

from the beautiful picture of a woman upholding the banner and chanting songs of victory, to a cold climate saturated with ideology, bureaucracy, voluntarism, political consciousness lagging behind ideological consciousness, etc. Here we have to make a clear distinction between the national will and bureaucratic administration on the one hand, and the objective effects of national action which supercede both will and administration on the other.

The Palestinian national movement has occupied the political stage in the Arab world for more than two decades. It has experienced massacres, martyrs, sieges, famines, bombardments, assassinations, etc. It was enough to stir Palestinians, men and women, educated and illiterate, rural and urban, and draw them into the movement which is a mixture of war, maneuvers, attack, waiting, etc. From the moment of her birth, the Palestinian woman understood that the camps were not the roots of Palestine, and the tents were no more than passing phenomena.

The movement brought about undeniable objective changes which advanced or retreated in various ideological orbits. The gap between the sphere of the movement and its ideology was sometimes reminiscent of Balzac who was himself reactionary but wrote progressive novels. The Palestinian organizations upheld many slogans, ranging from left to right. Women too had a place in these slogans. Yet the problem here is not the raising of slogans, but implementing them. When it came to that, not all were progressive. Women were present in all the organizations, but they did not all move out of their traditional positions.

From the conservative camp, we often heard: Women are here to liberate the homeland, not to emancipate themselves. The positive aspect is clear in the first phrase in that women are accepted as integral parts of the organization and as individual fighters in the struggle. But the negative aspect stands out when the leader draws a line between human emancipation and the liberation of the homeland, as if the latter were possi-

ble without the former. The real problem here lies in the emancipation of the conservative leader from his traditional ideology which recognizes only the traditional woman. The researcher can also find another false motto: Women are half of the society. Although those who follow such a notion do recognize that women have a role, they reduce it to a quantitative role; they perceive women's labor without perceiving them; they recognize women only for utilitarian purposes.

The gap between the political consciousness of the militant fighter for the homeland, and the ideological consciousness which views the struggle only in terms of traditional standards, is only one of the obstacles to women's emancipation. There are other objective hindrances that compound the first. Here we see the contradiction anew, as well as the complexity of the situation of the Palestinians. Being bound to the family may seem a negative phenomenon according to sound logic, but it seems to be positive in the Palestinian case, because the absence of a homeland, together with the exile mentality and the various atrocities experienced, often mean that the family serves as a small homeland. Yet, this positive aspect itself is equivocal. Correct revolutionary logic always tends to break down all narrow relations. Facing this problem, the attitude of the resistance has been equivocal and diffuse. The left has tried to find theoretically progressive and unfettered formulae, while the right has continued to emphasize tribal and communal allegiances, supporting family ties and narrow individualism. In this way, it has contributed to the preservation of traditional values so that women would remain reproductive machines in spite of the fact that they have taken up arms.

Another contradiction is perceivable: The resistance has tried to preserve the traditions of Palestine. But instead of updating these traditions, it has time and time again tended to consecrate the past. This leaves women as peasants plunged in hard work day and night, while remaining traditional. Here I would venture to say: While revolution in the true sense approaches the future, the unforeseeable and what is new, the

