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WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWSLETTER

International Women's Day

March 8, 1984

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1857, March 8 has been marked by protests, demonstrations, marches, and rallies on issues of importance to women--wages, working conditions, suffrage, and equal rights. Now fully recognized as International Women's Day, it provides the global context for this issue of the Women's Studies Newsletter.

Constantly we need to remind ourselves of our kinship with women--our sisters--throughout the world and work at building strong bonds of solidarity with them. Together we need to develop the power to both affect and respond to change in ways that insure the full exercise of personhood for all women--in the social, economic, political and personal realms of our lives.

Drawing on her visit to Nicaragua in the summer of 1983, ANN FITZGERALD, Director of Women's Studies and Instructor of English, writes about the role women continue to play in the struggle in that country. The essay provides an historical context for a contemporary understanding of the incredible courage of women in their efforts in the liberation movement.

MARLEE MERIWETHER, Assistant Professor of History, and BAHRAM TAVAKOLIAN, Associate Professor of Sociology/Anthropology, co-taught a course during fall, 1983, entitled Women and the Family in Middle Eastern Society and History. Combining the perspectives of both disciplines, the course focused on the social roles and political and economic power of women in diverse Middle Eastern communities with special attention to the effects of contemporary changes in economy and education on the lives and conditions of Middle Eastern women. The piece by Meriwether is her statement of introduction to the Common Hour presentation made by members of the class to the Denison community. Tavakolian's essay emerges from his on-going research interest in women and change in developing societies. JULIE DONAGHY, sociology/anthropology major, tackles the issue of "placing" women in society and history in the Middle East, while senior major MARY WOOLLEN, responds to the assignment of assessing the impact of change on the lives of Middle Eastern women.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL's article focuses on the denial of the human rights of women throughout the world and lays the groundwork for public response and action. Opportunities are being provided on the Denison campus for concerned community members to participate in Urgent Action letter writing campaigns on behalf of women prisoners.

The announcement of the scholarly activities of the women's and women's studies community reminds us of the continuing professional energies of our faculty which are not always immediately visible in the classroom but which enhance the life of the academic community which we share. Finally, the announcement of the Second Annual Women's Studies Prize is a challenge and an invitation to all students to submit entries in this year's competition.

"ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF MYSELF"¹:
WOMEN IN THE NEW NICARAGUA
by Ann Fitzgerald

I expected to see women, lots of women in army uniforms. I did. I expected to hear male leaders of the country talk fervently about women's issues. They did. I expected to see severe poverty--women with malnourished children--and severe wealth--women in the upper class North American mold. I saw both. I had hoped to meet Margaret Randall. I did. Despite the fact that sexism in advertising had been banned by the government, I still expected to see it. And I did: but only one instance.

I went to Nicaragua this past summer armed with facts, searching for images to make them real. I knew that in the struggle against the Somoza dictatorship women composed 30% of the Sandinista army; that currently they constitute nearly half of the army; and in some parts of the country they are as high as 47% of the territorial militia. But I needed the concrete experience of meeting a sixteen year old girl who was in a reserve batallion to give meaning to these facts. Of seeing Sandinista women armed and in uniform patrolling the streets and riding in army trucks. I needed to see these women in uniform and hear the stories of other women who had fought, often covertly, against the dictatorship to sense what "feminism" means in Nicaragua. The main goal of the national women's organization, AMNLAE (named after Amanda Luisa Esinosa, the first female Sandinista to die in the struggle), is defense of the revolution.² And the main goal of its predecessor organization, AMPRONAC,² was the overthrow of the Somoza regime. In fact to explicitly forge the link between "women's issues" and the goal of the Sandinista struggle, the organization changed its name to AMNLAE. By taking the name of the first female martyr in the revolutionary war, the organization made clear its priorities.

In order to understand these priorities and particularly women's presence in the military it is necessary to understand the situation Nicaraguans faced prior to 1979: extreme poverty (2% of the population owned 50% of the land and 40% of all industry); illiteracy (60% of the population was illiterate and only 5% went beyond fifth grade); rampant disease (6 of 10 deaths were caused by curable disease); extremely high infant mortality (4 times that of the United States); and the lowest life expectancy (53 years) of any Central American country. This system had been held in place by the Somoza family (a dynastic dictatorship installed by the United States in 1933) in tandem with their private army, the National Guard (many of whom were trained in the United States). "Somocismo" meant the detention, disappearance, torture or death of anyone who spoke out against the appalling conditions. The Somoza family

alone controlled 40% of the economy and following the massive earthquake of 1972 (which destroyed the capital city of Managua and resulted in 20,000 deaths), the family personally pocketed the international aid money, including \$78 million from AID and \$54 million from the Inter-American Development Bank. This high-handed unwillingness to share the loot with their buddies in the oligarchy signalled the loss of bourgeois support for "Somocismo." The increasing corruption and violence of the National Guard turned bourgeois sympathy toward the Frente Sandinista, the popular people's guerilla movement founded in 1962. Taking its name from Augusto Cesar Sandino (the hero who led an armed movement for national liberation in the 1920's), the Sandinista Front was eventually responsible for the military overthrow and ousting of Somoza in 1979. On July 19, 1979, when "los muchachos" and "las muchachas" triumphed, they showed the world that a people repressed by hunger, abandonment and massacre could rise in power for their liberation.

When we began to speak about the arms struggle we women were slow to understand it. I don't like killing. But I came to understand that when the Gospel says that one shouldn't kill that killing can mean hunger. The government doesn't always kill with a knife; it kills with hunger and abandonment. For me the liberation of Nicaragua is the Gospel being realized in the process of struggle. I had a fear of blood and bullets. I wondered if I were qualified to do it but I felt the revolution was a commandment of the Lord. I've never seen a country freed by votes.³

The necessity of armed resistance necessitated a revolutionary perspective in Nicaraguan women themselves and in their companeros. Their participation in the overthrow of Somoza resulted in an overthrow of traditional Latin American ideas about women. And the undeclared war against Nicaragua by the United States (which began in 1979 and grows daily with lethal alacrity) forces men and women to work equally to defend themselves. United States foreign policy makers don't practice sexism on the firing line: only special forms of torture for captured women soldiers. Thus the Sandinista slogan "Todas Armas al Pueblo" means all arms to all the people--female and male, adults and teenagers alike. Just as women had to fight the first enemy (Somocismo) first, so now they have to fight the threat of its return via the CIA backed contras. The defense, then, of the revolution is a defense against torture, disappearance, illiteracy, hunger and ill-health.

The majority of those illiterate under Somoza were women, especially in rural areas. Thus, AMNLAE's second major concern was the literacy campaign launched in 1980. While illiteracy was successfully reduced to 11% during the first year of the campaign, AMNLAE continues to promote adult education programs, particularly in the area of women's health. In addition to

promoting a vaccination campaign that eliminated polio last year, AMNLAE is reeducating women about the importance of breast-feeding. As is the case in many other Third World countries, Nicaragua was a dumping ground for infant formula. In a poor country where potable water is scarce the result is an extremely high infant mortality rate.

There are, of course, other "women's" goals somewhat more familiar to the North American conception of feminism: to promote the political and ideological advancement of women; to combat institutional inequality and discrimination against women in general; to promote and stimulate the cultural and technical advancement of women; and to promote awareness about the value of household labor. The laws that the Sandinistas have passed toward the achievement of these goals are indeed impressive. Prostitution has been decriminalized. Sexism in advertising outlawed. Women have been guaranteed the right to their own wages; in the past male "heads of household" received the wages of the family group. Two very important additional laws have been passed to ensure that both men and women have equal obligations toward their common children. But machismo dies hard. In the four short years since the triumph, some progress has been made toward these goals but the gulf between legal reality and actual reality remains wide. One can only hope that the country will fulfill its promise of integrating women fully into all aspects of its society. In general, I remain skeptical of revolutionary promises to women, remembering Russia...China...but as long as the United States continues to escalate the war, it may be a moot question as to how far the Sandinistas can go toward their professed feminist goals.

It was heartening at least to hear Tomas Borge talk with real emotion on the issue. The Minister of the Interior and the oldest living member of the founders of the Frente Sandinista, Borge has spoken and written frequently on the achievements of women in the revolution. I had the opportunity to interview him in his home in a middle-class suburb of Managua.

Our poor example offers the threat of a new morality to the United States. A threat of a country that has made the principle of Christianity its own. The objective of women is to end the men's machismo. I wonder when that miracle will come. It will be the biggest revolution of all mankind. The dream of the equality between men and women can be attained.

In another interview Rafael Solis, Vice President of the Council of State, echoed this sentiment by emphasizing the numbers of women present in the political process: "Our goal is the transformation of women's participation in public life. Women are in batallions in the war zone, in the fields harvesting crops, in the unions, and in our chief ministries of State."

This message was reiterated in my meeting the next day with Mercedes Mejia, a twenty year old leader of AMNLAE. The national

office of AMNLAE is located in a small house on a quiet residential street of Managua. On the morning of my first interview, men and women artists were busy at work on a mural they were painting on a wall outside the building. The mural celebrated the role of women in the revolutionary process and had as its central figure a woman nursing a child.

At the time of the insurrection women were in the trenches: women shoulder to shoulder with men. Now we combat a society that taught us that women were inferior. The heritage of that mentality, that very backward concept, is machismo. Women and men are both responsible for our new society.

The personal highlight of my trip was the two evenings I spent with Margaret Randall. For years I had admired her writings: her poetry, her books on women and the Cuban revolution. I wondered what this woman would be like: this woman born in Phoenix who had moved to New York and left college to travel in Europe and Africa; who had decided to have a child on her own in the unfeeling climate of the 1950's; who had moved to Mexico and later--via Chicago, Paris, Prague--to Cuba, which was to be her home in the 60's and 70's. Driving to her home in Managua, I felt intimidated and a little nervous. I knocked on the door of a middle-class home in Managua and a teenage-girl answered the door. "Oh, you're looking for the Cuban woman. She lives next door."

Margaret was asked to come to Nicaragua by Ernesto Cardenal, the Minister of Culture, to write a book about the role of women in the revolution. She wrote two (Sandinos Daughters and Doris Tijerino) and in the process decided to move to Nicaragua. Her home revealed the riches of her life: pictures of her children, Cuba's revolutionary heroes and the people of her various countries cover the walls. I knew immediately that my admiration was well-taken and my intimidation ridiculous. As we talked about her photographs of some of the female Sandinista Commandantes I felt the same comfort, warmth, and, yes, inspiration I had felt in the presence of other North Americans I had visited in Nicaragua who had chosen to live there. Margaret's straightforwardness and strength reminded me of another woman I got to know quite well when I was in Nicaragua. In thanks and in admiration for this other woman, I will conclude this essay with an excerpt from the journal I kept while I was in the country. Hers is the courage of those Nicaraguan women whose effort, though covert, was central to the liberation of the country.

August 1, 1983

I spoke with a woman today who is about sixty-two years old. While she is not entirely in favor of the Sandinistas, she is not entirely against them. What she wants is peace, not war. When she was living in Managua, her home was next door to

a school of journalism where Michelle Najlis⁴ was studying; the students barricaded themselves inside as they were being stormed by Somoza's National Guard. Michelle climbed over the roofs and came to this woman's house, wearing a disguise (make-up and a wig). When this woman's son saw her, he explained, "That's Michelle Najlis!" They offered her the safety of their home, hiding her on the second floor of the house for nearly two months. Later, Carlos Fonseca came, again in disguise (dressed and made-up like a woman) and when the woman asked him/her what he wanted, he said he had come to fix the refrigerator: at that instant she knew he was Fonseca, a founder of the Frente Sandinista, and that he was being hunted by the National Guard. He stayed several months on the second floor--maids bringing him food--and they never heard him move. People would come into the house to visit and talk. Often they would talk about Fonseca and unbeknown to them he was listening right above them. By offering her home as a "safe-house" to those wanted by the Guard, she endangered her own life and the lives of her children. The quiet and matter-of-fact way in which she described this stirs me. The courage.

FOOTNOTES

1. The title of a poem by Giaconda Belli, one of Nicaragua's many female poets.
2. AMPRONAC is an acronym for the association whose name translates into English as "Women Confronting the National Problem." That problem was Somoza.
3. Interview with Olivia Guevara on August 4, 1983, in Managua, Nicaragua.
4. Michelle Najlis was a leader of the student Sandinista movement. She currently heads the Center for Media and Communications in Managua.

* * * * *

"IN REALITY: THE LIVES OF MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN"
by Marlee Meriwether

The Middle East is very much with us these days. It's almost impossible to pick up a newspaper or turn on a news broadcast without being confronted with some new crisis. Despite this attention (and some would argue because of it, since the media often give out more misinformation than correct information on the region), most Americans still remain appallingly ignorant about the history, politics, and culture of the region, and about the realities of people's everyday lives. We still know the Middle East largely in terms of stereotypes--robed and turbanned sheiks, fanatic mullahs, oil wells, camels, deserts. Nowhere are these stereotypes more prevalent than with regard to women. You mention Middle Eastern women, and images come to mind of the harem, of bellydancers, of women who are veiled and secluded, passive, powerless, lazy, sensual, completely dominated by men and unaware of their oppression. Despite the grain of truth in these stereotypes, as in all stereotypes, they badly distort the realities of the lives of Middle Eastern women.

In our course on Middle Eastern women this semester, our primary objective has been to move beyond these stereotypes to examine closely the "lived-in" world of women, the realities of women's lives. It is not easy to make generalizations because of enormous diversity in the experiences of Middle Eastern women, diversity created by differences in class, differences between urban and rural. But we have been able to see some patterns, despite this diversity, patterns that show that women are not passive and powerless, that, rather, women have had a "long tradition of responsibility for the performance and management of social and economic activities and manipulation of political relations between segments of society" (to quote from Louise Sweet, the person from whom we cribbed the title of this Common Hour talk). Moreover, the particular nature of the social world of women has led to strong female networks (separated to large extent from that of men), and has often fostered an independence of mind and a critical and cynical attitude toward men and the male-dominated power structures. This is not to deny that sexual inequality exists in Middle Eastern society, but this hardly makes it unique. But we must realize that it is not sufficient to declare Middle Eastern society to be male-dominated, to declare that all women are oppressed, and therefore to assume that this captures the realities of their lives. The realities are much more complex and ambiguous.

Besides examining the "lived-in" world of women, the other central concern of our course has been the impact of change. Clearly, Middle Eastern society is changing rapidly, through the growth of a market economy, development of a modern state, urbanization, industrialization, changes which parallel developments in western society to some extent. From a Western perspective,

this change, "modernization," looks like progress. And what follows from this assumption is that "modernization" will mean progress--eventually, if not immediately--for women too. Implicit in Western stereotypes of the oppressed and downtrodden Middle Eastern woman is the ethnocentric assumption that to overcome this oppression, Middle Eastern society will have to be modernized, to be westernized, and that Middle Eastern women will have to become like Western women. But does modernization mean progress for women? For some, yes--change has been positive. But when one looks closely at the lives of women in contemporary Middle Eastern society, these changes have not meant progress for many women. Changes in the last 50-100 years have often eroded the sources of control and power for women in the past, they have often created new and difficult situations which women must cope with without the support systems they used to have. Women are often left without the means to take advantage of the benefits that change potentially brings. Change has been a mixed blessing at best. "Modernization" does not bring automatically universal benefits to women. As we have discovered this semester, there is no simple or easy answer to the question of the impact of change.

* * * * *

PLACING WOMEN'S HISTORY IN HISTORY AND SOCIETY:
REFLECTIONS ON MIDDLE EASTERN CULTURE
by Julie Donaghy

A common view held by most Westerners is that Moslem women are creatures incapable of and unfit for public duties. To coin a phrase: A woman's place is in the home. Westerners tend to view the superiority of men as a basic value in the social stratification system of Middle Eastern society. Social stratification in different parts of the Arab region is very complex; and the political entities are quite varied. This is why it becomes necessary to emphasize that theoretical and methodological reflections concerning the status of women must be linked to the study of conditions of the entire region. It is an historical phenomenon which transcends social classes, and the Moslem world has not escaped its implications. We must look at the role and position of women with respect to Moslem social structures and women's impact on the development of these structures. More definitively, we must begin to place women's history in history.

Has the history of women, the sociology of women, the anthropology of women really been explored to its fullest capacities? Or, instead, have women simply been omitted? These questions can be seen to transcend a dialectical historical view of Moslem women (or women in general). While Moslem women have continuously contributed to the construction of their society, they also have witnessed throughout history the reduction, exploitation, and the deterioration of their status. This trend continues today.

In essence then, Moslem women are full participants in their society. Yet this degradation of the status of women is the result of a long process of social disintegration of the Middle East region as a whole. By this I mean the disintegration caused by colonialism, urbanization, international capitalism, and references to new ideological, religious, economic, and political orders.

These systems of disintegration generate certain theories of why women have been omitted in history. They, in turn, have been incorporated into our (Western) belief systems and institutions. We hear such words as harem, polygamy, purdah, and veil and assume that Moslem women must be oppressed and dominated. Our own society has made some very basic value assumptions concerning the nature of the roles of men and women in Middle Eastern society. We see men and women as living in two different social worlds. Men affirm their position by exercising authority, while women affirm their position through marriage and children. We imagine the ideal man as the provider, the protector, the patriarch. We imagine the ideal female as dependent, chaste, and fertile. These conceptions are part of a universal male bias--not primarily Western.

It becomes evident that in both the Middle East and in our own society the topic of women's lives in history and across cultures has faced the problem of misinterpretation, methodologically and theoretically. Many of these problems stem from very shallow and stereotyped viewpoints on and about women. Assumptions about Moslem women (and men) not only govern the situation of women but also hinder research about them. Evidence based on preconceptions perpetuates ignorance about women and myths about both genders.

Such myths and ignorance are widely acclaimed in ideologies, Western ethnocentrism, stereotypes, and Orientalism. As social scientists Bates and Rassam point out, Westernization has long been associated with modernization. This is evident in regard to imperial interests. The Western world exploits the Middle East politically, economically, and intellectually in order to make them like us. The familiar saying rings in our ears: If it works for us, it will work for you. This can result in a loss of cultural identity and confusion of social organization.

Western superiority is further exemplified in the media's attitude toward the Middle East. Since we as Westerners are so unaware of the origins of Middle East customs, we term Islamic customs and traditions as "bad." The entire system is seen to be in need of change so that women aren't so oppressed and degraded. Even Western feminists continue to perpetuate this myth. They, in fact, agree that these stereotypes exist and must be abolished.

There are further problems with historical evidence. Many of the available sources are undependable; they are either romanticized, dramatized, or idealized. Even prominent sociologists and anthropologists are guilty as researchers. The foremost criticism is that of the functionalist position, which serves to ingrain

these myths and assumption. Both Radcliffe-Brown, in his definition of a political system as the maintenance of social order by coercive authority, and Barth, in his study of the Swat Pathans and their use of physical force in many relations, tend to view power and authority as exclusive to men (Nelson, 1974). A problem that seems to exacerbate this functionalist viewpoint is the male ethnographer and the male informant.

For men in Middle Eastern society there is limited access to the home life and barely any access to the communication patterns of women. There seems to be a lack of interest by most men in women's affairs. This situation is complemented by the limited access that women have in men's affairs. The "segregation" is one of the first things that is observed by a visitor to the community. Such segregation makes it even more difficult to gain any information or knowledge of the women, their activities and functions, their roles, or their status. Nelson points out that not only is it difficult for men to talk to women, it is not even allowed for them to ask about women. Thus an ethnographer, a visitor, a traveller could be easily misled concerning the exact amount of influence or power a woman had in her town or community. Nelson concludes that ethnographers tend to exaggerate the extent of male dominance because of their lack of knowledge of women in general, and especially, in roles of influence and power.

To avoid these biases, it is essential to look at the theoretical implications of Fox-Genoveses's "generative" approach for criteria and a method for placing women's history in history (1982:5-29). She adamantly claims that women have been excluded from history, and that historians have tended to emphasize the distinctive attributes which differentiate the lives of women from men. Thus, the theoretical approach to studying women has been to look only at family structure, access to property, and participation in reproduction. Theoretically, we are accepting the idea that what women do in these spheres has no bearing or relevance on the social or economic structures affecting both men's and women's lives. This seeks to re-emphasize the theory of the male dominant view of women as the "other."

Fox-Genovese claims that the order of patriarchal religions, institutions and states, and the ideological and economic order that has evolved throughout history has perpetuated woman as "other." We must conduct an historical analysis of women as both members of one sex and also as members of society. Fox-Genovese suggests looking at gender systems as a mode of analysis. She suggests we look at how society promotes identities and roles according to gender. If we look at history, (i.e., colonialism, urbanization, exploitation, expansion, immigration, and the kinds of stratification and tribute systems of centralized authority internal to the Middle East), we can see some of the basis for the ideologies of sexuality.

Therefore, we must heighten our critical awareness of inequalities by being more aware of gender systems. We must conduct an analysis of women's power and determine how it affects society as a whole. Thus, women's work and the institution of the family must be examined more closely. We must look at both the domestic and the public setting. Do men's and women's work overlap? Who makes the decisions? What comprises role identity?

When observing the public sphere, we must be more aware of the issues of power and domination. Kinship groups, social circles, male and female groups, marriage, and property must all be fairly scrutinized. Different classes of men and women must be observed for commonalities or differences in history. And finally, key points of change must be examined in order to reveal elements of social organizational change. What group has been most affected by change?

In her ethnography of Middle Eastern village life, Elizabeth Fernea has been able to observe areas of both change and power in women's social organization. Despite the fact that she was an outsider, an American, she was still able to penetrate the social sphere of Arab women that has been so difficult to enter in the past. By living in the world of women, Elizabeth Fernea was able to provide special insight and knowledge of Arab women for the very fact that she was not segregated from them. It is important to realize that Fernea had no anthropological/sociological background or very defined preconceptions of El Nahra life. It is this very aspect that makes her observations and conclusions honest, interesting, and believable.

Fernea enters the El Nahra village innocent in knowledge of the Arab women. She expects to be treated well, to form friendships quickly, and to be accepted immediately by all. What is unique is that none of her expectations come true until she proves her worth to the satisfaction of the Arab women she interacts with. She must learn how to be a woman in a way that she is not accustomed to being. Therefore, in the beginning of her ethnography, we are clearly able to see a display of hypocrisy, naivete, and bias. Expecting to be treated well, Fernea treats the women she meets as, what Fox-Genovese would call, the "other." This displays some of the male biases of Fernea. Treating other women as the "other" is what we, as women, have come to expect from men; we see that women also hold these male biases.

Yet as Fernea is assimilated into the Arab women's world, we see her ideas of Arab women's life change. Her immediate "idealist" challenge to change or better El Nahra life with her Western ideas subsides. Fernea scoffs at the thought of having to wear a veil. She uses stereotypical language to refer to the abayah-- "servile garment." Alas, she was "elected to live in relative seclusion." By closely interacting with these women, she learns that many of her assumptions are fallacies. In fact, she discovers

that the veil is a source of power for the women. They are able to go about unnoticed--to visit, to pray--without exposure. The veil increases social interaction among all women. Women are able to learn more information about village life. This includes information involving economic, political, and social decisions.

Fernea, by being exposed to both tribal and town women, also realizes that these women have shared values. Rather than being segregated from women of different regions and classes, these women display common characteristics of family life and work. These similarities give women great influence over both husbands and sons. This is most clearly revealed in the areas of marriage and education. What is most important, however, is that Fernea discovers that women's influence is recognized by all. Men did admit that women had what Nelson calls spheres of influence. Unfortunately, Fernea fails to question why this sphere of influence isn't openly recognized and still remains segregated. This is an important issue which should be developed.

Perhaps most importantly, I see Fernea's experience, her ethnography, as a way to tie together some of the loose strings that biases, whether male, Western, or idealist, perpetuate. By revealing to us her knowledge of the actual happenings of women's work, women's interaction, family life, kinship ties, and women's power, Fernea proves false many of our assumptions. Although we must not rely solely on her conclusions, we realize from her work that the Middle Eastern world is very different from ours and from others, with values and attitudes that we must first understand. If change is to take place, we realize that it must take place from within the society. Fernea shows us that historians as well as sociologists and anthropologists have neglected many of the varied dimensions of women's lives. As historian Tucker cites: "To see Middle Eastern women solely as oppressed victims of a benighted society is to deny them a history and culture, to greatly underrate their ongoing contributions to economic and social life." (Tucker, 1981).

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WOMEN AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHANGE
AMONG SHEIKHANZAI NOMADS
OF WESTERN AFGHANISTAN
by Bahram Tavakolian

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the intentions and implications of two exogenous programs of socioeconomic change for women among Sheikhanzai nomads of Afghanistan. These two central government-sponsored plans and policies differed in the political and economic alternatives which they proposed, and they were also in sharp contrast with one another with respect to how much they specifically focused on questions of women's rights and opportunities. There is, nevertheless, a curious and tragic irony in how both programs, one capitalist, individualist, and market- and profit-oriented, and the other collectivist and nationalist-oriented, neglected or, indeed, potentially worsened the conditions and lives of women.

That both of these programs were sponsored by the respective governments of the Republic of Afghanistan before and after the coup of April, 1978, serves to indicate the depth of the problems faced by women in traditional societies of the Islamic Middle East. Women are not only the victims of capitalist expansion and transnational proletarianization, but also of the Western-oriented, yet patriarchal, social and ideological modernists in their own countries.

Although it would be an exaggeration to assert that women and men are equal in status, prestige, mobility, and authority in traditional Sheikhanzai society, it is also difficult to conclude that such a society is clearly male-dominated. Attention to the voices and the will of women is essential not only for a harmonious household, but for an economically and politically viable one as well. In 1977 Sheikhanzai women and men had together succeeded in establishing the most productive pastoral economy in western Afghanistan. Unlike some of both their pastoralist and their agricultural neighbors, they experienced almost no out-migration for wage labor in Iran or in other areas of Afghanistan, and they remained capable of resisting government efforts at economic incorporation and political encapsulation. All conflicts and disputes were resolved through indigenous institutions and processes, rather than being taken to officials of the central state, and the Sheikhanzai refused to accept "citizenship" responsibilities of birth registration, compulsory education, military conscription, or taxation since they neither needed nor received any services from the government. For this reason, too, distinction made between male and female responsibilities and opportunities within Afghanistan in general with respect to employment, education, legal and political representation, and rights in marriage and divorce did not apply to Sheikhanzai women and men, nor did problems of ethnic and class differentiation.

WOMEN AND THE HERAT LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Beginning in 1974 and continuing until the abortion of the project after the Saur Revolution and the change of central government in April of 1978, the World Bank sponsored a plan for the "rationalization" of pastoralism in western Afghanistan. With officials drawn from the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture and consultants with expertise in range management and veterinary services, the Herat Livestock Development Corporation was established as an umbrella organization for a program of land and animal purchase, sedentarization of pastoral nomads, development of economic cooperatives, quality control in sheep marketing, and the slaughtering and transporting of frozen lamb and mutton for sale in Iran. In addition to the stated intentions of the program to improve health standards and marketing facilities in pastoral production, the designs of the plan were also directed toward the introduction of a profit motive, the breakdown of local kinship and ethnic obligations, reduction of animal smuggling between Afghanistan and Iran, and the extension of governmental control over economic and political processes in rural and isolated regions of western Afghanistan.

There are many reasons why this program was already a failure before the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan finally terminated relations with the H.L.D.C. in 1978, but here I want to focus only on the implications of the program for women. In their traditional roles women are not merely active in the private and domestic realm of their society, but their labor and control of resources are essential ingredients in all aspects of social, economic, and political life. Nevertheless, the objectives and activities of the H.L.D.C. totally neglected the roles of Sheikhanzai and other pastoralist women. It was simply assumed by the official staff and consultants, on the basis of experience with similar projects in South Africa and Australia, as well as on the basis of stereotypes about Muslim women, that pastoralism was a strictly male-dominated economic system. Not only was it assumed that animals were owned solely by men, but also that a pastoralist economy was sustained by the breeding and marketing of live animals. In contrast the Sheikhanzai depended far more significantly on dairy production and exchange, which I maintain were under the control of women more than men. Aside from the question of how such production and exchange of "surplus" dairy products were intrinsic to social relations of Sheikhanzai within a segmentary lineage structure, the male dependence on women's labor and control over the flow of resources was ignored.

Instead it was assumed that men would become the representatives of their households within economic cooperatives, and that these economic cooperatives would be formed on a basis independent of kinship and ethnic identity and obligations. The cooperatives were to be given credit for the purchase of land, breeding stock, and animal vaccine, and the profits made from the sale of live animals would go toward purchase of subsistence and luxury goods as well as toward repayment, with interest, of the loans. The

cooperatives as a whole would be responsible for the production and credit of their individual members, and they were specifically meant to reduce "irrational" expenditures in the areas of religious ritual, marriage transactions, and local patterns of household hospitality and kinship-based economic reciprocity and mutual assistance. So, not only was the power of Sheikhanzai women to be undercut in matters of resource production and control, but also within the social matrix in which Sheikhanzai economic relations were embedded. Much of the power of Sheikhanzai women depended upon relations between households and camps, and not upon their labor, or "drudge work" as some would call it, within the tent-household. In stripping the Sheikhanzai away from their kinship nexus, the H.L.D.C. program was also, intentionally or not, stripping women away from their roles as power-brokers and power-wielders.

The Sheikhanzai and other nomadic pastoralists of western Afghanistan rejected participation in the H.L.D.C. for many other reasons as well, and it would not be accurate to suggest that the roles of women were of supermost importance in the decisions reached by Sheikhanzai men to remain aloof from the various aspects of the program. It is more important, I think, to point out that the program itself failed to understand and to appreciate the role of women in socioeconomic change than to suggest that Sheikhanzai men were adequately liberated from their own sexist inclinations. It is also necessary to make explicit my theoretical view that we view women's roles and men's attitudes about these roles within the context of material conditions. That the H.L.D.C. ignored these conditions and gave preference to sexual stereotypes was at least partially responsible for the failure of that program. Ironically, as I will turn to next, the various 1978 decrees on women's rights and other subjects, which came from the Marxist-oriented government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, were similarly guilty of a lack of awareness of the material circumstances in which rural women and men of Afghanistan lead their lives.

WOMEN AND THE SAUR REVOLUTION

As Nancy Hatch Dupree has carefully documented for the past century of Afghan history, Afghan ideology about women's rights has been consistently dominated by urban and Western-oriented men (1981; see also Tapper 1983). Unfortunately, this has frequently meant that well-intentioned programs and policies of change, and legal reforms in the status of women, have been developed and offered without much first-hand knowledge of women's lives and experiences. Even the sweeping reforms of the collectivist-oriented government of Nur Taraki, between April, 1978 and September, 1979, were shockingly inadequate in addressing the needs and ideals of rural Afghan women. For example, Dupree identifies Dr. Anahita Ratebzad's emphasis on the "duties of women and mothers...to bring up sons and daughters who are sincere and patriotic" as an obvious perpetuation of culture-bound stereotyped roles of women as mothers (1981:8-9). Similarly, Nancy Tapper has pointed out that the D.R.A.'s

programs for marriage reforms and women's rights in general "are themselves derived by an Afghan elite from a First World ideology of production and gender roles, (and) it is unlikely that these goals will be realized even if linked with substantial reforms in other areas. Rather, given the comparative scarcity of resources within the country, it is more likely that any such transformations of Afghan society would result in an inferior imitation of First World Society in which poverty and discrimination against women remain integrally connected" (1983:17).

The specific decree of the D.R.A. having to do with women was first announced in October of 1978. In brief Decree No. 7 called for "equal rights of women with men...and for removing the unjust patriarchal feudalistic relations between husband and wife for consolidation of further sincere family ties." In specific articles the decree insisted upon an abolition of traditional bride-price arrangements in marriage, a requirement--already present in Islamic law--of full consent of the parties involved in marriage, and the raising of the minimum age for engagement and marriage to 16 for women and 18 for men. As Dupree mentions, "Principles crucial to true emancipation, such as the equal right of women to demand divorce, work opportunities, and inheritance...were not considered" (1981:23), presumably because they would be too controversial in rapidly worsening relations between the D.R.A. and rural Afghans.

I have presented the view that an adequate understanding of the social roles of Sheikhanzai women, and of the implications of change in these roles, must depend upon an analysis of their ability to control the production, allocation, and distribution of economic resources. One would expect a Marxist government to be aware of this fundamental relationship rather than to succumb to the ideological trappings of cosmetic reforms and attempts at replications of Western models of society.

Looking at bride-price first, it is important to understand that Sheikhanzai marriage transactions are transactions between equals. That is, the segmentary lineage structure of Sheikhanzai society emphasizes a structural and ideological equivalence between inter-marrying households, and bride-price payments are one of the levelling mechanisms serving to reduce potential dissimilarities in household wealth and power. Households which are better off in animal holdings and other forms of wealth are expected to provide substantially more of a bride-price when their sons marry, and poorer households must meet lesser economic obligations. Furthermore, a bride-price is a corporate family, and not an individual, responsibility. And, since endogamy is practically universal among the Sheikhanzai, at least within their parent tribe of Es'hakzai Durrani, if not within their sub-tribes or lineage, the flow of resources does not serve to increase but to reduce indebtedness between households.

Within this structural system, women not only give voluntary consent to their marriages to tribal and lineage relatives, but they maintain life-long relationships with their natal families

and act as mediators in relationships between their husbands and agnates.¹ The portion of a family patrimony which goes toward the payment of a bride-price also entitles sisters, who did not receive a direct inheritance, to call upon their brothers for economic assistance. Since their brothers' wealth is in part made up through the resources provided in the husbands' bride-prices, women indirectly receive their patrimony through such assistance. Their children, too, may take the option of camping and grazing their animals with their matrilineal kin if patrilineage rights to land are inadequate for their needs.

An actual bride-price may represent only a token payment between patrilineally related households, or it may involve the huge sums of a full payment (of as much as \$7,000 worth of animals, commodities, and cash). In either case the bride directly shares in the wealth, whether through the aforementioned benefits of assistance from her brothers or through "protection" for her well-being and happiness which is guaranteed by the "extravagant" compensation for the loss of her services to her natal family. Most importantly, the agnatic tie which is maintained by a woman to her brothers and other lineage relatives extends the rights of her husband as well. But when financial assistance, especially in the form of animals, is offered to a woman and her husband from her agnates, the animals or other contributions may not be transacted by a man without his wife's approval and support. Thus, the bride-price serves not only to place a value upon women, to equalize relationships between families, and to restrict or discourage mistreatment and divorce, but it also provides women with an immediate basis for economic control and political power over household activities. Nancy Dupree correctly argues that a reduction in marriage transactions to a maximum of 300 "afghanis" (ca.\$10) as required in Decree No. 7 would only serve the interests of the wealthy groom and of men in general, and not the interests of women (1981:22).

In terms of the land reforms instituted or advocated by the D.R.A., as well, the rights of Sheikhanzai women were to be potentially abrogated and not enhanced. Although it has never been adequately established that Afghanistan was in need of major reforms in land ownership patterns in the first place (see Dupree 1980), the changes called for by the D.R.A. were essentially designated to meet the needs of the relatively small portion of the population which comprised a landless peasantry. In restricting ownership of prime lands to amounts totally inadequate for animal pasture, the D.R.A. showed particular disregard of the needs of the two million or more pastoral nomads of Afghanistan. Furthermore, land registration requirements would have made it impossible for people such as the Sheikhanzai to be able to claim legal title to lands to which they held only usufruct rights on a seasonal basis; and, as one might expect by now, land title was only to be a right bestowed upon male household heads. Whereas Sheikhanzai women held agnatic rights to the lineage land of their fathers, brothers, and other patri-kin, such rights were to be relinquished in the land reforms, and kinship-based land rights in general were to be replaced by less particularistic and more collectivistic access.

Unlike the goals of the H.L.D.C., the Taraki government's reforms were, at least on the surface, designed to reduce the poverty and inequality of the men and women of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the implicit class- and urban-bias contained within the reforms also inevitably perpetuates sexual inequality as well. Especially in the case of Sheikhanzai women, the socioeconomic change advocated by outsiders has not been adequately informed by the women themselves, or at least by others in comparable social and economic circumstances. This is unfortunate not only because of the obvious material and human costs involved in the failures of the programs, but also because of our unwillingness to learn a thing or two from Sheikhanzai women. To be sure, Sheikhanzai society and economy are not utopia, and no one can doubt the need for improved health services and a reduction in the extreme labor burdens placed upon women. Nevertheless, any attempt at massive restructuring of the society along either capitalist or collectivist lines is, at best, patronizing and, at worst, potentially devastating to both Sheikhanzai women and men.

NOTE

1. This point is more fully developed in my paper entitled "Sisters Are Agnates Too: The Role of Women in Segmentary Lineage Theory" presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Anthropological Society, Lexington, Kentucky, April 9, 1982.

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CAPITALIST PENETRATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST:
COPING WITH CHANGE
by Mary Woollen

Capitalism, born in industrial England, created not merely a new economic system, but marked the genesis of radical and revolutionary political, cultural and social order. The expansionist dynamics of the capitalist mode of production is the legacy it holds for those immediately involved in the system, and for the most seemingly remote and autonomous societies. The capitalist propensity is to establish itself in areas where it may best generate profit, investment and extraction of resources. Capitalism has few scruples as to the nature of its penetration or the effects which emanate thereof. The Middle East, a region once predominated by two modes of production, kin-ordered and tributary, is one of the contemporary preys for Western capitalist expansion.

In this study I will examine the effects which capitalism has upon rural and urban communities. Large urban centers by now hauntingly resemble any given Western metropolis, due to capitalist influence. The dissemination of capitalism to the outlying rural areas has a more devastating effect. I will analyze the impact capitalism has upon rural populations in the Middle East, with specific attention to the consequences this force has on women in kin-ordered and tributary modes of production. The methodology used will be to isolate three different rural communities selected from Lois Beck and Nikki Keddie's book, Women in the Muslim World, and perform a comparison for later analysis. By citing specific differences in the relationships between social organization and women with respect to the prevailing production mode, I intend to examine the different prices of change capitalism has on the social entities. In addition to this rural examination, I will examine the problems imposed by the capitalist system upon urban women in Cairo. The status and position of women in both urban and rural society has been extremely affected by capitalist intervention. Historically, women played very vital and respectable roles in Middle Eastern society. Although capitalism has not completely stripped them of their once esteemable status, it has denigrated their position by rendering women the victims of its malevolence.

As the name implies, the kin-ordered mode of production draws upon the loyalties generated through "affiliation and marriage, consanguinity and affinity" (Wolf, 1982:90). This system based upon age, sex and free access to resources, knits social relations and designates labor tasks. The fruits of this labor, under conditions where resources are widely available, are distributed on an equal share basis. It is a relatively open-ended, acephalous system managed by group consensus which allows greater flexibility of choice and freedom of movement.

The tributary mode of production is more prevalent in Middle Eastern society. Here social organization and labor are mobilized in a centralized and hierarchical fashion. It is characterized by a more heterogeneous community where people are coerced into exchanging their good and services. Tribute for the state is exacted from the producers by political or military means. There exists a triadic relationship in this society which is the fundamental operative base composed of: a state-ruling elite, a group of overlords (surplus takers) and the primary producers. Each is dependent upon the other for perpetuating the dynamics of the system.

The three rural communities I have selected for comparative purposes are: the Baluch of Panjgur, the nomadic pastoralists of Iran and the Shahsevan nomads of Iran. Despite the differences in geographic location, religion and production modes, there are striking similarities among the groups in their pre-capitalist kin-ordered and tributary mode of production. I will analyze these characteristics with specific attention to the role of women. The determination of women's relation to the society will be based upon such features as kinship network, marriage patterns and inheritance rights. Particular emphasis will be placed upon political and economic participation.

Traditional Baluchistan society constitutes a kin-ordered mode of production, based on a bilateral kinship which places a high value on agnatic relationships. Due to their adherence to the Sunni Muslim faith, women are given inheritance rights. This is to ensure them moral and economic security and comes in the form of indirect dowry, moveable wealth, and other forms of material property. Paradoxically, their patrimonial system does not regard women as the equals of men. There is a strict public/private dichotomy which relegates women to purdah. Although they have legal access to property rights, the full exercise of economic rights is negated by consequence of their physical seclusion.

Purdah additionally delimits female encounters with those not related through either blood or marriage. This serves to restrict women's access to work outside of the private domain. Their activities center mainly around household responsibilities and visitation of other women. Marriage for Baluchistan women is a civil contract based on material transactions. It is marked by two components of indirect dowry which are: 1) mal--the exclusive moveable property of the bride and 2) lub--a deferred portion of goods (both moveable and immovable). Both these are important because they secure financial insurance to the wife should her husband divorce her (Pastner, 1978:441).

The Qashqa'i pastoral-nomads appear to practice a duality of production modes. They in some ways exemplify a kin-ordered mode of production. In other ways they resemble a tributary system, especially by the way they are divided into five tribes, each headed by a family of khans, defined by political affiliation. The family was the basic economic unit and the women's role here is of vital

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and recognized importance. Unlike the Baluchistan women, their lifestyle is based on symmetry, where there are no domain distinctions. Men and women share in the decision-making process, economic and political roles, although to varying degrees.

Because these nomadic women are not as sequestered as those of Baluchistan, they are able to create networks which ensure them a presence or at least a voice in social, economic and political activities. Men are still the predominant figures and exercise the greatest influence in these areas, but not without the dictates of women. Women are restricted to the house when it comes to child-care and family subsistence activities, while the men exercise periods of absence for whatever reason (economic, social, political). While it would seem this lessens any chance for women to gain access to information and influence wider societal decisions, they have been shown to actually capitalize on this separation. Women are not excluded from the political and economic domain by virtue of their biological disposition, especially when their interest is at stake.

Women can thus manipulate contacts with others to protect their households and for their own ends, and they can selectively disseminate the information acquired to members of their unit, according to their own interests (Beck, 1978:354).

Women among the Qashqa'i have little say in their own marriages, a commonality of most Middle Eastern societies. They marry into close physical proximity with fathers and brothers in order to maintain close kinship relations. Unlike the Baluch, these women of Shiite faith do not inherit property but make up for this omission by a large dowry and a less stringent social codification.

The Shahsevan nomads represent a tributary society. They are a confederation of tribes, each headed by a chief. Existing under this larger structure are more atomized local groupings of agnatically related families based on patrilineal descent. The Shahsevan women are said to comprise a "subsociety," due to the indigenous operating principles of segregation and male dominance. This subsociety formulated around physical (i.e., encampment) and social constraints, does allow them some degree of economic and political execution. The type and degree to which these powers are carried out depend upon certain variables subsumed under the titles of ascriptive and achieved status. Marriage is considered ascriptive in that it unites a male and female of equal status. The particular status of the men is important in this unification because it is one of the main determinants of the position women will have in the subsociety. Typically, the more venerable women are those with the more affluent husbands. They are, in turn, recognized as leaders within the subsociety and in many cases have a direct effect on male decision-making processes.

Women's configuration as a subsociety, by its very name, implies a notion of impotence. Although their niche is more privatized, they

are able to transcend a number of boundaries which enable them to influence extra-domestic decisions. The subsociety acts like an information service due to the women's exchanges. Through dissemination of information they are able to learn the changing economic positions of others, which they can use to their own or the family's advantage. It is a reticulate system with inherent checks on information by which they are able to verify claims by multiple accounts. The main basis of women's authority is carried out in face-to-face encounters within the camp. Since daily life patterns are so conducive to such, it would seem women have a prominent foot in the door when it comes to societal decision-making.

In each of the three communities, women strive to exercise power around certain constraints dictated by the nature of society. Despite the differences constituted by opposing modes of production, or even coterminous elements of each (i.e., Qashqa'i), a distinct female power is detectable although varied.

The penetration of capitalism into kin-ordered societies has a devastating effect. Kin-ordered systems are predicated upon production within the household--a specialized adaptation perfected through time. The household's internal logic is not towards maximization of profit but achievement of a balance between family demands for consumption and labor required thereof (Tucker, 1979:245). With the coming of capitalism, the State begins controlling these rural collectivities and placing demands upon them which draw them from their locus into the market and monetary economy in attempt to centralize their extractions into large-scale corporate units.

This long achieved social cohabitation and ecological adaptation is undermined by such extrinsic manipulation. Moreover, the coerced integration into the state system and economy particularly erodes the status of women due to the transition from a domestic to a wider economy. In this sense men take on the role of commodity producer while the women produce use-values through domestic labor (Tucker, 1979:247). The family becomes a domain for women and children where once revered material production is devalued. Lastly, the horizontal division of labor exercised before capitalist disruption gives way to male dominance due to their role as producers--creating a more private/public dichotomy.

Capitalism produces similar changes in tributary societies with respect to production patterns, social organization and the resulting denegation of women's roles. However, one cannot generalize the effects of the phenomenon because the nature of its intrusion varies in magnitude and in context. A tributary system exhibits some of the characteristics of a capitalist system by its relation to the "wider field of power" (Wolf:1982;82) and its extractive production for the elite. However, the means of production are still in the hands of the local producer which is a vital distinguishing characteristic. The official transition to capitalism is demarcated by a detachment of the means of production by a centralized national entity. Laborers are in turn denied access to means of production

which forces them to sell their labor power to the capitalists. This process then places the capitalist in a position to maximize profit by way of "ceaseless accumulation accompanied by changes in methods of production" (Wolf,1982:18).

In tributary societies where there already exist class distinctions, capitalism further fragments these relations and crystallizes them. Women are relegated to the lowest stratum of the hierarchy.

Since the penetration of capitalism into the Middle East, the region has undergone tumultuous transitions. The seeds of capitalism are primarily sown in the urban centers of collective power. But the characteristic ebb and flow of capitalism cause it to branch out into the rural areas, producing effects such as those I previously cited. The impact of capitalism in an urban area is my next point of focus.

Cairo represents a city with all the sparkling amenities of a working, thriving metropolis. Cairo also represents the subjugation the squalor and the contradictions so characteristic of a capitalist society. A visitor to Cairo is struck by the overt juxtaposition of wealth and poverty. A clean split between social classes is played culturally, physically, and politically. Capitalism creates new social relations not merely by its economic characteristics; it carves out a new infrastructure within the city to facilitate transport, access to resources and to stratify social arrangements for the luxury of the elite. Cairo is divided between an upper middle class and a petit-bourgeoisie, or lower middle class. The former is relatively liberated due to its accommodation with the system, while the latter is more conservative and adheres to more Islamic dictates.

These more "liberal" upper middle class women have experienced a near renaissance of freedom and movement because of their upper class socio-economic status.

As Egypt's involvement in the world market deepened, upper class women became involved in new activities which complemented those of her husbands. Eventually, upper class women began moving out of the home, but not so much into the professions as into social service and voluntary activities (Gran,1977:4).

These women began to take on more "modern" western roles of what it means to be a wife and mother. This assimilation was to accommodate new value and working systems by which to facilitate and perpetuate capitalism.

In opposition to this process is the plight of the lower class women and their reversion to a more private realm. Sawsan el-Messiri called them the "banat al balad," which characterizes them as illiterate lower class persons who are the "victims of progress." These craftspeople, laborers, factory workers and sellers live in partitioned slum areas in and around Cairo (el-Merriri,1978:525).

The reason for the gross disparity between the sexes is the fact that capitalism in Cairo widened the gap between the domestic unit and the unit of production which traditionally were coterminous. As in the rural centers, the family used to be the unit of production. With the advent of capitalism and the production style it demands, the dichotomous roles of male-female labor relations were molded and sanctioned. "Men produced goods and services for the commodity markets; women reproduced labor for the market" (Gran, 1977:4).

The women's traditional place within this family unit has always been a pervasive one, but today it is characterized as exploitative. Those who are the most powerful in a capitalist society are those who are an historical proponent of its birth or have bought in the system. The benefactors of the capitalist mode of production are owners of the means of production or supervisors of luxury import/export items, political leaders and the landed aristocracy. The predominant group involved with the aforementioned are men. The effect of this transition is the erosion of women's role in the society.

The women in the three rural communities I examined will each respond to the impact of capitalism and change in different ways. Similarly, women in the city of Cairo will not react analogously. Each separate entity, despite prevailing similarities, adapts differently due to respective historical experiences. History is not simply time gone by but a dictator for the future. In order to understand the nature and direction of a present-day culture/society, acknowledgement of its history (i.e., mode of production, religion, social laws) is essential. Without this understanding by which to explain and predict its various circumstances, one's criticism or analysis has no foundation. It is like trying to change some aspect of the world without a theoretical perspective.

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WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS DENIED
Amnesty International

Women Around the World

Women around the world are being silenced. They are victims of intimidation, illegal arrest and detention, and torture by governmental and para-governmental agents. They are victims of official campaigns to deny human rights and to crush the human spirit. In scores of nations--South Africa and China, El Salvador and Romania, Turkey and the Soviet Union, Egypt and Ethiopia-- governments take illegal and extra-legal action against women who speak out or women who are perceived as potential opposition.

These women are of all ages, from all walks of life. They are trade unionists, agricultural workers, office workers, housewives, journalists, physicians, and attorneys. Most are on the forefront of social and political change, and many are leaders. But others are victims of human rights abuses simply because they are wives, mothers, daughters, or friends of those deemed "dangerous." What is happening to them should not happen to anyone.

Some women have disappeared without a trace--suddenly taken from their home by armed men, pulled from a steercar, or forcibly abducted with their children. They have vanished, never to be heard from again.

Some women have been banned--officially removed from society and forbidden to write, publish, teach, travel, or attend social, business, professional or political activities. Those banned are often sent to remote areas far from home and family.

Many are prisoners of conscience, arrested for their beliefs, for expressing opinions, for disclosing information that governments would rather keep from the public. Many are imprisoned without trial or sentenced by special ad hoc courts. For these women, free expression and free association have had devastating consequences. As women they are vulnerable to special exploitation and abuse. Mothers are abducted with their children, who are then threatened and in some cases tortured in front of them. Women pregnant when detained may give birth in prison, then have their babies taken to an unknown fate. Other women are subjected to sexual assault as a form of torture.

Calculated inhuman treatment, wielded with the full force of official power, shatters the lives of women and of their children and families. For every silenced woman, we must speak out. Amnesty International has found that if enough people act, imprisoned women can be protected and freed.

The following cases are compiled from reports available to Amnesty International as of October 1983.

Nonzamo Winnie Mandela: Medical Worker and
Political Leader Banned in South Africa

Most of the last twenty years Nonzamo Winnie Mandella has either been imprisoned, or officially "banned" from society though she has at no time been convicted of a serious political offense. Since 1977 she has been forced to live in a remote village 200 miles from her Johannesburg home. Under her banning order, most recently renewed in July 1983, she is forbidden to leave her home on weekends or after 6:30 p.m. on week nights. Nothing she says or writes can be published or quoted in South Africa, and she cannot meet more than one person at a time.

Since 1958, when she was first arrested for joining protests against pass laws, she has been detained many times for her opposition to the government's apartheid policies or for defying her banning restrictions. In 1969 she was twice tried and acquitted on political charges after 15 months' detention, much of it spent in solitary confinement.

She now lives in a small house without electricity or running water. From the house she runs a soup kitchen and administers the town's first clinic and infant care facility. Her husband, African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, is serving a life sentence imposed in 1964 under the Sabotage and Suppression of Communism Acts. In the past 21 years, she has been able to speak to him only through the partitions of prison visiting rooms.

Marianela Garcia Villas: Human Rights Activist
Killed in El Salvador

Marianela Garcia Villas' violent death in 1983 shocked the world. President of El Salvador's non-governmental Human Rights Commission, she was the last survivor of the commission's founders. The other three were killed in 1980.

Prior to her death, Garcia was twice detained by Salvadoran authorities. After her second detention, she told of being beaten with rifle butts on the back and breasts and of having her front teeth knocked out.

She fled El Salvador in 1981 when her name appeared on a number of "death lists." One list of "traitors" responsible for "terrorism" and "disparagement of our country in the international community" was broadcast by the armed forces' official press committee. The broadcast, in effect, gave official sanction to groups carrying out extrajudicial executions.

Officials in El Salvador have offered conflicting accounts of Garcia's death. The government has failed to order an independent public inquiry.

"I suffered everything you would expect a woman to suffer when she is attacked...I cannot bear to talk about it."

Lu Hsiu-Lien: Feminist Human Rights
Activist Imprisoned in Taiwan

Lu Hsiu-lien is widely considered to be an intellectual leader in Taiwan's women's movement. Author, attorney, and journalist, Lu founded a publishing company in the mid-seventies specializing in books on the women's movement. In 1977 she wrote On New Feminism, the first of many works she has written on women's issues. A year later her examination of Taiwanese politics, The Past and Future of Taiwan, was published. The government has banned all of her writing. Combining her commitment to feminism with a passion for politics, she was a candidate for the National Assembly in 1978, as well as an officer in the independent candidates' Campaign Coalition. When the elections were postponed, many members of the coalition established Formosa, a political commentary magazine.

Lu was arrested on December 13, 1979, following her delivery of a speech at a Human Rights Day demonstration. Nearly 200 demonstrators were detained. Arrested with her were seven other staff members of Formosa. All eight were charged with attempting "to subvert the government" and sentenced to prison terms ranging from 12 years to life.

Lu has served three years of her 12-year sentence. She is sharing a cell with codefendant Chen Chu; both are kept separate from other prisoners. Exercise is limited, and the food is poor. A year ago Lu's health deteriorated: she is suffering from a thyroid ailment which was untreated. She had difficulty breathing and occasionally vomited blood. After an international public outcry, authorities permitted a doctor to treat her.

Although Lu's physical health has improved, her future remains uncertain. All her legal appeals have been rejected. She is forced to read material assigned by authorities and to write lengthy favorable reviews of the works. She is forbidden to use the words "peace" and "human rights."

"I have encountered setbacks and difficulties. Although I once despaired, I also recovered fast. I believe that new feminism has sowed its seed in Taiwan; buds are beginning to appear, and I can almost see leaves coming forth."

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES
OF WOMEN AND WOMEN'S STUDIES FACULTY

JANET HYDE, Professor of Psychology, presented a lecture, "Does This He/Man Business Really Make a Difference? A Psychologist's Research on Sexist Language," at Hope College in January, 1984.

PAULA ROSSI, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, was granted a U.S. Patent with C.W. McCurdy and R.L. McCreery, "Diffractive Spectro-electrochemistry," in 1983. Also in 1983 she was awarded an \$18,000 grant from Research Corporation for a project entitled "Diffractive Spectroelectrochemistry with a Continuum Source." Her article, written with R.L. McCreery, entitled "Diffractive Spectroelectrochemistry: A Sensitive Probe of the Electrochemical Diffusion Layer," appeared in the Journal of Electroanalytical Chemistry, Vol. 151, p. 47.

KATHRYN RUSSELL, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, organized a conference on Feminism and Racism for the Society for Women in Philosophy, held February 24-26, 1984, at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. She will address the topic, "A Feminist Critique of the Nuclear Arms Race," at the meeting of the Pacific Division of American Philosophers Association, March 22, 1984, in Long Beach, California.

LISA McDONNELL, Assistant Professor of English, presented a paper entitled "Sensationalism in James Shirley's Tragedies" at the Philological Association of the Carolinas meeting, March 1-3, 1984, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

SUZANNE COSTELLO, Artist-in-Residence in Dance, premiered a new dance in December, 1983, for four Denison women students. Set to a score by Yoko Ono and Meredith Monk, the work is "Dead Coats" and examines the questions individuals (women, in particular) face in making choices about belonging to and breaking away from various "groups." In January, 1984, she was a guest artist-in-residence at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where she taught modern dance technique. With Stuart Pimsler, also of the Dance Department, Suzanne has been invited to perform a new duet on a Spring Showcase at the Emanu-El Midtown YM-YWHA in New York City on March 24 and 25, 1984.

JOAN NOVAK, Assistant Professor of Religion, presented a paper at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Dallas, Texas, December 20, 1983. The paper was entitled "Thielicke's Orders of Creation: A Feminist Critique."

ANNE SHAVER, Associate Professor of English, through the publication of her translation of Tristan and the Round Table, makes available to an English-speaking audience one of the most extensive Arthurian narratives of the Middle Ages. ANNETTE CASH, Assistant Professor of Modern Languages, edited the book.

SANDRA YORKA, Assistant Professor of Physics/Astronomy, had her article on "Photometric Molecular Indices in Warm Carbon Stars: NH, CN, CH, and C₂" published in the December, 1983, Astronomical Journal. Also in December, she did observing runs at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory and at Las Campanas Observatory, both in Chile. In March she will have an observing run at Lowell Observatory in Arizona.

CLAUDIA ESSLINGER, Assistant Professor of Art, opens her show, "Among Images from Venus," in Burke Hall Gallery on March 26, 1984. An exhibition of her prints and drawings, the images provide a general commentary of humanness but, in the artist's words, "have a lot to do with being a woman--with womanness." The show runs through April 15, 1984.

JANICE LEOSHKO, Instructor in Art History, will present a paper, "Images of Bodhgay and Seeing Beyond Form," at the national conference of the Association for Asian Studies in Washington, D.C., on March 23, 1984. Leoshko has organized an exhibition entitled "Images from Asia: Selected Works from the Chinese and Burmese Collections of Denison University" which will run simultaneously with the Esslinger show, March 26-April 15, 1984, in Burke Hall.

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SECOND ANNUAL PRIZE IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

The Denison Women's Studies Committee announces its Second Annual Prize for the most impressive scholarly or creative student work in the area of Women's Studies. Entries from any discipline or interdisciplinary area will be considered.

Competition is open to all Denison students. The deadline is May 1, 1984. Entries should be submitted to Mary Schilling, Women's Coordinator, in the Women's Resource Center, 1st floor of Fellows Hall.

Submissions must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a conscious use of gender as an analytical category
- a creative use of non-traditional sources, materials, and methodologies
- a contribution to the development of an inclusive feminist theory
- a project demonstrating feminist insight from personal experience

Submissions might include papers, art work, performances and productions (both original and interpretive), senior research and honors projects, or an informed activism that makes an educational impact on the community.

Submissions over thirty pages, or works not in written form, should be accompanied by a written statement of summary, description and intent. The statement should suggest why this production or product should be considered.

Questions about the entries may be addressed to Ann Fitzgerald, Director of Women's Studies.

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A TUNISIAN LULLABY
collected by Tunisian Muslim women

She who gives birth to a girl
Deserves to be hit with a
pottery mug,
And her husband not to sleep
with her anymore.
She deserves his anger,
She deserves to be tied up
And hung from a vine tree.

But she who gives birth to a boy
Deserves the [minaret] and
the village,
Deserves a basket of henna,
Jingling anklets,
A sheep slaughtered for her,
Great celebration,
A big barbecue,
And the fat tail of the sheep.²

She who brings good news of a
son
Deserves a camelload of
good things,
A house facing east toward
Mecca,
Servants and slaves,
A good foreign slave,
A handsome man-servant.

And she who bears a girl
Deserves a blow with a mug,
Deserves to stay home
To be hidden away.

Ah, but don't be too happy,
O mother of a son
My daughter will grow up
and take him.
We'll eat up the stores of her
house.
I'll use her oil to shine my
hair
And you'll keep on nagging
Just like a yapping dog!