salwa more and more, I noticed that her aptitudes were not limited to science; she enjoyed music, she succeeded in acting and singing, and in performing social work. At the college, I knew a brilliant physics teacher who could write poetry and also excelled in dramatic art. As I won more experience, I learned what Salwa meant when she said

that science and art are interrelated. The dream of an artist can inspire a scientist and the discoveries of a scientist can inspire an artist. A wide, unrestricted knowledge is necessary for both. Specialization is a myth. Limitation to one narrow field of knowledge cripples one's imagination. Great artists like Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci were also great thinkers and philosophers. Poets like Shakespeare, Racine, Goethe, Al-Ma'arri, were also philosophers or mystics. Scientists like Darwin and Teilhard de Chardin were also philosophers. Though we live in a scientific age, art can flourish by cooperating with science. This cooperation has made possible the creation of new arts: the cinema, television, modern architecture, and modern art. In the long run, I have learned to admire artists as I admired scientists in my early college days. My old infatuation was gone.

*Considering women and their role in this respect, I have realized that Salwa Nassar was right in her point of view. Women in the past, with the exception of Marie Curie, had no chance to deal with science. They produced artists because the practice of art was the only field open to them, though in a limited manner. We all know about women poets like Sappho, al-Khansa' and others. We hear of women prophetesses in the Bible, of women priestesses in ancient Greece, of women singers and dancers who flourished in the Far East, in India, Iran and in the Caliphs' courts of Baghdad and Andalusia. In our days, women's talent for singing and dancing is being revived, acclaimed, and encouraged. They still excel in the delicate arts of embroidery, dress-making and decoration, though their distinction hereby is not sufficiently recognized. As actresses, the great screen-writer and producer, declared acting to be a **woman's art.***

Since women have recently had access to higher education, the number of women poets, writers, musicians, painters and sculptors has steadily increased. Science is to them a newly opened field but, as I tried to show that both art and science can join hands and require equivalent preparation and capacities, it is safe to presume that women can equally succeed in either field. The choice of a major depends more on orientation and environmental influences than on an inherent bent. Specialization is usually a final stage, but a wide, preliminary, general culture, including both art and science is necessary in this age in which art and science have become inseparable.

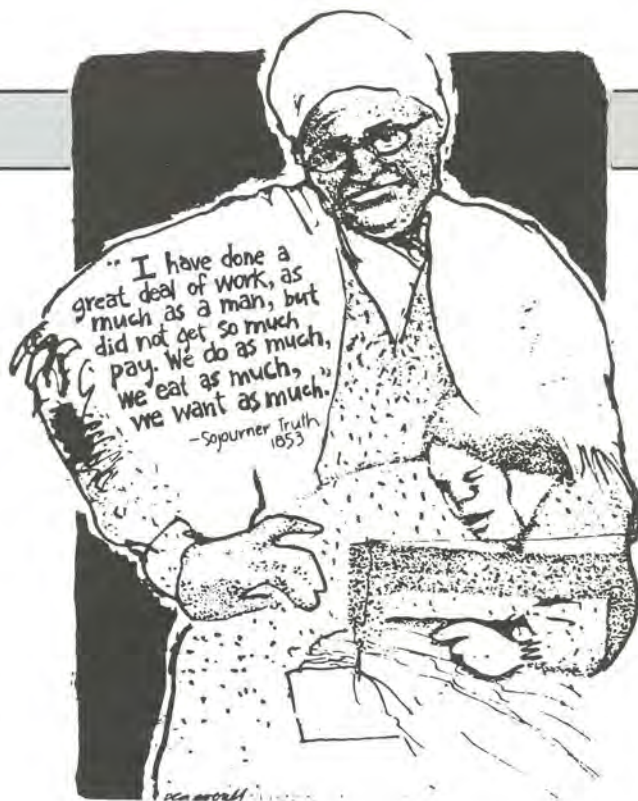
Rose Ghurrayyib

Measuring Women's Economic Activity

Over the last decade interest in the role of women in economic development has increased greatly. The measurement of female labour force activity is often underreported in censuses and surveys. Statistical data on women's economic activity are either inaccurate or incomplete and show lower activity rates for women than expected. Economists have always been concerned with the delimitation of what is and what is not to be accounted for. One of the major problems concerning women's work is the lack of a **well-developed** definition of women's economic activity. There is a growing concern to expand the meaning of economic activity beyond the conventional definition of the "production boundary" that gives primacy to market activity. Accounting only for goods and services provided and distributed in the market-place was broken when imputations were made in national accounts for agricultural products consumed by the farmer himself.

This is the only exception to the market criteria, but there are no regular exceptions for women's participation in home management and domestic production. Changes in the "production boundary" would create better reporting of women's participation in the informal sector of the economy and better measurement of women's contributions in the System of National Accounts (SNA).

The work of women in the Middle East, as elsewhere, has gone largely unacknowledged and unmeasured and has been excluded from national accounts. According to current definitions, these non-market activities of the household are considered to be "non-productive", unpaid services and remain "outside the production boundary". According to the United Nations, economic activity is defined as "any activity which is devoted to the production of goods or services which is measurable in economic terms and in which, generally speaking, people are gainfully



Women do two-thirds of the world's work, receive one tenth of the world's income, and own less than one percent of the world's assets.

From (Peace and Freedom) March 1987

employed".⁽¹⁾ Continuous efforts are being made to measure women's non-market activities of the household and to include it in labour force surveys and studies.

The process of socioeconomic development in the Middle East has generated a larger demand for and larger supply of women's labour in the market economy. Moreover, women's labour was also affected by the following demographic changes:

- Reduced mortality, with a longer expectation of life beyond the reproductive years.
- Decreased fertility, which leads to lower responsibilities of women in the household.
- The increased periodic out-migration of males in search of jobs leaving women as heads of households.

All these factors are catalysts for change in women's roles and will enhance their participation in the economy outside the household enterprise.⁽²⁾ Measuring women's economic participation involves collecting and analyzing information on women's work as well as

(1) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 1974. *Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics*. Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 18. New York: United Nations.

(2) Zurak, Huda. "The Measurement of Women's Economic Participation" in *Population Factors in Development Planning in the Middle East* by Frederic C. Shorter and Huda Zurayk (Eds.). The Population Council, New York and Cairo 1985, p. 18

factors influencing their economic activity. The population census remains the primary systematic source of information or labour force statistics in most countries⁽³⁾.

Housewives' services are still the largest item missing in national accounting, despite the fact that non-market household production is now accepted as an economic activity, sharing many characteristics with market production. It is also recognized that it is quite difficult to impute a value on household activities because there are no direct market transactions which determine prices. Also, there is very little documentation of household activities which "merge imperceptibly into the process of living",⁽⁴⁾ so that coverage and inclusion of this item in national accounts becomes difficult and uncertain.

The recommendations of the U.N. Statistical Office for data collection on economic activity in censuses specify the following classification of economic activity:

1. Activity Status: The **economically active** population includes all persons engaged in economic activities on full-time or part-time basis for a minimum time during a given reference period. It includes both the employed and the unemployed. The **economically inactive** population includes home workers not engaged in economic activities, students, retired persons, persons deriving their incomes from sources other than work, and persons too young, too old, or unable to work.
2. Occupation: Relates to the type of work an individual does or seeks when looking for work.
3. Industry: Relates to the principal product of the enterprise in which the person is working or seeks work.
4. Employment Status: Relates to the employment relationship of the person to the enterprise, and includes a category of unpaid family workers, defined as "persons who do a specified minimum amount of work without pay in economic enterprises operated by other members of his (her) household".⁽⁵⁾

(3) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 1968. *Method of Analyzing Census Data on Economic Activities of the Population*. New York: United Nations.

(4) Ibid. F. No. 18

(5) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1985. *Handbook of Population Census Methods*. New York, United Nations.

Time - allocation studies are the best indicator of how much time is allocated to productive activity within and outside the household. These studies are subject to methodological problems that can affect the validity of the information produced:

- The reference period to be used in collecting time budgets must be fixed so as to reflect the variable nature of women's work and to minimize recall problems. Most reports of time-allocation studies suggest the use of short periods of about 24 hours, spaced throughout the year to catch seasonal variation in activities.
- Data collection procedures must ensure reliable recording of what women actually do through direct observation, random visits to record the activity of the household members, recall-activity specific during some reference period, real-sequential of activities.
- Summary classification of activities must be designed to allow a meaningful and complete representation of the information collected.⁽⁶⁾
- Development planners must be fully aware of the existing economic contribution of all members of society. Women's work is still unmeasured and unaccounted for in policy planning and implementation.

The following suggestions have been proposed to improve the current system for measuring economic activity:

- Additional questions on economic activity should be added to the census questionnaire to improve its ability to cover and to measure market activity that is not organized on a full-time, single-job basis (this applies to both sexes).
- Moreover, thorough analysis of census data by sex should be undertaken by means of cross-tabulations as well as by applying multivariate analysis. A sample from the census data can be utilized to make the cost reasonable.
- Finally, the statistical system should expand to include some household production activities in addition to market activity. This will require redefinition of economic activity, which should be based on prior time-allocation studies of household members.⁽⁷⁾

(6) United Nations Statistical Commission. 1979. *Progress Report on the Development of Statistics of Time Use*. Report of the Secretary General.

(7) Zurayk, pp. 45-46

Women and Work

Iraq: Working Women

Women represent 19 per cent of the total labour force in Iraq. In the agricultural sector they are 43.7 per cent of those employed. While laws governing rural activities do not discriminate between men and women as regards the right to inheritance and utilization of agricultural land, the number of women exercising this right is very small.

Women in management positions represented 18.8 per cent and those with the rank of director - general 2.2 per cent. It is expected that the number of women in decision-making posts will increase if policies of providing women with opportunities to qualify for such positions continue to be pursued. Special policies and measures in employment focus on providing training opportunities for women to acquire skills required in industrial and rural production, providing appropriate conditions for increasing employment opportunities for women.

A major task to promote the employment of women in all fields continues to be the education of the population in new social values relating to the status of women, and providing appropriate conditions and facilities for women's employment. The Government has outlined a comprehensive set of strategies to be implemented in different fields.

In addition, there is concern for developing policies which counter the tendency for women to be employed in traditional low-paying jobs.⁽¹⁾

Tunisia: Improving the Status of Women

The General Union of Tunisian Workers and the Tunisian Government have set up three important organs whose objectives are to meet the following requirements:

- The Women's Commission, a non-governmental body which was created in 1982, is part of the General Union of Tunisian Workers. It comprises three committees: maternity protection, women's right to employment, and working conditions.
- The Women's Work Committee was set up in 1981 within the Ministry for Social Affairs in order to meet the recommendations of the Copenhagen Conference.

(1) General report presented to Nairobi International Conference (Baghdad, National Committee for the preparation for the Nairobi Conference, 1985).

Its task is twofold: to provide analysis and advice with a view to promoting women's integration in economic activity and to improve their living and working conditions.

- The Ministry for Family Affairs and Women's Promotion was created in November 1983. Its objective is not only to analyse and co-ordinate, but also to implement programs for the full integration of women in development.⁽²⁾

Jordan: Training Women for Participation in the Labour Force

The Jordanian Labour law in force overlooks women's rights to receive technical and vocational in-service training. However, new labour legislation currently in the final stages of drafting makes a provision for the principle of equality in employment opportunities, remuneration, promotion and training.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Development has specified a serious strategy to increase women's participation in the labour force. This is to ensure that the quality and quantity of female training is geared to the opportunities available in the labour market during a specific planning period.

Plans for the next 15 years include increasing education and training opportunities for women in agricultural and industrial employment. In order to improve the status of women in agricultural work and in managing family life, it is proposed to conduct training courses for women in modern methods and food processing. Career guidance has also been signalled as a means to prevent women's un-employment in certain fields and to increase female enrolment in technical, agricultural, and industrial training, which so far have been the exclusive domain of men.

While the new draft labour law is a basic step towards protecting women from discrimination, it is the unwritten concepts, beliefs, and attitudes of society that govern women's participation in the Jordanian workforce.⁽³⁾

(2) *L'egalite et les droits de la femme en Tunisie* (Tunis, Ministry for Family Affairs and Women's Promotion, 1985).

(3) National document submitted by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development, Peace (Amman, Ministry of Labour and Social Development).

The Arab Family and The Challenge of Social Transformation

This article is a summary of an essay by Halim Barakat* in which he discusses the challenges confronting the Arab family.

He defines the Arab family as a basic unit of social organization in traditional and contemporary Arab society. The Arab Family has been undergoing significant social, political and economic changes and needs to be examined in the context of the transitional nature of Arab society, the ongoing confrontation, and the struggle for social transformation in response to many challenges. The Arab family may be described as patriarchal, pyramidally hierarchical, and extended.

The Arab family constitutes an economic and social unit and is at the centre of social organization in all three patterns of living (bedouin, rural and urban). The behaviour of an individual member becomes that of the family as a whole. Many structural changes have begun to undermine traditional relationships, roles, and values within the Arab family. The centrality of the family is being challenged by the social institutions and the state structure. These institutions and the state are in control of the economy and education and have already become the biggest employers in most Arab countries.

In the traditional Arab family the father holds the authority and the responsibility. The wife joins his kinship group (patrilocal) and the children carry his surname (patrilineal).

Recent changes in family structure due to the emergence of competing socioeconomic units, have contributed to the democratization of husband-wife and father-children relationships. The patriarchal tradition

is passing through a transitional period, yet it remains hierarchical in structure. According to the traditional norms, a woman commits a grave mistake by challenging her husband's authority.

The traditional Arab family is stratified on the basis of sex (females are subordinate to males) and age (the young are subordinate to the old). Arab society has traditionally assigned women a subordinate status. This is reflected in the following features:

1. Women are secluded and segregated. Though an increasing number of women are receiving education (still seen as a man's priority) and are occupying important roles and positions in the public domain, the majority continue to occupy the private domain of the household.
2. The roles most available to women are those of daughter, sister, wife, mother, mother-in-law, etc. Few professional careers are available to women under the existing division of labour.
3. Veiling is still widespread in most of the Arab world.
4. Personal status codes discriminate against women, particularly in such areas as marriage, divorce, and inheritance.
5. Among certain classes, ownership of property is almost exclusively confined to men. Social, economic, and political organizations relegate women to marginality.
6. The prevailing standard of morality stresses those values and norms associated with traditional ideas of femininity, motherhood, wifehood, and sexuality.
7. The prevailing religious ideology considers women to be a source of evil, anarchy (fitna), and trickery or deception (kaid).

* Barakat, Halim, "The Arab Family and the Challenge of Social Transformation" in *Women and the Family in the Middle East. New Voices of Change*. Austin TX: University of Texas Press, 1985. pp. 27-46.

8. Women may still be exposed to such practices as forced marriage, honor crimes, clitoridectomy, etc.

Arab writers agree that society assigns women a subordinate status, but strongly disagree on the extent of acceptance of this situation, its origin, and the nature of required reforms.

Followers of the traditionalist trend assert that women are subordinate by nature and/or by God's will and design. Abbas Mahmood al-Aqqad states in his book **The Women in the Quran** that women are subordinate by nature, and they receive their character ('irf) from men. This trend may be traced back to al-Imam al-Ghazali (1050 - 1111) who insisted on the right of man to be followed and not to be a follower because the Quran described men as being superior to women.

- A reconciliatory, apologetic, reformist trend attributes the subordination of women to the misinterpretation of Islam rather than to Islam itself. According to the Egyptian author Aminah al-Said, Islam in its time "appeared as great social revolution in the history of women's position, not only for us in the Arab nations but also for the whole world... Islam restored to woman her total humanity; it 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."⁽¹⁾

- More liberal and radical progressive writings reject the traditional and reconciliatory trends. The subordinate status of women was a significant issue in the writings of Boutros al-Bustani (1819-1893) who wrote **Ta'lim al-nisa'** (**The Education of Woman**) in 1849, Shibli Shmayyil (1860-1916), Farah Antoun (1874-

1922), and others. Qassem Amin (1863-1908), a pioneering voice on behalf of the emancipation of women, wrote two books on the subject, **Tahrir al-Mar'a** (**Liberation of Woman**) and **Al-Mar'a al-Jadida**. (**The Modern Woman**). In his first book he based his defence of women's rights on religious texts. In his second book, he based his argument on the social sciences and was influenced by the liberal concepts of individual freedom and the rights of free expression and belief. He linked the decline of women to the decline of society. Amin called for the removal of the veil, granting the right to divorce to women, the prevention of polygamy, specification of the conditions under which a man might be allowed to proclaim divorce, education of women as well as men, and women's participation in scientific, artistic, political, and social activities.

Barakat believes strongly that the socioeconomic conditions rather than some inherent nature are responsible for the woman's role being dependent on man, for her evaluation in terms of role rather than her personality, for her responsibility not only for her own but also for those of men because she is seen as a source of seduction and evil. The prevailing general order and the nature of its division of labour, property ownership, degree and quality of involvement in social and economic activities, control over the production process and products, and the overall position in the social structure constitute the basic factors contributing to the subordination of women.

The emancipation of women must begin by transforming the prevailing socioeconomic structures in the context of eliminating all forms of exploitation and domination.

(1) Al-Said, Aminah, "The Arab Women and the Challenge of Society" in **Middle Eastern Muslim Women** by Fernea and Bezirgan. pp. 373-390.

IWSAW in Kuwait

The Children's Literature Project

Under the sponsorship of the Kuwait Society for the Advancement of Arab Children, the Ministry of Education and the Directorate of Libraries in Kuwait, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World held training sessions and workshops for children's libraries in Kuwait (February 17 - 21, 1986). The Institute launched the Children's Literature Project in 1981 to train librarians, writers, and illustrators of books for children between the ages of 2-12. This project is financed by the Kuwait Society for the Advancement of Arab Children.

Dr. Hassan Ibrahim, President of the Society, opened the session by stating that the project is financed by the Commission of Kuwaiti Banks headed by Ahmad Abd-al-Rahman al-Bakr and the cooperation of the Minister of Education Anwar al-Nouri. Dr. Julinda Abu Nasr, Director of IWSAW, outlined the objectives and endeavours of the "Children's Literature Project". The project aims at promoting quality children's literature in the Arabic language and providing essential base line data about children's literature for writers, illustrators, librarians and educators of Arab children. A comprehensive project combining research and action programmes in this field was undertaken by the Institute. Phase I was comprised of research and Phase II was comprised of promotion and implementation through workshops for writers, illustrators, and librarians to train them to be sensitive to children's development needs and to sharpen their literary and artistic skills to meet their needs. Workshops on writing and illustrating quality books for Arab children were held in Cyprus (August 25 - September 10, 1985 and August 1 - 23, 1986). Librarian workshops were held in Cairo, Jordan, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, and Rabat (see *Al-Raida* Vol. VIII, No. 38 pp. 12-13). In February 1987 a librarian workshop was held in Kuwait in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. The workshops not only included basic



literary skills for organization and administration, but also presented the concept of programming and extension services to promote reading. They resulted in a change of understanding the role of the librarian from the traditional custodian of books to the motivating force for reading promotion. Participants developed an awareness of what constitutes quality in children's books and how to select them. Information used in training is compiled in a guide book which will be published in the Fall of 1987.

Dr. Abu Nasr also mentioned that research was conducted to provide essential base line data about children's literature. Results revealed the scarcity of "quality" literature in Arabic and the abundance of translated books that have no direct bearing on the lives and culture of Arab Children. "Quality" children's literature in Arabic was identified as one of the pressing needs of Arab Children. A team of twenty researchers worked on the study in addition to one-hundred and thirty eight teachers and four thousand children in seventeen schools who volunteered for testing as well as eighteen members of the Lebanese Chapter of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). The IBBY group assisted in evaluating 875 books available in the Lebanese market and prepared lists of selected books according to age group, a novelty in Arabic Children's books.

Criteria for selecting good literature were also provided.

The methodology of the research involved the following stages: sources for data collection, testing voca-

bulary, testing language structures, and testing children's preferences in books.

Results of the research identified vocabulary comprehended by Arab children in each developmental stage between the ages of 2 and 12. A recommended "word" list of about 5000 words was set-up corresponding to the different age groups.

Recommendations for language structure, sentence length, sentence pattern, morphology, and idiomatic expressions were drawn up as a result of this study.

Arab children's preferences pertaining to content, illustrations, style, calligraphy, book size, binding, and cover were found to be similar to universal children's preferences.

Base line data for writers and illustrators of children's books have been provided. The research findings were incorporated in a manual for writers and illustrators of children's books which will be published in the coming few months.

At the end of the session, five children's books were presented to the Kuwait Society for the Advancement of Arab Children:

- 1 - Reem wa al-Himar (Reem and the Donkey)
- 2 - Antara al-Saghir (Little Antara)
- 3 - Arnab Arnoub (An Alphabet book in rhyme)
- 4 - Abou Hirdabbeh (The Hunched Back)
- 5 - Kabkoub al-Souf (The Ball of Wool)

The Basic Living Skills Programme (BLSP) in Kuwait

Sheikha Latifa al-Fahd Saad al-Sabah opened the training session for "The Basic Living Skills Programme" held in Kuwait (February 22-24, 1986). The sessions were organized by Nadi al-Fatat in coordination with the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations, presided by His Royal Highness Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, an advocate of the need for the integration of women in social development; "There will be no social development and no improvement in the conditions of children and mothers unless women are integrated in social development".

Fatima al-Issa, President of Nadi al-Fatat stressed the need to eradicate all forms of illiteracy in order to enhance the status of Arab women. Dr. Abu Nasr stated that the rationale behind the Basic Living Skills Programme is that social illiteracy in the Arab world, especially among women, is one of the major problems that one should try to solve. The BLSP is a comprehensive programme that has educational material relating to different aspects and needs of the Arab women. BLSP consists of one-hundred-and-forty lessons divided into eight areas, namely: health, environment, nutrition, childcare, family-planning, home management, civic responsibilities and legal rights. The programme includes a guide manual that has detailed information on how to use the programme and how to evaluate its results. (see al-Raida, Vol. VIII. No. 35 p. 12).

"La dépendance amoureuse" (Amorous Dependence)

This number, (31) of **Les Cahiers du Griff**, a quarterly, magazine published in Paris (Editions Tierce, Rue des Fossés St. Jacques) contains interesting **highbrow** articles on dependence in love and how it may evolve into bondage. Most of the articles are psycho-analytic, written by psychoanalysts like Jacqueline Rousseau-Dujardin, Horacio Amigorena, Marie Claire Boons, Francoise Routheir, and Hannah Creuift.

The numbers which complete this topic are:

no. 26, Jouir (Enjoyment) 1983, 45 Fr. Francs.

no. 28, D'amour et de raison, 1983, 45 Fr. Francs.

no. 32 L'indépendance amoureuse, Dec. 1985, 45 Fr. Francs.

This quarterly is published by French feminists, a group of highly intellectual women.

About subscriptions see p. 2 of the number:

abonnements a 4 numéros: 1200 frs. belges., 185 fr. français.

Fi Tareek-el-Hayat

(Traversing the Road of Life)



Dr. Jamal Karam Harfouche was the first woman doctor from South Lebanon. She received her medical degree in pediatrics in 1941 from the American University of Beirut. Besides her private practice in pediatrics from 1943-1946 and 1950-58 she was a Professor at the School of Medicine at AUB. In 1959 she received her degree in Social Medicine and Hygiene from Harvard University and six years later a doctorate in Public Health (see Al-Raida, Vol. VI, No. 25). Some of her current activities are:- Member of the Advisory Panel on Maternal and Child Health, World Health Organization, Geneva.

- Conducts consultation activities, including book reviews and graduate studies, at the request of local and foreign teaching institutions.

- Analysis of data on growth and development, breast feeding, traditional birth attendants, primary health care, and writing manuscripts for publication on these and other related subjects.

Last month, her book **Fi Tareek-el-Hayat**★ (**Traversing the Road of Life**) was published by the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World. The following is what Dr. Harfouche wrote about this remarkable book.

"Life is a path which we traverse only once; its images cannot be replicated even if simulated... some of them penetrate deep into the heart, while others pass unnoticed without arousing our concern!"

(Introduction)

This book presents the reader with a series of images,

★ First edition, Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World. (Beirut 1987) 268 pages.

reflections, memories and lessons to be learned, addresses, and radiobroadcasts that the author has written in Arabic between the late 1940's and the early 1980's as a side-activity to a laborious and productive professional career involving a lifetime of service, teaching, and research in the areas of Maternal/Child Health and Nutrition.

In 268 middle size pages, the two parts of the book, expressed in a simple and appealing style, convey to the general public, as well as to individual citizens, members of clubs and societies, and to graduates of schools, colleges, and universities a sense of orientation for self-realization and the attainment of a balanced and healthy society by adhering to the principles of righteousness, human welfare, beauty, peace, love and faith. Man the creator of his own material means for survival loses his sense of direction as he cedes his mastery over the means to subserve wealth, political power, and technology. Had the decision-makers and rising generations been loyal to the high goal of existence and the traditional principles of constructive achievement since the attainment of national independence in 1943, Lebanon would have been spared the detrimental effects of the civil war.

Part I

In the first section of Part I, the author initiates a dialogue with the creator, raising basic questions, through a self-searching process, that are answered in part by quiet meditation and silent prayer.

"Who am I O Lord, but a small atom woven by your hand from the remnants of your eternal being!

I have seen you in all beings and all that the beings possess speak of your gracious abundance!
As I walked over the land, sailed over the sea, and soared over the cloud, the glory of your creative wisdom was revealed to me!"

- - - - -

"In the deep silence of the night, I thought I was alone, but, there you were O Lord extending your arm to pull me out of my solitude!

From the deep valley, I lifted up my eyes to the summit far beyond the cloud, where your glorious light shines to disperse the darkness of my misery... O Lord, as your grace has enabled me to feel your presence, facilitate my path and show me the way to witness your glory up high on the summit".

In the second section, a dialogue between the sea and the sky culminates with the lonely drop of water that travels hard and long within the cloud to find its final haven and eternal rest in the collective reunion with other remaining drops that reach the heart of the sea.

This section also tells the story of a series of old trees scattered along the coast between Sidon and Beirut. They were strikingly obvious to the daily traveller by their declining top that became distorted in adapting to the repeated insult and humiliation of the storm initiated by the rough sea. It also relates the thwarting temptations and trying experience of the deserted poor young girl on the city street.

The third section has words and messages dedicated "to my mother who reared me as a child and guided me in the prime of youth, providing me with the best of tender concern...". Special inspirational messages are expressed on "Mother's Day", the recurrent event of "Meeting the Dawn as a Daily Life-Style", the "Story of Her Death", and the "Death of the Roses".

In the fourth section, addresses are dedicated to five outstanding friends who were honored by the community on different occasions for noted literary, scientific, or service achievement.

Part II

The first section of this part contains a series of commencement addresses to graduates of schools, colleges, and universities.

The second section has a series of addresses that

were prepared at the request of leading institutions and societies in Lebanon and abroad.

Section three presents radiobroadcasts that were requested on special occasions by three leading national agencies - Beirut Municipal Council, the Lebanese Red Cross, and the National Society sponsoring the Annual Week of the Tree.

- The annual campaign of the Beirut Municipal Council launched on May 1, 1954, to promote cleanliness and uplift the level of health and general welfare of the capital city had a special significance that year, because for the first time in the history of Lebanon some of the outstanding women in the country were appointed as Council Members.

- May 5, 1969, marked the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the League of Red Cross, Red Crescent, the Lion and Red Sun Societies actively concerned with peace and human welfare throughout the world. Henry Davison, the founder of the League in 1919 and its first president, emphasized the universal impact of the League in rising above sex, color, race, and creed differences; giving human dignity the highest priority; and overlooking the boundaries of time and place. He noted, "We are not building for any one generation, but for all generations at all times".

- The week of the tree celebrated in December of each year has been an on-going national activity since independence. It is intended to promote the significance of the tree and, in particular, the cedar tree, emblem of Lebanon's historic prestige and national pride. Safeguarding forestry; protecting trees from fire, goat grazing, and hewing by the axe; and promoting the planting of nurseries and sowing of seeds are some of the emphasized themes.

Section four deals with the role of Lebanese women in public life, covering the topics listed below.

- The Contribution of the emigrant woman in preserving the Lebanese customs and tradition.

- Christianity and woman's right.

- Celebration of the woman's week (radiobroadcast inaugurating the campaign in support of women's political right, launched by the Committee elected by the National Council and comprising - Mrs. Laure Tabet, Miss Ibtihaaj Kaddoura, Mrs. Najla Saab, Mrs. Helen Rihan, Mrs. Emeli Faris Ibrahim, Mrs. Nejla Kfourie, Maitre Laure Mughazizel, Mrs. May Fayad, and Dr. Jamal Karam Harfouche.)

- Woman's right and the electoral law.

- An address supporting Mrs. Laure Tabet in her 1957 electoral campaign to enter the Lebanese parliament as the first woman representative from Beirut city.
- The woman as a health and social counsellor, delivered at the 1975 seminar sponsored by the Society for the Care of the Child and Mother.
- The role of the Lebanese woman in preparing the future generation, delivered at the 1975 seminar sponsored by the Ministry of Information.

sored by the Ministry of Information.

In summary - this book covers a wide variety of important topics written over a long period of time. In addition to the interesting material contained therein, it registers important landmarks in the historical development of some of the most important teaching institutions and social welfare societies, especially the Lebanese Red Cross, the National Y.W.C.A., and the Lebanese Council for Women.

My Next Door Neighbor

When she heard that her brother was the blessed father of a fourth male heir, she uttered shouts of rejoicing, "More boys, more young men for our family!," she said. I wanted to ask her why she preferred boys. Because they can fight? Our country has been ruined by war. Because they can work? Women are now working more than men. She and her sister sit all day long sewing or knitting wool for the family. Otherwise, they clean, cook, give private lessons or perform some other lucrative job. Their work did not require any costly training. They went to school until reaching the secondary classes. Their education allows them to teach reading and dictation to little children. This is probably the main trait that differentiates them from their mothers and grandmothers. In their conversations, they handle the same old topics of birth, betrothal, marriage, money, disease, and death. Now they have added political events, but their knowledge of politics consists in repeating what they hear from other people or from the radio. They believe what people around them affirm, and identify with the party to which their family belongs. Should their family change sides, they would do the same. Besides the limited education they received, there is one more difference between them

and their mothers and grandmothers. They have more opportunity to earn money through teaching, or some similar job. This gives them the pleasure of saving, just as their mothers and ancestresses enjoyed hoarding pieces of jewelry. Are they happier? Better dressed? Do they spend part of their money on cultural activities like reading books, taking trips, going to the movies or to the theater, engaging in sport and recreation, visiting exhibits or museums, doing anything that would allow them to grow, to break the routine of their occupations? Nothing of the sort attracts them, even if they could afford any of the above activities. Not having personal ambitions, they adopt the interests and ambitions of the group to which they belong. Their pleasure is that of the group and also their worry.

The coming generation of females will probably lead the same traditional life as that of my next-door neighbor and her sister. They will go to the same schools, repeat the same old prayers, hear commonplace radio talks, perform the same traditional jobs. And I sit pondering, trying to see how change could find its way to such an environment.

Rose Ghurayyib

Mercury and Birth Defects

Over the last decade scores of scientific studies have been carried out to determine if mercury is a deadly weapon.

Until now dentists have assumed that the resin living in the base of the cavity would protect the metals of the amalgams from spreading down into the pulp and on into the tissues. But now studies show that this is not the case. Resin only delays the entry of the mercury into the tissues. There is ample evidence to show that mercury from amalgam is present in the soft tissues of the mouth. From there it can move via the circulation system into the rest of the body.

Studies showed a marked correlation between the mercury levels in the mother's blood and the case of

still births. It also indicated that malformed infants could be linked to prenatal background mercury levels. Although it has been shown that all mercury compounds are potentially harmful to the fetus, pregnant mothers are not alerted to the possible damage. Mercury also has the ability to penetrate the blood/brain barrier which protects the brain from chemical damage. The only country to take necessary poisoning seriously is Japan: thousands of people there suffered irreversible damage to the nervous system and brain from eating contaminated fish.

Many doctors insist that mercury should be avoided in any form. In the past people did not have much choice. They either had amalgam or rotting teeth.

The Fifth International

Women and Health Meeting

Women's health activists, researchers, and proactioners from all over the world will gather in San Jose, Costa Rica next spring for the Fifth International Women and Health Meeting. The Centro Feminista de Informacion Accion (CEFEMINA) is coordinating the planning for the conference, which is scheduled to take place from May 23 - 28, 1987. This marks the first time the meeting will be held in a Third World Country; the

previous four meetings have been held in European cities.

The conference will focus on five main themes: population policies and reproductive rights, community health, environmental health hazards, drugs, and the health care system.

Eleven national and international women's organizations, are sponsoring the conference.

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Film:

- **The Global Assembly Line**, a film about the exploitation of women workers, is available from New Day Films, 22, Riverview Drive, Wayne, Nj 07470.



Women Work More Hours Than Men

Worldwide, women work twice as many hours as do men.

ILO statistics reveal that women who work at home, work an average of 69 hours per week. Women with outside jobs spend an average of 55.09 hours a week working at home plus an average of 44 hours a week working on the outside job. This adds up to a total of 99.9 hours a week spent working.

In Italy, 85% of mothers with children and full-time

jobs outside the house are married to men who do no domestic work at all. In Europe as a whole, a working woman has on average, less than half the free time as her husband.

In the industrialized countries, unpaid housework contributes between 25 and 40% to the Gross National Product (GNP).

The Tribune
Newsletter 35, 1986

A Museum for Women

The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA), which opened in April 1987, is probably the first museum of its kind in the world. Its supporters say that the museum came into being in response to a need voiced by artists, art historians, collectors and museum professionals for an institution that focuses on the contributions of women to the history of art, but some of its critics fear that it is an idea whose time has passed.

Many of the museum's critics believe that at a time when women are making unprecedented breakthroughs in all professional fields, a separate museum for women's art is inappropriate.

The driving force behind the museum is its founder, Wilhelmina (Billie) Cole Holladay, who, with her hus-

band, Wallace, has formed a collection of art by women. She makes a paradoxical patron for today's women artists: politically conservative, she opposes feminist activism. "I must stress that we are not a part of the feminist movement", she states firmly.

The combined library and study centre is collecting monographs, general works, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations on women artists, women art collectors, and women art patrons, American and foreign, of all periods, as well as catalogue raisonnés and exhibition catalogues of women artists, rare books and exhibition catalogues has grown to more than 2,000 volumes, and the artists' files number more than 3,000. The only criterion for inclusion in the NMWA library is that the artist, apart from being female, must have had a sole exhibition.

Five Years After Nairobi

An international group of women who call themselves GROOTS, Grass Root Organizations Operating Together for Sisterhood, are planning a "Grassroot Forum" to be held in Madras, India in 1990. The Working Women's Forum, an organization of 37,000 women in South India, will host the meeting.

The forum will expand on networking begun in

Nairobi among low-income rural women and women workers. It aims to enable women from community-based organizations to share problems of day to day organizing, and exchange technical and managerial resources. Special attention will be paid to Community development strategies that help women overcome oppressive situations in the home, the workplace, etc.

World Congress of Women

June 23 - 27, 1987

Women and their organizations on all continents are preparing for the World Congress of Women to be held in Moscow, June 23 to 27, 1987. This Congress will be an important milestone in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women until the Year 2000. It will be an open platform for discussions and actions for the promotion of women's rights, the guaranteeing of the peoples' right to national independence, sovereignty and development and the protection of life and the future of humanity against the threat of a nuclear war. Consultations, meetings and seminars at the national, regional and international levels are important steps on the way from Nairobi to Moscow.

An essential stage of the preparations for the World Congress of Woman was introduced by a con-



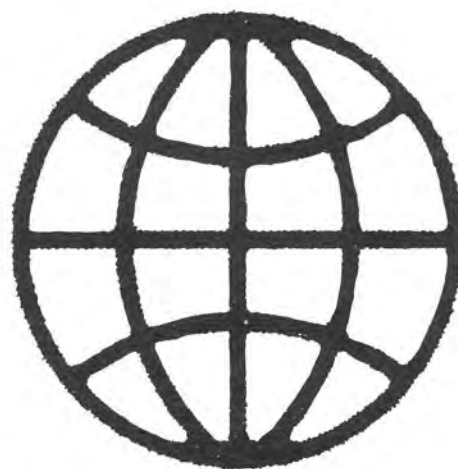
sultative meeting of international non-governmental organizations convened by the WIDF and held in Geneva in early June.

The process of consultation is being continued - in Africa, Asia, Latin and North America and Europe. The ideas and proposals conceived at these meetings will extend the range of topics to be discussed and considerably enrich the World Congress of Women.

Shaking up The World Bank

The good news for women is that the new World Bank President, Barber Conable is planning to increase the number of female senior staffers. The bad news is that at present only 6 out of 60 senior staffers at the World Bank are female. At his first staff meeting, Conable, a former New York Congressman said, "Well, I expect to begin my address by saying, good morning ladies and gentlemen, but there seems to be a disappointing number of ladies here." A videotape of the speech was a huge hit among female staffers. Conable has not announced any personnel changes yet, but U.S. Treasury officials believe a shake-up of the bank's entrenched senior bureaucracy is long overdue.

Newsweek, September 8, 1986



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YEARLY CONTRIBUTION

Lebanon: L.L. 50 per year
Other Countries: \$ 15 per year
plus \$3 to cover postage