

## Andalusian Love Poems by Women

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Wallada**  
(d 1091)

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

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

## STUDY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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