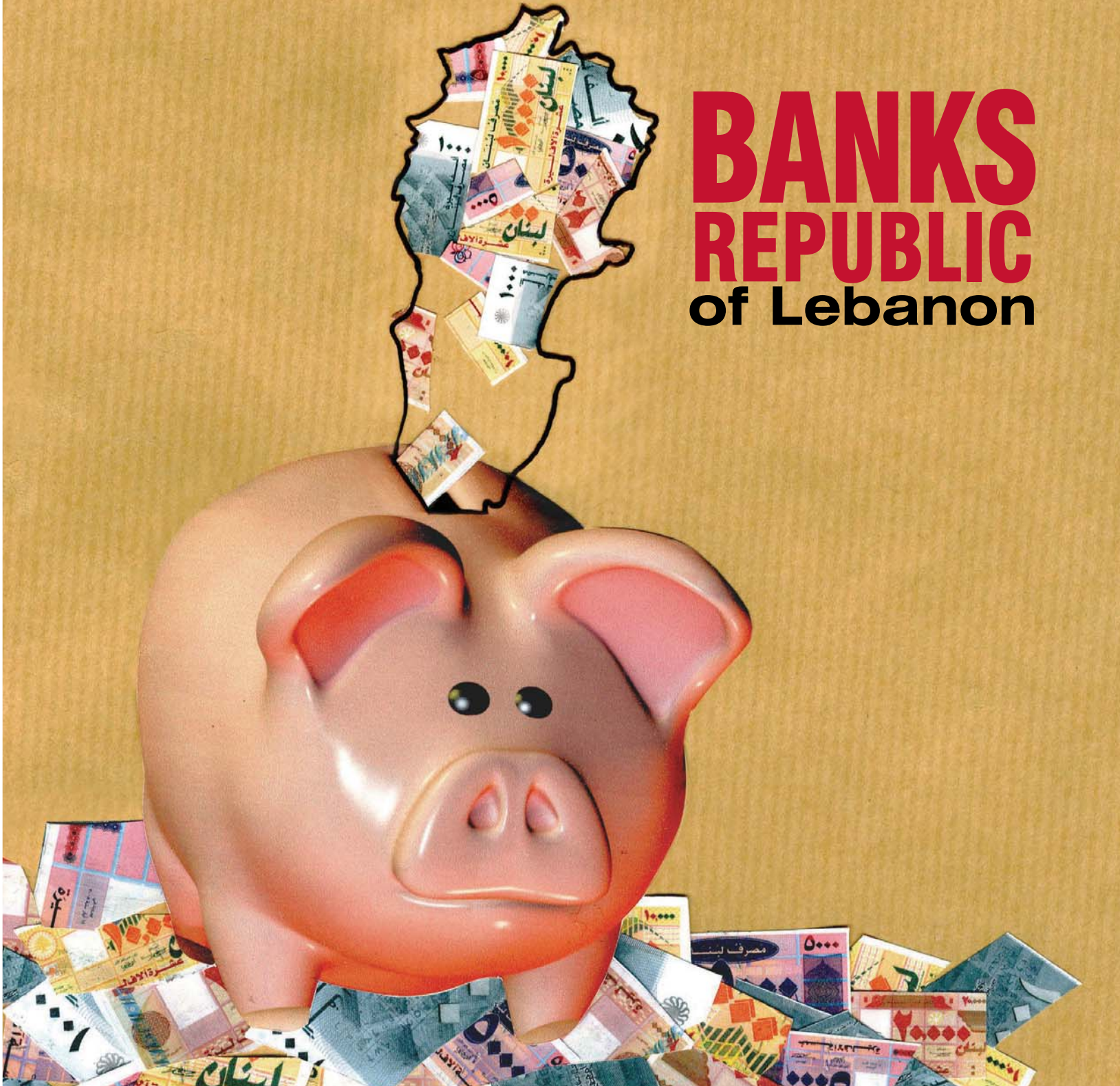


# The Monthly

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- Taxes and fees in Lebanon
- 2009 Harvest: An election year in which bank deposits increased
- The Monthly interviews Ambassador of the Philippines in Lebanon, Gilberto G.B. Asuque



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## CITIZEN ZERO DECLARES HE IS PHOENICIAN-DRUZE



Citizen Zero decided to break the silence. Two local events provoked his sadness and his words. He was taken by a statement by Samir Geagea that he is an Arab nationalist and the jubilation of Fouad Siniora - also an Arab nationalist - with his new comrade. He was also taken by Walid Jumblat's statement about an "*abandonment of reason*" ('Lahthat Takhlee' in Arabic). Citizen Zero did not know that Geagea, Siniora and of course Condoleezza Rice were up to their ears in their Arab nationalism nor did he know that the Druze enjoyed a special language worthy of a lexicon understood only by the enlightened of the "Arab Druze". And he wondered about the variances between this lexicon and that of Bsharre when some of its inhabitants, after burning the houses in Ehden, stated in bewilderment: "Who burned Ehden?... Thank God!" At this point, Citizen Zero wonders: what happens if everyone declares they were living in a moment of abandonment?

- Hundreds of thousands of dead, missing and disabled in Lebanon's civil war had become victims of an *abandonment of reason*.
- Billions of dollars worth in public funds from properties were squandered and violated, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Confessions and tribes loathe and then love one another and elect zua'ama in moments of love and hate at the same time - all of course, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Citizens protesting and voting after getting paid, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- A country with no electricity, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Officers, politicians and capitalists ruled Lebanon and Syria and enriched themselves, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Political assassinations and haphazard killings of students and citizens in clashes between March 8 and March 14, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Lebanese soldiers were killed and the Nahr El Bared camp was destroyed, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Public debt with high interest rates for Lebanese banks was accumulated, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Media outlets were financed by politicians and states, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Teachers do not teach and learners do not learn, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Demands for Hezbollah's disarmament on Sunday, August 13, 2006 were declared as soon as there was a "cessation of hostilities", in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Bad roads and suffocating traffic, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- A railway without a train, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- A city without a public park and a public library, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Polluted water everywhere and solid waste in the valley, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- Audi-Saradar announces the construction of an "urban dreams" complex after destroying what little remained of Phoenicia and Byzantium, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- LBCI suddenly discovers, after MTV was reopened, that there had been a squandering of funds over the past few years and that Solidere had crossed the limit, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- From "one people in two nations" to at least two people, two nations and two embassies, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- From "the complete liberation of land" to two states: Palestine and Israel, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- From the "usurped province" (Iskenderun) to the Ottoman caliphate, in an *abandonment of reason*.
- An Arab world ruled by individuals, of whom the oldest ruler is Muammar Gadhafi (first worldwide) followed by the Omani Sultan Qaboos ben Sa'id, then by the Egyptian Hosni

Mubarak, of course seeking to hand down the reins of power to their sons, in an *abandonment of reason*.

However, he read what Dr. Hassan Sarkis wrote in the Monthly about "Canaanite-Phoenician cities-states"<sup>1</sup> and "Phoenicia and the Phoenicians"<sup>2</sup>: "Cities acted completely as independent states... He/she was either Sidonian (from Sidon), Aradian (from Arwad/Arados) and so forth. The natives' negative reaction to be named Phoenician is caused by the term's hidden pejorative meaning. Phoenician seems to have been derived from a Greek word for bloody, blood-soaked and even murderous or criminal."

Furthermore, he read from Dr. Sarkis: "Phoenicia, as a geographic entity, is confined to the middle part of the central eastern Mediterranean region situated between Ra's Al Bassit in Syria, to the north, Mount Carmel in Palestine, to the south and the chain of Lebanon's mountains to the east..." But didn't the Phoenicians establish Carthage in Northern Egypt as well? Maybe it is possible to overcome the Sunni-Shia'a-Christian and Lebanese-Syrian-Egyptian-Iraqi-Saudi hurdles, but how?

Citizen Zero, after all this, deduced that he was a Phoenician in a moment of abandonment. He is therefore a Phoenician-Druze and so went the cry to the Arabs stretched from "the roaring ocean" (Morocco) to the "rebellious gulf" (Arab or Persian) to join him in this new identity.

Jawad N. Adra

1 - The "Canaanite-Phoenician" city-states by Dr. Hassan Salameh Sarkis, The Monthly, issue number 89

2 - Phoenicia and the Phoenicians by Dr. Hassan Salameh Sarkis, The Monthly, issue number 88