

Thursday, 21 March 2013

Saudi women, objects of French envy?



I had not been aware that French women were that envious until I read an article in this newspaper saying that 2.5 million of them are sick of equality and prefer to marry Arab men who would spare them the suffering this oppressive equality entails. Examples include having to wake up every morning and take the underground to go to work. They want to become pampered housewives. The pan-Arab Asharq al-Awsat newspaper then published a statement by a businessman who managed to rouse the envy of French female MPs when he said that 38% of jobs in our country are occupied by women and 70% of bank accounts are in women's names and that women in our country are financially supported by men from the day they are born until the day they die even if they are rich and that if they work they get a salary equal to that of men unlike in Europe and the United States where only 9% of women get the same salaries as men. Upon saying this, the female MPs applauded and "wished they were Saudis."

Green with envy

What's the story on French envy that has suddenly come up these days? I guess we better be more reserved when talking about Saudi women, especially in front of envious French women.

I cannot deny I am happy that we are now a source of envy? And by whom? French women who are fond of proving themselves and competing with men to the extent that the wife of the new French president refused to stay at home and insisted to continue her work as a journalist even though a sizable portion of the French people demanded that she stops working not because they believe a woman's place is in her home, but were rather concerned that she would take advantage of being the first lady and use information she gets access to in this capacity to benefit her magazine. The wife of the former French president also insisted on signing and selling her records to assert her independence. Add to this the number of female ministers who overlooked traditions and insisted not to be financially supported by men from birth to death.

Who are the French women who wish to be Saudi because men theoretically support women financially

The reality would not have garnered an applause

Is our concept of patriotism based on excessively praising our country or working on making it progress for the welfare of all its citizens, men and women, and get over some illusions that have no place in reality? Had the French women known that unemployment among women in Saudi is approaching 89% and that the number of working women does not exceed half a million out of a total of five million, they wouldn't have applauded. What if the French women know that the Ministry of Justice is still refusing to allow 2,000 female lawyers to work before courts or that our laws discriminate between men and women so that women, for example, cannot take real estate loans and are excluded from some jobs and positions for being women? What if they know that women in our country cannot appear in court in their national capacity and with their identification documents but have to be identified by two men or that a woman cannot leave the airport except after a text message is sent to her husband's cell phone to alert him of her departure? What if French women known that the holders of the 70% of bank accounts are not allowed to have their own business without a legal guardian and an agent to follow up with the ministries where they are not allowed? What if they know that 3,000 minor girls were married off to men who are 20 years their senior and that till the present day neither the Shura Council nor the Association of Senior Scholars nor human rights and women's organizations have been able to put an end to these marriages? What if they know that women do not bequeath their pension as long as their husbands inherit it?

Apparently, what is said in favor of Saudi women especially in front of strangers is based on exaggerated glorification rather than facts. We would love for our country to be developed and our laws to be fair and civilized, but this does not mean that we twist facts in order to make French women, who themselves have always been envied, envious. Have some mercy on them!

This article was first published in al-Hayat on March 20, 2013.

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