



## Gibran's Anniversaries

The years 1981 and 1983 were officially proclaimed respectively commemorative of the fiftieth anniversary of Gibran's death and the centennial of his birth.

"Why this double honor?" Some might ask.

The immediate answer would be that Gibran was an international writer whose works have been translated into most of the living languages. But this is not all. Probably many people do not know that the anniversaries of this eminent emigrant have been celebrated not only in Lebanon, his birthplace, but also in many lands of Lebanese emigration which cover North America, Latin America, Africa, Australia and other parts of the world. The Lebanese emigrants number about four times as many as those residing in their country of origin. This love for their homeland remains deep-rooted and the tragic years which have recently swept over Lebanon have only served to kindle their love and strengthen the World Union of Lebanese Emigrants.

Another reason for Gibran's renown is the fact that he ranks among the few contemporary figures who devoted a large share of their efforts and works to the cause of international understanding and world peace. He was an officer of the New Orient Society in New York, which comprised cosmopolitan leaders of thought and citizens of the world. Arthur Upham Pope, Julia Ellsworth Ford, Witter Bynner, John Dewey, Bertrand Russell and H.G. Wells belonged to that group, but first among them was Mahatma Gandhi whom Gibran believed to be "one of the greatest men living".

It is a good omen that while people in Lebanon have been reading Gibran, attending lectures and panels about him, and visiting exhibits of his books and paintings; they have been, at the same time, watching the great Academy - Award winning film on Gandhi, the apostle of peace and non-violence. This film has been playing simultaneously in three cinema houses of Beirut for about two months and will probably continue to pass from one screen to another for many months more.

Champions of peace have always existed everywhere but in our time they are becoming more numerous, more vehement and their message is likely to spread more widely and rapidly due to the amazing progress of communications; which is in itself, one of the blessings of technological development.

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## Anbara Salam Al Khalidy

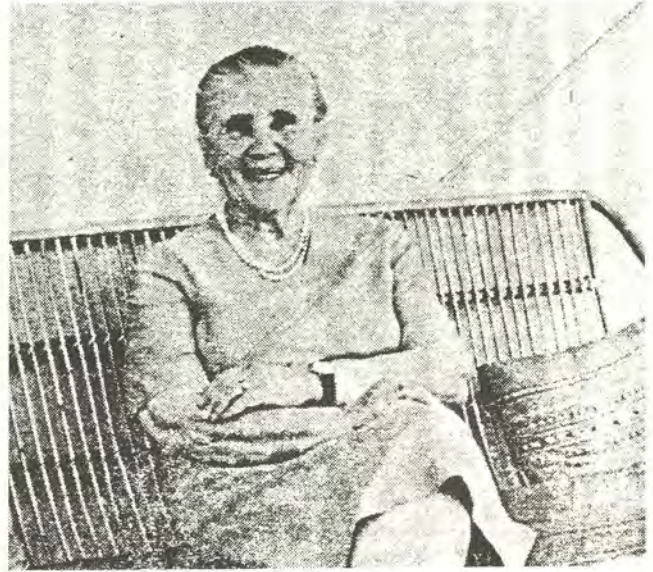
Anbara Salam el Khalidy, elder sister of political leader and ex-prime minister Saeb Salam, was born in a well-known politically active family of Mousaitbeh in Beirut at the turn of the 20th Century.

Her father, Selim Salam, was a successful businessman and a respected Sunni figure of his time. He was one of the first men to transcend the confessional barriers separating Muslims and Christians at a time when relations between both communities were confined to polite, superficial business relations. He befriended many Christian religious leaders and brought a Catholic priest to teach his children French. Moreover, despite strong objections, he sent his sons to study at the Syrian Evangelical College which was to become the American University of Beirut. He was also among the first Lebanese to send his son abroad in 1910 to specialize in Agricultural Engineering in England.

Although Selim was a busy man and the head of a large family of 9 sons and daughters, he became quickly aware of his daughter's intelligence and her love for reading and writing. He believed in the necessity of educating women so he asked one of the most eminent Lebanese intellectuals of his time, Abdallah al-Bustani, to teach his daughter Arabic and literature. Selim Salam also encouraged his daughter to think liberally and he stood by her all his life.

When she was ten years old Anbara Salam was pushed to wear the veil by her mother and her relatives. This decision angered her and she felt as if she was entering an "iron gate". This also meant she could no longer play with her brothers in the garden nor climb trees. She decided that one day she would do something about it.

At fifteen she became attracted to the idea of Women's Liberation, a movement which coincided with the rise of Nationalistic feelings among all Arab countries under the Ottoman rule. This was the era of the "Arab Awakening". Thus, in March 1914 Anbara Salam and a group of enthusiastic young women formed one of the first Arab Women's Associations. It was called **Jamyiatu Yakthat al Fatat al-Arabiyya** or the **Arab Girls' Awakening Association** and its aim was to encourage bright school-girls to continue their higher education by helping them financially and morally.



Anbara Salam was also a member of the **Lebanese Women's Union** and the **Union of Arab Women**. The first President of the **Union of Arab Women** was Egyptian feminist Huda Sha'rawi. This union, which preceded the creation of the Arab League (of men) pressed Arab governments to introduce new laws pertaining to the status of women. It insisted that the minimum age of marriage for girls be sixteen. It asked for a compulsory medical examination of future spouses one year before their marriage. It demanded both the right to vote and the right to be represented in National Assemblies. The first countries to comply with these demands were Syria and Egypt, which had appointed women as cabinet ministers.

In the 1920's a big controversy arose in Muslim communities around the compulsory wearing of the veil or "Hijab". Both advocates and opponents of the veil fiercely defended their views. Anbara Salam was an opponent of compulsory wearing of the veil. A two-year-long visit to England in 1925-27 confirmed her point of view, especially when she saw the freedom with which English women moved and acted in their society.

On her return to Lebanon, and during a talk about her English trip to a mixed audience, Anbara Salam took off the veil defiantly. She was the first to do so in Lebanon. This courageous move created a big scandal. For her, it was a point of no return.

On August 9, 1929, in the midst of her popularity and of her social and political activity Anbara married Ahmed Sameh Khalidy, the director of the Arab College in Jerusalem and a

leader of Modern Education in Palestine. She moved to her husband's homeland where she became active in the **Palestinian Women's Movement**. While raising a large family, Anbara translated into Arabic Homer's Iliad and Odyssey and Virgil's Aeneid. She loved Palestine dearly and was heart-broken when she had to leave it after the first Israeli-Arab War in 1948, never to return again. Shortly after, her husband died.

For the remainder of her life Anbara was a fervent advocate of the Women's cause. Among the issues she believed in most were: the necessity for all women to further their education, to participate hand in hand in political and social activities with men, and to fight against confessionalism and narrow ethnic sentiments which divide Arab people instead of uniting them.

Years later, and at the insistence of friends and family, she agreed to write her memoirs which she entitled: **A Trip in Memory between Lebanon and Palestine**. This book is among the liveliest socio-historical documents of an era that saw the birth

of two great movements: Arab Nationalism and Women's Liberation. It is also a book which abounds with stories about her friendships with outstanding women such as Julia Tohmeh Dimashkieh, Salma Sayegh, Ibtihaj Kaddoura and others who played a crucial role in the Women's Movement in Lebanon.

**Wafa' Stephan**

**N.B.**

At the time of writing this article Anbara Salam el Khalidy is living in Beirut among her numerous children and grandchildren. Two of her sons are professors one at the American University of Beirut, the other at Harvard University.

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- (1) The Arabic title of the book is **Jawlatun Fil Thikrayat Bayna Lubnan wa Falastine**, published by Dar al Nahar, 1978.

## ARTICLES

# Sexual Equality, Constitution and Islamic Law in Algeria<sup>(1)</sup>

Woman's status in Algerian law carries the mark of ambivalence. While she enjoys full rights in political law her personal status reduces her to a second class citizen. For example, the husband has the exclusive right to repudiation and polygamy and the actual division between political and civil rights is not confirmed by any fundamental text. But rather, this dualism dates from the colonial period and was based on differentiation between colonizers and colonized. Under Independence it becomes necessary to visualize Algerian law not as a quasi autonomous project but as a coherent whole.

### Sources of the Algerian Law

Unlike the constitutions of other Arab countries which state that the Islamic Law is their

main source of legislation, no such stipulation exists in the Algerian constitution. Article 6 of the said constitution refers to the National Charter which confirms the equality of all citizens as the fundamental source of the Nation's politics and state laws.

There are three texts which permit the application of Islamic law in matters of personal status in Algerian law. But it happens that a large number of sectors, including the personal status, have not been provided with such a legislation. The judge is then led to refer to article one of the civil code which recommends that in the absence of a legal basis or reference a judge should resort to the principles of Islamic Law.

Apparently because Algerian laws do not include a family code the personal status has been subjected to Islamic law. Yet this reasoning is subject to discussion because the judge's first duty, whenever he applies the rules of Islamic Law, is to see that it conforms with the written law; i.e., with the principle of sexual equality ratified by the

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(1) Abstract of a study prepared by Ramdane Babadji, **Droit et Système Politique Algerien**, Université d'Oran, 1983.

Constitution. It is probable that many constituents of Islamic law are in agreement with that principle but it is also certain that other constituents are not.

In classical law the principle of equality is considered most fundamental. The Algerian constitution of 1976 gives it special emphasis when it states that all discrimination based on prejudices of sex, race, or profession is condemned (art. 30 in fine). Moreover, "All citizens are equal in rights and obligations" (art. 39); "Law is the same for all, whether it serves to protect, to restrain or to repress" (art. 40).

The Algerian constitution adds that "the State is bound to cancel all economic, social or cultural obstacles which limit equality between citizens, hamper the blossoming of the human personality, and prevent the effective participation of all citizens in political, economic, social and cultural development" (art.41).

The above texts clearly show that no division is made between the political and the civil rights of women. In this respect the Algerian constitution differs from other Arab constitutions such as that of Morocco, which restricts sexual equality to political rights; and the Egyptian constitution, which specifies that "the State ensures for women the means for conciliating their domestic duties with their outside work, their equality with men in the political, social, cultural and economic fields, but without any prejudice to Islamic principles".

Equality, free from all restriction is also required by the National Charter which declares that

"Woman's promotion is both an imperative of the spirit of justice and equality, and an exigency dictated by the dialectic of progress, democracy and the harmonious edification of the country". The basic principle of equality entails two consequences: first, no particular obligations may be imposed on any category of citizens, second, no particular rights may be granted to any category.

These consequences are in contradiction with certain solutions admitted by Islamic law and applied in many instances in the family code, mainly in the cases of unilateral repudiation, polygamy, and inheritance.

It is true that legislation in many Moslem and Arab countries has endeavoured a good many years to promote women's condition. Certain measures have been taken to restrict polygamy and to limit unilateral repudiation by imposing the judge's arbitration. No matter how commendable the efforts have been, they fail to hit the root of the problem in Algeria because they do not respect the spirit and the letter of the constitution which affirms sexual equality.

### Conclusion

Both the National Charter and the Constitution, the only texts that have been adopted by referendum, agree on the recognition of the citizens' equality in all rights, including sexual equality. It remains to be seen whether legislators will profit from the fundamental texts at their disposal and endow Algeria with a family code which will provide such equality constitution.

## Dr. Saniyya Habboub: Death of a Pioneer

In the November 1, 1982 issue of *Al-Raida*, in "Pioneer" Section, a short account appeared on the life and achievements of **Dr. Saniyya Habboub, the first Lebanese woman doctor to study medicine abroad.**

Exactly one year later *Al-Raida* is sorry to report the death of this pioneer of women's education and emancipation in Lebanon and the Arab World. Dr. Habboub died at the age of 82 after 50 years of devoted medical service during the 1st week of September 1983.

In a posthumous tribute to this outstanding woman **An-Nahar** newspaper published one of her articles written in 1948 and addressed to young

university women students.<sup>(1)</sup> In this article Dr. Habboub says:

When I meet a young university student entering the campus, her head raised, free of worries and agile, wearing light clothes with no veil covering her head; a great happiness rises in me and I cannot but go 20 years back to when I was in the place of this young sister, dreaming of seeing her one day as I am today. The "Dream" has been realized my girl, you are now where you should be, a normal, natural

(1) *An-Nahar* 11/9/83, page 11, Beirut.



Dr. Saniyya Habboub with Prime Minister during ceremony awarding her the "Health Medal of Merit" May 19, 1982.

element of the University ... You are not anymore a subject of surprise, mockery, or shame; nor an unnatural event, a strange undomesticated bird isolated from the flock. You are now with your sisters, a bead among many in the university necklace; preparing, arming and training yourself for the battle of life exactly like a young man, because the battle will unite you. There is no benefit for you my girl nor advantage for him to separate your potentials. You should rise and be his help and his associate for you will be a good mother as much as he will be a good father; you will be a good citizen as much as he will be one. You will be if you want a doctor, a teacher, an engineer, a lawyer ... like him. You will be an enlightened and educated woman capable of establishing a home, creating a society, and building a nation. Whether you will have a profession or not, you will be a cornerstone to modern society and you will walk hand in hand with the man as you are walking today at the university like two friends, without burdening him with your ignorance, weakness or fright. He will feel the lightness of your hand and the broadness of your mind next to him and your footsteps will become lighter and you will run forward together, as if you were about to fly ... (2)

This encouraging, even exhilarating vision of woman by Dr. Saniyya Habboub was written 35 years ago, 20 years after she had graduated as a doctor from the American University of Beirut. It was written after she witnessed the bitter fight between two factions at the university, one that wanted to admit women as students and the other strongly opposed it. It also came at a time when she saw the number of women students rise at

Beirut University College (then the Junior College) from 3 students in 1925 to 200 in 1948.

A lot has been said about Dr. Habboub's relentless work as a gynecologist in her own practice in Bab Idriss and her work with the Red Cross, the Muslim Orphan's Home and the Young Women's Muslim Association. Yet, the most appropriate account of her was given by Dr. William Stoltzfus, ex-president of Beirut University College. He described her life as a "get-started signal" for the professional lives of many Arab Women.

W. Stephan

(2) Translated from Arabic.

## LECTURE

# Miriam Cooke — Claire Gebeyli,

10 June 1983

One of the highlights of the month of June at Beirut University College was the lecture given by Dr. Miriam Cooke of Duke University on "Women's Literary Responses to the Lebanese Civil War". Attended by a large number of individuals including many women writers, poets, and academics. The lecture, organized by the Institute of Women's Studies in the Arab World, was one of many Dr. Cooke gave during a tour of Arab Gulf and South-East Asian countries at the invitation of American Embassies in the region.

Because of her knowledge of the Arabic and French languages, and having lived some time in this part of the world, Miriam Cooke was able to understand and analyze the literary production of many Lebanese women writers first hand. It was this factor, added to a poetical and vivid oratory style, that gave her lecture such authenticity and impact.

After a brief analysis of the way most women writers in Lebanon chose to talk about the war, Cooke concentrated during the rest of her lecture on Claire Gebeyli's poetry of war, called "Billets" The "Billets" being a series of political commentaries of some thirty lines which focused on an event or an incident that had touched the poet. These commentaries were published weekly in the French-language newspaper *L'Orient—Le Jour*, "They were a celebration of life that was harsh, violent and ugly, but defiant of death"; summarized Cooke.

Through her "Billets", says Cooke, Claire Gebeyli tried to touch her readers and make them aware of the "anarchy and obscenity" around them, while avoiding description and repetition. Moreover, Gebeyli deals with war as a "process". She lives through the "interstices of the art of war", by weaving a "canvas of sound, touch, smell, taste and then sight". In other words, the war for the poet has become a language, "a form of discourse that should insinuate itself into the souls of men". But most of all, the war should be "acknowledged".

To "acknowledge" a war, explains Cooke, is not just to contemplate it by calling it "the events", "hawadith", "evènements". It is to perceive it and see its intertwinement with life and language. Moreover, it is the poet and writer's responsibility not to create a "seperate system, a story, a quasi-dialogue with an interlocutor called War". "The artist must perceive and make others perceive that discourse is life and here (in Lebanon) life is war"

Thus for Cooke, a true artist is the "mirror of his time". But more than that, a good writer chooses his words carefully making sure they will

not "dry up and calcify". And it is precisely Claire Gebeyli's ability of using language as a "sword to be seized" that Miriam Cooke seems to admire most in her. No wonder then that she quotes her saying: "But what is the use of the pen if it forgets to press down on the chests of others, if the words that it pours out are merely particles that have been sewn and re sewn on the body of language."

In conclusion, Cooke told her audience that the Lebanese war which cannot be explained rationally or logically was better interpreted by women writers than men writers because women knew best how to describe the moods it provoked, the multitude of little events that made it, its irrationality, and its repetitiveness. And if women writers as different in style as Claire Gebeyli, Emily Nasrallah, Ghada Samman, and Hanan el-Sheikh succeeded in their mission as writers, it is because they all felt responsible for what was happening, rather than feeling guilty, heroic, or epic like most male writers did.

**Wafa' Stephan**

(1) Translated from the French from Gebeyli's "La Vie en Sol Mineur".

## Educational Material on Primary Health Care June 13, 1983

It was a colorful spectacle. The exhibit looked more like a children's fair than like a serious health care exhibit. But, after all, that is what the whole thing was about. It was a non-formal approach to health education. Its purpose? To remove the aura traditionally surrounding health and health education, and to bring them down to the people so that children and grown-ups, educated and uneducated, can all understand and participate in them. The exhibit was one of the first attempts to bring health out of the doctor's clinic and to put it where it really belongs: at home, in schools, in the villages, and in the fields.

Entitled "Educational Materials in Primary Health Care", the exhibit was held from June 10-13 in the Ministry of Tourism Hall in Beirut. It was prepared mainly by the Department of Health and Behavioral Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences at the American University of Beirut (AUB). Participating were AUB health students as well as some non-AUB students and health practitioners. The participants had earlier this year

participated in a health care education seminar sponsored by the Faculty of Health Sciences at AUB.

With very limited materials, and a great deal of hard work and talent, these young students and health workers attempted to translate the complicated language of health into colorful symbols and images understandable by all. Posters, charts, flannelgraphs, games, cassettes, slides, plays, puppets, and songs were some of the teaching aids suggested for health education. In short and simple terms and with plenty of color and variety, one learned all about primary health care: How to prepare an easy homemade cure for diarrhea, how to purify water, what family planning is all about, how to keep oneself healthy through good nutrition, how to make your child's growth chart, and many more important and interesting health lessons and ideas.

Good health, the lessons told us, is easy to attain and can be very inexpensive — but only if we know how. For years now, only the privileged could afford good health-care and service. It is no longer so. Good health is a basic right which we can all learn how to acquire. It is a daily process in which we should all participate.

**Nada Khuri**

# The Personality of Gibran Khalil Gibran: A Psychological Study of his Life and Work

Among the numerous books published this year on the occasion of the "International Year of Gibran", Nahida Taweel Ferzli's study of the life and work of this renowned writer, poet, and artist stands out. Not only because it is one of the rare books that devotes a large part to Gibran's relationships with women, but also it is the first of its kind to use psychology to analyze his work, unlike the conventional approach that tends to perceive him solely as a great humanist philosopher.

This study of 382 pages in Arabic is an illustrated, revised, and enlarged edition of a thesis written by the author for her Diploma of Higher Education in Psychology, at the Lebanese University in 1973. It is divided into 2 parts. The first part consists of 3 sections:

- 1) Gibran's relationship with his family
- 2) Gibran's relationship with women
- 3) The influence of the West on Gibran's personality.

The second part, illustrated by his drawings and paintings, consists of the psychological interpretation of his ideas, dreams, and the themes recurring in his work. Among the main themes analyzed are:

- the image of the "sacred mother" and his reverence of motherhood,
- his longing for the mother's bosom and return to mother earth,
- the concept of the "hero" or "superman", presented in many of his books,
- the rejection of the father and all father figures like priests, governors lawmakers,
- his reverence of Christ, and his profound identification with him.

What comes out of this study of Gibran is a fascinating portrait of a man continuously pulled between conflicting forces:

- Between his love for life and worldly pleasures and his deep longing to escape the material world and take refuge in the inner one.
- Between his idealization of "mother figures" and his rejection of anything that represents the "father".
- Between his desire to emulate Christ, and constant wish to reach perfection of the soul and



*Self portrait of Gibran*

his knowledge that "man" is weak and far from being perfect.

I would like to look now at one of the most interesting chapters in the book, chapter three, which analyzes Gibran's relationships with women and the influence of the mother figure on these relationships.

Biographers of Gibran and those who knew him closely, like Michael Naimy and Amin Rihani, point out that Gibran had relationships with many women. But here one should distinguish between the close relationships that do not exceed four and the numerous social ones with American upper-class women says Ferzli.

Gibran's ambition to be successful explains the vast number of social relationships with rich American women who admired his work, his drawings, and his interesting personality. About these he once wrote: "Dinner parties every Friday at Mrs. Ford are infinitely delightful. At them I always feel I can say whatever I wish ..." (1)

Gibran's relationships with American women influenced his opinion about women in general and Lebanese women in particular whom he

(1) Otto, Annie, S. *The Letters of Kahlil Gibran and Mary Haskel*. Houston, Texas: Southern Printing Company, 1970, p. 621.

criticized as not being open enough to the world. What he liked in women was not only kindness and purity but also courage and intelligence and the love of life and its pleasures. He described his "Ideal Woman" as being a mixture of Beatrice and Messalina. Beatrice being Dante's pure love in the Divine Comedy and Messalina a Roman Empress renowned for her lust and political intrigues.

As for the women who were close to Gibran, the author mentions:

— **Sultana Thabet:** A young widow Gibran met in 1901 when he had returned to Lebanon to study Arabic. He was seventeen years old. They exchanged letters for fourteen months till she died at the age of 22. Her friends sent Gibran a silk scarf which belonged to her and 17 love letters she had written to him but never sent. Gibran was deeply affected by this gift and wrote: "You cannot imagine how deep was my sorrow. Why didn't she send them to me before?"<sup>(2)</sup> Taking this incident into account, the author concludes that Gibran's relationship with Sultana Thabet was a platonic one because Lebanese society at this time did not allow men and women to mix freely, nor to send letters to each other.

— **Emilie Michel or Micheline:** An attractive teacher few months older than Gibran whom he met in Boston in 1904 and whom he painted a number of times. She was the "personification of femininity" and their love relationship was transformed into a friendship when Micheline married in 1914. When Gibran was in Paris studying with Rodin, Micheline came to see him a number of times. He never proposed to marry her but they always remained on good terms.

— **Charlotte Teller:** A suffragette and a play-wright who wrote under a masculine pseudonym. In a letter to his friend Jamil Maalouf in 1908, Gibran depicted his relationship with Charlotte as being a temporary one. He describes her as "loving everything that is beautiful and pleasurable". Eventually, Charlotte married the writer Gilbert Hirsh in 1912 and went to live in New York.

— **Mary Khoury:** Whom he met during his first years in New York. She was the one who inspired his literary piece: "The Enchanting Fairy". In this work of prose, Gibran reveals what he felt for her by saying: "Will you be satisfied with the love of a man who considers love a friend and who refuses it to be a master? Will you accept me as a friend who does not enslave nor wishes to be a slave?"

— **May Ziadeh:** After publishing his book "Broken Wings" in 1912, Gibran started



*Portrait of Gibran's mother*

corresponding with the famous Lebanese writer May Ziadeh who was a leader of Women's Liberation in the Arab World and was renowned for her literary salon in Cairo. Gibran and May Ziadeh exchanged letters till Gibran died but they never met in person. Biographers of May Ziadeh agree that she loved Gibran dearly. This was apparent in the tender and sometimes passionate letters she wrote to him. When she died they found a photo of Gibran among her papers on which she had written: "This has been my unhappiness for years". As for Gibran he never wanted to get tied to one woman only and he wrote to her once: "I know that a little love does not please you. I also know that a little love does not please me either. Neither you nor I are satisfied with little. We both want much. We both want everything. We want perfection."<sup>(3)</sup>

However, the woman who meant most to Gibran was **Mary Haskell**, whom he met in 1904 after he had returned from studying Arabic in Beirut. He was then 21 years old and she was 31. She ran a boarding school for girls in Cambridge. From the beginning, Mary recognized Gibran's unique literary and artistic talents and proposed to become his provider of financial security all his life. He accepted. Their friendship and platonic love, unknown to many until the discovery of their correspondence, lasted 27 years until he died in

(2) Ferzli, p. 48.

(3) Bushrui, S. and Al-Kazbari, S.H. **The Blue Flame. The Unpublished Love Letters of Kahlil Gibran to May Ziadeh**, London: Longman, 1983, p. 176.





*Portrait of Mary Haskel*

1931. In one of the 325 letters he wrote to her he said: "Beloved Mary, God has given me much through you. How blessed it is to be one of God's hands. And how fortunate, how more than fortunate I am to know that hand and to touch it and to take from it. It is so good to be a little willow on the bank of a great river".

According to Ferzli, Mary's care for Gibran made him feel a reborn man, especially after he had suffered loneliness and poverty in a foreign land with no close companions except his sister Mariana. Moreover, the author describes Gibran's love for Mary as a mixture of a lover's love and of love towards a "sacred" mother.

Mary Haskell was the only woman he proposed to marry despite the fact that he was very much opposed to the institution of marriage. She was his "angel", his "beloved", and when he wrote the following thought he was probably thinking of her: "Women opened the windows of my eyes and the doors of my spirit. Had it not been for the woman-mother, the woman-sister and the woman-friend, I would have been sleeping among those who disturb the tranquility of the world with their snoring". (5)

In conclusion, Ferzli's chapter on "Gibran's Relationships With Women" is informative but not analytical enough. After citing the names of the women he was close to, Ferzli stresses the passive side of Gibran's personality and how all these relationships were characterized by a longing for motherly love, especially his relationship with Mary Haskell. We never really know why Gibran was afraid to get committed to one woman nor do we have a psychological analysis of his non-committal attitude.

We are left to guess why and to look for answers in other studies. When we do that we realize that Gibran did not see a woman as a sexual partner as much as he saw her as mother, ... nature ... goddess ... source of abundant life and symbol of beauty. What proves this point is a sentence he wrote: "Every man loves two women. One that his imagination creates and another that has not been born yet". (6)

However, Ferzli analyzes thoroughly Gibran's deep attachment to his real mother and the effect this attachment had on all his relationships with women. She also backs her analysis by demonstrating how much Gibran's paintings of other women were inspired by the face of his real mother, so that even when he painted the Virgin Mary it had his mother's features.

Wafa' Stephan

#### Note from the editor

So far, Al-Raida believes that the best biography that has been produced about Gibran is the one written by Jean and Kahlil Gibran, **Kahlil Gibran, His Life and World**, published in 1974 by the New York Graphic Society, Boston. The author Kahlil, Gibran's namesake worked on it with the help of his wife Jean. He is a well-known sculptor in Boston and was the son of Gibran's first cousin N'oula who emigrated to the States with his family. The book contains 442 large-sized, illustrated pages; it is based on research on a number of original documents owned by the author and collected over a twenty-year period.

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- (4) Hilu, Virginia (ed). **Beloved Prophet. The love letters of Kahlil Gibran and Mary Haskell**, London: Quarter Book, 1972, p. 389.
  - (5) Ferris A. R. **Kahlil Gibran: A self Portrait**. Translated from the Arabic. New York, Bantam Books, 1970.
  - (6) Bashir, An onios. **The Complete Collection of Gibran's Work in Arabic**. Beirut: Sader Publishing House, 1964, p. 167.

#### APOLOGY

*Due to severe electricity shortages during the months of Sept. – Oct. – Nov., 1983 Al-Raida was delayed for one month. We apologize to our readers for the inconvenience it has caused them.*

## Andalusian Love Poems by Women

**Mariam Bint Abu Ya'qub**  
(d 1010)

What does one expect from a woman  
Of seventy seven made of cobwebs?  
She crawls like a baby to her stick,  
And stumbles, a convict in shackles.

**Hafsa Bint al-Haj**  
(d 1190)

I send my poems to call you,  
As they sing they'll please your ear.  
A garden waiting to be seen  
Floats its perfume on the air.

If you were not a star  
The world would be dark  
As I praise your beauty  
I look for your light.

The garden didn't smile when we walked in its lanes  
But displayed green envy and yellow bile.  
The river didn't ripple with pleasure when we stood  
On its bank; and the dove cooed with dislike  
You mustn't think the world is lovely and kind  
Just because you are good. Look how the sky  
Switched on the stars to spy on our embrace

**Wallada**  
(d 1091)

Will this separation end so we can  
Share our love? Last winter when I waited for you  
To call, the coals of desire burned my skin.  
You've been away so long. How do I feel?  
I endure my worst fear: the night has passed  
But the absence stays. Patience hasn't untied  
The thongs of need. I hope rain blesses your land.

Translated by GBH Wightman and Abdullah al-Udhari,  
Associate Editor and Editor of *TR, Poetry Journal*, Vol.2,  
No. 1, 1979, London.

## STUDY

### Factors Affecting the Education and Employment of Women in the Arab World <sup>(1)</sup>

"Factors Affecting the Education and Employment of Women in the Arab World" is the title of a study written by Dr. Hassan Hammoud <sup>(2)</sup> under the auspices of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World. The study is divided into two parts: The descriptive part aims at evaluating the extent to which Arab Women participate in the development process of their countries, whereas the field study aims at identifying the factors that affect the employment and education of these women. The countries reviewed are: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria and Tunis.

According to Dr. Hammoud the major obstacle impeding women's participation in development is illiteracy which ranges from 50% to 76.6% in the countries studied. Moreover, what discourages Arab woman from participating in the work force

is the fact that her society in general wants her to be a "mother and a wife"; but if she has to work, it should be a "feminine" occupation.

Based on a sample of 300 taken from Kuwait, Jordan and Tunis, which included an equal number of working, non-working, single and married women, Dr. Hammoud found that age was a significant factor in women's decision to work or not. The younger a woman started work the more

(1) Funding for this study came to the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World from the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) in Tunis. The study published in 1982 by ALECSO, was also abridged in *Al-Majallatul Arabiyya lil-Buhuth at-Tarbawiyya* (Arab Journal of Educational Research), Vol. 3, No.1.

(2) Professor at Kuwait University, Social Science Division.

probable it was that she would continue to do so after marriage. On the other hand, there was no relationship between woman's work and the number of years she had been married, nor the number of children she had. However, there was a negative correlation between a woman's work and the social status of her parents. The higher the parents' position in society, the lower was the probability of the daughter being employed. The researcher explains this result by saying that a woman whose parents are rich is not encouraged to work.

Briefly, the factors impeding women's work were:

- **Personal factors** such as inadequate training, incapability of coping with both outside work and housework, and the high income of the husband.

- **Family factors** such as the need of children for their mothers, having children below 6 years of age; and the husband and parents' refusal to allow her to work.

- **Social cultural factors** such as the condemnation of women who mix with the opposite sex in the workplace, or the belief in men's dominance over women, and the unavailability of child care centers or help at home.

**By contrast the factors encouraging women to work were:**

The husband's help with housework and raising children; the women's work experience before marriage; the availability of part-time work; financial need and worry about the future; and the desire to raise the family's standard of living.

**As for the factors affecting women's education,** the study revealed the existence of a significant relationship between the educational level of the parents and those reached by the daughter. Only 13.2% of women who had fathers with low education were university educated contrasted to 79.6% of those with university educated fathers. Only 18.6% of daughters who had low educated mothers were at university by comparison with 90% of those whose mothers had been to university. The author explains these figures by saying that Arab women tend to identify with their parents, especially their mothers. Thus if the mother was highly educated, the daughter would tend to do the same.

Another significant correlation was between the level of the woman's education and the number of children she had. The more children a

woman has the less likely she is to be a university graduate, and the more educated a woman is, the less likely she is to marry early. Only 11.5% of women with more than four children had reached university level by comparison with 50.9% who had less. Moreover, the longer a woman was married the less likely it was for her to be university educated.

**Listing briefly the factors preventing women from continuing their education we find out:**

- The tendency among parents to encourage the education of their sons more than their daughters.

- The unavailability of secondary schools and universities in the region where their family lived.

- The "modesty code" that does not allow women to mix with men at secondary schools and universities or public places.

- The lack of motivation on the part of the woman herself.

As for the relation between personal aspirations and the educational level reached by women, the study reveals that only 11.3% of women with traditional aspirations (who wish to marry and have children) reach university level by comparison with 40.7% of women with variable aspirations and 48.8% of those with liberal attitudes.

In conclusion, Dr. Hammoud remarks that although the results of his study cannot be generalized, they are **useful tools** for identifying the major factors influencing women's participation in the work force and education in the Arab World.

**Wafa' Stephan**

#### Note from the Editors

Al-Raida would like to hear from you, have your comments and listen to your suggestions. Please write to us on the following address:

**Al-Raida IWSAW  
P.O.Box 13-5053  
BUC, Beirut  
Lebanon**

We are looking forward to a new year full of information exchange. Happy Year 1984!

# Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication in Kuwait

The following is a brief report, published in 1982 on Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication in Kuwait during the years 1967-1980.<sup>(1)</sup>

## 1. First Stage: Illiteracy Eradication Centers

1) In 1967-77 five centers to extinguish illiteracy were opened in Kuwait. Three of these centers were assigned to women.

2) Illiteracy Eradication courses were started for army men and prisoners in 1976-77.

3) At the beginning of 1976-77 specialists in the teaching of illiterates were employed instead of untrained teachers.

4) The Kuwaiti Ministry of Education participated in the 11th, 13th and 15th Adult Education Workshops held at Sirs-el-Layyan, Egypt in 1976-77. It also participated in seminars on women's educational needs and adult education held in Baghdad, Sirs-el-Layyan and Bahrain during the years 1976, 1977 and 1979.

5) In 1979 the Ministry organized panels of experts who discussed methods of training illiterate youth and programs that could be prepared for their rehabilitation. In those panels emphasis was placed on the people's participation in the campaign for wiping out illiteracy, on coordination of efforts and on close cooperation between the government and the people's organizations.

6) Between 1976 and 1979 several conferences were held in Alexandria, Mogadishy, Somalia, Bahrain, Sirs-el-Layyan and Baghdad dealing with illiteracy eradication programs. Delegates of the Kuwait Ministry of Education took part in the conferences.

## II. Intermediate and Secondary Stage

### 1) Guidance and follow-up

A group of expert men and women counselors were placed in charge of counseling students at the intermediate and secondary levels, and of improving school standards and teachers' methods. Emphasis was placed on improved methodology in teaching science and mathematics and in preparing examination questions.

Counselors extended their activities to prison schools to which they made visits of inspection. Transportation facilities, school contests in Koranic reading, poetry reading, and literary composition were organized.

### 2) Penmanship Institute

Penmanship institutes for teaching the art of Arabic handwriting were created in two centers of the country. Students included Kuwaitis and foreigners, young people and adults, and students of ordinary schools and of prison schools. Annual exhibits and the great interest it aroused proved the success of the project.

### 3) Cultural Guidance

Social activities, library equipment, magazine publication, and the creation of centers for Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication projects in 1974-75 were developed for cultural guidance. The following is a list of the most important achievements in the realm:

a) Preparation of a program of consciousness raising and of social and health education, which was gradually carried out in 54 centers for men and women, in coordination and cooperation with the Directorate of Adult Education and the Ministry of Health. The topics included in the program were inspired by local needs.

b) General Cultural Activities (1976-1980)

– Preparation and presentation of three films on cultural activity and adult education programs.

– Organization of annual receptions for the distribution of prizes and certificates.

– Organization of four exhibits presenting arts and crafts works performed by students in their leisure hours.

– Preparation of regular radio talks on the activities of the Education Centers.

– Publication of a magazine.

– Publication of a yearbook summarizing the achievements of the Adult Education Centers. The book was distributed on the occasion of the International Illiteracy Eradication Day.

– Enlargement and development of the library including all the documents published by the Arab Regional Center for Illiteracy Eradication Programs.

(1) By the Directorate of Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication, Ministry of Education, Kuwait.

c) Other Social Activities:

– At the Men's Centers, 31 programs were organized on national and religious occasions; at the Women's Centers, there were 45 of such programs.

– Itinerant teams of students were formed to spread awareness and participate in social activities like general cleanliness and traffic regulations.

### III. Recommendations

– Continuous development of the program of general health awareness in cooperation with the Ministry of Health.

– Necessity of introducing athletic activities

in Adult Education Centers.

– Training the students in the use of the school libraries and urging them to develop permanent reading habits.

– Enrichment of the Central Library.

### IV. Difficulties faced by the Directorate:

– Lack of interest, especially among women, in Adult Education and Illiteracy Eradication Courses.

– Large number of drop-outs.

– Irregular attendance of students.

– Inadequate salaries paid to employees.

– Inadequate financial assistance given to delegates who attended training sessions in Bahrain.

## Social Affairs Activities in Bahrain<sup>(1)</sup>

The last issue *Al-Nashra al-Dawriyya*, a quarterly published by the Unit of Social Research in the Ministry of Social Affairs in Bahrain<sup>(2)</sup>, reports on social activities performed in that country during the first quarter of 1983, particularly those connected with the Directorate of Social Affairs. The main activities consisted of the following:

1. Fifth session of the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs in the Gulf States.

2. Seventh Family Day Festival in Bahrain.

3. A training workshop on research work in the field of breast-feeding.

4. A training session for kindergarten teachers.

5. Visits made by members of local women's organizations to kindergartens and other children's institutions in Jordan for acquaintance and study.

6. Participation in the second conference of the Regional Center of International Movement held in Sharda (U.A.E.) and attended by 6 Arab States.

The following are a few notes reporting on training sessions organized during the first quarter of 1983.

### 1. A training session or workshop on breast-feeding:

Held from February 26 to March 3, 1983 and organized by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the World Health Organization and UNICEF, discussed the importance of breast-feeding, the factors that hinder it, its influence on the health of mother and child and the necessity of encouraging it. The session included a training course in research work done in this field, its technique and methodology.

### 2. The third training workshop for kindergarten teachers:

Organized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was held from February 26 to April 23, 1983. Its aim was to study the role of kindergartens in securing the parents' participation in their children's education. The participants were four groups of kindergarten teachers (22-24 in number) and four groups of mothers (10-12 in number). They discussed the methods used to ensure parents' participation, the stages of child development, the emotional problems of children, the influence of family health on child development, the role of the kindergarten teacher, the importance of children's nutrition and the role of radio and television programs.

### 3. The first training session unit for kindergarten teachers:

This session took place on January 24 to February 6, 1983 at the new Center for Training Kindergarten and Nursery Teachers, established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Its purpose was to train participants in detecting and analyzing the aspects of children's behavior, acquainting them with methods leading to normal children's development, development of individual skills and to study the physical, intellectual, linguistic and social forms of child development. Fifteen teachers from five kindergartens attended the session which was conducted by a UNICEF delegate assisted by women experts of various ministries.

(1) *Al-Nashra al-Dawriyya*, No. 32, Jan. Feb. March, 1983.

(2) See *Al-Raida* Nov. 1982, Vol. V, No. 22, P. 8.

## International Centre for Ethnic Studies

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies has been recently established in Sri Lanka to meet the following objectives:

1. to provide a clear institutional focus and identity for the study and understanding of the management of ethnic conflict;
2. to stimulate cross-national comparative research to ethnic policy studies;
3. to bring together scholars, policy-makers, academics and those in public life for dialogue and mutual learning and;
4. to encourage experimentation with innovative policy and action approaches that hold promise in the resolution of ethnic conflict.

The following objectives will also be covered:

1. the impact of economic development on the human rights of indigenous populations;
2. the link between ethnic conflict and international migration,
3. the way ethnic policies affect women.

Sri Lanka was chosen as the home for the Centre because of its geographical location and its relatively free intellectual life.

Address: **International Centre for Ethnic Studies**  
494/3 Piachaud Gardens  
Kandy, Sri Lanka

## A Silent Protest: Lebanese Women Sit-in

On the morning of the 22nd of September 1983, more than 400 women belonging to various organizations gathered together in silent protest against the last round of war in the Mountain.

They sat in front of the UNICEF building carrying banners on which was written: "Stop the fighting immediately"—"We demand Lebanese Reconciliation"—"Return all Refugees to their Homes"—"Implementation of Security Council Recommendations Nos. 508,509 and 520."

The two-hour long protest started with a minute of silence in memory of the victim of war, followed by the Lebanese National Anthem. After that, president of the "Child Welfare Society", Zahia Salman, gave a short speech in which she said: "We women refuse what is happening on Lebanese soil, we condemn the suffering

inflicted on people, institutions and the dignity of human beings."

Mr. Ikbal Akhund, High Commissioner Delegate of the UN Refugee Commission and Mr. Mohammed Baalbaki, President of the Lebanese Press Syndicate, spoke next, followed by Member of Parliament, Mr. Zaki Mazboudi, who declared: "A woman is the strongest pressure force on her husband, brother and son. I hope that all fighters in Lebanon will drop their arms."

At the end of the rally, Mother Doumian, head of the "Convent of the Cross" in Jall el Deeb spoke to the audience saying: "I heard about the sit-in and came to join in and testify that the Lebanese people love each other and care for their unity which has not been shaken by the fighting. I also came to say that the deep wish of all citizens is to break down the barriers erected by war".

At last, the Lebanese Council of Women called for another meeting on its premises in order to coordinate emergency and aid campaigns for all displaced people: old, young, women and men.

## Campaign Against Crimes of Honour <sup>(1)</sup>

Minority Rights Group (MRG), a consultative body to the United Nations based in England and winner of the 1982 UN Media Peace Prize, is planning in conjunction with several other organizations a campaign against the practice of "crimes of honour" in the Mediterranean and the Arab World.

The aims of the campaign are:

- To create public awareness of the existence and extent of these crimes.
- To give information and advice to those who wish to work further on the subject.
- To channel funds for practical projects aiming at eradicating this practice and helping its sufferers.
- To work at government and international levels to prevent such crimes and extend refuge for victims.

(1) "Crimes of Honour" are crimes committed to save the honour of the family i.e. any man who surprises his wife, his sister, his daughter, or other kinswoman in flagrant act of adultery and kills her without premeditation, benefits from alleviating circumstances. See **Al-Raida**, No. 4, P. 10, 1978 and No. 7, P. 6, 1979.

— To press for a change in the Geneva Convention of 1951 to allow victims who have managed to flee their countries and find asylum in the West to be given "refugee status". At present these women are not classified as a "social group" suffering persecution and cannot be given refugee status under UNHCR criteria.

Speaking at the UN Working Group on Slavery and Slavery-like practices in Geneva on the 10th of August 1983, Mrs. Hoda Dubray, an Egyptian lawyer living in Switzerland said that not only were many young women tortured, poisoned or killed because they had transgressed the laws of "family honour" but they were also driven from their village and country.

Mrs. Dubray hoped that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Commission on Human Rights would take up the cause of these women and extend them proper legal protection in the international arena by granting them refugee status. Such status would enable victims to find the security to develop a new life.

For further information on the campaign contact:

**Kaye Stearman**  
**MRG**  
**36 Craven St.**  
**London WC 2**  
**England**

## Associated Country Women of the World Conference

"Living in Today's World" was the theme chosen by the Associated Country Women of the World's (ACWW) 17th Conference held in Vancouver, Canada, between the 19th and 29th of June 1983.

Representing Lebanon at this conference was Zahia Salman, president of the Lebanese Child Welfare Society. Commenting on her trip to Canada and on the role Lebanon played at the conference Mrs. Salman said: "This is the first time Lebanon could participate in an ACWW event because of the situation in the country for the past years. The participants in Vancouver had a lot of sympathy for Lebanon and they expressed their willingness to help. I drew their attention to the fact that if we were asking for help it's because we



feel human beings are brothers and sisters and should support each other, not because we want pity."

The recommendations that came out of the conference centered around the future of humankind and the necessity to raise future generations to love peace and to be sound in body and mind. The importance of breast feeding, protecting the environment and food chemicals, and the non-discrimination of women at home, work and in local and government institutions were other issues of concern. In addition, the conference recommended the participants to ask their governments to issue special bank notes for the blind and to press the UN for organizing a "World Year for the Family".

(Al Hasna', 19 August 1983)

## Kali Press: New Women's Publishers.

The **Kali Press** is a new publishing house in India which aims to publish material **On Third World Women**, written by Third World Women produced in the Third World.

**For more information contact:**  
**Urvashi Butalia**  
**18 D Thornhill Crescent,**  
**London N1,**  
**ENGLAND**

(Outwrite: issue 14, May 1983)

## Secondary School Girls in Saudi Arabia <sup>(1)</sup>

On the occasion of **The International Year of Communication**, two seminars were organized on the 5-8 March, 1983 by the Egypt Women's Association together with the Hoda Shaarawi Association, the African representatives of the World Association of Women Journalists and Writers, the Egyptian Ministry of Information and the El-Nil Centre for Education and Training.

The first seminar discussed the role of women in direct communication to promote development. It covered Egyptian women's historical role in development, health conditions, local and international legislation.

The second seminar held at the same date, discussed **Communication - Key to the Future** with papers on basic and practical communication based on the understanding of cultural differences and international relations. Representatives of different branches of the media also exchanged working methods, in addition to celebrating International Women's Day.

(International Women's News)  
(Vol. 78, 1983.)

### Universal Childbirth Picture Book

**Universal CBPB** is available in English from Women's International Network, WIN. Will also be available in Arabic 1984.

Cost: \$3.00 US (\$1.00 ship mail/\$3.50 air mail)

Address:

187 Grant Street  
Lexington, MA 02173  
U.S.A. (Tel: 617-862-9431.)

Secondary school girls in Saudi Arabia regret the absence of physical education in schools and complain of unequal treatment of the sexes. These are some of the findings of a thesis **Problems facing school-girls in Saudi Arabia**, written by a psychology student of King Seoud University in Riyadh.

The author asked a sample of 850 women students living in the Saudi Capital 24 questions related to scholastic matters. Seventy percent said they regretted the absence of physical education at school and 38% declared they were not being treated equally to male students.

More than half of the respondents mentioned they suffered from excessive shyness which, according to the author, results from family socialization that considers decency and timidity as being one and the same thing.

Created in 1960, secondary female education in Saudi Arabia is at all levels completely separated from its male counterpart. Teachers are exclusively women, and when this is impossible, men teach female students through a closed television circuit. Moreover, women in the Kingdom are not allowed to drive a car, nor share public transport with men.

(Arab News, 4 June 1983)

(1) See **Al-Raida**, May 1, 1983, No. 24, p. 6, "The New Saudi Woman".

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