THE CHANGING STATUS OF WOMEN IN A LEBANESE MOSLEM VILLAGE

BY

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Salma Najjar

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the past few decades the Middle East, as a culture area has been undergoing changes in the political, economic and social spheres. With the increase in education and advances in technology which led, among other things, to a wider exposure to the mass media of communication, the people of the Middle East have been exposed to western ideals and western ways of life. One of the areas which was greatly affected and with which we are concerned here is the position of women.

The influence of the west and the broadening of Arab people's and particularly Arab men's horizon as a result of education, led to a reevaluation of the status and role of women. They came to realize that if society is to progress and develop, women must be given the chance for wider and more intense participation in public life. This realization led to drastic and basic changes in the position of women, which has been the subject of many scientific studies, and propaganda campaigns as well. When writers speak of the emancipation of women and their changing status, however, they usually mean the educated

middle class urban women. The changes in the position of these women, drew the attention of observers away from their rural illiterate counterparts. Empirical studies have concentrated mainly on urban populations, and thus reported results that reflect important changes towards more emanicipation and participation. Very little attention has been given to rural women and the incidence and pace of their change. Goode says: "in speaking of 'emancipation' we are largely talking about opportunities that are gradually being opened to the educated Arab women. Although these changes already have had some impact on the family life of other women, for the most part, the rural illiterates have not changed their position in either the family or the larger society."[1]

Studies dealing with this segment of Arab population are few in number. In describing the developments that have taken place in the position of urban women, rural women are dismissed as being traditional and backward. To what extent are they backward? How much have they changed? These and other such questions can be answered only after approaching the subject more empirically.

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[1]W.J. Goode, World Revolution and Family Patterns (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1963), p. 154.

It is the purpose of this study to find out whether or not, and to what extent are rural Lebanese women changing. More specifically an attempt will be made to examine and compare the practices and attitudes of young married rural Lebanese women with those of women in their mothers' generation, with respect to areas which are good indices of change. By this is meant, areas in which change, if there is to be any, is apt to be reflected.

1. Fatalism. Fatalistic attitudes will be reflected in the answers of the respondents with respect to matters or issues pertaining to expectations for the future, and the causes for a child's illness.

2. Emigration. Emigration is of vital interest to the villagers. They are all in one way or the other, directly involved in it. Almost every household has had, at some point, to face this question. For this reason, we tried to find out what are their conceptions of places beyond the village boundaries, and to what extent are they willing to emigrate or allow their children to emigrate?

3. Marriage. The respondents' attitudes with respect to marriage were also explored. More specifically an attempt is made to find out how these women differ in their outlook on marriage to Ibn Am (patrilateral parallel cousin) in particular and endogamy in general.

In analyzing the attitudes of the respondents, the possibility of discrepancies between attitudes and actual behavior was kept in mind.

In addition to the comparison of attitudes, a comparison of the actual role that these women play in the nuclear family was attempted. To what extent are members of one group more or less subordinated to their husbands? To what extent do they play the role of companion sharing in the making of decisions that affect the family? What aspects of life are considered the woman's domain in which she can exercise authority and control? In brief, to what extent is the role of the older women closer to that of women in early traditional Arab society.

The aim of our study then is to concentrate on answering the above mentioned questions, and to attempt to test the following hypotheses:

1. Generational differences that exist between the two groups are more in the nature of superficial differences that have to do with clothing, and spatial mobility (exclusive of emigration).

2. There are fewer generational differences than one might expect in terms of more basic things such as ideas and attitudes towards duties and role of women, fatalism, emigration, decision making and marriage.

Methodology

The Universe.- For the purpose of this study, a Sunni Moslem village of 850 people, located in the western part of the Beqaa valley was chosen. This single religious affiliation was intended in order to avoid the complications of holding religion as a variable. The women population of this village forms the universe of our study.

Selection of the Sample.- As we are interested in examining the generational differences in the attitudes and practices of married women, two groups of women in two different generations were chosen. The first group consisted of married women whose ages range between twenty and thirty years. The second group consisted of married women fifty years of age or above. Since the whole population of the village consists of 850 people only, it was intended to include in the sample all the married women who fall in these two age groups, in order to have a more reliable basis for generalizations and predictions. There were, however, difficulties which stood in the way and prevented the achievement of this desired objective.

The first problem was faced when determining the members of the sample. There is no dependable source for getting the exact ages of the respondents. If one asks a woman her age, she will give it within a margin of error ranging between five to ten years, especially if she is

an old woman. Even young women cannot give the exact ages of their young children. Government records, although more reliable than the women's knowledge, cannot be considered adequate by themselves. Because of the Lebanese Law[1] which imposes a fine on anybody who does not register a new born baby within the first month of its birth, many a five year old is registered as having been born newly. The mayor's testimony is required before a birth is registered, but the mayor being one of the villagers and involved in intimate primary relationships with them, gives a testimony according to the people's wishes. An eighteen year old girl's identity card testifies that this girl is fourteen years old. When asked about that she said that she had changed it when she was thinking of going to Brazil, in order to take advantage of the reduced fare for minors. This source, however, on the whole has a narrower margin of error than the respondents' testimony. For these reasons, in determining the ages of the respondents, more than one source was consulted. First, Government records, second, respondents' testimony, and third, information from the village census prepared in 1950 by two anthropologists: Kepler Louis and Herbert Williams, and

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[1] The New Collection of Lebanese Laws: Family Status (Beirut: December 7, 1951), p. 2 (In Arabic).

brought up to date in 1955 by Miss A. Rintz from the American University, Washington, D.C., and again in 1964 by Herbert Williams.[1] An approximation of the respondents' ages, derived from these sources was the closest estimate of the true and correct ages. For this reason the sample could have included some women who are either a bit younger or a bit older than required.

The second more major obstacle was the reluctance of the women to be interviewed. Living in relative isolation, with limited contact with strangers, the women were reluctant to be questioned by a stranger. They regarded the interview as an encroachment on their private lives, and could not really understand why any one would want such information. Explaining the purpose of the study and giving examples of the questions helped a bit, but did not eliminate refusals. In the end interviews with fifty women were completed: twenty five in one group, and twenty five in the other.

Collection of the data.- The interviewing of the fifty women was done during July and August of 1964, but contacts and rapport with the villagers were established a few months earlier when almost weekly visits to the village were made. During the months of July and August, the writer of this thesis stayed in the village for at

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[1] Unpublished Census compiled by K. Louis and H. Williams in 1950.

least three consecutive days a week, and thus had a chance to live with the people, participate in some of their social activities, and observe them. Apart from the formal less intimate interviewer-respondent relationships, friendly casual relationships were established. This rendered possible the complementing and enriching or checking of the information secured through the interview, against evidence arrived at from the observation of the spontaneous actions and reactions of women inside and outside the interview situation. The formal tool of research, however, was an interview schedule with open ended questions dealing with the areas of interest mentioned before. The questions included in the schedule can be reviewed in Appendix A.

Limitations of the Study

The research and analysis of generational differences among rural Lebanese women would be more meaningful if a cross section of all Lebanese villages can be taken. This, however, requires a lot of time and money which could not be afforded; thus the study was limited to a small village in the Beqaa.

Even in this one village more questions of an intimate nature such as birth control, could have been added. The respondents, however, consider such questions to be too private and improper to discuss, especially with an unmarried girl. For the sake of rapport and

confidence such questions were avoided.

Another limitation of this study is the failure to secure a hundred percent sample of women in the age groups considered. Hard as we tried there remained some women from each group who refused to be interviewed. The smallness of the sample, we felt, did not warrant any significance tests to confirm or reject the initial hypotheses. Thus the results were all in the nature of observed rather then tested differences; and this was sometimes a handicap in the comparison of the two groups.

Significance of the Study

Although the study has such limitations, yet studies on the women populations of villages are few. Empirical sociological data in Lebanon is also limited, and any contribution is apt to be of some value. Inspite of the fact that we cannot generalize about all Moslem villages in Lebanon, yet the results, we feel, can shed some light, and help in the formation of hypotheses that can be tested in other villages with similar socio-economic conditions.

The discussion of the changes in attitudes, and position of women in one specific village can be better understood in the context of the larger society in which they fit. A survey of the changing status of women in Arab society would therefore be in order, and will be attempted in chapter II of this thesis. Chapter III is intended to give general background information on

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CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF THE CHANGING STATUS OF ARAB WOMEN

A. Traditional Status of Arab Women

To some extent the institutions and relationships that develop and evolve in any society are partly attributable to the natural habitat of that particular society. Geographic environment moulds social life, especially among primitive underdeveloped societies where man has not acquired and developed the technology necessary to manipulate his environment.

The nature of Arab Society, particularly its patriarchal aspect has its roots in the pre-Islamic era when the Arabs were nomads living in the harsh conditions of the desert. Their livelihood consisted of protecting their sheep and cattle from other tribes, and at the same time trying to capture as much loot as possible from those tribes. Power and strength of a tribe therefore, was its only guarantee for survival. Thus men played the major role and their society was a male-oriented, male-dominated society. The head of the tribe was the

center of authority and control.

The family followed the same pattern of organization with the eldest male, generally the father, as the main figure of authority.

The position of women in pre-Islamic Arab society however, was very much influenced by the living conditions of the time which forced them to share in every aspect of life. Apart from the usual household chores which included cooking, washing and raising children, the grazing and milking of cattle was considered women's duty. This meant that women were not confined to their homes, but had to share in almost all the activities of the tribe. Even in war, women went along to take care of the wounded and encourage the soldiers.[1] These conditions though strenuous and harsh, gave women freedom which could not have otherwise been enjoyed in a male-dominated society. Women were not segregated from men, but mixed with them at work and in social life as well. Girls had the right to sit with their future husbands and discuss with them matters of life. Talking of the pre-Islamic Arab woman, Nejla Izzeddin remarks: "... with the hardships that she bore she carried the rewards and satisfactions of freedom and personal dignity and worth".[2]

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[1] Said al-Afghani, al-Islam wal-Mar'a (Islam and the Woman) (Damascus: Maktabat at-Taraqqi, 1945), p. 20.

[2] Nejla Izzeddin, The Arab World (Chicago, Henry Regnery Co., 1953), p. 296.

The freedom of women and the absence of the veil in the pre-Islamic era was, as shown above, a function of the living conditions which could not spare the participation of women. The form of social organization prevalent at that time however, namely the tribal system, based on power and struggle for existence, gave women an inferior position in the social system. The increase in the number of men was desired for they were the pillars on which their society rested. The birth of a girl was a source of distress and the practice of female infanticide was common. The justification for this practice was the fear of poverty which could lead to shame and disgrace.[1] In time of war, which was very common among the tribes, women were always subjected to kidnapping.

The traditions prevalent at the time, since there were no written laws, deprived women of many rights which were later granted to them by Islam. Not only were they not allowed to inherit property, but they themselves were inherited when their husbands died. The heirs of a dead man had the right to inherit his wife or wives, even if they were his sons, provided the women were not their mothers.[2] Polygyny was common and the number of wives not

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[1] al-Afghani, op.cit., p. 22. Several other justifications have been advanced for the persistence of this pre-Islamic custom. See: I. Lichtenstadter, Islam and the Modern Age (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), p. 48.

[2] A.M.A. Shushtery, Outlines of Islamic Culture (2nd. ed.; Bangalore City: The Bangalore Printing and Publishing Co., L.T.D., 1954), p. 510.

limited. This gave them the chance to procreate despite the shortage of men which was caused by the recurrent wars. A woman gained importance and prestige when she bore children especially males.[1] The marriage of a girl, though she was free to move around and mix with men, was subject to her father's approval, who was supposed to consult the head of the tribe before committing himself. The interest of the tribe came above everything and the marriage of its members was a tribal concern.

The advent of Islam marked an important change in the position of women. The Shari'a gave women rights of which they had hitherto been deprived. The practice of female infanticide was completely prohibited, and marriage laws limited the number of wives to four. The verse of the Qoran which permitted marriage to four women at one time however, was followed by another verse which limited this freedom by the necessity of justice among wives and added that one can by no means be equally fair to all of them.[2] This last verse helped some Ulema later to make use of the principle of Ijtihad to find a religious basis for the prohibition of polygyny. The Qoran made it

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[1] Muhammad Jamil Bayhum, al-Mar'a fi ash-Shari'a al-Islamiyya (The Woman in the Shari'a) (Beirut), p. 161.

[2] The Qoran, Surat an-Nisa', verses 3 & 129.

necessary that a girl's approval be secured before the marriage contract is written. It is reported in many sources that a girl came to the Prophet and accused her father of obliging her to marry her cousin. When the Prophet gave her the freedom of choice she said that she accepted her father's wish, but she wanted to prove that a father has no right to force his daughter to marry whoever he chooses.[1] This privilege was not enjoyed by women in the pre-Islamic era.

The exclusive right to initiate divorce practiced by men in the Jahiliyya (pre-Islamic era) persisted in the early years of Islam. It was made clear, however, that divorce should be the last resort to end an unhappy relationship, and that efforts should be made to salvage a marriage before divorce is resorted to.[2] Not only that but women were given the right to ask for divorce under the following conditions: chronic sickness or insanity of the husband, or his failure to fulfil the promises made in the marriage contract. A woman however had no right to ask for divorce on the grounds of incompatibility since her consent was supposed to have been taken at the

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[1]Inge Aphlatone, Nahnu an-Nisa' al-Masriyyat (We Egyptian Women) (Cairo, 1949), p. 69.

[2]Abdallah Afifi, al-Mar'a al-Arabiyya fi Jahiliyyatiha wa Islamiha (The Arab Woman in Jahiliyya and Islam) (Cairo: Matba'at al-Istiqama), pp. 60-61.

time of the marriage.[1]

The nature of life among the pre-Islamic Arabs did not require nor did it leave any time for education. The instructions in the morals and traditions of the tribe that the youngsters acquired in their families equipped them for efficient adult citizenship. With the advent of Islam, the need for learning was felt. The Prophet urged his followers, men and women, to acquire learning, and the Hadith contains many of his sayings in this respect: "There is a way for everything, and the way to paradise is through learning".[2] The Shari'a made it the duty of the wife to obey her husband, but if he stood in her way to learning, she could disobey him and follow her quest.[3] The Early Islamic era knew many women scholars famous among them was 'Aisha, the youngest of the Prophet's wives. After the death of the Prophet his followers considered his wives as the best source of the Hadith.[4]

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[1]Taher al-Haddad, Imra'atuna fi ash-Shari'a wal-Mujtama' (Our Woman in the Shari'a and Society) (Tunisia: al-Matba'a al Fanniyya bi-Nahj al Kanisa, 1930), pp.51-68.

[2]Nazira Zeinuddin, as-Sufur wal-Hijab (Unveiling and Veiling) (Beirut: Matba'at Qozma, 1928), p. 308.

[3]Sheikh Mustapha al-Ghalayini, al-Islam wa Ruh al-Madaniyya (Islam and the Spirit of Civilization) (Beirut), p. 272.

[4]al-Afghani, op.cit., p. 101.

Islam considered woman as an independent individual by her own right, and opened the way for her economic independence. Not only was the custom of inheriting the wives of the dead man prohibited,[1] but women were given the right to inherit property and handle it without the intermediary of a male relative.[2] The Shari'a specified that a daughter's share of the inheritance should be half her brother's share.[3] Taken on its face value this law may seem unjust, but further investigation shows that the reason behind this law is the fact that a woman is not supposed to contribute anything to her family of procreation, while it is the duty of her husband to support her and the children. Failure to do this, as mentioned earlier, is one of the situations which entitles a woman to seek divorce.

The freedom of movement and participation of women in the life of their community in the Jahiliyya and early Islamic period, coupled with the improvements on their legal position brought about by Islam, could have been a basis for the development of Arab women in the direction of more freedom and equality with men. Historical events however, interfered with this process and

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[1] The Qoran, Surat an-Nisa', verse 22.

[2] Izzeddin, op.cit., p. 298. See also al-Haddad, op.cit., p. 10.

[3] The Qoran, Surat an-Nisa', verse 11.

as a result women's status in society witnessed some definite setbacks.

The conquests and expansions of the first century of Islam strengthened the political and military position of the Arabs and brought riches and wealth to society. With this prosperity, a new class of people was introduced, namely the foreign slaves brought back from the surrendering countries. These women slaves were generally taken as concubines and thus acquired a social stigma. Out of respect for the free women, and to differentiate them from the slaves, the practice of veiling and secluding them was resorted to. A woman in the home of the rich became an ornament and a source of pleasure rather than an individual and person of worth. It was considered a sign of honor and a privilege for a woman to be veiled and secluded.[1] This practice which was intended to honor or preserve the status of the free woman became oddly enough the very factor which eventually began to restrict her freedom and self realization. Until then women took part in the activities of their society and many distinguished themselves as scholars and women of worth. Khadija, the wife of the prophet, it must be recalled, was one of many women who had great influence in the support of the prophet during the early days of Islam.[2]

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[1] Izzeddin, op.cit., p. 299.

[2] Afifi, op.cit., pp. 106-111.

The position of women in society in the early years of the first century of Islam was reflected in the family. Though the husband was the dominant figure in the family, yet the wife was given her due respect. The two partners cooperated to face the problems of life. Even at home men used to help their wives. It is said that Ali Bin Abi Taleb the son-in-law of the Prophet used to help his wife in the preparation of bread.[1]

The decline in the position of women thus began with the conquests and prosperity of the Arabs, but did not reach the alarming state till the days of the Abbasids. Immorality and the excessive indulgence in pleasures drove women into their homes and deprived them of the opportunities to develop their individual and social potentialities. It is against this situation, which developed even more with years, that the Arab writers of the early nineteenth century rebelled. Foreign scholars writing about the position of women in Arab society, blamed Islam for the inferior position of women.[2] The preceding remarks, sketchy as they are,

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[1] Ibid., p. 37.

[2] See for example Reuben Levy, An Introduction to the Sociology of Islam (London: Williams and Norgate, L.T.D.) I. See also W.R. Smith, Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1907), and R. Patai, Golden River to Golden Road, (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

should suffice in way of pointing out that Islam did after all give women certain rights which could assure their development into full equivalents of men. Even in the laws which seem to give women less rights and assign them to an inferior position, such as those pertaining to inheritance and polygyny, the Shari'a left a chance for Ijtihad which could reinterpret these laws and modify them in accordance with the times. Arab men, however, clung to the traditions which developed as a result of the conquests and contacts of the Arabs with strangers and tended to ignore the laws of the Qoran and the recommendations of the Prophet. The Abbasids and their successors abused their rights and reduced women to an inferior and secondary status. The patriarchal nature of Arab society in general and the Arab family in particular helped to promote those conditions. An attempt will be made in the following pages to describe the position of women in this era, and show how the patriarchal, extended and endogamous nature of the Arab family helped to promote those conditions.

Patriarchalism.- The internal organization of the traditional Arab family, which was basically extended and endogamous, followed the patterns of organization of the larger society. The father in the family represented the head of the tribe. His wishes were orders

with which his wives, daughters, sons, and daughters-in-law had to abide. Whatever property the family owned was controlled by the father. According to Baer, the authority of the father was derived from the fact that he remained in control of the family possessions for as long as he lived.[1] Although the economic factor cannot be overlooked, yet it is not the only element which endows the father with this authority. The respect of the elders who hold and transmit the values and traditions of society was, and still remains, one of the basic values of Arab society. In the case of the absence or death of the father, his sons, especially the eldest, handle the property and affairs of the family. The daughters held a position of minor importance. They were confined to their homes where they helped in the household chores until they were married. In her father's home a girl was regarded as family property. The father was responsible for preserving her honor and thus the honor of the family. Even after marriage, when the husband theoretically took over, the father and brothers, still felt responsible for punishing her if she misbehaved, and for defending her if she were badly treated.

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[1]Gabriel Baer, Population and Society in the Arab East (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 61.

The confinement of the girl, and the segregation of the sexes in all spheres of life did not leave her any chance for the choice of her husband. In fact she had very little influence on the decision of her marriage, and it was the opinion and decision of the father, or any male guardian, that counted. Although Islamic law requires the consent of the bride as a condition for the writing of the marriage contract, yet in practice the girl did not attend the writing of the contract, and it was her father who testified for her. If a respectable girl was asked about her opinion concerning her marriage to a certain person, she was expected to answer: "as my father sees fit" or "what pleases my father pleases me". Because she was not given sufficient freedom to mix with people of the opposite sex, a girl was not likely to have any special preference, and felt content to rely on her father's judgement. She was however, theoretically given the right to refuse her parents' choice.[1] The father in most cases, except in those situations where he sought to achieve status and wealth through his daughter's marriage, chose a son-in-law whom he thought was most suitable for his daughter. The authority of

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[1]Kazem Daghestani, La Famille Musulmane Contemporaine en Syrie (The contemporary Moslem Family in Syria) (Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1932), p. 13.

the father concerning the marriage of his children was not limited to his daughters. The father remaining, in possession of all property for as long as he lived made his sons dependent on him for securing the bride price, and gave him the right to impose his wish concerning the choice of the bride and the date of the marriage.[1] This however, need not have been as rigid as it sounds because the son had a wide range of choice which gained the father's approval, and thus did not generally feel the restraints on his freedom of choice. Some families were even in the habit of marrying their children when they were still young by writing the marriage contract and waiting for them to reach maturity to consummate the marriage.[2]

Marriage and bearing of children was almost the only way through which a girl could achieve a higher status, but even then she did not come close to being her husband's equal. The husband replaced the father as the master and figure of authority. She did however gain an improvement on her maiden status, as the mother of children especially males. Her position as the mother of males became more secure. This accounts for the strong desire of women to have sons, and for their consequent

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[1]Baer, op.cit., p. 61.

[2]al-Haddad, op.cit., pp. 90-91.

anxiety and feelings of insecurity when they fail to do so. It is small wonder that witchcraft and other such rituals have been associated with women who have suffered such a fate. The role of companion which the modern western and Arab women play, was almost unknown to the women in traditional Arab society. The husband and male children led a life in which the women in their household hardly shared.

Qasim Amin, the famous Egyptian advocate of women's emancipation writes: "I have seen with my own eyes a man sitting at table eating, with his wife standing by his side chasing away the flies, and his daughter carrying a jug of water ready to serve him".[1] In upper Egypt a woman was not supposed to eat until her husband was through with his meal, and if ever she went somewhere with him, she was expected to walk behind him.[2] This latter case could have its origin in the wish to walk ahead to clear the way for the woman and insure her safety. The habit of segregating the women even in the meals of the family is an example of the traditions which developed in the latter days of Islam. In the early days women were allowed to sit unveiled with men. It is said

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[1]Qasim Amin, al-Mar'a al-Jadida (The New Woman) (Cairo: Matba'at ash-Sha'b, 1911), p. 32.

[2]Aphlatone, op.cit., p. 7.

that Omar bin-al-Khattab, the second Caliph, once asked his wife to come and eat with him and his guest.[1] In his discussion of the background of women in the Middle East, Ibrahim Muhyi, summarizes the status and role of a woman in her house: "After marriage the husband traditionally replaces the father as the sole controller and director of the girl's affairs. She is not supposed either to protest against anything he does or to do anything herself without permission. Her prime function is to look after the household and to produce lots of children preferably boys. Even in the control of her children she has very little authority, the father being the final court of appeal".[2] The ideal wife in traditional Arab society is described as being "content, submissive, clean and devoted to her husband."[3]

Another evidence of the unequal position of men and women in traditional Arab society, and probably a function of the patriarchal nature of the Arab family, is reflected in the unlimited right of the man to divorce his wife,[4] and the denial of this right to the

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[1] Zeinuddin, op.cit., p. 190.

[2] Ibrahim Muhyi, "Women in the Arab Middle East", in Richard Nolte, ed., The Modern Middle East (New York: Atherton Press, 1963), p. 128.

[3] Shushtery, op.cit., p. 519.

[4] al-Haddad, op.cit., p. 87.

wife. Some writers think that this is a cause rather than a result of the inferior position of women.[1] This along with the man's right to marry more than one woman, are two of the factors for which Islam is mistakenly blamed.

The concern for the protection and respect of free women by veiling them and confining them to their homes was one of the major causes which led to the decline in the position of women. The role of the free women, as was shown earlier, especially in the homes of the rich, was reduced to an ornament and a source of pleasure to the husband. Only in the poorer families where women's participation in field work was indispensable, did the women frequently leave their homes. A well known proverb in upper Egypt summarizes this situation best. It says: "A woman does not leave her home except twice in her life: when she gets married and when she dies".[2]

The belief that education is not needed by women became widespread. Not only that, but education came to be regarded as a threat to a girl's chastity, partly because a literate girl can send love letters to her

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[1]For example Baer, op.cit., p. 36.

[2]Aphlatone, op.cit., p. 5.

lover. Qasim Amin refutes this belief and says that if it so happened that a girl who could read and write sent love letters to her lover, thousands of illiterate and ignorant women had unchaste relations with men and communicated through servants or old women.[1] Education got to be regarded as Man's prerogative. Nazira Zeinuddin who wrote in the latter part of the 1920's accused the Man in the East of being afraid of losing his control and authority over his women if they become educated.[2]

This confinement and lack of education have naturally limited their participation in public life. When a woman is born in a home which she hardly ever leaves, and in which she freely communicates with only the female members of the family, she loses her self-confidence, and is naturally no more equipped to face the outside world. She also loses her qualification to bring up the men of the future.[3]

Extended Family.- The prevalence or dominance of the extended family as the basic unit of social organization in traditional Arab society also played a role in assigning the woman a secondary and inferior status.

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[1]Qasim Amin, Tahrir al-Mar'a (The Liberation of the Woman) (Cairo: Maktabat at-Taraqqi, 1899), p. 19.

[2]Zeinuddin, op.cit., p. 318.

[3]al-Haddad, op.cit., p. 81 and 117.

Before her marriage a girl was not the concern of her father alone, but that of the extended family and even the lineage at large. Her behavior and her reputation reflected on all the group to which she belonged, and therefore she was the responsibility of this group. The marriage of a girl, or a man, was evaluated in terms of the extended family's interests, and this naturally limited the freedom of choice of either member of the couple concerned, especially the girl. It was the duty of the father to consult his immediate relatives mainly his brothers, cousins, and sons before promising his daughter to anybody. Any improper behavior on her part was a blow to her family's honor, and it was often a cousin who took revenge generally by killing her, in an almost ritualistic effort to cleanse the family blood or honor; hence the label of "blood crime" with which such offences have come to be identified.

After marriage, the position of a girl in her husband's extended family was not much different from her maiden position. Her husband replaced her father as the figure of authority, and he in turn had to comply with his father's wishes. Even in matters that were considered women's domain, it was her mother-in-law who made the decisions and ran the household. The bride gained importance when she gave birth to male children,

thus gaining the approval of the family. Later in life, by influencing her children she asserted her presence and gained dominance over her own daughters-in-law.

The main concern in traditional Arab society was for the perpetuation of the family line, and the woman consequently, was only a means to an end. The birth of a boy resulted in celebration, and the birth of a girl was an unpleasant event.

Endogamy: The preferred form of marriage among traditional Arabs has generally been one between patrilateral parallel cousins. A man had priority to his cousin, and his consent was usually insured before the girl was promised to someone else. In some cases the groom had to pay something to the cousin as a compensation for taking his cousin away from him. Whenever discussions of the position of the patrilateral parallel cousin arise, proverbs and sayings like the following come up: "a cousin has the right to dismount his cousin from the mare" meaning he can claim her even the last minute on her way to her groom's house. This preference was partly due to a concern for protecting the honor of the family by not leaving the girls unmarried, and partly to the desire of the girl's parents to keep her in the family. In this way she will continue living near her parents, and will have a better guarantee of being well

taken care of.

Sociologists and anthropologists have presented various other justifications for the presence and persistence of endogamous marriages. Murphy and Kasdan, for example, note that most of the people who wrote on the topic, adopted the Arab explanation that it keeps property within the family.[1] These explanations, however, and in agreement perhaps with Barth, are valid only when the Qoranic law pertaining to the inheritance of daughters is observed; namely that a daughter inherits half the share of her brother. The argument overlooks the fact that a bride from another family would bring her share into the family. Therefore the property explanation could be used to account for both endogamy and exogamy.[2] Another justification for patrilateral parallel cousin marriage is the fact that the bride price in such marriages was much lower than the usual. Barth says that this is due to the fact that the girl's father was ready to give up the bride price in return for having his nephew, who would protect him and stand by his side in times of trouble, for a son-in-law.[3] Murphy and Kasdan find flaws in his argument and say that as applied to the Arabs it

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[1]See Shushtery, op.cit., p. 517.

[2]Robert F. Murphy & Leonard Kasdan, "The Structure of Parallel cousin Marriage", American Anthropologists, LXI (February 1959), 17.

[3]Fredrik Barth, "Father's Brother's Daughter Marriage in Kurdistan", Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, X (1954), p. 171.

was not the father of the girl who gave her to his nephew, but it was the nephew who claimed her as his right.[1] The bride price argument, however, could be considered a valid justification for this preference from the point of view of the groom and his father. Apart from this, in an arrangement of this nature, the question of equality in the social standing of the couple did not arise. This being important in a society based on ascription and family position. Family feuds and conflicts put a wife from a strange family in an embarrassing position, and gave rise to what is called "the dilemma of split loyalty". This situation is avoided in endogamous marriages.[2] Millicent Ayoub presents patrilateral parallel cousin marriage as an extreme example of the general preference for endogamy found at almost every level of Arab social organization.[3] This practice had its effects in limiting the freedom of the girl, and putting the decision of most relevance to her life and future in the hands of her family.

Hopefully, the foregoing remarks should provide evidence to demonstrate how some of the traditional

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[1]Murphy & Kasdan, op.cit., p. 18.

[2]Baer, op.cit., p. 66.

[3]Millicent Ayoub, "Parallel Cousin Marriage and Endogamy: A study in Sociometry", Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, XV (1959), p. 266.

features of Arab family (particularly, its patriarchal and extended character, and the preference for endogamous marriages) have had a definite impact on the status of women in society.

Her relatively subordinate and servile position was, in large measure, a reflection of a male-oriented culture and its associated values. It follows then that a wife in traditional Arab society did not play the role of a companion or partner to her husband, as the modern educated Arab woman or even more so as her western counterpart. This is sometimes also attributed to the discrepancy in the degree of education and experience of husband and wife, and the double standards which are still deeply rooted at all levels of the traditional society.

It should be remarked that this description of the status and role of the traditional Arab woman, can be considered the "ideal type" because many women did exercise strong influence on their families, even if they went about it in an indirect manner, and not as their acknowledged right. Though Islamic history did not know any woman rulers yet many women wielded power behind the throne.[1]

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[1] Izzeddin, op.cit., p. 301.

B. The Changing Status

Like all other societies in transition, the Arab World today is in the throes of deep and continuous change. Numerous new processes and events underlie its social structure. New forms of communication, increasing exposure to the mass media, decline in kinship and other forms of traditional authority, emergence of new social movements, increasing economic and political participation have all had a considerable effect on the status of women and their emancipation. In fact more so than the conditions governing the rights and duties inherent in the traditional status of man, those of women have undergone some swift and alarming change. An attempt will be made in the following part to give a brief survey of the manifestations and causes of change in Arab society in general with special reference to the status of women.

The beginning of the end of the dark ages for Arab women in general and for the Egyptian and Syrian[1] women in particular, started during the early part of the nineteenth century. The increase in the number of schools and the contacts with foreigners through educational and religious missions, broadened the horizons of some Arab men, and made them aware of the stagnant and inactive position of Arab women. They came to

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[1] Syria at that time included present Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine.

realize the necessity of educating and reactivating this almost socially dead segment of the population. Women at that time were still too ignorant and secluded to realize this, and it was therefore natural for men to take the lead in the movement aiming at improving the situation of women.[1] Towards the end of the nineteenth century however, a number of women caught on and women's magazines owned by women started appearing. Prominent women such as Bahithat al Badiya and May Ziyadeh contributed articles criticizing a society with no place for women, and emphasizing the importance of education in enhancing the status of women.[2] The first woman's magazine, "Majallat al Fatat" (The Girl's Magazine), owned by Hind Nawfal of Syrian origin, appeared in Cairo in 1891.[3] Many other magazines, mostly owned by women of Syrian origin followed.[4] It was around this time also that men, interested in promoting the rights of women, lectured, wrote articles and published books all dealing with this topic. Qasim Amin's two books "Tahrir al Mar'a" and "al-Mar'a al-Jadida" were a product of

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[1] Izzeddin, op.cit., p. 304.

[2] Ibid., p. 305.

[3] Mohammad Jamil Bayhum, al-Mar'a fi at-Tarikh wa ash-Sharae' (the Woman in History and Religious Laws) (Beirut, 1921), p. 227.

[4] an example of these magazines is "Fatat ash-Sharq" (the Girl of the Orient) owned by Labiba Hashem.

that era.

Although the awareness of the necessity of improving the position of women started in the latter part of the nineteenth century yet the efforts remained scattered individual efforts which only paved the way for the organized movement later to come.

The nation's struggle for freedom and independence gave women the chance to participate in public life. Their first real participation took place in 1919 when they organized in Cairo a demonstration against the British.[1] Thus an organized women's movement did not come into being until a few years after the first world war.[2] The first federation of Arab women's clubs was established in Lebanon in 1921. Two years later Huda Sha'rawi founded the Egyptian federation of women. Among its demands were the raising of the age at marriage to 16, the reform of marriage and divorce laws, and the right for political participation.[3] The demand for

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[1]Mrs. Ahmad Hussein, "at-Tatawor al Ijtima'i lil-Mar'a fi Masr", (the Woman's Social Development in Egypt) in Mohammad Khalafallah ed., ath-Thaqafa al-Islamiyya wal-Hayat al-Mu'asira (Islamic Culture and Contemporary Life) (Cairo: Maktabat an-Nahda al-Masriyya, 1953), p. 516.

[2]Izzeddin, op.cit., p. 306.

[3]Durriya Shafiq, al-Mar'a al-Masriyya (The Egyptian Woman) (Cairo, 1955), p. 145.

political participation according to Munira Thabet[1] however was not adopted by the Egyptian federation of women until 1936.[2] This demand had been first raised by Munira Thabet in her Newspapers, and officially in the first petition to ask for women's political rights presented by her to the Egyptian government in 1927.[3] The number of women's organizations in the Arab world grew bigger with time, and they gained more influence on their respective governments. The feminist movements did not restrict themselves to improvements on the personal status only, but were equally concerned with social and political rights which promote equality between the sexes. The decisions that were taken in the inter-Arab Women's Conference of December 1944, give a clear idea of the nature of these demands. These decisions can be summarized into the following categories:[4]

1. Political rights (voting, employment in government offices).

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[1]One of the first Egyptian women Journalists. In 1925 she issued a daily French Newspaper, and weekly Arabic one, and called them both "al-Amal" (Hope).

[2]Munira Thabet, Thawra fil-Burj al-'Aji (A revolt in the Ivory Tower) (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'aref, 1945), p. 13.

[3]Ibid., p. 26.

[4]Baer, op.cit., p. 49.

2. Legal rights.
3. Culture and education.
4. Protection of the health of mother and children.
5. Protection of morality (banning of public houses of prostitution).
6. Economic rights (equal salaries for men and women).

The advocates of women's rights, whether men or women, tried to reinterpret the Qoran in a manner which suits modern developments - Nazira Zeinuddin demanded more Ijtihad, and at-Tabari al-Haddad said that one should act in the spirit of the Shari'a rather than the literal interpretation.

Manifestations of Change

The change in the position of women took many forms, but one of its most obvious manifestations is the increase in the educational opportunities. Until the first three decades of the twentieth century, the number of schools for girls was negligible. The concept of girls' education as such was neither widespread nor recognized as an issue. A school in Arab society, until the early part of the nineteenth century, meant a religious school where students, young and old, learnt the principles of Islam and whatever other subjects connected therewith. After that time, and as a result

of the contacts of the Arabs under the Ottomans with the west, learned men and officials realized the necessity of enlarging and widening the scope of these schools to prepare the new generations to meet the demands of life. It was found more practical however, to leave these schools as they were, and start new ones founded on different principles. The main aim behind these new schools was to teach the students the scientific aspects of modern warfare. They had become aware of the deficiency of their army in comparison with western armies, and realized that wars were being fought on new principles which had to be taught to the students. Learning the science of war entailed knowledge in other fields, and thus schools expanded and varied fields of knowledge were introduced.[1] This development of schools in Arab society shows that they were not intended for women. Neither religious scholarship, nor army matters were women's domain. It was not until a few years after the first world war, and as a result of various influences in Arab society, that individuals, groups and government officials realized the necessity of educating women, and brought this issue to the foreground. The number of students in general

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[1] Sate' al-Hosari, Hawliyyat ath-Thaqafa al-Arabiyya (The Yearbook of Arab Culture) (Cairo: Lajnat at-Talif wat Tarjama wan-Nasher Press, 1950), Vol. I, pp. 3-6.

has been steadily increasing, but the relative increase in the number of female students has been more than that of boys. This is reflected in Table I (Appendix B) which shows the overall progress in primary and secondary education in the Arab world.

Although education in the Arab world is not a solely governmental concern - for there are many private and foreign schools - yet Arab governments at present are becoming more and more concerned with education, and are allocating more funds to it. Table II (Appendix B) gives the educational budget in percent of the total budget of four Arab countries from 1957/58 - 1964/65. A comparison of educational budgets among countries cannot be very accurate because one country may include in its educational budget items that form part of another ministry's budget in another country. The small differences in the budget of the various years show little significance because of the closeness of the years. If the same information for more distant years could be secured, then the increase in the budget allocated for education could be noticed. The educational budget of U.A.R. in 1920-21 for example was only 2.5% of the national budget. In 1960-61 it became 19%.[1]

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[1]A.A.H. El-Koussy, A Survey of Educational Progress in the Arab World 1960-65 (Beirut: Regional Centre for the Advanced Training of Educational Personnel in the Arab States, 1966), p. 59.

The number of students is increasing every year at a larger pace than the increase in population. Tables III and IV (Appendix B) show the development of enrolment rates in elementary and secondary schools respectively by percent of age group, in the past five years.

Higher education - university or higher Institute level - is gaining more and more importance in the Arab world. The total enrolment for all the Arab world has increased from 156484 in 1961/62 to 248150 in 1963/64, the yearly rate of increase being 29.3%.[1]

Although the female student population forms around only 10% of the total enrolment at the higher level, yet this percentage is an improvement on the previous years. An example of the development of enrolment at the higher level can be seen in Table V (Appendix B) which shows the development in four Egyptian Universities from 1959/60 to 1964/65. It is apparent from this table that the rate of increase among the females is much more than among the males. In a period of five years the percent of females in the total student population increased from 14.0% to 20.3%, and the annual rate of increase among girls is almost three times as much as that of boys. The number of girls at all levels

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[1] Ibid., p. 7.

of education is growing rapidly, but it has not yet reached the level it is expected to reach. Not only that, but also as the level of education becomes higher, the percent of females becomes lower: girls form only 35% of the total primary school population in the Arab world, 26% of the total secondary school population, and about 10% of the students at the higher levels.[1]

Efforts are constantly being made to improve the situation and raise the level of education among women. The recommendations arrived at in the meeting of Unesco experts on the education of girls in the Arab world, held in Algeria in 1964, can lead to an improvement on the educational situation of Arab girls. The recommendations urged the Arab ministries of education to help the various organizations and institutions in dispelling the misunderstandings and prejudices which hinder the education of girls. They also recommended the participation of women in all aspects of their country's life, with the same rights as men. This, they thought, will allow women to help in raising the educational level of the whole coming generation, and will have positive influence on family planning and population control.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 88.

[2] Ibid.

As a result of education a great number of Arab women are no more confined to their homes, but show wider and more intense participation in the social, political and professional life of their community. Many women organized themselves and formed associations to promote social welfare. Unions of these associations played, and still play a role in the independence and political struggles of their countries. More and more Arab governments are giving women political rights. Over a period of ten years, between 1949 and 1959 women in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia have won the right to vote. On January 28th 1967 the Iraqi draft election law was officially issued for the perusal and suggestions of the people. This draft law which gave the Iraqi women the right to vote and be elected to parliament was approved by the cabinet on February 10th 1967.[1] Women in most Arab countries have by now won the right to vote and be elected to high government positions. In 1953, three women were appointed in the municipal council of the city of Beirut, and currently the municipality of one of the villages in the Rashaya Qaza in Lebanon is headed by a lady. In 1963, the Lebanese elected their first lady representative to the parliament.

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[1] an-Nahar daily newspaper (Beirut), Feb. 11, 1967, p. 8.

In 1966, and for the first time in Lebanon, a lady lawyer was appointed as the Judge of the Juvenile Court. The Minister of Social Affairs in 1965 in the United Arab Republic was a lady, in charge of a highly responsible job in the critical era of her country's social development. As to the professions, many women are going into medicine, law, journalism and politics.

The legal status of Arab women has also improved in contemporary society, Article 4 of the Syrian Law on family status, which was adopted by other Moslem countries, fixed a minimum age for marriage for both men and women, making it 18 for the man and 17 for the girl,[1] thus making it legally forbidden to marry girls at a very young age as was the custom before. We say legally forbidden because this did not prevent people from finding ways to evade the law when they wanted. In the year 1318 after the Hijra (first decade of the twentieth century), the Egyptian Mufti tried to solve the problem of women who were not properly supported by their husbands. He made certain amendments in the laws to protect the rights of women as far as economic support was concerned, and gave them the right to initiate divorce in certain cases.[2] The change and modification of the legal codes,

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[1]Kazem Daghestani, "The Evolution of the Moslem Family in the Middle Eastern Countries", International Social Science Bulletin, V, No. 4 (1953), p. 686.

[2]Amin, al-Mar'a al-Jadida, op.cit., pp. 219-224.

though part of the trend toward greater freedom and more rights for women, should not be over exaggerated. According to Berger, the emancipation of Arab women is largely a consequence of the increase in their education and freedom to work outside the home, rather than the result of direct and intended legislation.[1] As a matter of fact the legal documents and provisions in regard to the Moslem family are not sufficient indicators of its status. Many of the texts and laws that form the personal status have not changed their religious character despite all the social changes that have taken place. Polygyny, for example, is the accepted form of marriage as far as Islam is concerned, while actually polygynous marriages are becoming fewer and fewer, and now they form only a small percentage of the total marriages.[2]

The discarding of the traditional dress is another of the manifestations of the changing status of women. The gradual, and in some places, the almost complete disappearance of the veil is probably the most conspicious example. Education and the changes in the economic and political spheres are the prime causes behind the veil's disappearance.[3] "In the Arab countries

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[1]Morroe Berger, The Arab World Today (New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1962), p. 152.

[2]Daghestani, "The Evolution..." op.cit., p. 682.

[3]Baer, op.cit., p. 52.

the customs and conditions relating to women did not undergo sudden changes as they did in Turkey and Persia. The change has been gradual but none the less real. Although no authority has ordered women to discard the veil on a certain date, women are dropping their veils fast as they hurry on their way to schools, colleges, clinics, offices and public meetings."[1]

The Causes of Change.- At the foundation of all these changes in the position of Arab women in society is education which can be considered an avenue as well as a manifestation of change. It is not the education of women alone that is responsible for the change, but equally so the spread of men's education. It is pertinent in this connection to note Berger's observation that it is not so much traditions or Islamic doctrine which stand in the way of women's emancipation as much as the psychology of the Arab man.[2] With the opportunities becoming more available to a greater percentage of the population, more men were being exposed to new ideas and new perceptions. They started realizing that women form an important segment of the population, and a lot of society's welfare depends on them. If, however, they are to be of any use to their country, they should

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[1]Izzeddin, op.cit., p. 306.

[2]Berger, op.cit., p. 146.

be educated. The spread of the mass media of communication, along with education, exposed the people to western values, and introduced them to a society where women play an important role. Qasim Amin in his book "al-Mar'a al-Jadida", describes the status and role of the western woman, that of freedom and participation in all spheres of life, and says: "All what we hope and work for, is for the Egyptian woman to reach this high level".[1]

The closer contact of Arab Society with the west was one of the important agents of change. Apart from the mass media of communication and education which exposed the people of the Middle East to western values, the relatively long period of foreign rule brought them closer to western ways of life. The advances in the technology of the west which led to an improvement in the means of transportation, made it easier for westerners to come to the Arab world, and for Arabs to go to the west, and thus for acculturation to take place. The transformation of the internal structure of Arab society, probably also a function of closer contacts with the west, necessitated a change in the outlook and perceptions of the people. The increase in urbanization, and the trend towards more industrialization, led to a reevaluation of the status

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[1]Amin, al-Mar'a al-Jadida, op.cit., p. 3.

of women. Progressive political and social leaders are constantly working for promoting women's rights, and increasing their active participation in the life of their country.

These changes in the status and role of women in the larger society had their impact on the position of the woman in the family in general, and on husband-wife relationship in particular. Women are being educated, and the discrepancy in the degree of education of husband and wife is no more a barrier to intimate companionship in modern families. The wife is no longer subservient and her role is not restricted to waiting on the comfort of her husband and children. The husband's role is no longer the replacement of the father, and the relationship between husband and wife is one of friendship and companionship. Through her education, the wife gained access to the world outside the home, and started sharing in the responsibilities of the family and society at large.

A modern woman's individuality starts in her father's home before she gets married. It is her freedom to get educated and later to work outside the house that prepares her for fulfilling the new role expected of her. For the more secular and emancipated segments of the population, the choice of husband is considered these

days by both the girl and her parents as her undisputable right. Marriage is gradually getting to be considered as a union between two individuals rather than two families. Compatibility of the couple is gaining importance in determining the desirability of the marriage.

This description of the status and role of modern women is, as that of the traditional role, very much of an "ideal type". Many women, though educated, still play a traditional role. The new conception of the role of a wife is causing difficulties of adjustment in many families. A modern educated woman is torn between pursuing the career for which she was trained on the one hand, and fulfilling the obligations of her role as wife and mother on the other. Not only that but sometimes the discrepancy in the outlook of the husband and wife with respect to the role of the wife creates misunderstandings and problems. Many men though themselves educated and advocate women's education, cannot, when it comes to their lives, resign to the fact that the woman is qualified to act as a partner and companion who shares in the making of decisions.

The modern Arab woman is now in the transitional phase between the old and the new: in a phase which is inherently characterized by instability, and maladjustments, inevitable in an era of quick social development.

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND ON HAOUCH

Far from being an isolated and simple phenomenon, generational differences among traditional women of an agrarian region, reflect certain complex institutional forces which underlie the basic socio-cultural and economic features of that community. Accordingly, the nature and manifestation of such differences can only be understood within the socio-cultural setting in which they emerge.

The following chapter provides a brief sketch of the setting of Haouch, with particular emphasis on those features that bear some relevance to the problem under study.[1]

Geography

The Beqaa valley is located in the southern part of Lebanon. It separates the Lebanon Mountain Range from the Anti Lebanon Mountain Range which forms one of

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[1]The information presented in this chapter has been derived partly from personal observation and specifically from the field notes of Herbert and Judith Williams.

the boundaries between Lebanon and Syria. Haouch is located in the western part of the Beqaa plain eight kilometers south of the Beirut-Damascus highway. The land of Haouch is irrigated from the Litani river and one of its tributaries the Ghzayyil river. The climate in winter is cold with a low degree of humidity. In summer the temperature in the daytime is high, but drops considerably after sunset, making for cold nights. The rainy season starts towards the end of November and lasts till around the middle of May. During most of this period, the villagers stay idle unable to work in the fields because of the deep mud.

Description of the Village

The village at the present time is composed of two sections: the old section, and the new section separated by the main road which joins the village with the Beirut-Damascus highway. The new section has been recently built--over the past thirty five years, since about 1930--after the old section has become very crowded. The roads between the houses are poorly paved and very narrow, and thus remain for the greater part of the winter very muddy. In places where the sun does not reach, the mud gets to be more than one foot deep, making it difficult to move around. Around the houses there are vacant pieces of land which serve as pastures for the animals,

when not in use, and are transferred into threshing grounds (baydar) at harvest time. These lots of land belong to the village as a whole, and any member of the village can build his house on them. The traditional building material is adobe brick and the roofs are earthen. These days adobe bricks are being replaced by cement blocks, concrete, and steel. The person who builds a house in the traditional form builds it himself with the help of his family. The average house is composed of two rooms: a big one where they receive their guests in the daytime and sleep at night, and another for cooking and storing their belongings. Some houses might be bigger or smaller depending on the economic standard of the family. Very few houses have toilets. The ones which have toilets are either new houses, or have had the toilet recently added. The majority of the villagers relieve themselves in the fields, which contributes to the unsanitary conditions of the village. Water is not readily available, because women have to go to the water tower in the middle of the village to get their daily supply. The luxury of having clean potable water in the middle of the village has been only recently enjoyed by the people. The water tower was built in 1955, but did not go into operation till the fall of 1963.[1] Prior to this date, the women, or

[1]Herbert H. Williams, and Judith R. Williams, "The Extended Family as a Vehicle of Culture Change", Human Organization, XXIV (Spring, 1965), p. 59.

generally the girls, had to go all the way to the river one kilometer away from the village to get water.

The village is not yet lit with electricity. The poles have been installed, the necessary wiring done, but they have not gone into operation yet. The coming of electricity will most probably be an important agent of change.

Economy

The economy of the village is predominantly agricultural. The vast majority of the people are peasants, most of them working on land that does not belong to them. Of the 10,000 dunums of village agricultural land, only 419 are owned by the villagers, and the rest belong to absentee landowners.[1] These 419 dunums are divided into about 14 parcels ranging in size from 10 to 80 dunums each. Apart from the small pieces of land owned by some families, the land farmed is usually rented or worked on sharecropping basis. Some farmers do both at the same time, but the majority are sharecroppers.

The amount of land rented varies in size, and ranges between 14 to 500 dunums.[2] The rent is about 50 pounds per irrigated dunum, payed in two instalments:

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[1] Ibid., p. 62.

[2] Ibid.

a downpayment on renting and the rest at harvest time.

In a sharecropping arrangement, the landowner provides the land, the water, and half the cost of seeds, fertilizers, and of hiring and operating the ploughing and harvesting machinery. The farmer provides the other half of this cost, plus labor. The harvest is then equally divided between the two parties.

The risk of a bad crop is generally higher in case of the rented land, but sometimes the sharecropper is burdened with the consequences, especially when he is not in a position to argue with the landlord. This weak position arises from his fear of antagonizing the landlord, who could deprive him of farming his land again. The fact that the peasants do not own their land, and thus are not certain whether they will be farming the same piece of land in the coming years, makes them ignore the agricultural principles which should be followed if the land is to give the maximum of its potentialities. An example of this is the principle of crop rotation. The farmer is more concerned with the immediate cash that he can get, than with the long run productivity of the land; therefore he plants the same cash giving crop year after year, and in this way jeopardizes his own interests.

The chief crops are wheat and sugar beets. Wheat

is mainly a subsistence crop, but is also generally sold for cash. Sugar beets form the main source of cash, which they get in winter after they have sold the harvest to the sugar factory. The planting of sugar beets is very recent in that it started in 1959. Before that watermelons were the main source of cash. Vegetables such as tomatoes, cucumbers, and beans are also a source of cash, but this is not a stable dependable income because it varies with the fluctuations in the Beirut market. Potatoes are widely planted mainly for subsistence, for they are a main item in the villagers' diet.

Agriculture in Haouch is becoming more and more mechanized. There are six owned tractors in the village, which are used for plowing, threshing, and transportation. Those who do not own tractors hire them, and thus ownership of a tractor is another source of cash. Irrigation from the river Litani or its tributary the Ghzayyil, is done by means of engines and irrigation pumps. A total of 16 engines and pumps are owned by the villagers.

Although the major occupations in the village are agricultural, yet there are some villagers engaged in non-farming enterprises. One of these enterprises is the egg business concentrated in one chicken farm of 1200 hens. Some women raise chicken in their yards, but their revenue is limited to being a means for barter,

which is still practiced in the village, especially when cash is scarce. Shopkeeping is another non-farming enterprise. Although the people do not depend on the six shops in the village for their shopping, since often they go to the near-by town of Zahle instead, yet these shops serve the daily needs of the villagers. They depend on them for supplying tea, coffee, sugar, oil, kerosine, cigarettes, soft drinks, lantern glass covers and other such items.

Transportation has become more available in the past decade. Fifteen years ago, there was only one early morning bus which connected the village with the outside. Now instead there are five taxi cars that take the villagers to the near-by towns and villages. This forms an occupation for the four taxi drivers who own and run the five cars. Apart from these taxis, there is one private car in the whole village.

Foreign remittances, like the rest of rural Lebanon, form a source of money for the people of Haouch. Many young men emigrated mainly to Brazil, and sent their relatives money, or came back with some capital to invest. Since 1950 101 persons emigrated, and of these 16 have come back.[1] The recent inflation in Brazil, however, almost stopped the backward flow of money, and discouraged further emigration. The wealth that one acquires there,

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[1] Ibid., p. 63.

is reduced by more than one half when converted to Lebanese currency.

Stratification System

The economic status of the villagers is not uniform, and one can place them on an economic continuum which ranges from the relatively rich (those who own some land, and farm other big lots) to the destitutely poor. These differences, however, do not lead to a clear cut hierarchy, and social classes are not easily distinguished. An outside observer visiting the various houses can differentiate between the relatively well to do and the very poor families. The houses of the former are bigger, the furniture more elaborate and the clothing less shabby. The villagers themselves realize these differences, and the poor look up to the rich. The economic position of the latter wins them respect from the rest of the villagers. The rich are the ones who can exert pressure in village affairs. Apart from the economic variable, the size of the lineage is important in determining the position of its members in the village hierarchy. Big lineages are generally richer, and their number gives them strength and power. They form a solid group which outsiders hesitate to fight or quarrel with. A big lineage is a good voting block which leaders from outside fear and seek to win its favor and support.

Although these differences are marked, yet they do not really affect the social interaction in the village. They all visit with each other and even marriage is not strictly confined to special lineages of the same social ranking. Social ranking is considered, but it is the position and status of the person rather than the social ranking of his lineage which is the determining criterion.

Religion

Haouch is a Sunni Moslem village. All the people adhere to this faith, with the exception of four women who had married into the village, and had before marriage belonged to different sects (one Druze and three Shi'ites). Now that they are in the village, however, they adhere to Sunni Moslem practices.

Over the past twenty years, two mosques were built. Twenty years ago an old mud brick mosque was replaced by a new cement block building which was never entirely finished. This building now stands empty, and a new one has been built and finished on the site of the original old mosque. Although the people have put some effort into building mosques, yet they cannot be described as religiously very active. Religion is practiced individually in the homes, and the mosque is only used on religious occasions. This could be partly due to the

fact that there is no sheikh in the village to conduct prayers and assert the presence of the mosque. Older people tend to observe the religious requirements such as daily prayers, and the fasting all through the month of Ramadan, more than the younger ones. The school curriculum, however, does include teaching of the Qoran and the techniques of prayer. This is to be expected since the school is not run by the government but by a Moslem benevolent association--the Maqasid Association. Religious expressions and reference to God and his prophet are frequent and apparent in the speech of the people even the less religious among them. This could be the result of the force of habit rather than genuine belief.

Education

Education in Haouch is a recent phenomenon. Almost half of the men, and all of the women thirty years of age and above, are illiterate. The people, however, are becoming more conscious of the importance of education, and the parents who can afford the money, and can spare the services of their children, are sending them to school.

The village does not have a government school at present. It did have one in 1950, but it was replaced by a school sponsored by the Maqasid Association.

The school occupies a three room, shabby cement house, with windows closed by sheets of tin. The rooms are crowded because each serves as a classroom for more than one form. The furniture of a classroom consists of one oil stove, a blackboard, and some shabby, narrow homemade desks and benches. The benches in each room are not enough to take all the students, so wooden boards were put between desks to serve as additional seats.

There are five forms in the school. The first form has the largest number of students, around fifty, and they occupy one of the three rooms. The second and third forms, with between 25 and 30 students in each, share the second room. The fourth and fifth forms, with again 25 to 30 students in each, share the third room. Each room has one teacher in charge. The total number of students registered in the school is 110. A distinction is made between those registered and those attending because attendance is very sporadic. It varies with the sex of the students, with the form, and with the time of the year.

Of the 110 students, between 20 and 25 students are girls, and the rest are boys. In other words only less than one fifth of the students are girls.[1] This is in terms of the student body as one unit. Girls are

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[1] Ibid.

more represented in the lower forms. Their number is inversely proportional with the form.[1] The relatively lower proportion of girls in advanced classes is significant since it reflects the prevailing attitudes of the villagers in general towards education for girls. They do not regard it as very essential for a girl to go beyond the stage of knowing how to read and write, since ultimately she is going to end up married with a husband and children to care for. For this reason priority is given to the boys in the family, who will be in charge of supporting a family in the future. Apart from this a young girl of the first and second form is not of much use at home. As she grows older her services will be needed by her family. She can help her mother in the housework and the caring of the young siblings, or she can help her father in the fields, or work in somebody else's field in return for a wage. Many girls do both jobs at one time, i.e., help their mothers at home and work in the fields. This being the case, very little time if any, is left for education. Consequently fewer and fewer girls are left in the third, fourth, and fifth forms. "The sporadic attendance (for girls) marks more of a respite from their endless chores rather than a

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[1] Ibid.

genuine change in their life course. Prestige does accrue to a girl who is in school: It not only implies that her family values her, but also is affluent enough to release her from work in the fields."[1] Attendance in general is at its peak in mid winter during the idle months when work is at a minimum.

Apart from the 110 students in the village school, 42 children study in schools outside the village, in the neighboring village of Marj, and in Zahle. Only one of them studies in Beirut, and he is one of the two young men in all the village who have gone beyond secondary education. In general we can say that only about half of the village children are in school. Even of those in school now, very few go beyond the elementary level.

The school follows the government curriculum. At the end of the fifth form the students sit for the government elementary exam referred to as the "certificat". The curriculum includes Arabic, Arithmetic, history, geography, science, and English as the foreign language. There is a daily session for teaching the students the techniques of prayer. This being imposed by the Association sponsoring the school.

On our last visit to the village, a few men and some children were busy spreading cement on the floor

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[1] Ibid.

of a new house. When we asked what they were doing, we were told that they were preparing the new house that the school was going to occupy. This, we understood, was a condition that the Maqasid Association put, if it is to continue subsidizing the school. The new house looks cleaner and healthier, though not much bigger, than the old one. This house is built on the common with a lot of space around it to serve as a playground. The sun is always shining on this piece of land which makes it less muddy than other parts of the village. The furniture will remain the same, but at least the hygienic conditions will be better.

Social Structure

Kinship structure.- The 850 people of Haouch are divided into fourteen lineages: two big lineages, the "Rabah" and the "Ahmad Hasan", and 12 smaller ones. The Rabah lineage is in turn divided into four sublineages, and they all total 150 people. Ahmad Hasan lineage is divided into two sublineages with 78 people in all. The total number of households in the village is 150. Some of these are extended families, and some are nuclear families.

Marriage.- It is a widely held belief that the Arab family, including the Lebanese family, is endogamous. The authors of Patai's monograph on "The Republic of

Lebanon" say: "the Lebanese family is endogamous..., i.e. preference is for marriage contracted within the extended family and relatively often between the sons and daughters of two brothers." They go on to say that "in tradition bound social strata such as the inhabitants of the more remote villages, a man is regarded to have the right and sometimes the duty to marry his cousin."[1]

In Haouch, there is still this persistent belief in the patrilateral parallel cousin marriage (Bint 'Am marriage) as the preferred form of marriage. Among 36 adolescent boys between the ages of 15 and 18, 23 (almost 64%) named Bint 'Am marriage as the preferred type, and among 27 adolescent girls in the same age group, 17 (around 63%) preferred Ibn 'Am marriage.[2] It is of interest to note that the incidence of this form of marriage in the village, however, does not coincide with this attitude. Of all the marriages in Haouch, only 6% are Ibn 'Am marriages. Although the incidence of a form of marriage is not in itself sufficient as an index of the attitude of the people towards it, but other demographic, political, or economic factors influence the situation, "the rarity of these alliances in Haouch cannot be

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[1]Patai, The Republic of Lebanon (Subcontractors Monograph, HRAF-46; New Haven, Connecticut, 1956), Vol. I, p. 260.

[2]Williams & Williams, "The Extended Family...", op.cit., p. 61.

entirely ascribed to lack of opportunity."[1] Apart from the incidence of this form of marriage which is opposed to the general opinion about Arab endogamy, the reasons given by those who prefer it to more distant alliances are not in the nature of the classical reasons that are usually presented. Murphy and Kasdan in their article on the structure of parallel cousin marriage say that most people who wrote on the subject, gave the Arab explanation that this form of marriage helps to keep the property within the family.[2] F. Barth offers another argument that this form of marriage "... plays a prominent role in solidifying the minimal lineage as a corporate group in factional struggle."[3] Murphy and Kasdan find flaws in both these arguments which we shall not discuss here. The main point is that the reasons presented are all in the nature of the power and economic position of the lineage or clan. Whether they had these reasons in their subconscience or not, the people of Haouch did not verbalize them. Instead, they pointed out things like greater familiarity, closeness, and, in cases of the women, better chances for good treatment at the hands of the husband and in-laws. The suggestion that

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Murphy and Kasdan, op.cit., p. 17.

[3] Barth, op.cit., p. 171.

these reasons are at the basis of their preference is supported by the fact that the rate of frequency of matrilateral cross cousin marriage (mother's brother's daughter, or Bint khal) is 5%, almost equal to that of Bint 'Am marriage. That of the Bint 'Am, as mentioned earlier, is only 6% of the total marriages.

Residence.- It is customary that when a son gets married, he brings his bride to live with him in his parents' home. Sometimes after a few years, the couple move to a separate house, either as a result of lack of space or misunderstandings between the wife and her in-laws. The move to a separate house could mean a room adjacent to that of the in-laws in the same house. The traditional conception of an extended family system frequently implies that the parents, with their unmarried daughters, unmarried and married sons along with their families all live under the same roof, or in a number of adjoining houses. The property is jointly held by all members of the extended family under the surveillance and control of its head. Furthermore, all the men work together and they all draw on the same budget for their expenditures.[1]

Judged by these criteria, one may outwardly be

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[1]Patai, Golden River to Golden Road, op.cit., pp. 84-85.

inclined to conclude that a large proportion of the families in Haouch are extended in nature. This is not so, however, on a closer look. To begin with, since very few of the farmers are landowners, it is the joint renting or farming of land on a sharecropping basis, rather than joint ownership of property that should be taken as an index of the incidence of extended families. Secondly, a sizeable number of nuclear families are living on what might look like an extended family, i.e., in the same house or in adjacent units. To complicate the picture further, farming is often jointly undertaken by father and sons even if they happen to be living in separate houses. But what is most significant, is the villagers' own conception of what constitutes an extended family. They do indeed differentiate between "living all together" and "living alone". But physical proximity or the mere fact that they share the same abode is necessary but not sufficient to create an extended family. The important criterion is whether they cook jointly and eat together, or each nuclear family manages its own household and cooks its own food.

These remarks should serve to qualify some of the yardsticks often employed in characterizing the attitudes of kinship organization in Middle Eastern village communities. That most of the families in

Haouch are extended in nature is not to be questioned. What is questioned is the criteria often singled out in identifying such features. It appears to us that the extended family as a unit of production is more common in Haouch than the extended family as a unit of consumption. It is the latter, however, which is more important from the villagers' perspectives and sentiments.

Polygyny.- As is widely known, Islam as a religion allows the marriage of one man to more than one woman. The number, however, should not exceed four at one time. This custom has been gradually dying out, and one Moslem Arab country, namely Tunisia, has already forbidden it. Many people present an argument that the banning is not against Islam. The Qoran specifies that a man can have more than one wife, provided he can be equally fair to all of them. It is clearly stipulated in the same sura "'ye can by no means carry yourselves equally between women.'". The Ulema[1] along with most orthodox theologians who favor the prohibition of polygyny, often quote this particular verse in an effort to indicate that the Prophet himself held similar views on the subject. Furthermore,

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[1]Like Mohammad Abduh, Sheikh Mohammad Mustapha al-Maraghi, the Azhar Sheikh who was instrumental in passing a legislation which called for the banning of polygyny. For further details see Durriya Shafiq, op.cit., p. 33 and 34.

it is argued that the custom of polygyny in itself may be interpreted to mean an improvement on the conditions prior to the advent of Islam when the number of co-wives was not limited to four. In other words, Islam did not encourage polygyny but limited its practice, and protected the women to some extent from abuse of the man's right to divorce.[1]

Although we have not collected any empirical data on the attitudes of the people of Haouch towards polygyny, yet we had the chance to hear some of their views concerning a recent case of a second marriage in the village. In general women were not in favor of this step and there was quite a lot of whispering about the subject, this being only the second case in the past twenty years or more. A group of men discussing the issue were not in agreement. Some held the opinion that it is not a bad idea if one can afford it, especially that it is permitted in Islam. Others held the opposite view and defended it with much the same tone of the argument advanced earlier. Whether the scarcity of polygynous marriages in Haouch at the present time is a function of negative attitudes towards polygyny, or a function of poverty and inability to

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[1]Aziza Hussein, "The Role of Women in Social Reform in Egypt", Middle East Journal, VII (1955), pp. 442-444.

support a second wife, is a question that should be answered after conducting empirical research on this particular topic. This we have not done, and thus are not qualified to answer.

Courtship.- Before we end our discussion of marriage in Haouch, we should say a few words about courtship. The picture that one expects to find in a traditional Moslem community is one of segregation of the sexes and limited opportunities for young men and women to meet one another. One would expect marriages to be arranged by parents, as family concerns rather than individual preferences.

The picture in Haouch does not coincide in many of its aspects with this traditional picture. Young men and women meet one another frequently and relatively freely. They work together in the fields, and young men visit houses where there are girls, and they sit together and talk. They meet each other on the streets, salute and might stop for a chat. Individual encounters, however, are usually spontaneous and unplanned. Boys and girls do not go out together neither in couples nor in groups, unless they are cousins or closely related, and then only in groups.

Although the western custom of dating is not known nor practiced in the village, yet there are many

opportunities for boys and girls to get together, and for love to develop among couples. Family gatherings, visiting, which men often engage in, especially during the idle winter season, and work in the fields, are all occasions for encounters. Many young couples agree to get married and they wait until the man has made enough money, before he asks for her hand from her parents. Until then the relationship does not remain a secret and many people are aware of it and they speak about it freely. During this period, the suitor gives her small gifts like scarfs, handkerchieves, and sweets. People speak of so and so as being in love with so and so. Adults do not seem to mind as long as the young couple behave themselves. Private meetings are usually rare and brief. He only sees her alone near the water tower where she goes to get water, or in the fields if they happen to be working together. Even an unattached young man or woman who takes care of his or her appearance is often described as being coquettish and is called "jahlan"[1], meaning coquettish. This description, however, does not have a negative connotation. The discussion of who is "jahlan" and who loves whom, often crops up, and is not regarded as a taboo. Marriage in Haouch frequently, but not necessarily, takes place after a period of courtship.

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[1] An adjective used by the people of Haouch to refer, not in a pejorative sense, to an innocent flirt.

Political Structure

The village in general can be described as relatively politically inactive. Apart from grumbling and complaining about the government concerning certain issues of interest to them, the villagers do not engage in political discussions or activity. An exception should be made for the few months before and the few months after parliamentary elections once every four years, when the situation changes. The village then is divided along lineage lines, into two politically opposed factions, each supporting a candidate. Although, outwardly, this may bear some resemblance to Patai's notion of Dual Organization, the situation, however does not concretely correspond to the dual factions and divided loyalties implied in Patai's characterization of Lebanese village communities.[1] The two big lineages belong to the same faction, with very few individuals deviating from the family expectations. These individuals do not deviate because of any family disunity, but as a sign of gratitude and loyalty to the opponent candidate for personal services that he had rendered them.

The political affiliation of the people then follows the traditional village loyalties. It is not

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[1]Patai, Golden River to Golden Road, op.cit., p. 218.

out of political principles or values that they side on one side rather than the other, but out of family tradition, or current family interests. The political consciousness of the people could be said to be undeveloped. They profess to certain political and ideological principles, but they vote for the candidates who represent the other extreme.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The drastic and quick changes in the attitudes of the Arabs towards women, and the consequent changes in the status and role of the latter were, as mentioned earlier, the result of more education and greater exposure to the west. The rural and relatively isolated segments of the population had very few educational opportunities and very little chance for direct contact with the west. The extent to which they changed is therefore likely to be much less than that of their literate urban counterparts.

The purpose of the first part of this chapter is to measure the attitudes of young rural women with respect to the areas mentioned in the introduction, and to compare them with those of women in an older generation. In doing so, we shall bear in mind the possibility of discrepancies between attitudes and actual behavior, and try to point them out and account for them whenever possible. The second part of this chapter will

deal with the differences in the status and role of young women on the one hand, and older women on the other, in the family in particular and in society in general.

A. Generational Differences in Social Attitudes and Practices

In a situation of continuous and rapid change, people are constantly led to a reevaluation and modification of their attitudes. This is so because an attitude is not generated in a social vacuum. It is not an isolated concept without any specific social referent. An individual or a group holds an attitude with regard to an issue or situation, when this situation changes the attitudes pertaining to it must also change, if the harmony between the social attitudes and the social values (i.e., the social object or situation the attitude refers to) is to be maintained.[1]

Various definitions of the concept of attitude have been presented. Thomas and Znaniecki, and Newcomb agree that an attitude is a tendency or predisposition to act. Newcomb includes in the definition the predisposition to perceive, think, and feel. He says: "An individual's attitude toward something is his predisposition to perform, perceive, think and feel in

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[1]Mabel A. Elliott and Francis E. Merrill, Social Disorganization (3rd. ed.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), pp. 26-27.

relation to it."[1]

Thomas and Znaniecki emphasize the fact that an attitude could be a potential activity or could determine actual behavior. They say that a social attitude is "a process of individual consciousness which determines real or possible activity of the individual in the social world."[2]

In our discussion of the attitudes of the women in the sample, Thomas and Znaniecki's definition will be adopted. What concerns us in the attitudes of these women is the fact that they represent their potential activity. Holding other intervening factors constant, one would expect a person to act in accordance with his attitudes. We should, however, point out that the attitudes presented are what these women claim to be their attitudes. In other words, the verbalization of that "process of individual consciousness" which determines their activity, as they themselves express it.

General Description of the Sample

An individual's attitudes about certain issues in his environment are in large part affected by his

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[1]Theodore Newcomb, Social Psychology (New York: Dryden, 1950), p. 118.

[2]W.I. Thomas, and F. Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1927), Vol. I, p. 22.

life experiences. General background information on the sample will, therefore, be useful in helping us to understand the behavior and analyze the attitudes of the respondents. The social setting from which the respondents come was discussed in chapter III. It remains for us here to describe the characteristics of the two groups represented in the sample namely: the young group, and the old group.

As mentioned earlier, the young group consists of twenty five married women whose ages range between twenty and thirty years old. Eighty eight per cent of these women are originally from Haouch, and the remaining 12% are from various Lebanese villages. It is worth mentioning, however, that 8% of the total and 66.6% of the women not from Haouch, are from distantly removed, ecologically and ethnically different villages, such as the Shi'ite village of Nabatiyyi in Southern Lebanon. This shows that village exogamy is not limited to the neighboring villages. In general the group can be described as homogeneous. Apart from the fact that the majority were born and raised in the same environment, the socio-economic level of their families is almost the same. As to their education, table I below indicates that 92% have had no schooling what so ever. One woman reported one year of schooling, and another reported five.

TABLE I

LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG WOMEN

Years of Schooling	Number of Women	Percent
None	23	92
One year	1	4
Five years	1	4
Total	25	100

It should be remarked here, that because of the sporadic attendance of the students in general, and of the girls in particular, along with the poor quality of teachers and instruction, a year of schooling in the village cannot be actually considered equivalent to a year of schooling in an urban middle class school. By and large, the person who has attended a village school for a few years, is only a little better off than a complete illiterate.

The extreme poverty in which the villagers live, and the lack of any facilities in the living conditions,[1] makes life very strenuous, especially for the young

[1]Lack of electricity and running water, unpaved streets and mud houses, etc...

married women. As conceived by the respondents, the responsibilities of a woman in the young age group, consists of taking care of household chores, and to a great many of them working in the fields as well. Each job alone is time consuming, and hardly leaves any time for rest. A woman has to keep her house clean and this means that she has the daily duties of sweeping the house more than once a day, washing dishes, washing clothes, taking care of the children and preparing the meals. On top of these daily chores, she has to white wash her mud house at least twice a month, prepare large quantities of bread, and towards the end of summer spend a few weeks preparing the preserved food for the winter. Needless to say, all these duties could have been less time consuming had she had access to some of the basic household conveniences such as running water and electricity. Furthermore, if a woman happens to be daughterless she has to interrupt her work to go and get her daily supply of water; and in winter when the roads are muddy, she has to work twice as much to keep the mud out of her house. Because of these added duties, leisure activities are relatively unknown for the women of Haouch. Their lives center around doing the necessary daily chores in the house, and to the majority--56%-- working in the fields as well.

As to the older group of women who are fifty years of age and over, 84% come originally from Haouch, and the remaining 16% are from neighboring villages. What distinguishes this group from the younger generation is the fact that all the non-villagers come from adjacent villages. Because of the limited size of the sample, and the complexity of the phenomenon, it is difficult to account for this difference in emphatic terms. It cannot be entirely incidental, however, it could very easily reflect the lower mobility and limited access which people in general had earlier to means of transportation. Like the younger group, the older generation of women can also be said to be homogeneous. Not only do they have similar socio-economic backgrounds, but the setting in which they have lived most of their lives is also similar. Like the young group, again there are no differences among them as far as the educational level is concerned. With the exception of one woman who went for one month to school, the rest 96% have had no schooling at all.

TABLE II

LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE OLD WOMEN

Years of Schooling	Number of Women	Percent
None	24	96
One month	1	4
Total	25	100

The life of the women in the older group is slightly more comfortable than that of the younger women. Whereas 56% of the younger women are in charge of their houses and children, as well as field work, only 28% of the older group have the same responsibilities. The remaining 72% have only the household chores to worry about.

Analysis of Results

With this background information we can now proceed to analyze the attitudes and practices of respondents with respect to three of the most significant social issues and/or problems facing the people of Haouch, namely: fatalism, emigration and marriage.

1. Fatalism.- Students of Arab culture in general and Islamic culture in particular often refer to fatalism as one of the basic value orientations of Islamic society. Moslems in general, it is maintained, are fatalistic and strongly believe in predestination, and the power of God in determining the lives of the people. Sania Hamady, among others, frequently reiterates that "the Arab manifests a dominating belief in the influence of predestination and fatalism. He is not aware of the fact that he can, to a large extent, control his environment, contribute towards shaping his destiny, realize his wishes through conscious management and ameliorate his

lot by his own actions."[1] Consequently this "belief in predestination", she continues, "renders the Arab utterly skeptical with regard to any control of his future actions or events."[2] To document her generalization the author quotes suras from the Qoran to the effect that "Behind every action is the hand of Allah".[3] Though Islam evokes the belief in predestination and determinism, and the fact that God is behind every action, yet this attitude of resignation has been dated back to the pre-Islamic era. Helmer Ringgren, for example, depicts fatalistic attitudes in pre-Islamic poetry. The belief in the "decree" and "destiny" is often reflected in pre-Islamic verse.[4] They maintained that "there is nothing but this life, and this world, and it is time that brings destruction and death".[5] The Islamic doctrine differs only in that it introduces the notion of God, and stresses the fact that everything

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[1]Sania Hamady, Temperament and Character of the Arab (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1960), p. 185.

[2]Ibid., p. 187.

[3]Ibid., p. 185.

[4]Helmer Ringgren, Studies in Arabian Fatalism (Uppsala: Lundequistska bokhandeln, 1955), p. 9.

[5]Ibid., p. 86.

is determined by Him, but the essence of determinism is the same.

This attitude that man cannot control events and thus cannot plan ahead is regarded as a characteristic of traditional Arab society. It is to be supposed, however, that with more education, and advances in technology which prove man's ability to control his environment, this attitude tends to change into a less fatalistic orientation. The change in this direction can, therefore, be considered one of the important indices of change.

The respondents in the two generational groups were asked questions the answers to which reflect their outlook on life. Considering the fact that the younger women matured in the last two decades, characterized by swift changes in society, one expects them to be less fatalistic in attitudes. Their answers to the questions, however, do not seem to assert this prediction. As a matter of fact, with relation to all the questions, the older respondents showed less fatalistic tendencies than did the younger ones. While only 56% of the younger respondents replied, when asked how do they picture themselves ten years from now, that they cannot predict what will happen in the future, and that it is all in God's hands, only 44% of the older group gave the same response. This could be due to the fact that the old women have

already passed through almost all the stages of a village woman's life cycle. They have already achieved what they are expected to achieve, and there is hardly anything left for them to determine and control. The younger women are still at the early stages of womanhood and are thus uncertain of what is to come. The older women are conscious of their ages and 44% of them, as compared with only 16% of the younger women, said that in ten years time they will be old, awaiting their end. The others as Table III indicates gave various other responses that do not reflect any serious thinking on their part as far as future plans are concerned.

TABLE III

ANTICIPATION OF THE FUTURE

Response	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Cannot predict the future it is God's will	14	56	11	44
I will have more children	5	20	0	0
I will be old	4	16	11	44
I will be better off	3	12	0	0
The village would have improved	1	4	0	0
I will be dead	0	0	1	4
I will be still living with my children who will be older	0	0	2	8
No change	1	4	0	0
Total[a]	28	112	25	100

[a]Totals add up to more than a hundred because respondents may have given more than one response.

The belief that sickness was the result of some source of evil is an ancient and widespread belief. With the advances in science and the discovery of the causes and cures of many diseases, this belief has been shaken and shown to be unfounded among many areas, and segments of the world's population. The people of Haouch, though aware and make use of the new developments in medicine, still maintain the belief in the evil eye and in the fact that God is the cause of any sickness which befalls man. When asked what they think causes a child's illness, all the respondents in both groups mentioned the evil eye as a cause. Another 56% of the young group and 52% of the old mentioned, instead, that it is God's will. As shown in Table IV the group did refer to other causes.

TABLE IV

CAUSES FOR A CHILD'S ILLNESS

Response	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Evil eye	25	100	25	100
God's wish	14	56	13	52
Weather (Very cold/very hot)	14	56	13	52
Dirt	4	16	9	36
Spoilt food	3	12	0	0
Too many kinds of food at one time	3	12	0	0
Nursed by sick or tired mother	1	4	3	12
Diseases (Tonsils, malaria)	0	0	2	8
Mosquitos	0	0	2	8
Lack of food (mal nutrition)	0	0	1	4
Totals[a]	64	256	68	272

[a]Totals add up to more than a hundred because respondents may have given more than one cause.

What is significant in the responses is that over and above the hundred percent belief in the evil eye, more than 50% of each group said that God is the cause of illness. Fifty six percent of the young group and 52% of the old group gave this response. Unexpectedly, the young respondents show slightly more fatalistic tendencies. The difference, however, is very small which indicates perhaps that there has been little or no change in the attitudes of young women. Knowledge of the causes of sickness is directly proportional to the level of education. Since the younger women are no more educated than their elders, it is not surprising that they do not hold more rational and less fatalistic attitudes.

Living in the harsh climate of the Beqaa, where one experiences very high and very low degrees of temperature in the course of the day, more than 50% of each group mentioned changes in the weather as a cause of sickness. Fifty six percent of the young women, and an almost equal number of the older group-- 52% -- gave this response. The others as Table IV indicates gave various other responses which do not follow any specific pattern reflecting any similarity or change between the two generations.

Although in terms of attitudes there has almost been no change, the respondents in the two generations

differed with respect to the measures taken to cure sickness. An almost equal number of both groups, 40% of the young group and 44% of the old group, said that they apply the folk medicine they know such as giving the child tea, boiled herbs, a purge or any other folk remedy. If he does not get better they consult a doctor. This is usually an expense which the villagers cannot readily afford, and thus women try their best first with remedies that they have learnt from their mothers. The most evident difference between the two generations is seen in the number of women who apply rational medicine and the ones who consult a doctor at the first signs of illness. While 32% of the young women said that they first apply rational medicine, such as aspirin or penicillin, and then, if he does not get better, they consult a doctor, only 8% of the older women gave the same response. On the other hand 20% of the young women and 48% of the older women said that they directly consult a doctor at the first signs of sickness. This can be accounted for by the justification that some of the older women gave for their behavior. In the past, they said, people did not know anything about antibiotics and the likes, so whenever the sickness was more than could be cured with the known folk remedies, they had to consult a doctor. These days women know about rational medicine, and they do not need to consult a doctor except

in very serious cases.

Considering the hundred percent belief in the evil eye as a cause of sickness, one would expect a large percentage of women to mention the ceremonial prayer (Raqwa) as a measure taken to cure illness. However, only 8% of the young women, and 4% of the old women mentioned it. This could be due to the fact that though there is unanimous agreement on the evil eye as a cause of illness, yet it is recognized as only one of the causes, and that not every illness can be cured by performing the ceremonial prayer.

TABLE V

MEASURES TAKEN TO CURE SICKNESS

Measures	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Applies folk medicine, if it does not work, she consults a doctor	10	40	11	44
Applies rational medicine (Aspirin, penicillin), if it does not work, she consults a doctor	8	32	2	8
Consults a doctor	5	20	12	48
Performs ceremonial prayer, if it does not work, she consults a doctor	2	8	1	4
Total[a]	25	100	26	104

[a]Totals add up to more than a hundred because respondents may have given more than one measure.

It was evident from the data presented thus far, that the women from both generations were generally fatalistic in their explanation of sickness, but were not passive when they were faced with it. This is probably due to the mysterious nature of sickness, which is not readily understood by illiterate people, and to man's natural tendency to account for mysterious events in terms of magic and supernatural power. Their folk heritage, however, provides them with various ways of treating sickness, which they often apply. The causal relationship between cause and cure is not quite understood or recognized.

2. Emigration.- Large scale movement of people from rural areas to cities, and emigration to foreign countries, is one of the main features of Lebanese history. This movement according to Lerner began in the second half of the nineteenth century. "Population growth and land congestion", he says, "resulted in excessive fragmentation of holdings. Peasants faced the classic choice of destitution or migration."[1] Tannous also maintains that one of the main reasons behind the emigration movement from Bishmizzeen, the

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[1]Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1958), p. 172.

village he had studied, was the disturbance of the land population balance resulting from a high and increasing birth rate.[1] The movement continues now, and foreign remittances form an important sector of Lebanese economy.

To the people of Haouch, emigration is also an important phenomenon. The majority being sharecroppers, they hardly have any means of advancement and prosperity. Emigration is the only means through which they hope to make some money to invest, and improve their conditions. Brazil has been the country of destination for almost all the emigrants from Haouch. Like almost all migrants, the people of Haouch seek the familiar, particularly if village folks and other kin relatives had established an earlier pattern of migrating to certain specific areas. This tendency is not peculiar to Haouch. Rather, throughout history, the Lebanese in general have shown a remarkable readiness to follow in the trail of relatives and acquaintances in their settlement abroad.[2]

Like elsewhere, it is usually the son or the husband who departs to look for better opportunities. What are the women's attitudes toward migration? How

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[1]Afif I. Tannous, "Emigration, A Force of Social Change in an Arab Village", Rural Sociology, VII (March, 1942), p. 64.

[2]Lerner, op.cit., p. 173.

do they perceive life beyond the village boundaries and across the sea?

Though all the respondents from both groups have been out of the village, 20% of the young group and 24% of the old group have been only to neighboring villages and towns. The rest have been to cities far from Haouch such as Damascus and Beirut, but only on a few occasions. The mobility of these women in general is very limited. As Table VI indicates, 80% of the young group and 68% of the old group said that they go out of Haouch only a few times, i.e. less than six times, a year. Twenty eight percent of the old group do not leave the village at all. The rest, 20% of the young women, and only one old woman said that they leave the village between once a week and once a month.

TABLE VI

NUMBER OF TRIPS OUT OF THE VILLAGE PER YEAR

Number of Trips	Young Group		Old Group	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Not at all	0	0	7	28
Six times or less	20	80	17	68
Once every month	2	8	0	0
Once every two weeks	1	4	1	4
Once a week	0	0	0	0
More than once a week	2	8	0	0
Total	25	100	25	100

The wide difference in the degree of mobility of the two generations can only be attributed to age, especially that the old women indicated that they used to go on more trips when they were younger. Apart from that, old women usually have children or daughters in-law who go for them, and thus the necessity of leaving the village is diminished.

The reasons for the majority of trips that a woman takes (shown in Table VII) are usually in the nature of necessities such as shopping from the neighboring town of Zahle, or seeing the doctor also in Zahle or Chtoura. Eighty percent of both groups named shopping as one of the main reasons for their trips. Fifty two percent of the young women and only 30% of the old women said that they leave the village for medical reasons. This is probably owing to the fact that young women have young children, and so they are in need of incurring a larger number of trips for this purpose. The old women do not have to go unless they are themselves sick. While only 12% of the young respondents said that some of their trips outside the village are on visits to relatives, 55% of the older women said that. The 12% of the young group who visit relatives outside the village, are

the same women who come from other villages, but had married into Haouch, and are thus expected to pay yearly visits to their families of socialization. The old women who go on such trips have married daughters in Beirut or the neighboring villages which is a good justification for such visits. Considering the percentage of women who go on necessary errands, in the two groups, the younger women seem to be more utilitarian in orientation. Of the thirty nine reasons for trips outside the village, given by the younger women, 89.7% of them are utilitarian in nature namely shopping, going to the doctor, or going to the flour mill or dressmaker in the neighboring villages. The utilitarian reasons given by the older women form only 66.7% of the total number of reasons. The excessive amount of work with which the younger women are burdended, leaves them with very little time for social visits, or any unnecessary errands outside the village. Only one young woman admitted that she sometimes goes to Zahle for fun.

TABLE VII

REASONS FOR THE TRIPS OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE

Reasons	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Shopping	20	80	16	80
Medical reasons	13	52	6	30
Visit with relatives	3	12	11	55
Flour mill, dress maker	2	8	0	0
For fun	1	4	0	0
Total[a]	39	156	33	165[b]

[a]Totals add up to more than a hundred because respondents may have given more than one reason.

[b]Percentages for the old group are calculated on the basis of N = 20, the number of women who do go out of the village.

Though the younger women are generally more mobile than the older women, yet their mobility in general is very limited, and has not increased much during the past few decades. The number of trips taken by the majority of respondents is only slightly larger than that of the women of Buarij of almost thirty years ago.[1]

Life in Haouch is hard and strenuous, especially for the women. The impressions that stick to their minds

[1]Ann H. Fuller, Buarij Portrait of a Lebanese Muslim Village (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 17.

after visits to towns and cities, are of a cleaner and more comfortable life. Asked where they would like to live if they were to leave Haouch, 76% of the young women, and 64% of the old women chose cities or towns. In their choice they were looking for a clean and comfortable life. The rest, as Table VIII indicates, preferred their hometown because it is warmer and more familiar. The difference in the attitudes of the two generations in this respect is not particularly apparent. Women of all ages suffer from the harshness of village life, and many of them tend to respond in favor of a better place. Older women, however, have already passed the hardest years in a woman's life and do not have many more to go. It is only expected therefore that less older, more younger women, would be ready to leave the familiar environment and community where, as Fuller says, a woman has status and security.[1]

TABLE VIII

PLACE OF RESIDENCE CHOSEN

Place of Residence	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Beirut or Zahle (City)	15	60	15	60
Haouch	5	20	7	28
Summer Towns	4	16	1	4
Her Own Hometown	1	4	1	4
Another Village	0	0	1	4
Total	25	100	25	100

[1] Ibid.

It is thus clear that the women's conceptions of places outside the village boundaries are formulated in terms of their frustrated wishes and their immediate lives and problems. The move to a new and totally different environment is not a smooth process, but requires basic adaptation and adjustment. The women are not unaware of this, but they tend to suppress their anxieties in favor of the comforts they expect to reap. Moreover, the motivation behind the change of residence from one community to another, especially from village to city or from country to country is usually economic in nature. The villagers' economic level is barely above the level of subsistence, yet only one young woman from the whole sample said that in the city her husband can earn more money. This indicates that poverty does not figure as one of the main and salient problems in their minds. The almost homogeneous standard of living in Haouch, which does not leave much chance for comparison, and thus for any feelings of deprivation, can probably account for this phenomenon. The wish and readiness to change their place of residence is motivated by the desire to be freed from their immediate problems of strenuous work in the fields and at home, rather than by a concern for eliminating poverty which is actually at the basis of all their problems. This is also

reflected in their reasons for wanting to live in Brazil.

As to emigration to a foreign country, Table IX indicates that fewer women expressed the wish to emigrate. Fifty two percent from each group said that they would like to go and live in Brazil. Twelve percent of the young group and 8% of the old group said that they would like to go only for a visit to see their relatives. The rest preferred to stay in the warm familiar atmosphere of their country.

TABLE IX

ATTITUDES TOWARDS LIVING IN BRAZIL

Attitude	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Likes to live in Brazil	13	52	13	52
Does not like to live in Brazil	9	36	10	40
Likes to go for a visit only	3	12	2	8
Total	25	100	25	100

Considering the age difference between the two groups, one would expect the younger women to be less set in their ways and more willing to accept change especially for the better. The results, as shown above, do not confirm these expectations, and no generational

differences were discerned. It is probably their limited communication with strangers and outside environment and their lack of education which make them hesitate to take a drastic step such as leaving their familiar hometown and going to a completely strange environment.

TABLE X

ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHILDREN'S EMIGRATION

Attitude	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Unconditional approval	11	44	11	44
Disapproval	7	28	8	32
Approval for daughters only	6	24	6	24
Approval for sons only	1	4	0	0
Total	25	100	25	100

Asked how do they feel about their children going to Brazil, 44% of each group indicated unconditional consent on the basis that life there is much more comfortable, and they like their children to lead a happy life. Twenty four percent of each group said that they do not mind their daughters marrying and going to Brazil, because anyway girls get married and leave their parents' home; so they might as well go farther away and get rid of the strenuous life of the village women. As to their

sons these women argued that a son's duty is at home, and he has to take over managing the affairs of the family; besides the fact that they hate to part with them. Only one woman of the younger group said that she does not mind her sons going, but not her daughters, because men can take care of themselves. Seven percent of the young group and 8% of the old group said that they do not approve of their children going to Brazil mainly because they do not like to part with them, and partly because they do not approve of emigration as such.

The striking similarity in the attitudes of women in the two generations with respect to emigration as such, whether it concerns them or their children, is worth noting. This similarity, however, is not all together unexpected. Conceptions of new places, and attitudes towards a different life and environment, are likely to change with more education, and greater exposure to foreign cultures through the mass media. The younger women in our sample have not changed with respect to any of these two areas. The vast majority, 92% of the younger women who have had no schooling whatsoever, are completely illiterate and thus not exposed to any written material. The newly acquired transistor radios are generally tuned to popular music and songs only.

3. Marriage.- The structure of traditional Arab society was primarily based on kinship and family relationships. Marriage was therefore a very important and crucial step that had to be arranged in a manner which serves the interests of the extended family group, and the clan in general. The socio-economic changes which have come about in Arab society weakened the kinship structure, and deprived the extended family of its position as the basic social unit. Marriage as an institution, with all its components, was naturally affected by these changes, and it is thus one of the areas in which changes from the traditional ways can be reflected. It is to be expected, therefore, that the marriage patterns and attitudes of the older women in Haouch will be closer to the traditional patterns and attitudes than those of the younger women.

a. Courtship.- Marriage in traditional Arab society was more of a family than an individual concern. As mentioned earlier parents particularly of the girl, chose the marriage partner. The couple hardly knew each other, and courtship therefore was not the natural step which preceded marriage. Granqvist confirmed this pattern in her 1929 study of Artas, a Palestinian Moslem village. Marriage in Artas was arranged by the

parents, and engaged couples could not speak or even see each other.[1]

In Haouch the situation is different. The social interaction that takes place between the sexes is much more than one would expect in a traditional, predominantly illiterate Moslem society. Moreover, this phenomenon is not a recent one, but manifests itself in the lives of the older people as well. The nature and necessities of their lives induce this divergence from the traditional pattern.

As Table XI indicates, 84% of the younger women and 76% of the older women knew their husbands well before marriage. Four percent of the former and 12% of the latter knew them slightly and the remaining 12% from each group did not know them at all. In the case of many of those who knew their husbands, a period of two or three years of courtship preceded marriage.

TABLE XI

ACQUAINTANCE WITH HUSBAND BEFORE MARRIAGE

Degree of Acquaintance	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Knew him well	21	84	19	76
Did not know him	3	12	3	12
Knew him slightly	1	4	3	12
Total	25	100	25	100

[1]Hilma Granqvist, Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village (Part I; Helsingfors: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum, Vol. 3, No. 8, 1931), p. 16.

As to how the marriage was arranged, the data reflects changes in the direction of more freedom. While 64% of the young couples agreed to get married before approaching the parents, only 40% of the older couples did that. In the case of only 20% of the young couples, as opposed to 52% of the older couples, the girl's parents were approached before the girl herself. The remaining 16% of the younger group, and 8% of the older group the couples eloped.

The parents of the majority of women in the sample considered it the right of their daughters to give their consent about their marriage. Only the parents of two women from the older group, which is 4% of the total sample, did not secure the consent of their daughters before promising them in marriage. In the case of two women from the younger group their parents went into the trouble of convincing them before giving the answer.

Although the cases of the young women reflect changes in the direction of more freedom, yet the percentage of old women who had freedom is high enough to allow us to suggest that this phenomenon is not a recent one. The small size of the village and the living conditions that compel women to work outside their homes, leave hardly any chance for the segregation of

the sexes. The acquaintance of young men and women becomes inevitable in such conditions. As was indicated earlier only 12% of the total sample of women did not know their husbands before marriage. In these cases, however, either the women were strangers who married into Haouch, or the men were away from the village for some time prior to their marriage.

With these conditions, and in the absence of any changes in their immediate society such as an increase in education or an improvement in the economic conditions, the slight degree of change between the two generations is to be expected.

b. Endogamy.- Patrilateral parallel cousin marriage is the preferred form of marriage in traditional Arab society. Asked about their attitudes towards this form of marriage, the two groups responded in an almost identical manner. The younger women did not seem to have any basic changes in attitudes. Table XII indicates that 60% of each group preferred Ibn Am marriage. This form of marriage they said, keeps the family together, and insures better treatment of the wife at the hands of husband and in-laws. Four percent of the young group and 8% of the old, said that it all depends on the person: a good stranger is better than a bad cousin.

The rest, 36% of the younger group and 32% of the older preferred a stranger. Good treatment, they thought, can be more insured with a stranger because an Ibn Am takes advantage of his cousin.

TABLE XII
FORM OF MARRIAGE PREFERRED

Form of Marriage	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Marriage to Ibn Am	15	60	15	60
Marriage to a stranger	9	36	8	32
Depends on the person	1	4	2	8
Total	25	100	25	100

The general preference for Ibn Am marriage in Haouch, was paralleled in other Arab villages as well. In the Palestinian Moslem village of Artas,[1] the Syrian Moslem village of Tell Toqaan,[2] and the Lebanese Druze village of Yanta,[3] Granqvist and Sweet respectively depicted a general preference for Ibn Am marriage. Even

[1] Ibid., p. 82.

[2] Louise E. Sweet, Tell Toqaan: A Syrian Village (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1960), p. 174.

[3] Louise E. Sweet, Unpublished field notes on Yanta, 1965.

in Munsif, the Greek Orthodox Lebanese village, where Ibn Am marriage is prohibited by the church, the villagers' conception of kinsmen and their role in marriage accentuates the dilemma between their attitudes and the dictates of the church.[1]

This attitudinal preference for Ibn Am marriage should not be misleading. It appears that very few of such favorable attitudes are transformed into actual practices. In Haouch, not one single woman in the whole sample was actually married to an Ibn Am. Sixty percent of the total sample were not at all related to their husbands. Twenty four percent of the young group and 20% of the old group were only distantly related. This discrepancy between attitudes and actual behavior was also found in the villages named earlier. In Artas only around 13% of the total marriages were first cousin marriages.[2] In Tell Toqaan aroung 8%[3] and in Yanta 13%[4]. Regardless of their readiness to translate their attitudes into actual behavior, the women tend to respond to a challenge of their attitudes in a culturally and

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[1]John Gulick, Social Structure and Culture Change in a Lebanese Village (New York: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Inc., 1955), p. 127.

[2]Granqvist, op.cit., p. 82.

[3]Sweet, Tell Toqaan, op.cit., p. 175.

[4]Sweet, Unpublished field notes on Yanta, 1965.

traditionally acceptable manner. It is the internalized cultural norms, and the socially acceptable patterns of behavior that respond, rather than their personal and objective attitudes.

TABLE XIII
RELATION TO HUSBAND

Relation	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Not related	15	60	15	60
Distantly related	6	24	5	20
First maternal cousin	2	8	2	8
Paternal Aunt's son	2	8	3	12
Ibn Am	0	0	0	0
Total	25	100	25	100

The concern for the family and kinship relations, makes the Arab eager to have as many children as possible. The more sons a person has, the more he feels that he had fulfilled his obligations towards his family, and enhanced his social position. Any interference with the natural process of conception is not favorably viewed, and often regarded as going against the wishes of God. This negative attitude towards birth control was also found in Buarij, a Moslem village in the Beqaa region of Lebanon.[1]

[1]Fuller, op.cit., p. 27.

The average number of children per household among the older women is accordingly high. The figure could have been even higher had it not been for the relatively high incidence of infant mortality. The average number of children alive is 5.08 per woman, and the average number of losses is 2.4 children per woman. This makes the average number of births 7.5 per woman.

As to the younger women, the average number of children alive is 2.96, and the average number of losses is 0.96. This figure at first glance looks much lower than that of the older women, but it should be kept in mind that the older women's fecundity has expired, while the young women are still in their prime. As a matter of fact four of them have not had any children yet. The average number of children among the older women is very close to that found by Tannous for Bishmizzeen women of two generations ago. The average he says is five children per woman.[1] Considering the fact that Bishmizzeen is more advanced than Haouch, socially and economically, and more exposed to western culture through education and missionary activities, the average number of children per old woman in Haouch can be considered relatively lower.

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[1]Afif I. Tannous, "Acculturation of an Arab Syrian Community in the Deep South," American Sociological Review, VIII (No. 3, 1943), p. 266.

Gulick calculated the average number of children per married couple for the whole village of Munsif including twenty couples who might still have had more children. The average was 3.8 children.[1] For purposes of comparison we can consider the average number of children among all the women in the sample, which can give a rough idea of the actual average for the whole village. For the fifty respondents the average number of children was 4.02, 0.22 higher than that of Munsif.

TABLE XIV

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER WOMAN

Number of Children	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
None	4	16	0	0
One child	1	4	1	4
Two children	5	20	3	12
Three children	8	32	0	0
Four children	1	4	7	28
Five children	3	12	3	12
Six children	1	4	5	20
Seven children	2	8	2	8
Eight children	0	0	3	12
Nine children	0	0	1	4
Total	25	100	25	100

Average No. of children per old woman = 5.08.
Average No. of children per young woman = 2.96.
Average No. of births per old woman = 7.5.
Average No. of births per young woman = 3.92.

[1] Gulick, Social Structure..., op.cit., p. 53.

TABLE XV

NUMBER OF LOSSES PER WOMAN

Number of Losses	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
None	11	44	4	16
One child	9	36	6	24
Two children	3	12	4	16
Three children	0	0	4	16
Four children	1	4	4	16
Five children	1	4	2	8
Six children	0	0	0	0
Seven children	0	0	1	4
Total	25	100	25	100

Average No. of losses per old woman = 2.4.
Average No. of losses per young woman = 0.96.

Comparison of the two generations of women in Haouch from the point of view of family size cannot be meaningful unless both generations have already passed the age of fecundity. We can, however, cautiously anticipate a comparison on the basis of the attitudes of women towards the ideal number of children, keeping in mind that there are many variables and considerations that have more bearing on the family size than the women's attitudes. Asked what they think is the ideal number of children, the young women's choice averaged 4.1 children and the older women's choice averaged 4.6;

only 0.5 larger than that of the younger women. Comparison of averages in this case does not give meaningful results. What is more significant is the frequency distribution shown in **Table XVI** below. While 64% of the young women chose an ideal number between two and four children, only 44% of the older women made the same choice. Thirty two percent of the young women and 52% of the older women wanted five children or more. This indicates that in general the younger were more in favor of small families than older women. This difference could be due to the increasing importance of education. Young women are becoming aware of that, and the expenses entailed in providing a large family with the necessary education. It is worth noting, however, that despite the relatively large ideal size family chosen by the old women, it is considered small by their standards. This can be concluded from the reasons they all gave for their choice: "few children are easier to handle and less expensive to bring up." This response is unlike the traditional Arab response which favors children and considers them more of an economic asset than a liability. Whether the young women will have larger or smaller families, can only be determined in a follow up study thirty or more years later. We can suggest, however, that if the family size of the younger women is to be

predicted, the husbands' rather than the wives' attitudes should be studied because they are the ones who decide on the number of children they would like to have.

TABLE XVI
IDEAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Ideal Number of Children	Young Group No.	Percent		Old Group No.	Percent	
This is God's will	1	4		1	4	
Two children	3	12		1	4	
Three children	7	28	64%	4	16	44%
Four children	6	24		6	24	
Five children	4	16		4	16	
Six children	3	12		3	12	
Seven children	0	0		0	0	
Eight children	0	0	32%	2	8	52%
Nine children	0	0		0	0	
Ten children	1	4		0	0	
As many as possible	0	0		4	16	
Total	25	100		25	100	

B. Generational Differences and Social Position

The status and role of women in traditional Arab society, and the changes and transformations which they had undergone were surveyed. We shall attempt in this

part to compare the position of the two generations of women in our sample, in society in general, and in their respective families in particular. More specifically, an attempt will be made to compare them with respect to their influence and responsibility in bringing up their children, their right of decision making, and the extent to which they play the role of companion to their husbands.

The extreme poverty, and hardships of life in Haouch, do not lend themselves to the segregation of the sexes, and the confinement of women to the home. Young women and especially girls have to work in the fields to save labor in some cases, and to earn money in others. Even those who do not work in the fields have to attend to the needs of their houses. This means going out to get water, and occasionally going down to the river to do the chores that require handy and ample supply of water. In such conditions, any strict control on interaction between men and women is hardly possible. Veiling is also nonexistent in Haouch. The older women usually put a white veil on the head, and the younger women often wear colored, small, and transparent scarfs.

Though not confined to the home, the women's mobility is limited. As shown earlier, the majority of women in both groups do not leave the village more than

a few times a year, and then only for important reasons. Even in the village, their trips outside their homes are mainly in the nature of errands. The formal visiting pattern known in other villages in Lebanon is not common in Haouch. The majority of women in the young group visit with neighbors and relatives, and call on others only on occasions like the birth of a child, sickness, death, or marriage. The rest either call on everybody only on occasions, or do not visit at all.

TABLE XVII
PEOPLE VISITED

People Visited	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Neighbors and relatives, others on occasions only	14	56	11	44
Neighbors and relatives only	7	28	8	32
Everybody on occasions	2	8	1	4
Everybody	1	4	2	8
Do not visit	1	4	3	12
Total	25	100	25	100

The men in Haouch do a lot of visiting especially in the idle winter season, and summer evenings. Their wives do not accompany them, and the women of the house they are visiting do not sit around, unless the visitors

are close relatives, or the house does not consist of more than one room. Joint social activities of men and women are in general very rare.

Unlike women in traditional Arab society, the women of Haouch are neither veiled nor confined to their homes. Their work in the fields leads to easier interaction with men, and thus for more freedom in the choice of the marriage partner. These differences or deviations from the traditional pattern are not the result of a reevaluation of the role of women, but rather, as mentioned earlier, the inevitable outcome of their living conditions.

Haouch society is still a male-oriented, male-dominated society. Women are in charge of attending to the needs of their families, and doing any extra work their husbands ask them to do. No significant differences were found among the women of the two generations which could reflect a change in the status of women in the family and society.

Though outwardly it is the woman who is in charge of bringing up the children, yet it is the husband, in the majority of cases, who makes the important decisions. Whereas 68% of the young women admitted that the husband takes care of the children's discipline, only 20% indicated that it is the mother's job, and 4% said that

they are both in charge of that. The mother usually sees to the minor disturbances, but the father is the main figure of authority and the final court of appeal. It is significant to note here that 8% of the women said that the father is mainly in charge of disciplining the boys. This brings to mind Daghestani's remark that "if the mother is considered a good educator of the girl, she is not considered so for the boy. When they say about somebody that he is "brought up by a woman", it means he does not have a strong character and is often described as inferior."[1]

TABLE XVIII

RESPONSIBILITY OF CHILDREN'S DISCIPLINE

Person Responsible	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Father	17	68	13	52
Mother	5	20	10	40
Father for boys	2	8	0	0
Both	1	4	2	8
Total	25	100	25	100

Among the older women, a bigger percentage said that the children's discipline is the mother's respon-

[1]Daghestani, La Famille..., op.cit., p. 119.

sibility. As Table XVIII indicates, 40% of the women said that it was their husbands'; and the remaining 8% said that they both took care of that.

Contrary to what one may expect, it was the older women who shared more in the upbringing of their children. The difference, however, cannot be accounted for in terms of generational differences, but rather in terms of the individual personalities of the women and their husbands. Many a strong willed woman could have exerted more influence in her family had she been married to a weaker person than her husband. On the other hand many of the women who have a strong influence in their families would be almost insignificant if they were married to men with stronger personalities than their husbands.

The mother is usually the one who takes care of the children, and therefore the first to notice any signs of sickness. The decision of taking a sick child to the doctor, however, is in more than 50% of the cases undertaken by the husband. Apart from the fact that the husband is considered wiser, taking a child to the doctor costs money, and therefore he has to decide whether he can afford it or not. As Table XIX indicates, 32% of the young women, and 20% of the older women said that it is the wife's decision.

Although in this case more young than old women have the right to decide, yet again the difference is not big enough to allow us to conclude that it is the result of any change in the role of the woman in her family.

TABLE XIX

DECISION MAKING WITH RESPECT TO A CHILD'S SICKNESS

The Person Who Decides	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Mother decides	8	32	5	20
Father decides	7	28	10	40
Mother suggests but father decides	6	24	5	20
Both decide	4	16	5	20
Total	25	100	25	100

Decisions concerning the education of children are again in their majority taken by the men. The responses shown in Table XX reflect hardly any difference between the two generations. It should be pointed out, however, that although in terms of the final decision, the difference between the two generations is almost negligible, 36% of the young women as compared with only 20% of the older women discuss the matter with their husbands. This means that a higher percentage of young

women have a great, though indirect, influence on the final decision.

TABLE XX

DECISION MAKING REGARDING CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

The Person Who Decides	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Father decides	13	52	16	64
Both discuss, but father decides	9	36	5	20
Both decide	2	8	2	8
Mother decides	1	4	1	4
No Answer	0	0	1	4
Total	25	100	25	100

Morroe Berger observes that "the Arab mother is formally more subordinate to her husband than a mother or wife in the west, but also wields considerable power through her almost sole responsibility in rearing the young children, and in her function as exclusive guardian of the household's finances."[1] The responses of the women in our sample do not seem to coincide with Berger's observation. The data presented so far indicate that even in the domain of child rearing, a woman's power in the majority of cases is suggestive in nature. Very few

[1] Berger, op.cit., p. 132.

women from both groups have the right to share effectively in the making of important decisions.

The function of "exclusive guardian of the household's finances" which Berger attributes to Arab women, is not necessarily a source of power as he suggests. The function of "guardian" should not be mixed up with the function of "controller" of the finances. Being the guardian does not necessarily imply being the controller as well, as it often does in the west. As Table XXI shows, only 20% of the young respondents and 32% of the old respondents said that they were the guardians of the money, but they went on to explain that they only kept the money, and gave it to their husbands when they asked for it. Sixty four percent of the young group and 36% of the old group said that their husbands left with them small amounts of money for petty expenses. The rest said that whenever they wanted to buy something, they ask their husbands for the cost.

TABLE XXI

DOES YOUR HUSBAND GIVE YOU MONEY?

Responses	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Gives her some money for petty expenses	16	64	9	36
Gives her all the money to keep	5	20	8	32
Gives her only the cost of the things she needs	4	16	8	32
Total	25	100	25	100

It may be interesting to note here that 28% of the young respondents and 32% of the old respondents do not even know how much their husbands earn. The decision to buy large purchases such as new furniture is made by the husband in the majority of cases. None of the younger women, and only 8% of the older said that both husband and wife discuss and agree on such matters, and only 4% of the young group and 12% of the old group said it is the wife's decision. The rest, as Table XXII shows, can only influence the decision indirectly. In spite of this, the younger women seem to exert more influence in this area than they do in the socialization of the children. This could be the result of the patrilineal and patriarchal nature of the Arab family, where the children belong to the father and his family. The mother's function is to offer her husband children, and is therefore hesitant about any basic decisions with regard to them. The home on the other hand is the woman's domain, and she is expected to know more about its needs than her husband. We may even suggest that had it not been for the extreme poverty which makes the man's approval on anything that involves money indispensable, women might have practiced and reflected greater autonomy and decision making in this area.

TABLE XXII

DECISION MAKING WITH REGARD TO LARGE PURCHASES

The Person Who Decides	Young Group No.	Young Group Percent	Old Group No.	Old Group Percent
Wife suggests, husband decides	13	52	10	40
Both discuss, husband decides	10	40	7	28
Wife decides	1	4	3	12
Husband and in-laws decide	1	4	0	0
Husband decides	0	0	3	12
Both discuss and decide	0	0	2	8
Total	25	100	25	100

Minor superficial differences between the two generations of women, observed among all the women of Haouch, are reflected in the manner of dress. The traditional long dress with the "sirwal" (long underpants) and the large white head dress, worn by the majority of old women in the sample, is giving way to the western short dress, with a symbolic colored transparent scarf for a head dress. The traditional dress is disappearing and will probably die out with the older generation.

The slight or almost negligible differences between the two generations with respect to attitudes and practices

is not peculiar to Haouch. This is to be expected in any society which has remained basically unchanged for many decades. Without any changes in the level of education which is a major and basic agent of change, with no increasing mobility or exposure to the mass media of communication, traditional attitudes and practices remain unchallenged. Old people remain the source of knowledge, and traditions are passed unchanged from generation to generation. Fuller believes that "because of the close association of grandchild and grandparent, a conservative and traditional outlook is instilled into the child at a young age. The child's view point being molded by that of a passing generation."[1]

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[1]Fuller, op.cit., p. 37.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study of the attitudes and practices of women in a Lebanese Moslem village, reflected very few significant generational differences. Old women's attitudes were no more traditional than those of younger women. As a matter of fact, in certain areas such as fatalism, old women were unexpectedly found to be slightly less fatalistic than the younger generation. In marriage, the courtship patterns of the two groups, and their attitudes towards Ibn Am marriage were almost identical. As to emigration younger women showed more inclination and interest in emigrating to a foreign country, largely because a young married woman's life in the village is harder and more strenuous than that of older women.

The position and role of women--young and old--in the family and in society is basically secondary and inferior. The role of a companion who shares in the making of important decisions is generally unknown to the women of Haouch.

The small size of the village and the living conditions do not lend themselves to the segregation of the sexes, and the confinement of women to their homes. Men and women interact rather freely. They work side by side in the fields and get together on certain social occasions. It should be emphasized, however, that this relative freedom of interaction is not the result of a reevaluation of the status of women, but largely a function of their living conditions.

The data and information arrived at in the course of this study, therefore, helped to confirm the initial hypotheses which guided the research, namely that:

1. Generational differences that exist between the two groups are more in the nature of superficial differences that have to do with clothing, and spatial mobility (exclusive of emigration).

2. There are fewer generational differences than one might expect in terms of more basic things such as ideas and attitudes towards duties and role of women, fatalism, emigration, decision making, and marriage.

Poverty and lack of education are at the basis of the slow rate of change in Haouch at large. With the standard of living being at the level of subsistence, any improvement in the living conditions becomes almost impossible. Education becomes more of a luxury than a necessity. Such conditions are not conducive to change. The absence of electricity and the high illiteracy rate

limit the exposure to new ideas and perspectives, and give importance to traditions, maintaining the position of elders as the source of wisdom and knowledge. It is thus only expected that young men and women follow the example of their fathers and mothers.

Unlike elsewhere in Lebanon, emigration did not prove to be a basic agent of change in Haouch. The emigrants who returned to their village fell back to the old way of living and resumed the role of sharecroppers. Very few of them brought back enough money to buy land and improve their way of life. Apart from the few electric appliances, such as television sets, that some of them brought back with them, there are no signs to indicate that they have ever left the village.

Prospects of change.- The picture presented above looks justifyingly grim. Future prospects, however, seem to be more promising. The need for education is becoming more and more widespread. Efforts and sacrifices are being made to provide the new generation with the basic education. In a few months electricity will have reached the village, and this will probably mean that television will become a main item of entertainment and consequently an important agent of change.

The position of women will be naturally affected by such changes, and the young women of the future might

play different roles and achieve higher statuses. How long will this take, and how different will the new generation of women be from their mothers, are questions the answers to which we cannot assert at this stage. It can be safely said, however, that change is gaining momentum, and rural Lebanese women are coming closer and closer to their urban couterparts.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Where do you come from?
2. How old are you?
3. How many children do you have? How many have you lost?
4. Who lives with you at home now? In the past?
5. Is your husband a relative of yours? How is he related?
6. What do you think of marriage to Ibn Am (paternal first cousin)?
7. How well did you know your husband before marriage?
8. How did your marriage happen to be arranged?
9. Did you have any say in the selection of your husband? (If No) Who made the decision?
10. What skills is a woman your age supposed to know?
11. Ten years from now, how would you picture yourself?
12. Who takes care of the children's discipline? (If she does) Do you ever ask your husband's help?
13. Who decides about the children's education?
14. Do you talk matters like that over with your husband?
15. Do you know how much your husband earns? Does he ever give you money?

16. If you want to buy a big purchase, like new furniture or a gas stove, who decides about that? Do you discuss it together?
17. What in your opinion is the ideal number of children for a family? (How many children do you like to have?)
18. What do you think causes a child's illness? (probe)
19. What do you do when one of your children falls sick? Do you take him to the doctor or do you use folkways first?
20. Who decides whether a sick child should be taken to the doctor?
21. Who do you usually visit with?
22. Have you ever been out of Haouch?
23. On the average how many times a year do you go out of Haouch? Where? With whom? and What for?
24. Have you ever visited a big city like Zahle or Beirut?
25. How many times during the past six months have you been to 1) Zahle, 2) Beirut. What for?
26. If you were to leave Haouch, where would you like to live?
27. Would you like to live in Zahle or Beirut? Why? Why not?
28. If you had the chance would you like to go to Brazil? Why/Why not?

29. Would you mind your daughter going to Brazil? What about your son?

30. Have you ever had any schooling?

APPENDIX B

TABLE I

Overall Progress in Primary and Secondary Education in the Arab World in 100,000s

Type of Educ. / Year	Primary Education for all the Arab World				Secondary Education for most Arab countries			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Girls to Total %	Boys	Girls	Total	Girls to Total %
1959-60	42	21	63	33	7.5	2.3	9.8	23
1964-65	63	34	97	35	13.6	4.8	18.4	26
Yearly rate of increase	8.4	10.1	9.0	--	12.1	15.8	13.4	--

Source: El-Koussy, op.cit., p. 6.

TABLE II

The Educational Budget in Percent of the Total Budget in Four Arab Countries

Year	Lebanon	Iraq	U.A.R.	Tunisia
1957-58	11.7	20.3	16.5	16.8
1958-59	13.3	19.4	11.7	18.0
1959-60	11.8	18.4	14.4	18.7
1960-61	13.5	20.9	19.2	19.4
1961-62	10.2	21.4	18.1	21.4
1962-63	13.2	23.4	13.1	22.8
1963-64	13.3	25.0	10.2	31.4
1964-65	13.2	24.4	9.6	--

Source: Ibid., p. 58.

TABLE III*

The Development of Elementary School Enrolment in Four Arab Countries by Percent of Elementary School Age Groups

Year & Sex	Lebanon	Tunisia	U.A.R.	Iraq
Boys				
1960-61	97.8	84.2	73.6	96.2
1961-62	103.8	90.3	75.8	100.3
1962-63	111.3	99.0	78.0	100.7
1963-64	116.3	106.3	81.3	100.2
1964-65	121.8	113.8	82.8	102.7
Girls				
1960-61	85.2	41.5	45.5	26.9
1961-62	84.1	44.5	47.0	27.2
1962-63	80.6	49.3	48.7	28.3
1963-64	83.3	54.0	51.3	28.2
1964-65	88.3	58.8	52.9	28.2

Source: Ibid., p. 31.

*Some figures exceed 100% because in most Arab Countries students are allowed to remain in elementary school even after they exceed the elementary school age.

TABLE IV

The Development of Secondary School Enrolment in Four Arab Countries by Percent of Secondary School Age Group

Year & Sex	Lebanon	Tunisia	U.A.R.	Iraq
Boys				
1960-61	21.0	9.2	18.7	21.6
1961-62	22.9	10.9	19.8	25.1
1962-63	23.7	11.9	21.4	25.8
1963-64	26.2	13.3	22.6	27.4
1964-65	32.8	15.0	25.5	30.4
Girls				
1960-61	13.8	3.9	6.0	6.6
1961-62	14.3	4.2	6.6	6.9
1962-63	15.4	4.7	7.9	7.7
1963-64	17.1	5.3	8.4	8.6
1964-65	21.4	5.9	10.1	9.5

Source: Ibid., p. 43.

TABLE V

The Development in Four Egyptian Universities from 1959-60 to 1964-65

Year	Males	Females	Total	Females to Total
1959-60	71475	11666	83141	14.0
1964-65	95133	24172	119305	20.3
Annual rate of growth	5.9%	15.6%	7.5%	--

Source: Ibid., p. 8.

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