

The Monthly

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- THE HIGHER ISLAMIC SHIA'A COUNCIL
- LEBANON'S MEDIA FAIL TO PAY LBP 1.6 BILLION
- THE MONTHLY INTERVIEWS
AYMAN BAALBAKI



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A RAMADAN “DIALOGUE” IN THE CEDARS FOREST

“They” decided to meet in what is left of the Cedars’ Forest to discuss what is left of Lebanon. The dialogue started with interventions from representatives of the Phalanges Party and the Lebanese Forces stating that the oldest cedar tree today in “Ain Al Rab” is 1,000 years old according to a carbon testing report and that the oldest tree in Lebanon is the endangered Lizab (Juniper), which is threatened with extinction, especially following the construction of the Dinnieh-Hermel road and the Brissa dam. Hezbollah representatives objected and demanded the verification of the laboratory tests. As a result, the attendees decided not to discuss this issue and agreed to only discuss matters affecting daily lives of people that could be tackled. Therefore, there shall neither be talk about the international tribunal nor the weapons. There shall be no talk regarding “international legitimacy”, “alliances with Saudi Arabia or Iran” or even debates about the age of the Lizab and the cedars, thus avoiding any escalation.

The discussions focused on the following:

Electricity: They agreed on the necessity to immediately grant a treasury loan to Electricité du Liban amounting to \$2 billion to enable it to initiate the construction of new gas powered stations in Deir Ammar, Al Zahrani and other areas, and rehabilitate the electricity networks. They also agreed on closing down the pollutant Zouq station, which is harmful to Lebanon, Keserouane, the Maronite patriarchy, the beauty of the shore and of course people’s health.

Full medical insurance: They agreed that the death of poor patients on hospital entrances and the inability of most people to receive or have access to good healthcare is humiliating. As such, around \$500 million should be secured for healthcare. Since real estate profits have multiplied by tenfolds in the past few years, it should not be a problem to introduce a real estate tax profits by 20%, after calculating inflation. This would provide the necessary amount to ensure that around two million Lebanese who are currently uninsured become medically covered.

The Lebanese University and Public Education: They agreed that the amounts spent on public education should ensure the provision of a good level of education but this is not the case. Support provided to private education, be it from religious institutions or the assistance granted to cover the fees of children of public sector employees, namely teachers, will be halted and priority should be granted to the Lebanese University and public education.

Cheap Labor and Emigration: The agreed that money transfers from abroad, along with the emigration of youth and the import of cheap labor, are issues that should be of the utmost priority. Thus, measures will be put in place to increase the cost of hiring foreign labor so that it does not become a form of slavery, while ensuring better opportunities for nationals. Organizing money transfers from abroad so that they do not cause an imbalance in the economy, is also something to consider.

Road accidents and Public Transportation: They agreed that the death of two Lebanese daily due to road accidents is unacceptable and therefore speed violations should be stricter, roads should be improved and the use of public transportation should be generalized (buses, trams and maritime transport) as is the case in all other countries around the world.

Environment and Construction: They agreed that environment and construction are intertwined issues and that Lebanon, from its shores and beaches to its mountains, should be treated like a vast beautiful garden. There should be no polluting factories, quarries, or garbage thrown in its valleys.

Conclusion: The Zua’ama, our princes and kings and “tarabeesh” on our heads, pledged that they would immediately implement the matters on which they reached an agreement. One of the attendees tried to discuss the electoral law and the independence of judiciary but he was told that these topics would be discussed in the next meeting. Another put forward the issue of the international tribunal and the weapons and the answer was that these two important matters would be discussed when what was agreed upon has been implemented.

Now came the time for iftar and Samir Geagea insisted on inviting everyone to his modest residence in Bcharri, remembering the quartet agreement and looking for a quintet agreement.

Suddenly a scary sound was heard. It was Humbaba, the guardian of the Cedars’ Forest, screaming “the hero has died... he has fallen and he will no longer rise. Like a fish in a net and a gazelle in a trap the hero has died, perhaps the nation has died”. The dream is short and the nightmare is ongoing...

Toufik W. Adnan



LEBANESE PRISONS: OVERCROWDED AND CHAOTIC

“Prisoners in Roumieh prison protest against their conditions and burn their cells; the parents of prisoners hold demonstrations in front of the prison demanding the release of their family members and the improvement of their detention conditions.” This is the news we have been hearing in the past few months. Roumieh prison and other prisons have added to the problems witnessed by Lebanon, as if the latter weren’t already enough.

Prisons and the quality of governance

Decree No. 14310 dated February 11, 1949 and its amendments (on the organization of prisons, places of detention and the juvenile detention facility) stipulates that prisons are under the authority of the Minister of Interior and are divided into two types:

- Central prisons: the Beirut and Baabda prisons.
- Secondary prisons: they are prisons located in regions that have a first instance or correctional tribunal.

The decree and its amendments also mentioned where prisoners would be detained according to the duration of their sentence. Table 1 lists the name of the prison according to the duration of the sentence.

Name of prison according to sentence duration		Table 1
Prison	Duration of the sentence	
Roumieh Central Prison (established in 1971)	Detainees and those who have been sentenced, regardless of the duration of the sentence.	
A'aley Prison	Detainees and those sentenced to ≤ 1 year	
Sir Dinnieh Prison (established in 1968)	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Ba'aqleen Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 years	
Trablous (established in 1964)	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 years	
Zahle (established in 1965) Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 years	
Baablbeck Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 years	
Jdeidet Al Matn Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 years	
Saida Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 years	
Sour Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 4 years	
Deir Al Amar Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 4 years	
Jounieh Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 3 years	
Jib Jennine Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 3 years	
Rashayya Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 2 years	
Batroun Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 2 years	
Halba Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 1 year	
Amioun Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 1 year	
Marja'ayoun Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 1 year	
Baabda Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Damour Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Hasbayya Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Bint Jbeil Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Tibneen Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Douma Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Ras Baalbeck Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	
Prisons located in individual judges' chambers in judicial centers that were not mentioned	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to ≤ 6 months	

Name of prison according to the sentence

Table 1

Prison	Duration of the sentence
Saray Trablous Prison	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to 3 months imprisonment or those who have no more than 3 months to complete their sentence. It is up to the Army Commander to decide whether this category of prisons is appropriate for the prisoner in question based on the duration of the sentence (between 1 day and 3 months).
prisons located outside individual judges' chambers in judicial centers that were not mentioned	Detainees, defendants and those sentenced to 3 months imprisonment or those who have no more than 3 months to complete their sentence. It is up to the Army Commander to decide whether this category of prisons is appropriate for the prisoner in question based on the duration of the sentence (between 1 day and 3 months).

Prisons of the Lebanese Army:

- Military Tribunal Prison
- Military Police Prison
- Military Police Prison in the various Lebanese regions
- Prison of the Military Intelligence Directorate
- Prisons of the departments of the Military Intelligence Directorate in the various Lebanese regions
- Detainees, defendants and those sentenced are placed in these prisons regardless of the duration of their sentence.

There is also the Prison of the Directorate General of the Internal Security Forces (ISF) in Beirut, which was established by virtue of Decree No. 15119 dated September 10, 2005. It is reserved for criminal and military judges and members of the Judicial Council, whatever the duration of their sentence. This prison was established following the arrest and detention of the four officers who were accused of assassinating Rafic Hariri. They were later released.

Prisoners

There are 32 prisons in Lebanon (in addition to the military prisons of the Ministry of National Defense and the prison of the Directorate General of the ISF). At the beginning of 2011, there were 5,753 prisoners although all of Lebanon's prisons can only hold 5,156 prisoners, which demonstrates the problem of overcrowding. This problem is of particular concern in the Roumieh (527), Zahle (85), Baalbeck (42), Jib Jennine (23), Baabda (women) (20), Halba (20), Nabatieh (15), Amioun (6), and Zgharta (4) prisons. The problem lies in the large number of detainees, which represent 72% of prisoners. Speeding up the trial process would reduce the number of detainees and solve the problem of overcrowding. Table 2 lists the prisons in Lebanon by number of prisoners and by maximum sentence.

Prisons in Lebanon by number of prisoners and by maximum sentence

Table 2

Name of Prison	Detained	Sentenced	Death Sentence	Life Sentence	Minimum Prison Capacity	Maximum Prison Capacity	Prisoners on 18-1-2011
Roumieh	2,645	892	34	65	2,500	3,000	3,527
Juveniles-Roumieh	115	13	-	-	250	270	128
Fanar facility	27	4	-	-	-	-	31
Female Minors Prison	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
Jbeil	-	14	-	-	22	24	14
A'aley	3	12	-	-	56	62	15
Baabda (Women)	58	12	2	-	45	50	70
Baabda Justice Palace	49	-	-	-	-	-	49
Beirut Justice Palace	22	-	-	-	-	-	22
Barbar Khazen (Women)	21	21	-	-	-	-	42
Al Helou Barrack	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trablous	383	125	6	4	495	550	508
Halba	-	95	-	-	68	75	95
Batroun	1	38	-	-	30	40	39

Prisons in Lebanon by number of prisoners and by maximum sentence							Table 2
Name of Prison	Detained	Sentenced	Death Sentence	Life Sentence	Minimum Prison Capacity	Maximum Prison Capacity	Prisoners on 18-1-2011
Zgharta	38	22	-	-	51	56	60
Amioun	31	25	-	-	45	50	56
Trablous (Women)	72	40	1	2	80	120	112
Trablous Justice Palace	31	-	-	-	-	-	31
Zahle	348	62	-	-	200	325	410
Zahle (Women)	20	12	-	-	30	50	32
Jib Jennine	51	43	-	-	63	71	94
Baalbeck	55	32	-	-	41	45	87
Rashayya	1	48	-	-	40	50	49
Ras Baalbeck	-	-	-	-	40	55	-
Zahle Justice Palace	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Baalbeck Justice Palace	9	-	-	-	-	-	9
Sour	-	56	-	-	62	68	56
Nabatieh	83	12	-	-	45	80	95
Tibneen	48	2	-	-	53	60	50
Jezzine	-	21	-	-	50	55	21
Saida Justice Palace	21	-	-	-	-	-	27
Nabatieh Justice Palace	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
Total	4,146	1,607	43	71	4,266	5,156	5,753

Source: Directorate General of the ISF-Gendarmerie/Prison division.

Food and Clothing of Prisoners

Decree No. 14310 dated February 14, 1949 and its amendments (the last of which was made in 1993), described the food that the state should provide to prisoners on a daily basis. Table 3 lists the categories and allowances of food the prisoners are entitled to.

Category and allowances of food		Table 3
Category	Allowance	
Category 1	100g of Labneh or cheese 4 times a week with a cup of tea 100g of Halawah or jam 3 times a week with a cup of tea	
Category 2	150g of grains daily (beans, peas, rice, lentils, chick peas, dry beans, bourghol)	
Category 3	150g of red meat twice a week 200g of chicken twice a week.	
Category 4	300g of potatoes a week 100g of pasta once every 2 weeks 2 eggs a week 500g of bread daily	
Category 5	180g of vegetables daily (tomatoes, courgettes, green beans, aubergines, spinach, cauliflower, carrots, cabbage, peas)	
Category 6	150g of olive oil, oil or margarine and sugar daily 5g of Tahina and tea daily	
Category 7	Salt, pepper, onions, tomato paste, lemon, garlic and coriander depending on the dish	
Category 8	100g of fruit daily (apples, oranges, bananas, grapes)	

It is not necessary to strictly abide by the abovementioned quantities on a daily basis provided that the prisoner receives the total amount by the end of the week. Three daily meals are prepared from the abovementioned ingredients according to a weekly schedule prepared by the prison's officer.

Special food is provided to pregnant women according to doctors' orders. In addition, detainees may get food from outside the prison on condition that this does not cause any disruption and they abide by the times set by the prison's officer. Based on the 2010 draft budget law, a sum of LBP 3,750 million was allocated to prisoners' food expenses. **On average, this would bring the daily food cost per prisoner to a meager LBP 1,786, which in itself is very telling of the quality of the food they receive. It is also worth noting that even if the number of prisoners fell below the maximum capacity, the daily cost would still be below \$2/day.**

As for clothing of sentenced individuals, they consist of 2 uniforms, 2 shirts, 1 pair of pants, a jacket, a pair of shoes and a hat. In winter, 2 pairs of wool socks are added and, when deemed necessary, a coat. Clothes are made of wool or cotton, depending on the season. They are blue and have a 20cm circle on the back: it is yellow for those who committed a misdemeanor and red for those who committed a felony. The hat is the same color as the circle. The prisoner's number is attached on a white cloth.

The tribe is more powerful than the state

Decree No. 10223

The President of the Republic

Based on the Constitution

Based on the Law of the Organization of the Judiciary, namely article 109

Based on the proposition of the Minister of Justice

Following the approval of the Council of Ministers on April 9, 1975

Decreases the following:

Article 1- Criminal Case No. 73 before the Hermel Tribunal concerning prisoner Deeb Nayef Elou is hereby transferred to the Beirut tribunals as a security measure.

Article 2- This decree is published and reported when deemed necessary

Baabda on May 12, 1975

Signature: Suleiman Franjeh

Issued by the President of the Republic

The Prime Minister

Signature: Rachid Al Solh

The Minister of Justice

Signature: Adel Osseiran

Prison's shop

There are shops that sell basics in a number of prisons. The state rents out these shops and the money is transferred to the state's reserve. Among the shops that have been rented out:

-Trablous Prison Shop: the rent was LBP 59 million in 2009 while it was LBP 47 million in 2008. It was LBP 26.3 million in 2004, LBP 19.5 million in 2003, LBP 18.1 million in 2000 and LBP 11.2 in 1997.

-Roumieh Prison Shop: the rent was LBP 106.5 million in 2008, LBP 100.7 million in 2003, LBP 63.7 million in 2000 and LBP 56.2 million in 1997.

Stories from the prison

There are a lot of stories told about violations that occur in prisons such as the use of cellular phones by prisoners, drug trafficking, the authority exercised by some prisoners over other inmates, groups that hold power and patronage. However, these allegations need to be investigated.

Tail of a lost car

A happy judge and a willing prisoner

A judge returned home at midnight and parked his car. He woke up the next morning but did not find it so he informed the security forces. Several days passed with no outcome and he was informed by someone that his car was in one of Beirut's suburbs. He found the telephone number of one of the drug trafficking prisoners in his diary, detained in Roumieh prison, who has ties with a network of car thieves and smugglers. The judge went to the prison and asked to see the said prisoner who told him: "Your Honor, I know your car has been stolen and I am trying to get it back to you." The judge was surprised: how did the prisoner know of the theft while the information had not been publicly announced? The prisoner gave him his wife's number, in order to coordinate with her. A few days later, the judge called the prisoner's wife who told him that his car was in the hands of a group they had no relationship with but that in a day or two it will be with people close to them. And this is what happened. The wife called the judge and told him his car was now with a group she knew and she could get it back to him. He was informed of the car's location in the Beqa'a and a colleague of his went to pick it up.

AMNESTY LAWS AND DECREES (1943-2011)

Over the past decades, a number of amnesty laws and decrees have been issued and led to the release of hundreds of prisoners and the return of thousands of “fugitives” from justice. These amnesties came as a result of political settlements between parties. However, they did not limit the crime rate or open a new chapter in the opposing parties’ relationship. Thus, the hostile relationship continued between them even after the Lebanese civil war. Amnesties were a kind of encouragement to commit crimes as some counted on their issuance to avoid sanctions.

Amnesty laws

Since independence in 1943 and until today (2011), 11 amnesty laws have been issued, some of which occurred after important incidents such as those of 1958 and 1990 and led to the release of hundreds of prisoners whereas others were related to ordinary crimes (such as publication offenses).

- Law issued on 1-2-1944 granting a general amnesty for crimes committed before November 22, 1943. It encompassed all infractions and all misdemeanors (with some exceptions), replaced capital punishment sentences with hard labor for life, while hard labor for life was replaced by hard labor for 15 years. This law was issued to start afresh following Lebanon’s independence on November 22, 1943.
- Law issued on 31-8-1951 granting a general amnesty for infractions committed between March 15 and April 30, 1951, and infamous misdemeanors committed during the same period and resulting from elections. This law was issued to solve the problems that occurred during the parliamentary elections that were held on Sunday April 15, 1951, after a call for elections was made on March 15, 1951.
- Law issued on 23-2-1954 granting a general amnesty for crimes that were ruled on by the French military courts before the formation of Lebanese military courts.
- Law issued on 24-12-1958 granting a general amnesty for all crimes committed before October 15, 1958, including crimes committed against the state, misdemeanors and infractions. It also reduced capital punishment to hard labor for 20 years and hard labor for life to hard labor for 15 years. This law was issued at the beginning of President Fouad Chehab’s mandate to turn over the page on the events that Lebanon had witnessed in the months prior to his election.
- Law No. 37/67 dated 24-6-1965 granting a general amnesty on crimes related to publications (articles 56-64 of the Publications’ Law issued in 1962) committed before May 6, 1965.
- Law No. 57/67 dated 16-11-1965 granting a general amnesty to publication crimes committed before October 28, 1965.
- Law No. 14/69 dated 24-4-1969 granting a general amnesty to publication crimes committed before April 1, 1969.
- Law No. 84 dated 26-8-1991 granting a general amnesty for crimes committed before March 28, 1991. It included infractions, misdemeanors (with some exceptions), political crimes or those of a general or local political nature. It excluded crimes referred to the Judicial Council as well as assassination or the attempt to assassinate religious figures, political leaders, Arab and foreign diplomats, bankruptcy, forgery and crimes related to culture. This law was issued in a bid to address the aftermath of the civil war that ravaged Lebanon between 1975 and 1990.
- Law No. 666 dated December 29, 1997, granting a general amnesty to all drug related crimes committed before 31-12-1995, whatever their nature and the sentences issued by it by the military or ordinary courts.
- Law No. 677 dated July 19, 2005, granting an amnesty the following cases ruled on by the Judicial Council: cases No. 5/95, 2/97, 2/99 and 4/96 as well as the sentence issued by the Beirut Criminal Court under No.380/96. This amnesty benefited the leader of the Lebanese Forces, Samir Geagea, and a number of those who committed similar crimes.
- Law No. 678 dated July 19, 2005, granting an amnesty for crimes transferred to the Judicial Council by virtue of Decree No. 2081 dated 5-1-2000 related to the incidents that occurred in Dinnieh and Majdal Anjar and all the cases related to them as well as the cases transferred to the military courts by virtue of Accusatory Decision No, 1 dated 3-1-2005.

The last two laws were issued simultaneously so that Geagea’s amnesty was granted in return for the amnesty of those accused of fighting against the Army in Dinnieh. This rid justice of its substance and converted amnesty into a trading political and confessional tool.

Amnesty Decrees

According to article 53 paragraph 9 of the Constitution, “[The President of the Republic] grants particular pardons by Decree, but a general amnesty cannot be granted except by a law.”

Since independence and until today, Lebanese presidents have issued specific amnesty decrees. President Elias Hrawi issued the most such decrees while presidents Suleiman Franjeh and Emile Lahhoud issued none.

- President Bechara Al Khoury (1943-1952) issued a special amnesty decree for prisoners.
- Prime Minister Fouad Chehab (1952) issued a special amnesty decree for 8 journalists.
- President Camille Chamoun (1952-1958) issued 2 special amnesty decrees for prisoners.
- President Fouad Chehab (1958-1964) issued a special amnesty decree.
- President Charles Helou (1964-1970) issued a special amnesty decree.
- President Suleiman Franjeh (1970-1976) did not issue any special amnesty decrees.
- President Elias Sarkis (1976-1982) issued 2 special amnesty decrees concerning one individual.
- President Amine Gemayyel (1982-1988) issued 6 special amnesty decrees.
- President Elias Hrawi (1989-1998) issued 160 special amnesty decrees for prisoners, some of which had been sentenced to several years.
- President Emile Lahhoud (1998-2007) did not issue any special amnesty decrees.
- President Michel Suleiman (2008) has issued, since his election in May 2008 and until today (August 17, 2011), 13 special amnesty decrees as listed in Table 1 below.

Special Amnesty Decrees issued by President Michel Suleiman from the beginning of his mandate until July 13, 2011-07-14

Table 1

Number and Date of Decree	Name of Beneficiary of the Decree	Type of Amnesty
2509 → 13-7-2009	Youssef Mahmoud Sha'aban (Palestinian)	Absolved of the remaining period for the completion of his sentence. He was arrested in 1994 for participating in the assassination of the Jordanian diplomat Omran Al Ma'aytah. He was sentenced by the Judicial Council to life imprisonment. In 2003, the Jordanian authorities sentenced the defendants to death and it did not inform the Lebanese judiciary of the result if its investigations to have them retried.
2595 → 11-9-2009	Milad Jerjes Touq	Replacement of his prison sentence with a fine of LBP 1.5 million. The sentence was issued by the single criminal judge in Baalbeck on 5-12-2000.
2596 → 11-9-2009	Nabih Hussein Alou	Absolved of the remaining period for the completion of his sentence. The sentence was issued by the Criminal Court of Mount Lebanon on 14-7-2008.
2597 → 11-9-2209	Walid Mohammad Izzat Bawwab	Replacement of his prison sentence with a fine of LBP 1 million in addition the fine he was previously sentenced to. The sentence was issued by the Criminal Court of Appeal of Beirut on 18-3-2003
2598 → 11-9-2009	Abdallah Ali Abdallah	Absolved of the remaining period for the completion of his sentence. The sentence was issued by the Criminal Court of Appeal of Beirut on 19-3-2007.
2599 → 11-9-2009	Boutros Chehab Habshi	Absolved of the remaining period for the completion of his sentence. The sentence was issued by the Criminal Court of the North on 31-1-2007.
2600 → 11-9-2009	Sabah Hafeth Taha (female)	Reduction of her prison sentence to 6 months and replacement of the prison sentence with a fine of LBP 1.5 million. The sentence was issued by the single criminal judge of Beirut on 20-10-1999.
2601 → 11-9-2009	Ghida Nouredine Mortada (female)	Replacement of her prison sentence with a fine of LBP 1 million. The sentence was issued by the Criminal Court of Mount Lebanon on 17-5-2007.
2602 → 11-9-2009	Idriss Hamad Al Shaye' (Iraqi)	Replacement of capital punishment with hard labor for life. The Criminal Court of Cassation confirmed his sentence on 30-6-2002 (the sentence was issued on the Criminal Court of Beqa'a on 29-3-2001).
3002 → 5-1-2010	Majed Ismail Ismail	Absolved of the remaining period for the completion of his sentence. The sentence was issued by the Criminal Court of Beqa'a on 18-4-2005.
3003 → 5-1-2010	Christopher Gregor Der Sarkissian	Absolved of the remaining period for the completion of his sentence. The sentence was issued by the Criminal Court of Beirut on 26-4-2007.
3004 → 5-1-2010	Raed Khaled Atiyyeh	Absolved of his prison sentence. The sentence was issued by the single criminal judge in Halba on 19-5-2008.
3638 → 23-3-2010	Karim Moussa Jerjes	Replacement of his prison sentence with a fine of LBP 1 million in addition the fine he was previously sentenced to, which amounts to a total of LBP 3 million. The sentence was issued by the 9th Chamber Court of Appeal of Mount Lebanon on 6-7-2009.

Politics and the judiciary

In 1958, a series of incidents and conflicts broke out in Lebanon concerning the renewal of Camille Chamoun’s mandate amid regional instability (the military coup that toppled the monarchy in Iraq and the American interference). The state intervened to sanction the “rebels” and the following text is but an example.

Decree No. 19976

The President of the Republic

Based on the Constitution

Broadcaster Mr Shafiq Jadayel submitted his resignation on June 30, 1958, requesting the dismissal of his services based on the provisions of Decree No. 19756 dated June 9, 1958.

It was proved to the Minister of News that Mr Jadayel did not wait for the state’s approval or rejection of his resignation but immediately joined the rebels and attended their secret location on a daily basis, slandering the authorities and encouraging rebellions and attacks on the state’s security in his publications. The work of Mr Jadayel constitutes a clear violation of the provisions of Legislative Decree No. 14 dated January 7, 1955, namely articles 29, 30 and 31.

Based on the proposition of the Minister of News Decrees the following:

Article 1- The request submitted by Broadcaster Mr Shafiq Jadayel to be dismissed from his services is denied.

Article 2- Mr Jadayel is to stop work for the abovementioned reasons and he is to be referred to:

(1) The Disciplinary Council to be tried for behavioral misconduct.

(2) The judiciary to be tried for his criminal acts.

(3) This decree is published and reported when deemed necessary

Beirut on July 23, 1958

Signature: Camille Chamoun

Issued by the President of the Republic

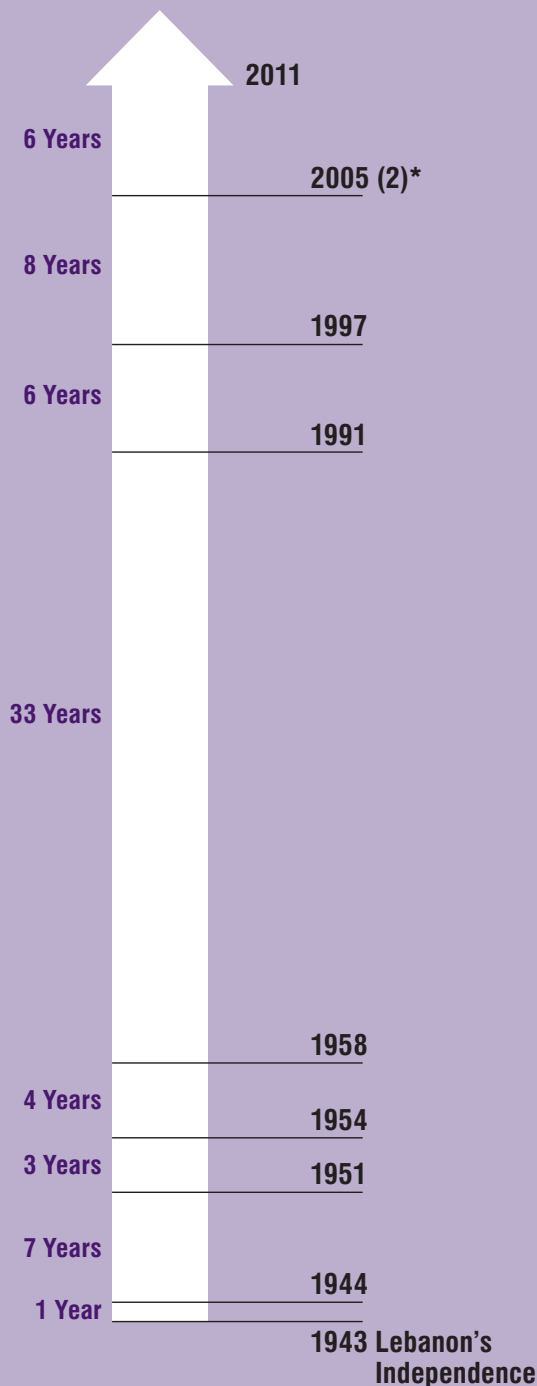
The Prime Minister

Signature: Sami Al Solh

Minister of News

Signature: Clovis Al Khazen

Graph 1 Timeline of general amnesty laws: 1943 to 2011



* The indicated year included two amnesty laws

SUPPORTING DRIVERS OR WASTING LBP 25 BILLION

On April 22, 2011, public transportation drivers cut off some streets in Beirut and other areas for a brief period of time to protest against the high prices of gasoline and threatened to protest again and to go on strike if the government fails to respond to their demands to reduce the price of the gasoline tank can to LBP 25,000 (its current price is about LBP 35,000).

On the eve of the strike, scheduled on May 19, 2011, the then Minister of Finance Rayya El Hassan and the Road Transportation Unions reached an agreement to suspend the strike in exchange of the latter receiving 12.5 gasoline tanks per month with a value of LBP 430,000-450,000 (according to the prices) for a period of three months, renewable for an additional three months. The Minister of Finance said that the goal was not only to support the drivers but also to avoid raising tariffs, which would affect a large segment of the population who use public transportation. Some considered this was a waste of public funds because public transportation drivers got more than what they asked for.

Public license plates

In 1994, the number of cars with public license plates was around 15,123 distributed as follows

- ◉ 11,443 public transportation cars
- ◉ 3,062 public transportation trucks
- ◉ 618 small and large buses

In order to reduce traffic and the use of private cars, the government put public license plates into circulation and sold them to drivers. Law No. 384 was issued on November 4, 1994, and specified the number of these plates to 25,000 plates distributed as follows:

- ◉ 12,000 public license plates for tourist cars
- ◉ 7,000 public license plates for trucks
- ◉ 4,000 public license plates for small buses of no more than 15 seats
- ◉ 1,000 public license plates for other buses

Each owner of a public license plate of the above-mentioned categories is given a similar free public license plate that he owns and has the right to dispose of and to put into circulation in all the Lebanese regions. The law set the price of public license plates of cars and small buses at LBP 6 million, and that of trucks and other buses at LBP 12 million. This means that the State collects LBP 192 billion from selling public license plates, which means there are 54,246 public license plates (on cars, trucks and


buses). As a consequence, traffic has increased and so has unemployment due to the rise in the number of drivers.

Correcting the mistake

Due to the congestion and chaos caused by granting free public license plates and selling new ones, and following the issuance of Law No. 341 dated June 8, 2001, and its amendments on the reduction of air pollution resulting from the transportation sector, the government passed Decree No. 7857 dated May 4, 2002, to retrieve 10,000 public license plates of tourist cars including those of small buses in exchange of the same price paid on the purchasing date (defined in Law No. 384). However, this decree was not implemented because none of these license plate owners wanted to give their license plates back to the government.

The cost of support

As a consequence of the decision of the former Minister of Finance Rayya El Hassan to support public transportation drivers with 12.5 gasoline tanks with a value of LBP 430,000-450,000, the monthly cost of which reaches LBP 25 million per month, the State Treasury's deficit has increased. This is also due to rising costs and declining revenues, the latest of which was the cancellation of charges on fuel, which used to provide around LBP 1,000 billion annually.

Financial management and proper planning implies putting in place a plan for the public transportation sector that covers all the Lebanese territory in a bid to reduce the transportation burden on low income-people rather than supporting public transportation drivers, which leads to a misuse and waste of public funds. This is especially true given that many of the owners of public license plates will benefit from this support even though they don't work in the sector. 

Until today August 17, 2011, the drivers have not been provided with support and this issue is still under study.

\$2 BILLION AND THE DISPLACED ARE YET TO RETURN

The Lebanese war that broke out in 1975 and officially ended in 1990 generated a number of problems, crises and tragedies, the biggest and most serious of which is probably the issue of displacement and the displaced, which affected nearly one million people overall amounting to a third of the Lebanese population in that time. With the end of the war, the return of the displaced was a priority for the government; therefore, the Ministry of the Displaced and a specific fund to finance their return were established. In fact however, the return has been limited and confined to small numbers. Many villages did not witness the return of their residents who seem to have abandoned them.

Displacement in numbers

Following the end of the war, the number of the displaced was around 200,000. However, for political and financial reasons, some estimated their number at 500,000.

Returning to the original place of residence occurred according to the following criteria:

- ◉ Houses that are still habitable and not occupied by a third party: their owners can immediately return on condition that the political reasons that led to their displacement no longer exist.
- ◉ Damaged houses: allowances and restoration compensation are to be paid in order for the owners to be able to return to their houses.
- ◉ Totally destroyed houses: compensation is to be paid for the reconstruction.
- ◉ Houses illegally occupied by third parties: the occupying parties are to receive compensation for their evacuation allowing the original owners to return.
- ◉ In many cases of destroyed houses, reconstruction compensations were paid to the owner of the house and in other cases, to two of his sons. As a result, in some villages, buildings of three to four-stories replaced small houses and fake reconstruction compensations were also paid.
- ◉ The Ministry of the Displaced implemented some projects (building water systems and networks, maintenance and construction of roads, building electricity networks, financing civil societies and organizations) at a very high cost and without tenders.

All these measures led to the squandering of funds so that some real displaced individuals in some towns and villages have not been able to cash the compensations allocated to them due to the lack of liquidity in the Fund for the Displaced. As a result, they remain displaced.

Waste

The estimated cost of the return of the displaced was \$ 500 million. Until now, about \$2 billion have been spent, which represents a 300% increase on the original estimated cost. The reason for this increase is the waste of funds that accompanied the payment of compensation. Examples include the following:

- ◉ The state was supposed to ask individuals who occupied a house and owned another to remain in their location. This would have saved the state the payment of compensation for evacuations. However, this did not happen and compensations for evacuation were paid to all illegal occupants. In addition, fake evacuation compensations were paid.
- ◉ In many cases, the extent of damages was overestimated to increase the restoration compensation. Moreover, fake restoration compensations were also paid. Late in 2005, the payment of restoration compensations increased in Beirut to 3 to 5 million people owning homes that had been affected from decades. These compensations were paid for political reasons.

In the towns where evacuation, restoration and reconstruction compensations were paid, full and complete return has yet to occur. The majority of houses are still abandoned due to economic and social reasons. In fact, displacement caused a new social reality. Those who left their hometown during their childhood or youth created new relationships so that return was no longer a goal for them. Others found employment opportunities and remained where they had relocated so that their return is ultimately for rest and recuperation.

The return of all the displaced was not accomplished despite spending \$2 billion. In addition, the Ministry estimates the need for another \$500 million to complete the return process. In sum, the war created a sectarian split that will be difficult to erase and that billions of dollars are unable to solve. 🌍

LEBANON'S MEDIA FAIL TO PAY LBP 1.6 BILLION IN PUBLIC FEES

Numerous are the audiovisual media in Lebanon that compete with each other and with the foreign media. Some succeed while others fail. This may be because they lack sufficient income to face the large burden of operational costs as well as the high governmental fees, which some fail to pay.

Government fees

Law No. 382 dated November 11, 1994 (Television and Radio Broadcasting), set the fees to be paid by the audiovisual media as follows:

- Television stations of the first and second categories (the first category broadcasts all kinds of programs including news and political programs and the second category does not broadcast news and political programs): LBP 250 million and an annual rental fee of LBP 100 million.
- Radio stations of the first category (that broadcast all kinds of programs including news and political programs): LBP 125 million as a license fee and a rental fee of LBP 25 million.
- Radio stations of the second category (that broadcast all kinds of programs excluding news and political programs): LBP 50 million as a license fee and a rental fee of LBP 15 million.

Licenses to the audiovisual media

In accordance with the above-mentioned law and Decree No. 7992 dated June 29, 1996 (Approval of the Bylaws of Audiovisual Media Stations of the first and second categories), decrees were issued to license audiovisual media stations for a period of 16 renewable years. Thus, there are 32 licensed stations distributed as follows:

- 7 television stations of the first category
- 12 radio stations of the first category
- 13 radio stations of the second category

These stations are:

- Decree No. 10056 dated 21-3-1997: Future TV – first category
- Decree No. 10057 dated 21-3-1997: L.B.C TV – first category
- Decree No. 10058 dated 21-3-1997: MTV – first category
- Decree No. 10059 dated 21-3-1997: N.B.N TV – first category

- Decree No. 13474 dated 5-11-1998:
 - Future TV Company: radio – first category
 - National Broadcasting Network: radio – first category
 - Liban Libre Company for Production and Broadcasting: radio – first category
 - The International Company for Broadcasting (Shaab - the people): radio – first category
 - The Modern Media Company (Voice of Lebanon): radio – first category
 - The Voice of Tomorrow Company: radio – first category
 - Delta Company: radio – second category
 - Radio Scope Company: radio – second category
 - Murr TV Company (Mont Liban): radio – second category
 - France FM Company: radio – second category
 - Light FM Company: radio – second category
 - Faddoul Music Company: radio – second category
 - Radio One Company: radio – second category
 - Sound of Music Company: radio – second category
 - Pax Network Company: radio – second category
 - Nostalgie Broadcasting Company: radio – second category
 - Liban Star: radio – second category
 - Mix FM New Company: radio – second category
- Decree No. 13475 dated 5-11-1998
 - Fan Voice Company: radio – first category
 - The International Network for Broadcasting: radio – first category
 - Strike Company: radio – second category
- Decree No. 13476 dated 5-11-1998: Al Manar TV - the first category
- Resolution nNo. 53 dated 29-9-1999: Al Watan (Nation) Radio
- Decree No. 3964 dated 2-10-2000: New TV – first category

- Decree No. 17312 dated 30-6-2006: Lebanese Broadcasting Company - first category (OTV)
- Decree No. 658 dated 24-8-2007: Al Fajr Radio Company – first category
- Decree No. 894 dated 8-11-2007: Lebanese Company for Media Broadcasting, “Radio Sevan”- first category
- Decree No. 2343 dated 20-6-2009: the new company for audio-visual media - first category (Voice of Lebanon belonging to the Phalange Party)

License Fees

By virtue of article 27 of Law No. 382, the license fees for these stations reach LBP 3.9 billion distributed as follows:

- LBP 1.750 billion: licenses for television stations of the first category
- LBP 1.5 billion: licenses for radio stations of the first category
- LBP 650 billion: licenses for radio stations of the second category

The annual rental fees reach LBP 1.195 billion distributed as follows:

- LBP 700 billion for television stations of the first category
- LBP 300 billion for radio stations of the first category
- LBP 195 billion for radio stations of the second category

The stations don't pay!

Despite the issuance of several decrees, some licensed stations fail to pay these fees and the government does not revoke their licenses but rather allows them to pay the unsettled amounts in installments. In its Decision No. 35 dated September 19, 2002, the Council of Ministers allowed the payment of fees in installments provided that the institution pays 25% of the total amount due as a down payment before October 1, 2002, the remaining amount to be paid in 5 equal monthly installments at the beginning of each month after October 1, 2002. When an institution fails to pay an installment on the due date, all installments are immediately due and must be paid within 1 month from the due date of the installment that has not been paid. An institution that doesn't pay shall be legally closed. However, this resolution has not been implemented in practice. On July 31, 2007, i.e. 5 years after the issuance of Decision No. 35, the Central Inspection Board recommended the implementation of the said decision but the claim remained unanswered. Thus, on December 23, 2009, the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers once again demanded the Ministry of Information to implement the recommendation of the Central Inspection Board, which

was based on a decision of the Council of Ministers. Accordingly, the Ministry of Information suggested to the Council of Ministers to allow the payment of the amounts due in installments “given the difficult circumstances faced by some of these stations and the limited advertising market due to competition against Arab and foreign satellite broadcasting stations” (as stated in the response of the Ministry of Information).

A report prepared by the Ministry of Information on the amounts incumbent upon media stations mentioned that these amounts reached around LBP 1.6 billion at the end of 2009 whereas they were as high as LBP 2.6 billion at the end of 2006. Thus, these stations continue to work and operate and refrain from paying the fees despite the state adopting measures to facilitate payment. Although its resolution was issued 9 years ago, the state refrains from shutting down stations that abstain from payment, thus rendering its decisions merely symbolic.



ELÉCTRICITÉ DU LIBAN:

CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF VACANCIES

Électricité du Liban (EDL) was one of the leading Lebanese institutions prior to the outbreak of the civil war in 1975. Today, it has turned into a model and an example of failing institutions. It used to produce and distribute electricity to all the Lebanese regions and make profits whereas today, darkness lurks over the Lebanese neighborhoods and the company suffers from large amounts of debt. There are a number of reasons behind this situation, among which we mention:

- ⦿ The worldwide increase in oil prices so that today 1 barrel costs more than \$100. Since the tariff of electricity has been determined according to the price of the barrel, it ranges between \$10-14.
- ⦿ The constant disruptions in production plants.
- ⦿ Infringements on the network and power theft.
- ⦿ An important lack of power stations and transportation and distribution lines.
- ⦿ The reduction of collection due to administrative, security and political reasons.
- ⦿ Damages suffered by the network as a result of military actions such as those that occurred during the 2006 July war or as a result of local conflict.
- ⦿ The increase in electricity demand accompanied by an inability to supply more electricity due to a lack of lines.
- ⦿ The considerable lack of human resources in the institution. There should be 5,020 filled positions at EDL whereas the current number of staff does not exceed 2,300.

Establishment of EDL

The Lebanese Electricity Authority was established by virtue of a draft law implemented by Decree No. 16878 dated July 10, 1964. Article 1 of the decree stipulated the institution's function as follows: "to produce, transport and distribute electricity across the entire Lebanese territory," provided that electrical constructions belonging to public and private bodies are transferred to it. The decree also specified that the Authority would be "a national public institution of an industrial and commercial nature." With the issuance of Decree No. 4517 dated December 13, 1972 (on the organization of public institutions), the authority was turned into an institution called Eléctricité du Liban.

Structure

The General Directorate of EDL is composed of the following authorities and directorates: the Diwan (Bureau Authority)-General Monitoring Department-Directorate of Financial Affairs-Directorate of Administrative Affairs-Directorate of Transportation-Directorate of Processing-Directorate of Joint

Affairs-Directorate of Production-Directorate of Distribution to Beirut and its surroundings-Directorate of Research-Directorate of Regional Distribution. These directorates are linked to the Director General who is the President of the executive body of the institution. Table 1 illustrates the institutional structure of EDL and the distribution of Grade 2 and 3 posts (technical and administrative).

Staff distribution at EDL		Table 1
Diwan-Bureau Authority		
Department of Administrative Affairs and General Archives		9
Public Relations Department		
Total		9
General Monitoring Department		
Technical Monitoring Authority		7
Administrative Monitoring Authority		8
Programming and Guidance Authority		3
Total		20
Directorate of Research		
Research and Planning Authority		
Department of Planning and Programs		14
Department of Expropriation and Typography Specifications and Curricula of Technical Works Authority		
Department of Specifications		14
Department of Curricula of Technical Works		
Statistics and IT Authority		
Statistics Department		31
IT Department		
Total		61
Directorate of Processing		
Contract Implementation Authority		
Department of Implementation Follow up		13
Department of Contract Follow up		
Projects and Categorization Authority		
Department of New Projects		10
Department of Contractors' Specifications		
Total		25
Directorate of Financial Affairs		
Financial Authority		
Department of Budgeting and Monitoring of Expenditures		
Department of Salaries and Wages		18
Department of Deals, Contracts and Expenditures		
Department of Revenues		
Department of Loans		
Accounting Authority		
Department of Public Accounting		16
Department of Analytical Accounting		
Department of Economic and Statistical Studies		
Storage Authority		
Storage System Department		10
Storage of Materials Department		

Staff distribution at EDL		Table 1
Supervision of Collections and Funds Authority		
Supervision of Collections' Department		21
Supervision of Funds' Department		
Total		67
Directorate of Administrative Affairs		
Consumers Affairs Authority		2
Consumption and Personal Files Department		
Department of Social and Medical Affairs		9
Cases and Legal Affairs' Authority		
Department of Legal Studies		16
Department of Cases		
Department of Financial Cases' Follow up		
Occupational Safety and Training Authority		
Department of Monitoring and Occupational Safety		7
Training Department		
Total		34
Directorate of Joint Affairs		
Supplies and Procurement Authority		2
Supplies and Procurement Authority		
Department of Supplies		7
Department of Orders and Procurement		
Building and Equipment Maintenance Authority		
Department of Building Maintenance		9
Department of Equipment Maintenance		
Fuel Authority		
Department of Program and Supply Follow up		6
Department of Fuel Purchases		
Total		24
Directorate of Production		
Jiyeh Factory-Zouq Factory-Al Zahrani Factory-Deir Amar Factory-Baalbeck Factory-Sour Factory-Water Plants Authority-Central Administration, each plant contains 4 departments: investment-maintenance-performance follow up-protection and prevention		160
Total		161
Directorate of Transportation		
Energy Authority		2
Energy Authority		
Coordination Department		33
Department of Statistics and Analysis		
Department of Energy Exchange		
High Voltage Network Authority		
Department of Underground Networks		13
Department of Arial Networks		
Main Switching Stations Authority		
Department of Beirut and Mount Lebanon Plants		36
Regional Stations' Department		
Technical Department		
Protection and Communications Authority		
Protection Department		15
Communications Department		
Laboratory Division		
Total		99
Directorate of Distribution to Beirut and Mount Lebanon		
Beirut Distribution Authority		1
Beirut Distribution Authority		
Beirut Department		54
Antelias Department		
Chiyah Department		
Arial Medium Voltage and Underground Networks' Department		
Operations Department		

Staff distribution at EDL		Table 1
Mount Lebanon Distribution Authority		
Jounieh Department		80
Bekfayya Department		
Beiteddine Department		
A'aley Department		
Arial Medium Voltage and Underground Networks' Department		
Technical Authority		
Department of Investment Studies and Distribution Networks		21
Public Lighting Network Department		
Department of Facilities, Equipment and Generators		
- Central Administration		2
Total		158
Directorate of Regional Distribution		
North Distribution Authority		1
North Distribution Authority		
Trablous Department		68
Halba Department		
Batroun Department		
Arial Medium Voltage and Underground Networks' Department		
South Distribution Authority		
Saida Department		68
Nabatieh Department		
Sour Department		
Arial Medium Voltage and Underground Networks' Department		
Beqa'a Distribution Authority		
Baalbeck Department		69
Chtoura Department		
Jib Jennine Department		
Arial Medium Voltage and Underground Networks' Department		
Technical Authority		
Department of Investment Studies and Distribution Networks		21
Public Lighting Network Department		
Department of Facilities, Equipment and Generators		
- Central Administration		2
Total		229
Receipt Committee		
		1
Grand Total		888

Income and Expenditures

There are 1,420,000 EDL subscribers. In 2009, EDL's income amounted to an estimated LBP 1,020 billion and increased to LBP 1,073 in 2010 whereas expenditures reached LBP 3,000 billion, which means EDL suffers from a deficit of LBP 1,927 billion or 180%. Table 2 illustrates EDL's income according to region, from which it emerges that Beirut and Mount Lebanon alone generate 86.1% of EDL's income.

EDL's income during 2009 and 2010 by region (billion LBP)			Table 2
Region	2009	2010	
Beirut-Chiyah-Antelias	718	750.3	
Mount Lebanon	164.7	174.1	
North	30.4	33.2	
South	74.6	80.2	
Beqa'a	32.5	35.2	
Total	1,020.2	1,073	

MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND WATER

The Ministry of Energy and Water, established in 2000 replaced the Ministry of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources and the Ministry of Oil. The Ministry of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources was established in 1966 after the Directorate had been part of the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation. The Ministry of Industry and Oil was established in 1973 (oil was part of the Mines and Fuel Authority of the Ministry of National Economy and it later became the Fuel Affairs' Authority). In 1997, two ministries were created: the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Oil and thus the latter had an important role, encompassing issues related to water, electricity and oil.

Establishment

Law No. 247 was issued on August 7, 2000 (merger, abolition and establishment of ministries and councils). Article 1 of this law stipulated that the Ministry of Energy and Water is one of the ministries that forms part of the state's central apparatus. This ministry was established following the abolition of the Ministry of Oil and the merger of the General Directorate of Oil, with all its equipment and staff to the Ministry of Energy and Water as well as the abolition of the Ministry of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources and merging the General Directorate for Hydraulic and Electrical Resources and the General Directorate for Exploitation with all their equipment and staff to the Ministry of Energy and Water. The law gave the Minister of Energy and Water authority over the electricity and water public institutions (Electricite du Liban, the National Authority of the Litani River, the Water Associations in the Lebanese Mohafazat).

Structure

The Ministry of Energy and Water is composed of 3 general directorates: the General Directorate of Oil, the General Directorate of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources and the General Directorate of Exploitation.

1-The General Directorate of Oil

It is in charge of issues involving oil, minerals, the import and exploration of oil and gas and fuel distribution in Lebanon. It has 38 staff members in addition to the Director General (Grade 1 employee): 14 Grade 2 and 3 employees distributed in various authorities and departments as illustrated in Table 1 and 23 Grade 4 and 5 employees.

Staff of the General Directorate of Oil	Table 1	
	Grade 2	Grade 3
Diwan-Bureau Authority	1	-
Department of Administration and Employees' Affairs	-	1
Department of Accounting	-	1
Department of Cases and Legal Research	-	1
Authority of Economic and Financial Affairs'	1	-
Department of Research and Statistics	-	2
Department of Financial Auditing and Accounting	-	1
Department of Stocks and Distribution	-	1
Authority of Technical Affairs	1	-
Department of Oil Transportation and Storage	-	1
Department of Production	-	2
Department of Oil and Mineral Exploration	-	1

2-The General Directorate of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources

The Directorate is headed by a Director General holding a Grade 1 post. There are 141 staff members distributed across the following authorities and departments:

- Diwan-Bureau Authority
- Planning Authority
- Electrical Processing Authority
- Implementation Authority
- Acquisition and Rights over Water Authority
- Research and Technical Structure Authority
- Groundwater and Geological Water Authority

3-The General Directorate of Exploitation

It exercises its authority by monitoring independent authorities and their affiliates. The Directorate is headed by a Director General holding a Grade 1 post. The departments are composed of 72 staff members as illustrated by Table 2.

Staff of the General Directorate of Exploitation by Grade					Table 2
	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Total
Diwan	1	-	10	11	22
Department of Legal Research	-	1	1	-	2
Department of Employees and Accounting	-	1	5	1	7
Directorate of Trusteeship	1	-	2	-	3
Authority of Financial Trusteeship	3	5	1	-	9
Authority of Electrical Trusteeship	2	2	1	-	5
Directorate of Monitoring	1	-	2	-	3
Administrative and Financial Monitoring Authority	1	4	4	-	9
Technical Monitoring Authority	5	-	1	-	6
Department of Mines and Quarries	-	3	3	-	6
Total	14	16	30	12	72

Budget

Based on the 2010 draft budget law, the Ministry of Energy and Water's budget reached LBP 731.8 billion distributed on the following:

- Salaries, wages, and allowances of the General Directorate of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources: LBP 3.06 billion
- Salaries, wages, and allowances of the General Directorate of Exploitation: LBP 1.5 billion
- Salaries, wages, and allowances of the General Directorate of Oil: LBP 365 million
- Payment to the treasury to subsidize red diesel: LBP 60 billion
- Rebuilding of the oil tanks in Trablous: LBP 30 billion
- Acquisitions to establish drinking water facilities: LBP 75.5 billion
- Construction of administrative buildings: LBP 2 billion
- Wastewater treatment facilities: LBP 83.2 billion
- Maintenance and operation of water station: LBP 5 billion
- Expenses related to research and monitoring of equipment: LBP 5.4 billion
- Construction of drinking water facilities (including dams): LBP 100 billion
- Construction of irrigation water facilities: LBP 2 billion
- Electrical factories: LBP 385 million
- Electrical construction for distribution lines: LBP

19 billion

- Expenses related to research and monitoring of electricity: LBP 10 billion
- Expenses related to the expansion of the natural gas network within the Lebanese territory: LBP 30 billion (the primary source is Egypt)



Ministers

Since the establishment of the Ministry of Energy and Water until the formation of the present government on June 13, 2011, there have been 9 ministers:

Suleiman Traboulsi: 4-12-1998 until 26-10-2000. The ministry was named the Ministry of Energy and Water as of August 2000.

- Mohammad Abdel Hamid Baydoun: 26-10-2000 until 17-4-2003
- Ayyoub Hamid: 17-4-2003 until 26-10-2004
- Maurice Sahnawi: 26-10-2004 until 19-4-2005
- Bassam Yamine: 19-4-2005 until 19-7-2005
- Mohammad Fneish: 19-7-2005 until 11-7-2008
- Alain Tabourian: 11-7-2008 until 9-11-2009
- Joubran Bassil: 9-11-2009 until 13-6-2011
- Joubran Bassil: 13-6-2011 until today

The first minister to head the Ministry of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources upon its establishment on March 29, 1966, was Kamel Al Assa'ad, who was minister from April 9, 1966 until December 6, 1966. He was succeeded by 28 ministers:

- Fouad Al Bizri (6-12-1966 until 8-2-1968)
- Anwar Al Khatib (8-2-1968 until 12-10-1968)
- Anwar Al Khatib (12-10-1968 until 20-10-1968)
- Raymond Edde (20-10-1968 until 15-1-1969)
- Othman Al Dana (15-1-1969 until 25-11-1969)
- Anwar Al Khatib (25-11-1969 until 13-10-1970)
- Jaafar Sharafeddine (13-10-1970 until 27-5-1972)
- Joseph Skaff (27-5-1972 until 25-4-1973)
- Joseph Skaff (25-4-1973 until 8-7-1973)
- Joseph Skaff (8-7-1973 until 31-10-1974)
- Malek Salam (31-10-1974 until 23-5-1975)
- Iskandar Ghanem (23-5-1975 until 1-7-1975)
- Camille Chamoun (1-7-1975 until 15-9-1976), in the same government Minister Majid Arslan (15-9-1976 until 9-12-1976)
- Ibrahim Shi'ito (9-12-1976 until 16-7-1979)
- Anwar Al Sabah (16-7-1979 until 25-10-1980)
- Anwar Al Sabah (25-10-1980 until 2-9-1981), and in the same government Minister Mahmoud Ammar (2-9-1981 until 7-10-1982)
- Baha'eddine Al Bsat (7-10-1982 until 30-4-1984)
- Nabih Berri (30-4-1984 until 22-9-1988)
- Issam Abou Jamra (22-9-1988 until 25-11-1989)
- Nabih Berri (25-11-1989 until 24-12-1990)
- Mohammad Youssef Baydoun (24-12-1990 until 16-5-1992)
- Mohammad Abdel Hamid Baydoun (16-5-1992 until 31-10-1992)
- Georges Afram (31-10-1992 until 11-6-1993).

He was dismissed and replaced by Minister Elias Hobeika who remained in his post until the resignation of the government on 25-5-1995.

- Elias Hobeika (25-5-1995 until 7-11-1996)
- Elias Hobeika (7-11-1996 until 4-12-1998)

Numbers on Energy and Water

The Ministry of Energy and Water issued a book in 2011 that includes its work throughout 2010. The most significant numbers in the book include:

- 8.6 billion square meters of average annual rainfall, around 5.9 billion square meters of which disappeared as a result of evaporation and surface and underground leakages. The remaining quantity amounts to 2.7 billion square meters of which 1.6 billion square meters may be used.
- 50% of drinking water networks are ragged
- USD 180 million is the liquidity surplus of the water associations of Beirut and Mount Lebanon. The other associations in the remaining Mohafazat suffer from a shortage of USD 70 million.
- 1,473 million square meters was the amount of water needed in 2010 and only 1,047 million square meters were available. There was thus a gap amounting to 425 million square meters. Groundwater ensured 556 million square meters while springs provided 446 million square meters and dams provided 45 million square meters. It is estimated that water needs will rise to 1,802 million square meters by 2035 of which a mere 1,088 million square meters will be available.
- 25,000 is the number of licensed well in Lebanon. The ministry awarded 221 permits in 2010.
- 710,722 is the number of subscribers to the water network in Lebanon, around 55% of them are members of the associations of Beirut and Mount Lebanon. The revenue from these subscriptions amounts to USD 114 million annually.
- 3,214 is the number of petrol stations in Lebanon compared to 1,600 in Syria and 12,700 in France.
- 5,692,610 tons was the consumption of oil derivatives in Lebanon for 2010 distributed as follows: 1.6 million tons of benzene, 2.2 million tons of diesel, 1.3 million tons of fuel, 163,000 tons of gas, 150,000 tons of airplane fuel and 105,000 tons of asphalt.
- USD 3,734,849,558 (around USD 3.7 billion) was the fuel bill for 2010.

EMPLOYEES' IMMUNITY

Employees assume many responsibilities during the performance of their functions; they are behavioral, criminal or civil. Thus, they enjoy immunity in criminal cases and a supposed immunity in civil lawsuits. As for behavioral responsibility, they may be prosecuted if they breach their duties.

Behavioral responsibility

Disciplinary sanctions are imposed on the employee if he/she intentionally breaches or neglects the duties imposed on him/her by the laws and regulations in force. For example, article 14 of the Employees' Law dictates that the employee should complete the transactions of stakeholders quickly, accurately and faithfully within the limits of his/her competence and entirely abandon any task or responsibility in political parties, bodies, councils or associations. Otherwise, the employee may be referred to the Disciplinary Board by virtue of a decree or decision issued by the competent authority responsible for his/her appointment or by a decision rendered by the Central Inspection Board.

Criminal responsibility

An employee shall be referred to the judiciary if it is found that the acts attributed to him/her constitute an offense punishable by the Penal Code and other applicable laws. An employee enjoys immunity against prosecution if he/she commits a crime arising from the performance of his function. The prosecutors must obtain management approval before suing an employee. Usually, the management grants such permission. Below are some examples of such cases:

- ◉ On June 21, 2004, Minister of Energy Ayoub Hmayyed approved the request of the Attorney General for Finance Khalil Rahhal to prosecute the former Director General of EDL in the case of Joseph Al Hawa for wasting public funds and neglecting his duties.
- ◉ On December 19, 2001, Minister of Energy Ayoub Hmayyed approved the request of the Attorney General for Finance to criminally prosecute the former Director General of EDL, Georges Moawad. Later, the Shura Council annulled this decision.

Among the most prominent employees' prosecutions that took place following the election of President Emile Lahoud, we mention:

- ◉ **Suhail Yammout:** on February 9, 2002, the investigating judge in Mount Lebanon, Fawzi Adham, requested that Suhail Yammout be sentenced to 15 years of hard labor for embezzlement and waste of public funds as well as for his responsibility in the quarries file, the settlement of construction violations, the granting of special permits concerning maritime estates and encroachment on municipal finances. After starting the judicial investigations with Yammout, he

was allowed to travel to Brazil and thus he was no longer considered a fugitive from justice and an in absentia arrest warrant was issued against him.

- ◉ **Muhib Itany:** on May 12, 1999, the Attorney General brought suit against the former president of the board of directors of the Beirut Port for corruption, waste of public funds and presenting reports for trivial works. He was arrested and released on bail. On November 2, 2001, the single criminal judge in Beirut issued a ruling acquitting Itany. The Court of Appeal of Beirut approved his acquittal on May 17, 2005.
- ◉ **Abdel Menem Youssef:** on September 16, 1999, the attorney general brought suit against the former Director General of the Ministry of Telecommunications, Abdel Menem Youssef, for wasting public funds and using official lines. Youssef was arrested for investigation and he was tried before the Misdemeanors Court of Appeals in Beirut and was finally declared innocent of the charges in 2004.

Civil Responsibility

As for civil responsibility, an employee is not required to pay compensation if he/she commits a harmful act to others during the execution of his/her duties or arising from them. However, this immunity is not absolute as the state has the right to request the employee to pay damages if it is proved that he/she committed a grave error that could have easily been avoided.

Immunity against dismissal

The employment contract between the employee and the state lasts until the employee's retirement. With the exception of cases where the employee commits errors making it necessary to dismiss him/her, he/she enjoys immunity against dismissal. However, the state may sometimes lift this immunity after promulgating laws for this purpose. The aim of the state in such cases is to purge the state departments from elements it considers corrupt. For example, Law No. 54 promulgated in 1965 gave the state, by virtue of decrees issued by the Council of Ministers, the right to dismiss or send to retirement any state employee including employees of public institutions and private businesses, with the exception of military and civilian personnel in the army and the staff of the Central Bank of Lebanon.

Thus, the government is able to lift an employee's immunity if it deems it necessary. ●●

LEBANESE ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

In 1994, Law No. 364 was promulgated organizing the profession of certified accountants in Lebanon and establishing a syndicate or an association for them. This association (Lebanese Association of Certified Public Accountants - LACPA) became the only body concerned with the profession. Among the association's objectives, we mention:

- The protection of the profession, working towards its development and prosperity, maintaining its dignity, developing the sense of cooperation and collaboration among its members and defending their interests and rights.
- The undertaking of research, participating in it and improving the technical principles and rules of accounting.
- The preparation and suggestion of principles of accounting, auditing rules and professional behavior in accordance with international standards, including those of Arab and international unions to which the association is affiliated.
- The presentation of its laws, regulations, duties and obligations to the members.
- The resolution of conflicts between members.

According to the law organizing the profession of accountants, a certified accountant is any natural person exercising in his name or for the account of a moral person the profession of auditing of the different accounts and their evaluation and expressing his opinion on financial statements.

Affiliation to the association

To become a member, a request for affiliation to the association as a trained expert should be submitted. The applicant for membership should be Lebanese (holding the nationality for at least 10 years), have completed 21 years of age, enjoy all his civil rights, not have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, have a degree in Business Administration, its equivalent or a certificate of excellence in technical expertise and accounting. The applicant must submit a written request to join the association, in addition to documents proving that he/she satisfies the conditions of enrollment and his/her approval to train in an office.

A university graduate spends a maximum of 3 years out of 4 in training, whereas a holder of a certificate of experience in accounting trains for a maximum of 5 years out of 6, and a graduate in accounting from an international organization or institute within the Lebanese territory only trains for 1 year. The trainee is not allowed to use the title of "expert accountant" without adding the status of trainee, and does not have

the right to establish an office in his name before the end of his training period and his official registration. The graduate will sit 6 exams in 9 years as of the date of graduation. After passing these exams and finishing the training, he/she becomes a certified accountant and his/her name is registered in the public experts' roster. The membership fee is LBP 1,500,000 and the annual subscription fee is LBP 600,000 for the practicing member and LBP 300,000 for the non-practicing member.

The pension fund

A pension fund was established by virtue of Decree No. 15222 dated September 27, 2005. Article 12 stipulates that "every member aged 64 shall benefit, upon request, from a full pension if the period of registration in the association's roster is not less than 15 years. Otherwise, the pension that he/she is entitled to shall be equal to a portion of the full pension calculated according to the number of years of service. He/she shall not benefit from a pension if the period of registry is less than 5 years." Thus, the payment of money to the certified accountants who request a pension is only effective 5 years following the date of adoption of this decree, i.e. in 2010. The General Assembly set the annual rate of the pension at LBP 300,000.

The association's organization

The association consists of the General Assembly, the Board of Directors, the President, the Disciplinary Board, the Pension Fund and the committees.

The General Assembly

The General Assembly includes the certified accountants registered with the association who paid their subscription fees during the first three months of the fiscal year. The General Assembly holds its ordinary meeting during the second half of May of each year and may be called for an extraordinary meeting whenever the Board of Directors deems it necessary. It is headed by the association's president represented whenever it is impossible for him/her to be present by the vice president, the secretary or the oldest member of the association.

The General Assembly is responsible for discussing the annual report of the Board of Directors; the previous year's accounts; appointing auditors for the accounts

of the next fiscal year; approving the budget set for the fiscal year that starts on January 1 and ends on December 31 of each year; electing the president, the Board of Directors and two members of the Disciplinary Board, and adopting the rules of procedure proposed by the Board of Directors. Moreover, the General Assembly sets the membership and annual subscription fees.

Article 15 of the law regulating the profession of expert accountants prohibits an accountant from combining his profession with the following professions:

- All public professions
- Employment in a private institution
- Employment in other liberal and commercial professions
- Membership or participation in a company's board of directors

Non-practicing members may join the General Assembly. They do not have the right to sign the budgets but have the right to vote in the General Assembly meetings, including the election of the Board of Directors, but they cannot be candidates to the Board of Directors. Finally, they are entitled to the social allowances provided by the association's bylaws.

The Board of Directors

The Board is composed of 10 members (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and 6 members) elected for 2 years by the General Assembly during its ordinary meeting. It manages the association's affairs. The Board is responsible for all the matters related to achieving the association's goals and it ensures the respect of the laws and regulations governing the profession and maintains its dignity and interests. The Board meets at least once a month following a written invitation sent by the president, which also includes the meeting's agenda.

Cases challenged before the Shura Council

What distinguishes the Board's decisions is that they can be challenged before the State Consultative Council-Shura Council. In some cases, the Board refuses to register experts. Article 39 of Law No. 364 stipulates that each stakeholder and the Attorney General of Appeals in Beirut shall have the right to appeal the decisions of the association's board within a period of 1 month from the date of notification of the decision. The Shura will then consider the request for appeal.

An example of this is the case of Asaad Sarkis Sarkis who challenged the association's decision before the Shura after the board rejected his request to join

the association on September 19, 1996, for failing to submit the application within the deadline. However, Sarkis proved he was not informed of the decision of the founding committee mentioned in Article 60 of Law No. 364. The Shura Council finally decided to annul the decision of the association and declared the right of the appellant to join the association.

The President


The president is elected for two years. He/she may be re-elected once. Previous presidents elected in accordance with Law 364/94 shall be given the title of "President of Honor" and as such they are invited to attend board meetings, without having the right to vote. The president represents the association before the courts and administrative authorities, presides over meetings of the board and implements its resolutions, signs contracts and documents to implement the resolutions of the board as well as all official and administrative correspondences, oversees the functioning of all committees, ensures the implementation of decisions of the board and General Assembly and signs, with the Treasurer, documents allowing the payment of funds. Exceptionally, Mouwafak Yafi was elected for two consecutive terms after the General Assembly so agreed.

Table 1 lists the names of former presidents and their terms.

Names of former presidents and their terms		Table 1
President	Year	
Habib Abou Sakr	1994-1995	
Muwafak Yafi	1996-2000; 2002-2004	
Georges Abou Mansour	2000-2002	
Farid Gebran	2004-2006	
Hikmat Salim	2006-2008	
Antoine Ghneim	2008-2010 (resigned)	
Gibran Barghout	June 2010	
Mouafa Yafi	Until April 2011	
Jina Shamas	May 2011-Present	

Source: Syndicate of Chartered Expert Accountants in Lebanon

Publications

The Lebanese Association of Certified Public Accountants publishes a quarterly magazine entitled "The Certified Accountant Magazine". It covers the association's news and information on local and international conferences. The association also has a website that includes all information related to its laws and regulations. 

NOTRE DAME DE LOUAIZÉ

History of the School

Alongside its spiritual mission, the Maronite Mariamite Order, founded in 1695, committed itself to a human mission, that of education and teaching.

For more than three hundred years, the Maronite Mariamite Order (the Aleppines at that time) has founded schools in various Lebanese regions in which they taught the Syriac and Arabic languages, as well as the basics of arithmetics, thus contributing to the literacy campaign and initiating youth to the service of the church and society. As teaching gradually became professional, these transitional schools became establishments with rules and regulations, an administration, teachers and a curriculum.

Notre Dame de Louaize (NDL), a Mariamite establishment founded at the beginning of the 60s and occupying the eastern quarters of the convent, opened up opportunities to the boys of the neighborhood, after having limited itself to the formation of seminarians ever since the 30s. In 1964-1965, the Mariamite monks built a two-floor block (demolished in 2003) to receive the students who had been particularly motivated to become priests.

In 1968, a new building, the French-intermediate school, was inaugurated to receive all the students. Thus, NDL became a school that fulfilled all the requirements of modern schools and comprised all levels, from Nursery to 3rd secondary.

According to the administration, NDL is preparing about 4,000 students to explore new horizons with plenty of promises.

- ⦿ The school (area 40.000 sq m) constitutes one of the three pillars of the Louaizean triangle: the Convent, the School and the University.
- ⦿ On the northern side of NDL, lies the convent of the Order with its rich patrimony: the Lebanese Congress of 1736, whose most important recommendation was “compulsory education for all”; the museum, with its rich collection of valuable objects belonging to the Order; and the library, comprising thousands of manuscripts and valuable books.
- ⦿ On the eastern side, parallel to NDL, lies the university, NDU.
- ⦿ NDL consists of six blocks (area 10.851 sq m), separated by yards (4.000 sq m), open spaces (about 10.000 sq m), pinewoods, flower-beds and vast parking areas (25.000 sqm).



NDL is sufficiently equipped on various levels. However, it still lacks an updated and well-equipped center of documentation and information (CDI), a larger theater and more covered terrains (their construction has already started).

Curriculum and Education

According to the administration, the objectives of the educational project at NDL are as follows:

- Bringing up a faithful, committed and active Oriental Christian Student
- Bringing up a responsible citizen, aware of his tradition, his culture, his rights and duties
- Bringing up a psychologically, intellectually, culturally, morally and physically balanced man

NDL follows the general objectives of the official curriculum and works in conformity with the General Secretariat of the Catholic Schools.

NDL is trilingual, meaning it teaches three languages (Arabic, English and French). It offers two tracks for its students, the French Track or the English Track.



Administration and Students

NDL’s principal is a clergyman. He is assisted by two directors of sections and a director of finance. It currently comprises of around 326 teachers, educators, directors of cycles, assistants and coordinators as well as around 24 administrative employees.

During the 2010-2011 academic year, NDL received 4,168 students from different socio-cultural backgrounds. These students are distributed between the English section (1,142 students) and the French section (3,026 students).

For the past five years, the distribution of students at NDL has been as follows:

Number of Students	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
French section	3,188	3,202	3,155	3,182	3,017	3,026
English section	1,076	1,023	1,058	1,072	1,082	1,142
Total	4,264	4,225	4,213	4,254	4,099	4,168

According to the school’s administration, the history of NDL, its geographic location and the neighboring regions can contribute to the elaboration of a new educational approach, which has so far confined itself to the school’s premises, almost totally separated from the outside world.





DIVERTICULOSIS & DIVERTICULITIS

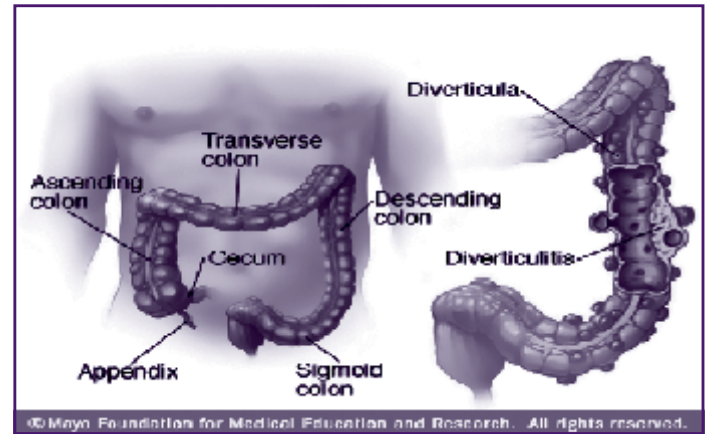
Dr. Hanna Saadah

The colon or large intestine begins at the appendix in the right lower abdomen, climbs up to the right upper abdomen, crosses over to the left upper abdomen, and then descends to the left lower abdomen to empty in the rectum. It has three main layers: a) the internal membrane or mucosa, b) two muscle layers, and c) an outer membrane or serosa. When the inner mucosal layer herniates through the muscle layers and bulges into the serosal layer, causing a bleb on the outside of the colon, the bleb is called a diverticulum and the condition that allows many blebs to form is known as diverticulosis. The figure below is borrowed from the Mayo Clinic Foundation web site and shows the details of this condition: www.mayoclinic.com/health/diverticulitis/DS00070

Diverticulitis means that one or more blebs have ruptured, spilled the colon contents into the abdominal cavity outside the colon, and started an abdominal infection. Because the diverticula tend to be more concentrated in the left lower colon, the condition tends to present with left lower abdominal pain in most cases. Fever may come if the condition is allowed to advance; diarrhea is not a common symptom; and pain with feeling ill are the main complaints.

Although the disease is genetically programmed, diverticulosis spares the young and increases with advancing age as the colon makes more diverticula, leading to more episodes of diverticulitis. Untreated episodes can be catastrophic, causing abdominal abscesses, which might require surgical resection of the diseased segment and connecting the remaining colon to a bag on the outside of the abdomen via a colostomy.

Early treatment with appropriate antibiotics such as Cipro or Tetracycline is crucial and usually aborts the disease without sequelae. Since diverticulitis tends to be recurrent, there are two strategies that have proven helpful. One, is to empower the patient to recognize and treat the recurring episodes without having to wait to see the doctor. Thus, giving the patient access to antibiotics and teaching him or her to begin treatment at the onset of left lower abdominal pain can be life saving. Two, is to give a daily dose of the antibiotic as a preventive measure to those who have very frequent recurrences and have them increase to the full



therapeutic dose to treat the occasional recurrences that escape this preventive measure. Although this preventive strategy is not backed by published scientific evidence, implementing it has proven most helpful in my own patient population.

Many diets are advised for keeping the condition under control but none of them is scientifically proven. Many preventive strategies are also advised such as avoiding corn, tomatoes, and other seed-bearing vegetables, but they also lack scientific validity. The best preventive measure is to eat a high fiber diet and take fiber supplements such as psyllium (Metamucil) or methylcellulose (Citrucel). Fiber discourages the formation of diverticula and decreases the incidence of diverticulitis.

Elective surgery is advisable when the recurrences accelerate in spite of appropriate preventive and abortive treatments. In such cases, with the hope of avoiding a catastrophic colon rupture, the diseased colon segment is preemptively resected and the remaining colon is reconnected to the rectum, thus avoiding a colostomy with an external abdominal bag. One of the disadvantages of having a catastrophic colon rupture is that surgery will have to be done in two stages. The fist, or emergency stage, is to resect the diseased segment and connect the remaining colon to an external abdominal bag. The second, or elective stage—which takes place several months later—is to reverse the colostomy, reconnect the colon to the rectum, and get rid of the external abdominal bag.

Diverticulosis and diverticulitis are commoner in advanced societies whose diets do not contain enough fiber.



PLUGGING INTO BLISS:

MEDITATIVE STATES CAN BE TECHNOLOGICALLY INDUCED AND HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO SHARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF TRADITIONAL MEDITATIVE PRACTICE

Dr. Samar Zebian

This article is the third in a series on mediation and its effects on the brain.

Technologically induced meditation has been around for more than a century. One of the earliest forms of this technology is binaural beats. It is the basis for the numerous sound neurotechnologies on the market today.

Binaural beat technology is transmitted through a headset and involves presenting two slightly different tones to each ear. The tones need to be below 1000 hz and need to differ by at least 30 hz. The sounds presented to each ear are slightly out of phase with one another, however the brain automatically computes one sound which is equal in frequency to the difference between the frequencies delivered to each ear. Essentially the listener hears a single beat that has a pulsating quality and feels like its origins is in the head. If you are interested, you can google “binaural beat sound file” and try it out with headsets (it will not work without heatsets).

The brain does more than just blend the two sound waves. It is busy computing where the sound is coming from (sound localisation). The brain does this automatically and thus the listener just kicks back and listens. The process of sound localize is said to bring about entrainment—a synchrony between the binaural beat and brain wave activity. This synchrony is what makes “BLISS” happen—first relaxation envelopes many listeners and then some report other altered states—feelings of open compassion, heightened attentional focus and deep relaxation.

Some researchers claim that the beats stimulate the superior olivary nucleus in the brain stem which controls basic vital life functions such as breathing, heartbeat, and blood pressure. Researchers hypothesize that brain stem stimulation, and the activation of areas involved in sound perception and localization bring about a change in brain wave patterns—namely more alpha waves which are typical of the relaxing brain. According to some, these brain fluctuations force the nervous system to reorganize itself or form new neural pathways which enable more efficient communication between the left and right hemisphere of the brain, or to be more technologically precise, greater synchronization between parts of the brain that previously were not in synchrony.

The neurotechnology industry makes at least three notable claims that are of interest to brain scientists: 1) technologically induced mediation is identical to non-technologically mediated meditation, 2) reaching a deep meditative state (a Zen state achievable by only experienced meditators) can happen in minutes, 3) technologically induced mediation gives you ALL the benefits of traditional meditative practice. The current state of research on binaural beats does not conclusively support any of these claims because most studies are poorly reported, contain methodological flaws and are not peer reviewed. Thus it will take time to validate these claims and check their generalizability.

Science is one means to help us be sure about things but it does take a very very long time to be scientifically sure. In the meantime, research subjects and users claim to be engaged in subjective experiences that seemed qualitatively identical to or indistinguishable from the heightened states attained by traditional techniques such as personality transformations, life-altering spiritual insights, and more.

As a cognitive scientist with a deep interest in how artifacts and cultural practices/rituals shape cognitive function, I would be very surprised if binaural beats produce the same type of meditative state as traditional meditative practices because the artifacts used and the practices enacted during the acquisition of a new skill leaves cognitive traces in the neurons, behaviorally and phenomenologically. I suspect that there will be differences in the meditative state, how the state is achieved (brain wise) and its consequences. However, what values we attach to this difference should be done in light of good research and not traditional ideas about how mediation ought to be performed. The potential of neurotechnologies is still to be discovered. One simple reason for this let’s-wait-and-see attitude is that if neurotechnologies do in fact work, even only partially or only for the short term, their applications are endless and widely accessible. I will list just a few: 1) reducing anxiety in chronic pain sufferers, test takers, surgery patients, 2) an alternative to psycho active drugs, 3) contribute to a reduction in aggression/violence among dangerous individuals, 4) facilitation of addiction treatments, 5) improve life-long learning, 6) promote compassion and peace in the hearts of individuals. If this is possible, and if technology can be ethically and effectively used for this purpose, than lets march on.



CHROMOSOMES, THE KEY TO GENETICS

Antoine Boutros

Genetics is the process by which features are transmitted from the parent to the offspring. However, it is an uncertain process; we cannot determine its direction in advance. The child may bear his/her father's facial features and his/her mother's hair color. The contrary is also possible; a tendency towards mathematics may be revealed in a family that does not even know the basics of counting on the fingers of the hand. The child may also bear a congenital deformity, although his/her parents have a normal body. It is not necessary for a newborn to share the exact characteristics of the parents. The scientist Pasteur was the son of a tanner and a maid, the painter Cézanne was the son of an old banker and a farmer. Until recently, it was believed that the father would plant a miniature version of himself in the womb of the mother, and that the function of the mother would not exceed feeding the baby.

Mendel, a monk and undoubtedly the father of genetics, noted that plants with long trunks that hybridized with plants having short trunks produced a first generation of long or short plants but not plants of moderate length. He also noted that "length" is a characteristic with a stronger influence than "shortness" and that purple is stronger than white, which means that there are dominant traits that triumph over others. But when he paired the plants of the second generation, he noted that long plants could produce short plants if one of the parents was short. This also means that there are recessive traits, which means they are inherited but weak; they are not eradicated, but appear in the subsequent offspring without any change, generation after generation. These observations have shown that there are some predictable elements in genetics. If we cannot know the length of the next plant, then if we apply the principle of probability we can at least estimate the proportion of the expected long plants. In other words, this obscure monk directed genetics out of the realm of illusions and into the scope of mathematical laws. However and most importantly, the laws of genetics apply to all creatures from beans to men.

The number of traits that are passed from one generation to another by a single gene is very little. The human skin for example is affected by at least eight different genes. This explains the existence of the great diversity in skin colors. Moreover, some other qualities such as intelligence or body and facial structures are based on hundreds of genes; which is why the inheritance of these characteristics can be accompanied by a number of abnormalities. It is not surprising that primitive peoples, who were expecting their leaders to give birth to strong and clever children, were often extremely disappointed. This was not only limited to primitive peoples, indeed Spartans used to throw newborns in a ravine if they had a weak body.

In fact, the likelihood of the emergence of human beings looking exactly the same is very rare; with the exception of identical twins who emerge from a single fertilized egg. This is because there are more than 8 million combinations (23 chromosomes from the mother with 23 chromosomes belonging to the father). Thus, the possibility of having a child similar to his/her brother is approximately 1 to 70 billion. If we take the father and mother, and we assume that each one of them has only a couple of genes for each single chromosome, the combination between these genes resulting from fertilization gives 19,000,000,000,000 genetic hypothesis. Since each chromosome includes 1,250 genes, this means that the likelihood of symmetry is a number that cannot be described and is written the following way: 1 followed by 9,031 zeros.

Every species of organisms has a fixed and specific number of chromosomes. Human beings have 46, i.e. 23 pairs. It is worth noting that it is only in the 1950s that scientists verified the exact number of chromosomes in the human body. White rats have 42 chromosomes while peas have 14. On the other hand, an animal called Rhizopod, which consists of a single cell, has more than 1,500 chromosomes. ●●

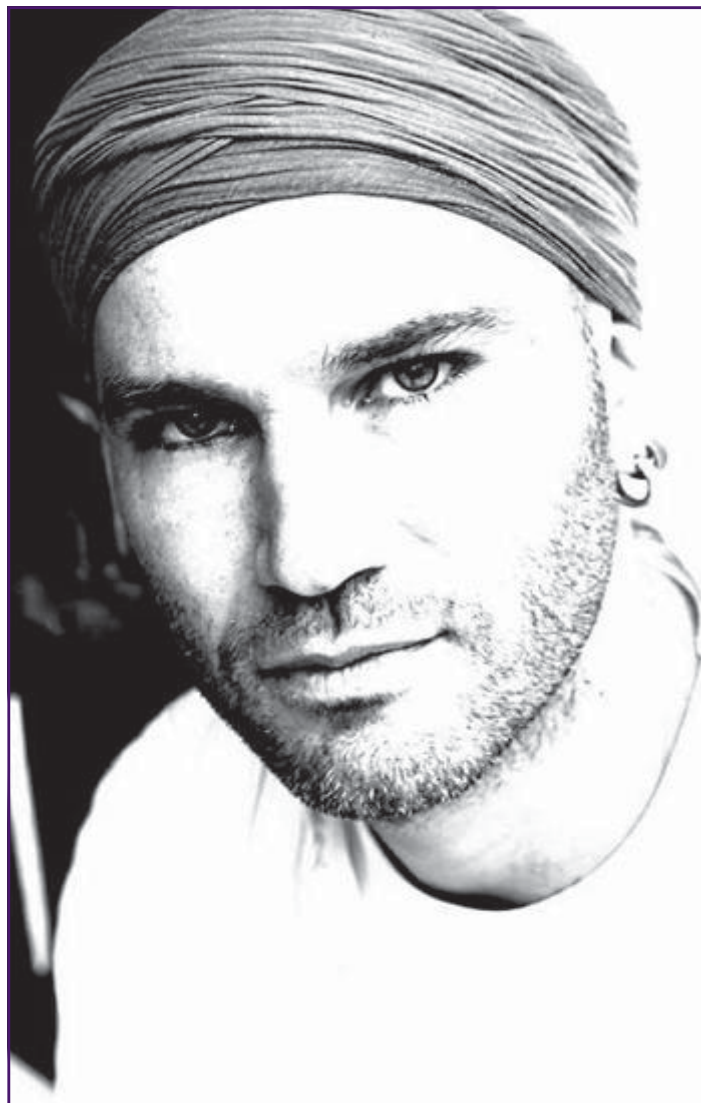
THE MONTHLY INTERVIEWS

ARTIST AYMAN BAALBAKI

Artist Ayman Baalbaki illustrates the war from the perspective of those who see the echo of its impact on the city.

How did you start drawing?

My family includes many artists. That is how my interest in art began. I enrolled in the Institute of Art in 1994 and followed my passion. I tried to get a PhD at the Institute of Arts, but the July 2006 war prevented me from achieving that due to the fire that flared up in my office and swallowed up all of the research and the thesis I had completed. After that incident, I started to restore my research, which made me tired; thus I decided to draw my energy toward the work of art and I left the Institute.



ARTIST AYMAN BAALBAKI

What are the subjects and issues addressed by your work?

I treat socio-political subjects, most of which are related to war. My initiative was a part of the movement of many young artists belonging to the post-war generation. This initiative is based on what Nietzsche calls the “imposition of memory”. After the war, whoever had experienced it, tried to erase its effects and impact from his/her memory and surroundings, although the causes of war and its essence will still be present in the city. Through my work, I consider the reasons that led to the war and I review its manifestations. The painting depicting the war touches whoever experienced it and I can feel the impact of the themes I treat when I watch the faces of those visiting the exhibition, those who have already seen the city under bombardment and who carried weapons in the war. When this visitor sees the scenes of shattered buildings and the destruction of the city, he/she feels a similar picture coming back to his memory, which creates a direct and violent connection with it.

Who acquires your paintings?

Art collectors who take my paintings to their homes look for the war and its effects as they search for a particular style in art. Most of them belong to the generation that lived the war or participated in it. One of the collectors was a combatant in the war with the Lebanese Forces and he acquired one of the most beautiful paintings that I drew that represented the face of one of the commandos. He told me that paintings representing the face of a combatant in the war helped him deal with the war's impact and see it from a new perspective. I think that every one of us bears wounds of war, some of which are painful and others creating a kind of nostalgia. During times of war, everyone has dreams and issues for which they fight. Thus, this creates an emotionally inflamed atmosphere.

How do you see the combatant in your paintings and illustrations?

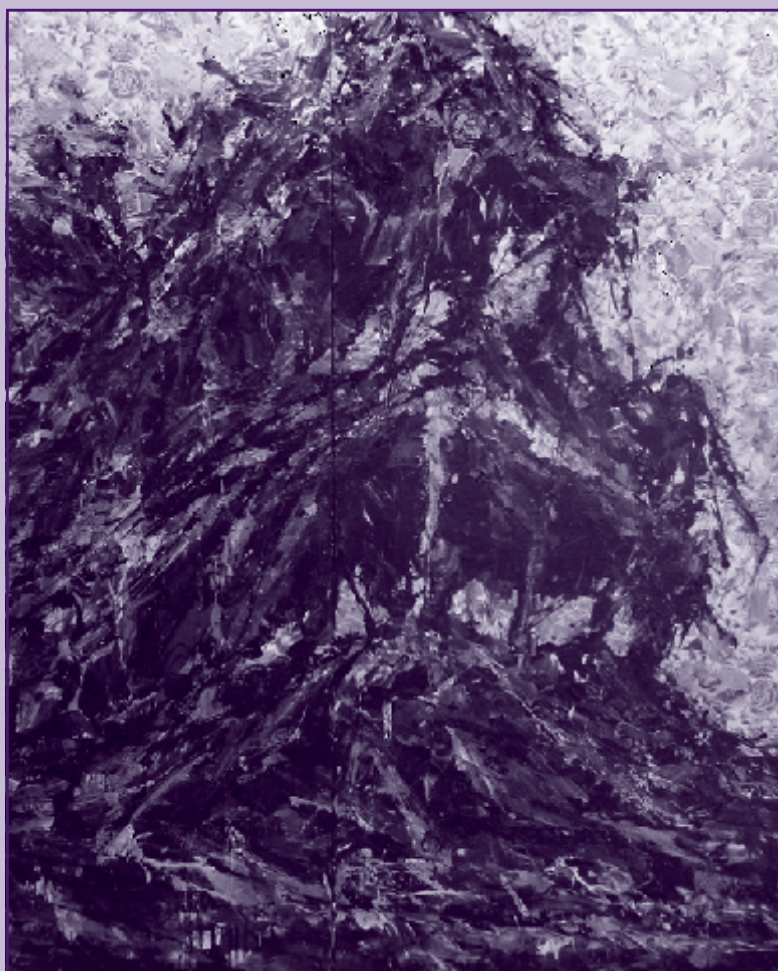
Every combatant has an incentive to enter the war; some combatants fought because of hatred, some fought for their interests, some fought for their dreams, and some did not have any other choice.

What about the political frame of your work?

It is hard for me not to be politicized in my work. Whoever has experienced war, displacement and violence cannot but deal with a political issue. By politics, I don't mean the battle between parties but I mean the adoption of political ideas. I believe that every movement lived by a citizen in the community is a statement of his political belief.

What about the colors and materials you use in your work?

I draw my paintings with the colors of war as I see it. In terms of my sculptures and other works, I look for factors familiar to those who lived the war, starting from the contents of the house and the luggage of each displaced, to the gallon of water. I look for small details that remind me of the beauty of culture such as the fabric colored with flowers used by the Palestinian women to sew their clothes and furniture. When fabric became part of my paintings, it was first a symbol of the nation, a return to the roots and hope as seen by the viewer.



PAINTINGS BY THE ARTIST AYMAN BAALBAKI

THE HIGHER ISLAMIC SHIA'A COUNCIL

“DEFENDS THE SHIA'A RIGHTS AND INTERESTS”, WHILE ITS GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS NOT MET FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS

The Higher Islamic Shia'a Council is the official religious authority of the Shia'a confession in Lebanon.

Establishment

The Higher Islamic Shia'a Council was established by virtue of Law No. 72/67 dated December 19, 1967 (Organization of the Affairs of the Shia'a Confession in Lebanon).

The law considered “the Shia'a confession independent in its religious affairs, Waqf and institutions.” The Higher Islamic Shia'a Council is responsible for the confession's affairs, it defends its rights, protects its interests, supervises its institutions and is entitled to establish a religious university and a university for higher education. (This university was established by Decree No. 8600 dated June 12, 1996, under the name Islamic University of Lebanon)

Structure

The Council includes three assemblies: the General Assembly – the Sharia'a Board – the Executive Council.

The General Assembly is formed of the following Shia'a figures:

- ◉ Islamic law judges and current and former Muftis
- ◉ Lebanese men of religion
- ◉ Current and former ministers and MPs
- ◉ Civil judges
- ◉ University professors
- ◉ Lawyers, physicians, pharmacists and engineers registered with their syndicates
- ◉ Public institution employees (Category 2 and above)
- ◉ Heads of municipalities in the Mohafazat and provinces and members of the municipality of Beirut
- ◉ Representatives of social and cultural institutions and charitable organizations
- ◉ Owners of newspapers and news agencies and editors, including seven editors registered at the Syndicate of Editors elected by a group of syndicate members
- ◉ Heads and members of the council of the Syndicate of Editors
- ◉ Heads and members of the chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture, the Association of Bankers and the Association Industrial Traders
- ◉ Heads, members and boards of public institutions (official and other independent institutions)
- ◉ Board members of the Lebanese University across the world and representatives of organizations of the Lebanese community

The aim of this large representation (although it does not include members of the public) was to secure the widest possible coverage and legitimacy for the Council. However, since its establishment in 1967 and until the present day, this assembly has not met once. Gathering it today may seem difficult because of the increase in the number of its members that has reached an estimated 20-25 thousand individuals.

The Executive Council includes Shia'a MPs (currently, 27 MPs) and another 12 members elected by the General Assembly from among its members for a 6-year term (a small body was formed from the General Assembly and elected the Executive Council in 1969).

The Sharia'a Board consists of 12 Lebanese men of religion elected by their peers for a term of 6 years.

The **president of the Council** is elected by the Sharia'a Board and the Executive Council by a relative majority for a term of 6 renewable years. In fact, Law No. 16 dated April 1, 1975, was promulgated to extend the mandate of the President of the Council until he reaches the age of 65 and this applies to the current president. The first president was Imam Sadr.

Moreover, the president has a first and second vice president who are elected by the Sharia'a Board and the Executive Council by a relative majority for a term of 6 renewable years; the first vice president belongs to the Sharia'a board (man of religion) and the second vice president to the Executive Council (a civilian). In the absence of a President and a first vice president, the oldest member of the Sharia'a Body (man of religion) undertakes the tasks of the president. If the position of president becomes vacant, the first vice president replaces him and a new president must be elected within two months (however, this didn't happen when Imam Moussa Sadr disappeared in Libya in 1978, neither did it occur after the death of Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamseddine in 2001).

If a position in the Executive Council becomes vacant, the person who received the second largest number of votes fills the vacancy. However, this did not happen in practice and vacancies were not filled until the issuance of Law No. 75 on April 20, 1990,

which extended the mandate of the Executive Council and the Sharia'a Body until December 31, 1992, and provided for any current or future vacancies in any of the two bodies to be filled by elections. Furthermore, Law No. 168 dated December 31, 1999, stipulates that vacancies of elected members in the Executive Council or the Sharia'a Board will be filled by virtue of a decision of the president of the Council with the approval of the body concerned for the remaining period of the mandate. With the absence of elections in practice, laws were issued by the Council of Ministers to extend the mandate of the president, vice president, the Executive Council and the Sharia'a Board.

Staff

The abovementioned law and its amendments set the number of employees of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council at 29 including the Director General (Category 1), a special Secretary for the Council's presidency (Category 1), a President of Administration (Category 2), a Secretary and a Head of Departments (5) (Category 3), an Accountant (5), an Editor (1), a Writer (6), a First Clerk or a Second Clerk (2), a Phone Officer (2), an Usher(1), a driver (1) and a office boy (1).

Succeeding presidents

The law stipulated that the president of the Council should be a Lebanese man of religion with an absolute "Ijtihad" recognized by the community. If this condition is not fulfilled, he should be a cleric known for his piety.

The first elections for the presidency of the Council took place on Thursday May 22, 1969, when Imam Moussa Sadr was elected chairman of the Council, Sheikh Suleiman Al Yahfoufi deputy of the Sharia'a Board and Dr. Adnan Haydarm deputy the Executive Council. This election was ratified by Decree No. 12529 dated May 31, 1969. In 1975, Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamseddine, the first vice president, was elected successor to Sheikh Al Yahfoufi, while Haydar remained in his position until his death in July 2011. Imam Sadr left Lebanon to Libya on an official visit in August 1978, and since then there has been no news concerning him. Some claim that the Libyan authorities executed him, whereas the Libyan regime denies this charge and asserts that Imam Sadr had left Libya for Italy, where his personal belongings were found. To this day, there is no proof that points towards either his death or survival. The vice-president (Sheikh Shamseddine) continued to serve as president and no elections took place within the two following months as stipulated by the law and the mandate of the

president did not end at the age of 65 (Imam Sadr was born on April 15, 1928, and reached the age of 65 in 1993). In 1994, Law No. 314 dated on March 24, 1994, was issued and added the following text to article 12 of the Law of the Council: "Imam Moussa Sadr shall be considered the founding president of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council for life." It is this provision that allowed the election of a new president. Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamseddine was elected president of the Council (Sheikh Abdel Amir Qabalan was elected vice president) on March 18, 1994, and died in January 2000. Decree No. 4923 dated on March 24, 1944, ratified this election. Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamseddine died on January 10, 2001, and since then, no president has been elected and the vice president, Sheikh Abdel Amir Qabalan, has been serving as president.

Budget

A special budget is annually allocated by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to cover the expenses of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council (the same applies to other official Islamic bodies). In the 2010 draft budget law, it reached around LBP 888 million distributed as follows:

- ◉ Stationery and administrative supplies: LBP 76 million
- ◉ Water, electricity and telecommunications: LBP 88 million (these allocations will be added later on)
- ◉ Rental fees: LBP 110 million
- ◉ Allowances, salaries and wages: LBP 533 million

The president of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council is granted LBP 4.4 million per month along with a seniority increase of 7% for every two years of service (this was added on January 1, 1999).

Budget of the Jaafari Ifta'

The budget of the Jaafari Ifta's (also included within the budget of the Council of Ministers) reached LBP 1,420 million distributed as follows:

- ◉ Stationery and administrative supplies: LBP 34 million
- ◉ Water, electricity and telecommunications: LBP 29.5 million (these allocations will be added later on)
- ◉ Rental fees: LBP 43 million
- ◉ Allowances, salaries and wages: LBP 1,264 million

The Huger Jaafari Mufi is granted LBP 3.9 million per month, the Jaafari Mufti obtains LBP 3.5 million per month and his secretary receives LBP 3.2 million per month. A seniority increase of 7% for every two years of effective service was added to the aforementioned allocations as of January 1, 1999. ●●

THE SHIA'A MEN OF RELIGION

Whoever of the Shia'a community (men only) wishes to become a sayed or sheikh, has to choose to enter one of the Hawzas (religious schools) located in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. These Hawzas or seminaries generally adopt the education of the same sciences and curriculum, but they differ in terms of the adopted system and educational methods within them.

Admission age

There is no specific age for joining the Hawza, but in general, the minimum age is 14 years old.

Educational level

Joining the majority of Hawzas does not require a specific educational level. The minimum required certificate is the intermediate school certificate. However, some Hawzas require obtaining a certificate from the secondary school.

Joining the Hawza

After the supervisor or administrator of the Hawza ensures the intellectual and spiritual capacity of the student, the latter shall be accepted into the Hawza to where he shall move to live in houses provided by the Hawza or in the Hawza itself and shall begin the first phase of the study.

Levels of the study

The study is divided into 3 main levels, i.e.:

- 1- Muqadamat' (introductory studies)
- 2- Sutooh (intermediary-advanced studies)
- 3- Dars kharij (advanced-Independent studies)

◉ **Muqadamat' level** (introductory studies) means the traditional sciences and is considered as a preparatory level helping the student to be specialized in Islamic and Shia'a jurisprudence. During this level, the student studies the provisions of recitation and Tajweed - Islamic tenets – Jurisprudence (Al Moujaz Book in the principles of jurisprudence, Tabsarat Addine Book in topics of faith, Inheritance, slave, marriage, taboos, hunting, slaughtering, justice, laws of Islam), Arabic language (conjugation, explanation of Ibn 'Aqeel Millennium, Akel Annada, Al Ajroumieh which is a book in declension, meaning summary, (In Al Labeeb Book), logic (the Logic Book of Muzaffar), Rhetoric (Rhetoric Jewels Book), ethics (Saadat

Mosque Book) and education. This level takes between 2 and 3 years.

- ◉ **Sutooh Al Wusta** (intermediary studies) to teach: Jurisprudence (Al Rawda Al Bahiya Book to explain Damascene Shine), principles (book in the principles teaching), Modern science - beliefs - philosophy and interpretation. The study duration is between 1 and 2 years
- ◉ **Sutooh Al Ulya** (advanced studies) to teach: Jurisprudence - assets - philosophy and takes 2 to 3 years of study. By the end of this level, the student becomes a sayed or sheikh qualified to do the religious work (prayer, preaching, counseling and others). However, some students simply pass Muqadamat' level and become mashayekh or asyad as well.
- ◉ **Dars kharij** (advanced-Independent studies) because the study is without books, which means that the teacher does not impose on the student a certain book but on researching methods. This level may take between 5 and 15 years, and then the sayed or sheikh becomes eligible for the degree of diligence by one of the references of the Shia'a tradition.

The study duration depends in general on the capacity, efficiency and seriousness of the student as it is not systematic as known. Thus, in order to reform education in the Hawzas (seminaries), some universities in Iran, Lebanon and Iraq began to teach religious studies in private colleges, but the number of students attending these colleges is still very limited in comparison with the number of students enrolled in the Hawzas.

Residence and study in Hawzas

After accepting the student in the Hawza, the administration of the Hawza takes upon itself to secure accommodation and food for the student. Some Hawzas provide students with a monthly sum of money, and with accommodation and expenses to married students.

Sources of Hawzas income

Hawzas receive income from several sources, among which the two most prominent are:

- ⦿ Contributions and donations from wealthy people or institutions
- ⦿ Funds from great religious authorities receiving assistance and funds of Al Khams (20% of the money saved and are paid one-time for the saved amount) and Zakat or almsgiving (2.5% of the total money owned by the end of the individual's financial year).

Sources of income

In Lebanon, the Shia'a men of religion registered with the "Supreme Islamic Shiite Council" earn LBP 200,000 every 3 months. Some of them receive remuneration in exchange for their work (funeral prayer, marriages and divorces contracts). Moreover, some of them get authorizations from the Shia'a authorities allowing them to gather the funds of Al Khams, Zakat, donations and other contributions. The law judges and muftis (about 30) receive a monthly salary from the Lebanese state, the amount of which is determined according to the level/grade and years of service. For example, the Shia'a religious judge (as the Sunni and Druze) receives the amount of LBP 2.1 million per month in the Grade 1 and up to LBP 5.4 million per month in the Grade 22. The Mufti receives an amount of LBP 3.5 million per month. Some of the Waqfs in the villages ensures to the village Imam some of his expenses or a house, depending on the availability of financial resources. Waqfs sources are the endowments of property and land belonging to it, contributions and donations of the wealthy people.

Shia'a Hawzas

Among the most prominent Shia'a Hawzas on the general level:

- ⦿ Scientific Hawza in Najaf in Iraq, which was held next to the shrine (tomb) of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib. It is one of the most popular and oldest Hawzas. It started in 1068 AD with its founder, Abu Jaafar al-Tusi. Since then, it became the destination of students of religious sciences from all countries where there are Shia'a, even under the rule of Saddam Hussein with harassment in certain periods.
- ⦿ Scientific Hawza in Karbala in Iraq, which was held next to the shrine of Imam Hussein Bin Ali bin Abi Talib
- ⦿ Scientific Hawza in Qom in Iran, which was held near the shrine of Fatima, the sister of Imam Ali bin Mousa's grandson, Imam Ali bin Abi Talib, in

the reign of the Safavid state (around 1140). Its role has been strengthened since the beginning of the twentieth century and reached its peak today after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979

- ⦿ Scientific Hawza in Samarra in Iraq, which was held near the shrines of Imam Ali al-Hadi and Imam Hassan Askari
- ⦿ Scientific Hawza in Mashhad in Iran

As for Lebanon, the estimated number of Hawzas is 20 among which the two biggest are:

- ⦿ Al Rassoul Al Akram Hawza for Hezbollah
- ⦿ Islamic Law Institute of Sayyed Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah

Before the establishment of Hawzas in Lebanon since the early eighties, most Shia'a students wanting to become sheikh or sayed went to Hawzas in Najaf and at a lower rate to Iran. Currently, few go to Iraq or Iran, whereas the majority studies in Hawzas in Lebanon. Studying in Hawzas in Iraq or Iran is of great importance because the teachers are from the references of the Shia'a tradition.

The number of Shia'a men of religion

The number of Shia'a men of religion is about 950 and this number has remarkably risen during the past twenty years after the establishment of Hawzas in Lebanon.

Ranks of the religious men

After the student finishes his studies of Muqadamet and Sutooh, he becomes a sayed or sheikh and his ascent to the degree of diligence happens after the end of Al Kharij study. After that, the men of religion can continue his education to reach the highest echelons which is the reference level that proves by the recognition of other religious references eligibility to take over the reference after many years of education, as well as the people acceptance of his tradition and follow ship in his judgments and fatwas. The religious reference is the highest religious authority for his followers; they refer to him in all their affairs and pay him the funds of Al Khams and Zakat. The number of the Shia'a tradition references is around 15 references (5 in Najaf, 9 in Qom, 1 in Lebanon). Among the most prominent references and the largest in terms of number of imitators are: the Iraqi reference (of Iranian origin), Sayyed Ali Al-Sistani and Sayyid Ali Khamenei, Murshid of the Islamic Republic.



THE LEBANESE RED CROSS

The Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) is a humanitarian organization that was established on July 9, 1945, as an independent national society. In 1946, it was recognized by the state as a public non profit organization and an auxiliary team to the medical services of the Lebanese Army. The Monthly interviews Mrs Rosy Boulos, Head of Emergency Medical services, about the Red Cross' mission statement, current events and plans for the future

How many centers does the Red Cross include? And how are they distributed?

Red Cross Lebanon provides its services through a network of active centers, distributed as follows:

- ◉ 32 local committees
- ◉ 43 emergency centers
- ◉ 4 communication and coordination operation chambers
- ◉ 44 social health care centers
- ◉ 15 mobile clinics
- ◉ 34 clubs and youth centers
- ◉ 11 blood transfusion centers
- ◉ Synthetic limbs workshop
- ◉ 1 college and 3 nursing centers

The Red Cross also depends on the time and efforts of 7,000 volunteers distributed as follows:

- ◉ 2,800 are stationed in paramedic troops
- ◉ 1,400 are stationed in the youth division
- ◉ 2,800 are stationed in the various centers to tend to activities

The total number of services provided by the Red Cross in 2010 was:

- ◉ Emergencies: 197,755 tasks
- ◉ Social and medical services: 260,146 tasks
- ◉ Blood unit distribution: 24,608 units
- ◉ Radiation: 4,438 units
- ◉ Youth programs: 124,245 beneficiaries
- ◉ First-Aid workshop: 7,763 beneficiaries
- ◉ Nursing: 50 graduates
- ◉ Transmission and publishing: 1,389 people

The cost of these services rose up to LBP8,697,106,652.

Can you tell us about training your paramedics?

Each paramedic is required to act in life-threatening situations such as car accidents, heart attacks, fatal injuries, mountain emergencies, etc. They should be quick and knowledgeable because sometimes they are the deciding factor between life and death. So we are meticulous about selecting the correct training methods and we are strict about applying the basics to perfection. In terms of designing training programs, we try to obtain the assistance of experts, so we work in cooperation with "Société de Coopération Suisse"

in programming training schools where our trainees pursue workshops for 8 months - 1 year. Ambulance drivers take up extra training before getting a license.

We also have special arrangements for snow accident emergencies. We witness many accidents of this sort in winter and during the ski season in Lebanon. Our trainees are sent to Norway to pursue extensive training on how to use instruments and cars used in mountain emergencies.

What are your development strategies focused on?

We formed a committee of Red Cross paramedics and with the help of an expert from Canada, we started evaluating all Red Cross emergency centers to establish a 5-year-development plan that includes 8 focus points:

- ◉ Cars and Equipment: we are aiming to replace all vehicles that were used in the 2006 July War and the events of Nahr-el-Bared and we are also working on bringing our mountain emergency vehicles up-to-date.
- ◉ Centers: with the assistance of engineers and architects, we are trying to unify the construction and interior design of our emergency centers so we can create a common identity.
- ◉ IT and communication: we are aiming to use computers for filing and saving information. We are also trying to switch to e-mail as a main communication tool, we have also established internet connection in all of our centers.
- ◉ Other main focus points revolve around: development training, human resources, legal systems, equipment and volunteering.

How many volunteers do you have?

We have 6,000 volunteers distributed as follows:

- ◉ 2,600 in emergency troops
- ◉ 1,400 in the youth division
- ◉ 2,000 distributed in various centers and activities

Our employees and staff reach 255 people.

And how do you describe volunteering amongst youth?

My first memory about the Red Cross goes back to the Lebanese civil war, when the pounding of bombs and

gunshots was always accompanied with ambulance sirens. This memory had always imprinted the courage and dedication I first perceived in the Red Cross. When I took charge of the emergency division, the 2006 July War erupted, and I expected fear and hesitation to spread amongst our volunteers. I was surprised to see that our youth were dedicated to aiding the injured, even when the areas in question were being bombarded. When we lost some of our paramedics in the attacks, I noticed how this dedication gained even more momentum.

Did you feel there was any change in this dedication between the civil war and the July war?

I have completed 20 years in the Lebanese Red Cross and I have not seen any changes in our young volunteers when it comes to aiding those in need. The circumstances of the attack do not afflict this dedication in any way.

How do you maintain the concept of non-discrimination in your centers?

You can say we follow an “Army” system. Addressing religious beliefs, skin color, politics, sex, is not permitted in any way. Any member who crosses this line is immediately deprived of his Red Cross card. In this spirit, we have organized a day where Lebanese from different areas gather in the Murr Stadium to draw a painting called “إيدك معنا” (idak ma’ana). We used this handmade painting to promote unity disregarding, age, sex, origin and political beliefs. This painting was listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the largest handmade artwork in the world.

How do you deal with traffic?

We don’t always find immediate responses from the drivers. Our ambulances only use the siren if the case they are transporting is a matter of life or death. Unfortunately, in addition to the lack of response, some cars find an easy leeway from the traffic by following close lead on the ambulance’s passing. We are trying to resort to awareness on this issue and to emphasize the importance of this topic.

What are your means of awareness?

The media is of great help in terms of advertising and promoting our image to the public. Security forces also provide cooperation and assistance. We do not resort to direct awareness. We consider ourselves as a back-up force for NGO awareness raising. We especially assist organizations that work on traffic and car accidents in terms of statistics and assessment.

How does the Red Cross fund these services and activities?

We fund them from the following:

- ◉ Volunteers’ membership subscriptions
- ◉ Symbolic fees collected for medical services, blood transfusions, preventive instructions and teaching programs
- ◉ Annual fund-raising campaigns (contributions of the Lebanese community)
- ◉ Donations, legacies and support from individuals, firms and institutions
- ◉ Programs financed by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross-Geneva
- ◉ Contracts with the public sector (particularly the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of the Displaced)
- ◉ Programs financed by international institutions

Is your funding sufficient to cover all your needs?

We do suffer from a lack of daytime volunteers. Most of the youth tend to go towards night time volunteering, as they work or study during the day. Sadly, we cannot afford to provide a full-time salary for daytime volunteers. This is a problematic issue we are currently working on.

Why is the crescent used in some countries instead of the cross? Are there any other equivalent symbols?

In 1864, the red cross on a white background was created for emergency troops in honor of founder Henry Dunant, who is Swiss. The colors of the Swiss flag were simply inverted.

During the Ottoman-Russian war in 1876, the Ottomans demanded using the colors of the ottoman flag (white crescent on a red background) to differentiate between medical troops and Russian soldiers. After the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, the red crescent was used. In December 2005, the Geneva accords included a third protocol that stipulates the use of the “red crystal”, which enjoys the same characteristics and function as the Red Crescent and the Red Cross. The protocol was put in action in 2007.

Governments select the protection badge to be used by the army medical crew and national organizations supporting general authorities. In each country, there is only one Red Cross or Red Crescent organization.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations celebrate the International Red Cross/ Crescent day on May 8, which is the birthday of founder Henry Dunant.

POPULAR CULTURE

St. Grace's holiday

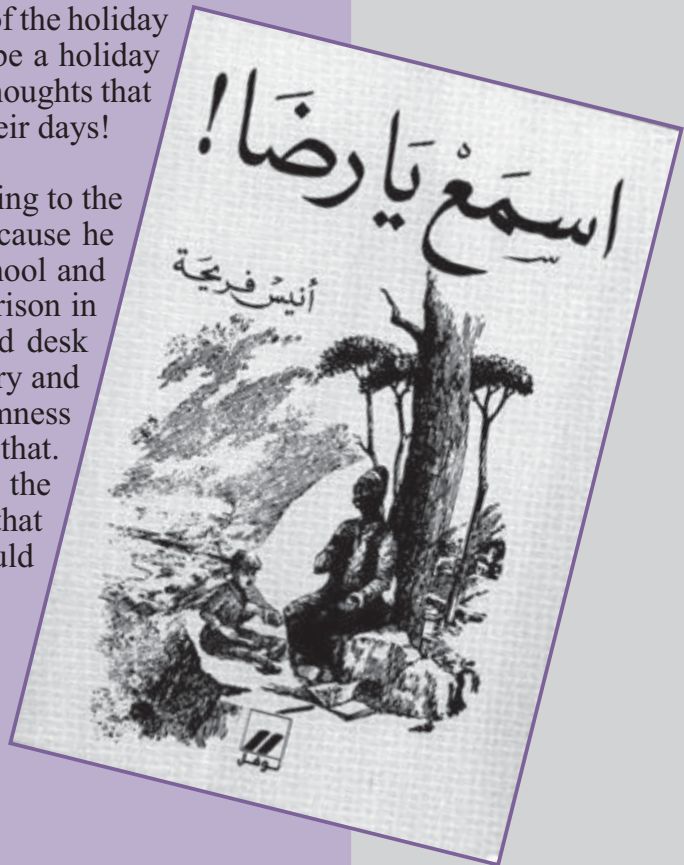
Listen Oh Rida!

When I was telling you about the holidays yesterday, I told you that St. Grace's holiday is the best of all holidays and concludes the spring festivals. It is really a holiday because it is a spring holiday and the spring farewell holiday. When the spring holiday is over, the village goes back to being serious. After St. Grace comes the summer, then fall and in our village, they don't celebrate in the summer and in the fall... St. Grace's holiday in our village is a day when the village forgets all its miseries and concerns and everyone enjoys life. St. Grace's holiday is a holiday for the youth.

This holiday was long waited for. We waited for the holiday 364 days in our village. The holiday was joyful. It was clothes and shoes, food and candy. We waited for the holiday. I waited for the holiday with much concern! I would be worried and scared the evening of the holiday!

The first thing that came to my mind the day of the holiday was for it to be a Saturday or a Sunday, to be a holiday where the school would be closed... These thoughts that went through children's minds and ruined their days!

Your grandfather forbid me one day from going to the monastery with the people in the village because he didn't want me to skip school! I went to school and I remember that day: a day I cried! I'm in prison in teacher Najib's school sitting behind the old desk and the sun is shining outside and it is flowery and it is a holiday!... I felt your grandfather's firmness that day and your grandfather was not like that. After that Rida, I prayed while I waited for the holiday that it would come on a holiday or that teacher Najib would be sick and so we would be happy!



Sources translated from: Anis Freiha, *Isma'a ya Rida - First Edition 2006, Dar Nawfal, Beirut*

THE HUMAN BRAIN

MYTH: Human Beings Use Only 10% of Their Brain

A widespread popular psychology myth assumes that human beings use only 10% of their brain and the remaining part is mostly inactive (Passer & Smith, 2010).

FACT: Human Beings Use the Whole of Their Brain

The myth is false. Several well evidenced rationales help us detect the wrongfulness of this myth. From a biological perspective, brain imaging techniques such as EEG, CAT, PET and fMRI show that the brain displays pervasive stimulation for any given activity, such as eating, walking, reading, writing and even sleeping. Moreover, though various activities stimulate certain specific areas of the brain, at the end of the day, almost all of the brain is used at one time or the other. Brain activity can be compared to muscle activity. At a certain time, human beings do not use all of their muscles; however, during the course of a day, they would use most if not all of their muscles.

Studies examining brain damages also disprove this myth. In fact, damage to fairly small areas of the brain may result in devastating disabilities. Hence, damages to 90% of the brain can be expected to be devastating. Furthermore, research results from neuropsychological studies also reject this myth. In truth, the brain development process requires the pruning of synapses that are not used to ensure the proper functioning of the nervous system.

The myth can also be questioned from an evolutionary perspective. It is very unlikely to develop a resource devouring organ, of which human beings need only 10%.

Possible sources of the myth and its survival

The origin of the myth is not clear. It can be dated back to William James who argued that human beings achieve only 10% of their potential. People might have misused the “potential”, and transformed it to “brain” capacity. Moreover, neuro-psychologists also promote that a huge part of the brain, the association cortex, is a silent cortex which is responsible for the functioning of the higher order (language, abstract thinking, reasoning, etc.). This silent cortex might have been mistakenly considered as a “no function” area. Others argue that the myth might be inspired by the work of some neuro-psychologists, who found that rats can still perform specific behaviors even though some parts of their brain were removed.

As for the survival of the myth, it can also be tracked to promoters of psychic powers and paranormal potentials. They attribute these potentials to the ability of accessing the “unused” parts of the brain. Another possible reason for the survival of the myth may be the mass media that highly publicized it and inserted it in the popular culture.

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DAMASCUS

A TRAVEL GUIDE

Damascus, A Travel Guide¹, by Carole Corm and May Mamarbachi, is a “must read” for any traveler spending more than a few days in the “eternal city.” Because Damascus has so much to offer from a historical, cultural and touristic perspective, this book illustrates why it is important to visit the city today before the winds of change alter the character of the prized souks, the beautiful mosques, and the hidden Ottoman palaces.

The writers start their book by providing practical information necessary for any traveler visiting Damascus. This practical information includes basic data about Syria (e.g: population and currency), Syrian holidays, information on visas and borders, how to fly to Damascus, neighborhoods, useful numbers, medical centers, embassies, cultural centers, festivals, etc. They then provide a brief history of Damascus, focusing on the important eras that shaped the culture of the old city and cites all the important locations that should be visited (museums, palaces, mosques, churches, neighborhoods).

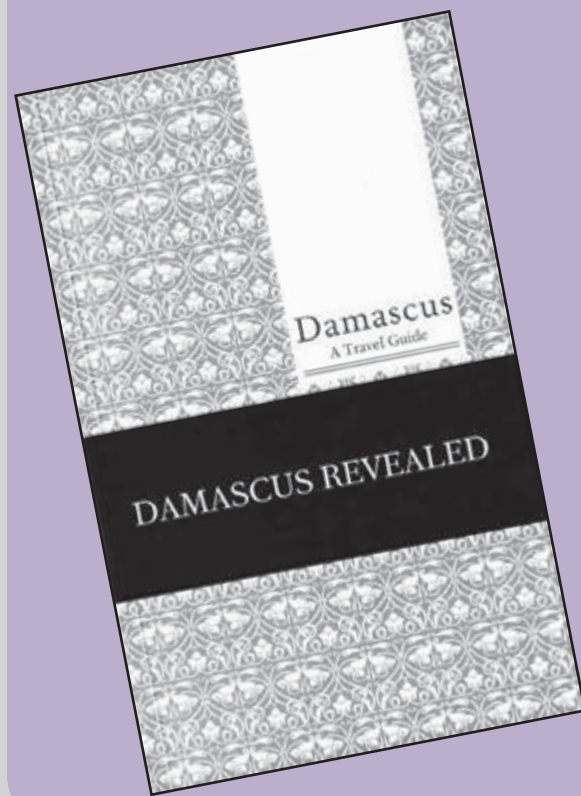
Damascus, also known as “The Jasmine City”, was ruled by various dynasties, which enriched the culture, society and architecture of the city. It had one of the oldest Christian communities in the world. It was under the control of Salaheddine (Saladin) and the Ayyubids, the Mamluks, the Ottomans and fell under French mandate. Modern Damascus has undergone a series of changes to respond to the increase in population all the while making efforts to preserve the old city.

Carol Corm and May Mamarbachi also advise the travelers on how to spend their leisure time, either by going shopping (they provide detailed information on markets and shops), eating out (they provide detailed information about Syrian cuisine and other cuisines together with the names of restaurants and coffee shops), and visiting hotels or hammams.

In a bid to gain credibility, the authors add advice from Syrian specialists and residents providing general guidance to visitors regarding the various choices they have to experience Damascus. For example, Missak Baghboudaria, the head of the Syrian National Symphony Orchestra, talks about the opera house, music stores and how he feels peace of mind in the old city.

The book also mentions some interesting subjects that travelers would be interested to know about such as street food, night life, Syrian lingerie, religions, cinemas, literature, art, etc. For example, Chadwan Al Yaghchi, a local resident, talks about the Midan Jazmatiyya area and Shaalanas, his favorite restaurant, which offer a variety of choices including shawarma, fatayer, foul, fatteh, hummus, falafel, etc.

Through its accurate information and beautiful array of images, Damascus, A Travel Guide, provides the reader with a deep understanding of the city by describing its historical and cultural aspects, the travel adventure and relaxation options.



1 Published by La Revue Phénicienne, 2010.

“OLIVER TWIST”*

The internationally renowned classic “Oliver Twist” by Charles Dickens, one of the most popular English novelists of the Victorian era, is retold by Brenda Lewis and Ronne Randall.

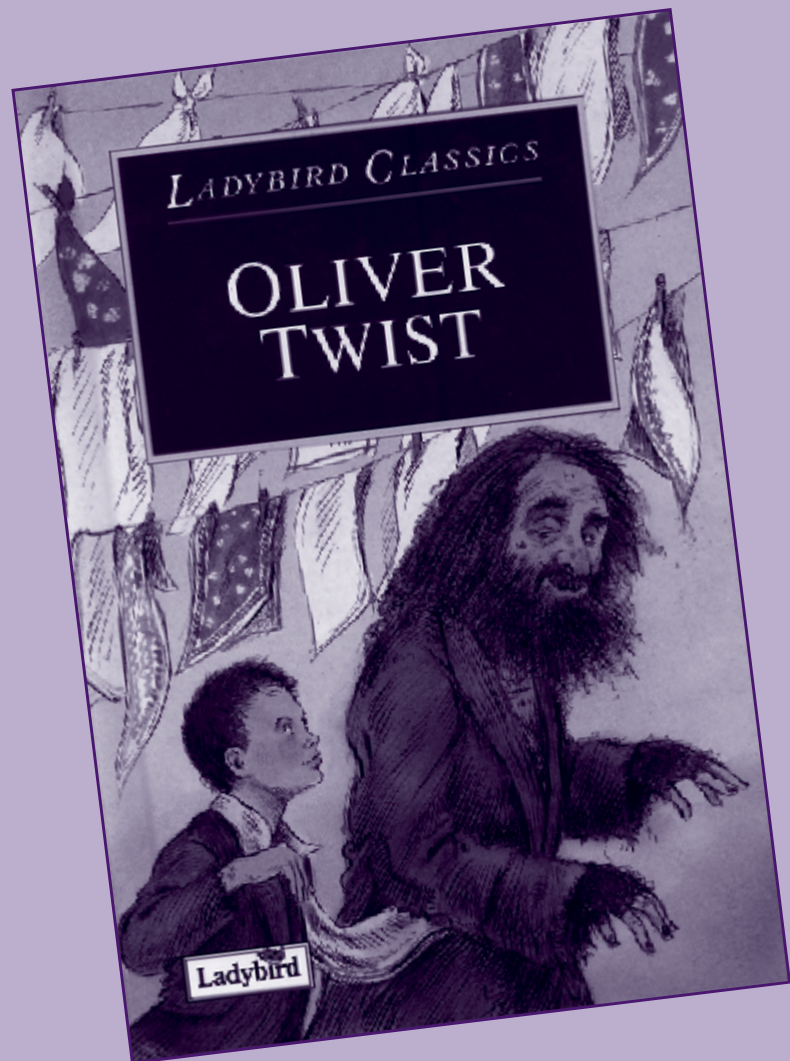
“Oliver Twist” and other publications that deal with poverty were inspired by Charles Dickens’ experience during his childhood. Dickens was pushed into child labor at a very young age after his father was imprisoned when he was 12 years old.

“Oliver Twist” describes the journey of hardship of a poor little boy called Oliver and how his life takes an unexpected positive turn. Children are taught the importance of good deeds and that after hard times, good things come along.

The story is illustrated by colored images on every third page to keep the children interested and make them relate to the places and characters.

The book is recommended for children in late elementary and early intermediate levels and can be read to younger children.

*Oliver Twist is part of the collection “Ladybird Classic” published by Ladybird Books. The collection includes other classics such as: Heidi, The Three Musketeers, Gulliver’s Travels, Treasure Island, The Secret Garden, The Wind in the Willows, Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan, among others.



ASWAD FAMILIES

Originally from Houran in Syria

This family originates from the Bani Sarkis Al Khoury family from “Athra’a” in Houran. The grandfather of the family is Ibrahim Bin Jerjes Bin Sarkis Al Khoury, who was referred to as Al Aswad due to his dark color. They came to Lebanon during the Ottoman era in 1517 and lived in Ras Baalbeck and then moved to Trablous (which used to be known as Trablous Al Sham).

At the beginning of the 17th century, “Ibrahim Bin Jerjes Al Aswad” was close to the rulers of Trablous, who assigned him to fight the Abi Rishah Shia’a tribe. He accomplished his mission and defeated the tribe. The rulers thanked him by moving him to the Trablous Port area. Later, some of his brothers moved to Mounsef and Jbeil and the rest followed but Jerjes Bin Ibrahim moved to Broumana.

There are around 910 members of the Al Aswad (the majority) and Aswad families. They are distributed according to confession and region as follows:

Maronites: 314 members

- Jezzine: 123 members
- Broumana (North Matn): 57 members
- Rmeil (Beirut 1): 25 members
- Achrafieh (Beirut 1): 21 members
- Ain Al Roummaneh (Baabda): 17 members
- Naccache (North Matn): 13 members
- Chiyyah Hay Karam Al Zaytoun (Baabda): 11 members
- Bakaseen (Jezzine): 11 members
- Al Bashoura (Beirut 2): 8 members

A limited number live in: Ras Beirut (1 member), Mina Al Hosn (6 members), Antelias-Al Matn (6 members), Al Mheidtheh-Al Matn (7 members), Jisr El Basha-Sin El Fil (1 member), Nahr Ibrahim-Jbeil (1 member), Deir Al Qamar-Chouf (4 members), Saqiet Al Misk-North Matn (6 members) and Ban-Bcharri (6 members).

Orthodox: 231 members

- Broumana (North Matn): 175 members
- Chiyyah Hay Karam Al Zaytoun (Baabda): 43 members

A limited number live in: Dekwaneh-North Matn (3 members), Kefr Saroun-Koura (7 members) and Douma-Batroun (3 members).

Sunni: 182 members

- Kamed Al Lawz (Western Beqa’a): 38 members
- Al Hadeed (Trablous): 38 members
- Zqaq Al Blat (Beirut 3): 28 members
- Al Mseitbeh (Beirut 3): 16 members
- Al Mina’ (Trablous): 14 members
- Al Bashoura (Beirut 2): 11 members
- Al Haddadeen (Trablous): 11 members
- Al Souweiqah (Trablous): 10 members

A limited number live in: Al Mazra’a (8 members), Al Ghbeireh Bir Hassan-Baabda (8 members).

Catholics: 97 members

- Al Rmeil (Beirut 1): 29 members
 - Al Moudawar (Beirut 2): 27 members
 - Al Saifi (Beirut 1): 15 members
 - Ain Al Roummaneh (Baabda): 13 members
- A limited number live in: Nahr Ibrahim-Jbeil (6 members) and Ajaltoun-Keserouane (7 members).

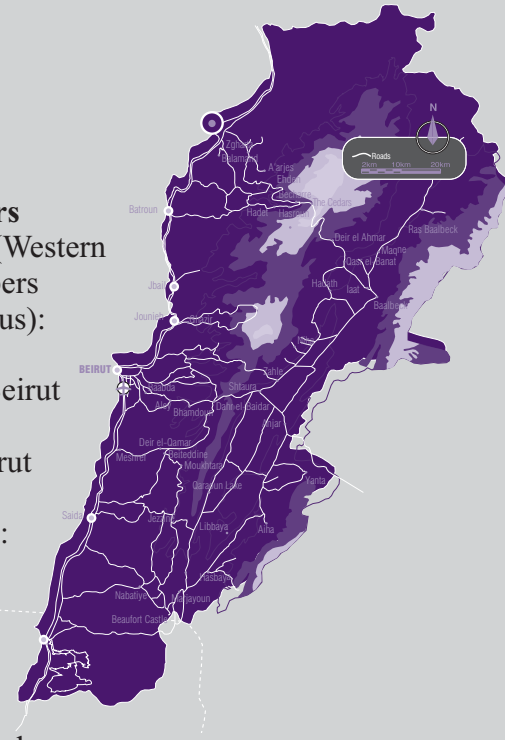
Some of the Al Aswad and Aswad family members belong to the following confessions:

Alawi: 59 members who live in Al Tebbeneh (Trablous)
 Syriac Catholics: 21 members who live in Rmeil, Achrafieh and Al Safra (Keserouane)
 Armenian Orthodox and Catholic Orthodox: 7 members who live in Rmeil and Achrafieh

Families deriving from Al Aswad

A number of families derive from Al Aswad family including:

Younes in Qalb Elias
 Nassar, Nader, Abou Nasr, Ghosn, Abou Farah, Adou Fares, Abou Jreij, Abou Badran in Mounsef and from Al Nassar derived Al Naseef in Aramoun
 Al Ouqoud in Arsoun
 Al Aqad, Al Mi’mari, Rbeiz and Al Am in Beirut
 Baroudi in Souq Al Gharb
 Al Daraqabli in Deir Qawbal
 Al Bikh’azi in Beirut



BATROUMEEN IN KOURA

rests on a kingdom of Roman remains

Etymology

In his book “Names of Lebanese Towns and Villages”, Anis Freiha traces the origin of the name to 2 possibilities:

- A Syriac word composed of two parts, “Betrumin”, meaning an elevated location. “Room” refers to altitude.
- A Syriac word, “Bet -romin”, meaning a military camp. This means that in the past it was most likely a military camp used to protect high commanders. Thus, it refers to the hierarchy in position.

For the Romans, Batroumeen means the land of power and fertility. In those times, the inhabitants of the town were the point of contact between the valleys and mountains. The locals believe the name refers to an old ruler of the town called Roumeen, who resided there.

Location: The town of Batroumeen is located South-East of the city of Trablous in the Qada'a of Koura, in the Mohafaza of the North, at an altitude of 320m above sea level. It lies 85km from the capital Beirut, 9km from the center of the Qada'a (Amioun) and 15km from the center of the Mohafaza. It extends over 338 hectares and can be reached by 3 different routes.

Population: The number of inhabitants registered at the Personal Status Register is estimated at around 1,700, most of whom belong to the Orthodox confession (98%) with a minority of Maronites (2%). There are around 250 houses and 30 commercial shops in the town.

Voters: In 2000, there were 1,171 registered voters, of whom 408 cast their ballots. In 2005, the number increased to 1,213, with 601 males and 612 females, but only 370 registered voters cast their ballots. By 2009, the number of registered voters hadn't changed, however the number of those casting their ballots increased to 437.

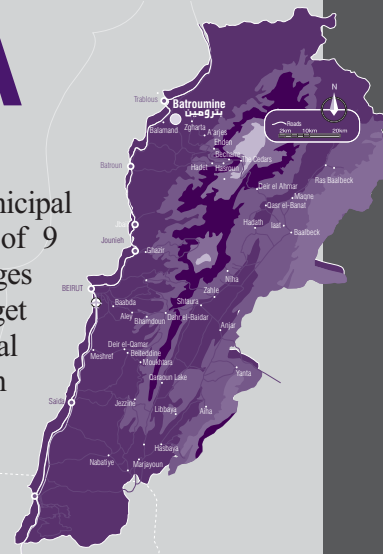
- Orthodox voters are distributed among the following families:

Najjar (Al Najjar): 318 voters, Hreiki: 120 voters, Mansour: 100 voters, Ghanem: 95 voters, Qoborsi: 85 voters, Mlees: 66 voters, Qatreeb: 66 voters, Fayyad: 55 voters, Fakhoury: 40 voters, Daher: 40 voters, Jreij: 35 voters, Shikhani: 31 voters, Dairy: 30 voters, Laqees: 17 voters, Khoury: 10 voters, In addition to the following families: Deeb, Sassine, Georges, Hajj, Jabbour, Helou, Hanna and Sama'an.

- Shamali family (Maronites): 15 voters

Local authorities: The municipality of Batroumeen was established by virtue of Decree No. 1254 dated

December 30, 1963. The municipal council is currently composed of 9 members and is headed by Georges Mansour. The municipality's budget from the Independent Municipal Fund reached LBP 59.6 million in 2005 and rose to LBP 101.2 million in 2006. In 2007, it decreased to LBP 99.3 million and the same amount was granted to it in 2008. There is also a Mukhtar, Jamal Mounir Ghanem, and a 3 member ikhtiyariah body.



Educational institutions

There are 2 schools in the town, 1 public and 1 private:

- Batroumeen Mixed Public School: it is an elementary and intermediate school.
- The International School: it is a private school that was established in 1990. It goes from the kindergarten to the secondary level and can hold up to 1,920 students.

Economy: Residents of Batroumeen rely on agriculture, namely olive trees, while some work in the public sector. Money sent from immigrants also represents a major source of income.

Archeological sites: Batroumeen has a cultural quarter where there is a church along with cultural sites and domes dating back to the Roman and Byzantine eras. It also has an oil refinery and ceramic pots, some of which date back to Roman times. The municipality is currently working with UNESCO to rehabilitate cultural sites in the town as new sites are being discovered with more and more archeological digs being carried out.

Challenges: Similarly to other Lebanese towns and villages, Batroumeen suffers from a lack of sewage network, electricity and water problems in addition to a high immigration rate.

Decree No. 2045

Prosecution of the guard of the village

Based on Decree No. 2044 dated July 11, 1935, the Public Prosecution was granted the permission to prosecute Mikhael Abboud Fayyad, the guard of the village of Batroumeen (Mohafaza of the North), for abuse of his profession.

THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL

IF THE TRIBUNAL IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL OF LEBANON, IS THE TRUTH FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL OF LEBANON?

It is called the Special Tribunal “for Lebanon”, located in The Hague in the Netherlands, and its mission is to uncover who planned and implemented the assassination of the former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri. One of its heroes is international investigator Detlev Mehlis and his successor Serge Brammertz as well as Judge Daniel Bellemare and everyone who is burning to know the truth and has appointed himself a defender of it, throwing accusations left and right. Its budget amounts to USD 73.9 million and Lebanon must pay 49% of it.

The stances regarding it have been conflicting. March 14 is a fervent supporter of the tribunal while March 8 is asking for more talks and discussions regarding it. Here are some of the opinions concerning the tribunal.

In favor

Saad Hariri: “There are a lot of things on which we will not compromise and the international tribunal is one of them (...) We will also not compromise on the issue of Hezbollah’s weapons, the composition of the international tribunal and the blood of Rafic Hariri.” (An Nahar, 14-12- 2005)

Samir Geagea: “Abolishing the STL would be committing the biggest crime ever committed in Lebanon (...) The tribunal and civil peace go together because there would be no real peace without questioning, investigating and follow up... There is an attempt to abolish the tribunal and miss out on a historical opportunity to solve the issue regarding assassinations in Lebanon.” (Al Mustqbal, 26-9-2010)

Amine Gemayyel: “If I were to choose between an international tribunal associated with the problems on the ground and no tribunal, I would choose the tribunal.” (Al Akhbar, 27-9-2010)

Farid Makari: “The campaign that Hezbollah has launched on the tribunal gives the impression that it is confused, scared and unsure about something. Justice is the basis of state building, it is the protector of citizens of this state and there will be no real stability without justice.” (Al Nashra, 6-10-2010)

Patriarch Sfeir: “The international tribunal should not be politicized and it should look for the truth and spread it. Until today, it has not proven to be unjust. The international tribunal should continue its work no matter the cost.” (Arab News Agency, 30-3-2010)

Against

Wiam Wahab: “This tribunal deserves the death penalty.” (Al Siyassah Al Kuwaitiyyah, 19-7-2010)

Suleiman Franjeh: “The international tribunal obtained its information from the Lebanese authorities and especially from the Information Branch. If the international tribunal is after strife in Lebanon, why has it not been abolished?” (Al Akhbar, 24-9-2010)

Mohammad Raad: “Accepting the international tribunal’s current path would be burying the truth regarding the assassination of Rafic Hariri because this tribunal is politicized and works according to the will of its funding powers (...)” (Al Akhbar, 27-9-2010)

President Michel Suleiman: “What is required is for the tribunal to regain its trust by demonstrating its independence from politics, investigating all the possibilities and examining all the facts.” (Al Akhbar, 27-9-2010)

Michel Aoun: “I cannot approve of the tribunal if it does not follow a righteous path (...) It is more than politicized. We want to know who killed Rafic Hariri and why. But we do not want to attribute the crime to someone or to a group that did not commit it. We believe that the investigation is not heading in the right direction and we doubt the trustworthiness of the tribunal publicly because it did not follow the right path in the investigation. It should correct its path regarding the investigation.” (Interview with Al Jazeera, 18-9-2010)

Naim Qassem: “(...) For us, funding by Lebanon should be rejected because nobody can ask us to fund a tribunal that threatens us with a sword (...) The tribunal is following a path while the truth is on another path. We do not trust the international community. This tribunal has a problem, the leaks have become clear and this is a wrong direction.” (Al Akhbar, 1-1-2010)

Talal Arslan: “Israel is present at the heart of this institution (the tribunal).” (As Safir, 3-5-2011)

HARIRI: “WE CANNOT STAY SILENT AGAINST THE BLOODY DEVELOPMENTS IN SYRIA”

Nasrallah: the implementation of warrants will not take place not even in 300 years, 100 indictments would not achieve any of the goals; Trust given to Mikati's government with 68 votes; Hariri: Mikati stabbed me in the back and Assad and Nasrallah threw me off the chair; The seven Estonians released and the government is absent; Salameh continues to be the governor of the Lebanese Central Bank until 2017 and administrative appointments take place; The space in Lasa provokes vices and confessional and political divisions; Kheireddine instead of Arslan in the government; Williams: “possible confessional confrontations in Lebanon in consequence to the events of Syria”; The French forces in UNIFIL were attacked in Saida The flag of Hezbollah gets burnt in Tripoli

2 July

- The Parliamentary Future Bloc announces, after its meeting which was presided by the Fouad Seniora, its decision of not granting Mikati's government its trust and that things before the indictment are different from after it.

- Said Mirza announces that the arresting warrants issued by the international tribunal have taken their way to implementation.

- MP Walid Jumblatt held a press conference where he wondered about the time of issuance of the international tribunal's indictment in conjunction with the ministerial statement of the government considering that they suspiciously coincide, stressing on the inevitable correlation between stability and justice, recalling the words of president Rafic Hariri that “no one is bigger than his country” and calling for the return of dialogue.

4 July

- Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in response to the indictment of Hezbollah members “the implementation of the arresting warrants will not take place not even in 300 years and the tribunal is Israeli-American”, announcing that Hezbollah refuses to cooperate with the tribunal.

- A conference for March 14 forces takes place in Bristol Hotel in which it declares the work to overthrow the government and launch a political campaign to free the republic from arms considering that the current government is a coup d'état government against

democracy demanding the prime minister to explicitly commit to the tribunal according to the resolution 1757 “or else the government and its prime minister should resign”.

5 July

- Hezbollah reveals Israeli customs documents concerning the transportation of the computers of the International Commission of Inquiry into Israel.

- A commemoration to mark the one year passing of Sayyed Mohammad Hussein Fadelallah in Al-Kawthar compound in Beir Hassan and is attended by Speaker Nabih Berri, Fouad Seniora who sat next to Speaker Hussein Al-Husseini and Sheikh Naim Kassem in addition to MP Ali Kansouh and the Ambassador of Iran. Speaker Berri considers “the indictment is one of the tools of creative chaos”.

- Judge Daniel Bellmare in response to Nasrallah says “we welcome getting any piece of information”

6 July

- The parliament starts the discussion of the ministerial statement of the new Lebanese government and the number of spokespersons is 23. MP Marwan Hamadi addresses Mikati saying “your friend Hariri was not killed in principle” in response to what was mentioned in the ministerial statement about the international tribunal.

- Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in a celebration for Hizbollah Al-Jarha foundation “we do not bargain between stability and justice

because bargaining is accepting the indictment” reassuring that Hezbollah “is neither isolated nor afraid or confused and does not care.”

7 July

- The monthly statement of the Maronite patriarchs “achieving justice halts the series of assassinations and buries divisions”.

- Verbal confrontation in the parliament between MPs Aassem Kansouh and Khaled Al-Daher in the background of Kansouh's words about Al-Daher “who is that dog” and it almost turned into a fist fight, in addition to another verbal confrontation between MPs Nohad Al-Mashnouk and Nawwaf Al-Mosawy who said about Al-Mashnouk “you are a spy for the intelligence and your price is known”.

- The parliamentary sessions continue for the second day discussing the government's ministerial statement in which 27 MPs spoke.

8 July

- The sessions for the discussion of the ministerial statement adjourn and the government was given the trust from 68 MPs after the unanimous withdrawal of the Future MPs from the session. 8 MPs spoke in that session. President Mikati in response to the speeches of the MPs addresses president Seniora saying “I write with a pen while you write with a pencil”.

- The Syrian Ambassador to Lebanon, Ali Abed Al-Kareem Al-Ali visits patriarch Al-Rai.

9 July

- The former MP Wiam Wahhab says from Damascus University “when the NATO intervenes, 100,000 missiles will be dropped on Israel”.

- The Muslim cleric Omar Bakri in a conversation with Al-Safir newspaper said “the tribunal is the enemy of Islam”.

- Marches in Tripoli after Friday’s prayer in solidarity with the Syrian people and to condemn the system. Sheikh Zakaria Al-Masri preaches the demonstrators and attacks Iran and Hezbollah.

11 July

- The election of Yara Al-Khoury Micheal as Miss Lebanon for 2011 in a party organized by the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation in Beirut Souks in Downtown.

12 July

- Fire in a plastic factory in Mazraat Yashouh owned by the minister of tourism, Fady Abboud.

- MP Walid Jumblatt in an interview with MTV: if Saad Hariri was prime minister, we would have avoided lots of reactions and the postponing of the indictment was the endeavor of Saad Hariri who advised him to have a dialogue with Berri and Sayyed Nasrallah.

13 July

- President Saad Hariri on MTV attacks PM Najib Mikati (Mikati stabbed me in the back) and minister Mohammad Safady and says that Assad and Nasrallah threw me off the chair and Aoun is a second degree officer for Hezbollah. And 300 press conferences for Hezbollah will not change the indictment.

14 July

- Minister Mohammad Al-Safady in response to Hariri’s words against him said: “the history of the Sunna is innocent of your provoking language that does not look like your father’s heritage and deforms the truth”.

15 July

- The release of the seven Estonians after 114 days since they were kidnapped with a technical assistance from the French embassy in Beirut. Talks about the government being absent from the release that took place in Al-Tibeh valley in Bekaa and the Minister of Interior and Municipalities, Marwan Charbel said that “the intelligence unit had the most important role in the release of the Estonians.”

- The parliament in its first session after trust was granted to the government re-appoints Riad Salameh as the governor of the Lebanese Central Bank for another six years, Walid Salman as the LAF’s chief of staff, and Antoine Chokeir as the general director of the presidency.

- Verbal confrontation and the objection of the residents of Lasa town (Shia’a) in the district of Jbeil on the presence of a delegation from the Maronite League and experts in survey after the civil engineers tried to survey lands belonging to the Maronite Patriarchate of Jounieh that comes as an implementation of the judicial decision that dictates drawing the borders of the lands. This disagreement goes back to 1939.

16 July

- The Pope represented by the President of the Council of Eastern Catholic Patriarchs in Rome, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri during his visit to Lebanon, grants the business man Sarkis Sarkis the medal of saint Gregoire le Grand of a knight’s rank in the name of the Pope based on the request of Bishop Joseph Bshara.

18 July

- Dinner at the President’s House in Amchit in the honor of the patriarch Bshara Al-Rai that included Nabih Berri, Najib Mikati, General Micheal Aoun and a number of ministers and MPs where President Suleiman called for the return to dialogue.

19 July

- A decree for appointing Marwan Kheireddine as a minister of state instead of the minister Talal Arslan was issued.

- The parliament concedes in the governmental saray and appoints the general Abbas Ibrahim as a general director of the general security and general Raymond Khattar as a general director of the civil defense.

- Patriarch Bshara Al-Rai from Jbeil: “we are with justice through the tribunal on condition that it should not be politicized”.

20 July

- Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah: 100 indictments will not achieve any of the goals and we will get out of this conspiracy more powerful.

- Antoine Khoury Harb of the journalism department in the Lebanese university second branch was beaten up, and the translation course exam was cancelled after the questions were slipped to the students.

- The appeal chamber in the international tribunal asks Francine to reconsider the documents that General Jamil Al-Sayyid requested and whether there were any documents that should not be revealed.

- MTV crew was attacked in Lasa, and the station accuses the residents and Hezbollah

21 July

- General Abbas Ibrahim the director general of the general security after receiving his tasks says “I will work with Hezbollah same as with the Lebanese Forces”.

- A meeting in Bkerki with a parliamentary and political delegation to deal with the subject of real estate and borders in Lasa.

- Council of Ministers meeting in the presidential palace in Baabda declares the normal agenda except the clause of agreeing on the memorandum between the Ministry of Energy and Water and the Iranian

Ministry of Energy and Oil.

- MP Walid Jumblatt from Moscow: “Lebanon accepts the indictment but rejects foreign intervention.”

22 July

- Michael Williams the representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in Lebanon after a session of the Security Council: “possible confessional confrontations in Lebanon as a consequence of the events in Syria.”

23 July

- The American embassy in Beirut in one of its statements declares that the United States supports neither Israel nor Lebanon on the issue of determining the maritime borders between the two countries and that it is not part in this case that should be solved diplomatically by the parties themselves and it is willing to help.

25 July

- MP Walid Jumblatt from Rashaya: “the recovery of wounded Syria will only take place by punishing the people responsible for the crimes” declaring his rejection to division and that “only free people can free the oppressed.”

26 July

- President Micheal Suleiman after welcoming the delegation of the national campaign for a Lebanese law of personal status: “we are with an election law according to proportionality and with a civil law for personal affairs”.

- The passing of Fahman (Mahmoud Mabsout) from a heart attack on stage in Kfarsir, South Lebanon.

27 July

- The Future Bloc: the campaign against Hariri aims at political assassination and it is obviously due to the “bankruptcy of reason and political excuses.”

- A meeting in the Bristol Hotel for 300 humanitarians from March 14 forces

supporting the international tribunal.

- Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in memory of the July war: “our oil infrastructure in exchange with Israeli’s”.

- An explosion on the southern entrance of Saida near the bridge of Saineek targeting a French convoy of the UNIFIL and wounds 5.

- The Minister of Energy and Oil, Gibran Basil visits Syria and meets President Bashar Assad. News that President Assad invited him (meaning Aoun) to facilitate the work of Mikati government and to allow Russian oil companies take care of the oil drilling in the future.

28 July

- Former MPs decide to help in implementing the Ta’if agreement starting from the parliamentary election law after meeting in the parliament.

- Samir Geagea in the launching of the electronic television for the Lebanese Forces: “no stability with the security islands and arms” and the Lebanese government is old-fashioned in the mentality, actions and goals.

29 July

- The American President Barack Obama renews the sanctions against the Syrian and Lebanese personalities that were imposed since August 2007 because of their role in threatening the stability of Lebanon and its institutions.

- The American Ambassador in Lebanon, Maura Connelly warns Lebanon from losing democratic gains in the shadow of a government that expresses the will of the people less and the will of foreign interests more.

- The military court postpones the prosecution of Fayez Karam until 30 of August which finds criticism from Free Patriotic Movement MPs and lawyers.

- President Berri receives the decision of Italy to withdraw 700 of its soldiers in the UNIFIL.

- A female march in Beirut to demand the Lebanese woman’s right to give her foreign husband and children the Lebanese nationality.

30 July

- The international tribunal in Lebanon decides to release the four names accused in the assassination of Hariri: Mustafa Amin Badereddine, Salim Jamil Ayyash, Hussien Hasan Onaysy and Assad Hassan Sabra.

- Demonstrators in Tripoli after Friday’s prayer burn the flag of Hezbollah.

- Samir Geagea in response to Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah: “doesn’t he know that he is not delegated by the Lebanese people to defend their interests and that there is a government and a parliament” and “it is not you Sayyed Hassan who responds to an attack. It is the responsibility of the army”.

- Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah welcomes Talal Arslan accompanied by the minister of state Marwan Kheireddine.

1 August

- Saad Hariri in a statement on the events in Syria... “we, in Lebanon, cannot under no condition remain silent concerning the bloody developments that the Syrian streets are witnessing”.

- Samir Geagea in Zahle: “we agree with the patriarch Bshara Rai on the big part of his opinions but we don’t on another part”... “it is time to have a state in Lebanon”.

- The Minister of Energy and Water, Gibran Basil, in a dinner for the Free Patriotic Movement in Kfarhazir attacks Samir Geagea without naming him “the person who got a single minister when all the power was in his hands while we took 10 ministers, the least he should do is to remain silent and be ashamed... he cannot talk about murder when he is a murderer... we want to build a country where all martyrs are equally important and each martyr who was killed in his own house is more important than any president whether he was president of the republic or prime minister”

- Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah welcomes the minister Wiam Wahhab accompanied by his counselor Yaser Al-Safady.

ARABS IN THE NON-ARAB WORLD: LEBANESE IN JAMAICA

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, immigrants from the Middle East began arriving in Jamaica. In her article “They came from The Middle East” published in the *Jamaica Journal* in 1970, Nellie Ammar, whose father was among the earliest immigrants to arrive to Jamaica in 1898, spoke to those who were still alive and to their descendants to identify their reasons for leaving and choosing Jamaica.

During the first wave of immigration, the whole region was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire and no borders existed between Lebanon and Syria. As Ammar accurately states: “I think there is a little confusion about the words Syrian and Lebanese which I would like to clarify. (...) When the first immigrants from the Middle East came to Jamaica the whole area was called Syria, but later when the countries were divided naturally the people from Mount Lebanon became Lebanese, not Syrians. But today there are still many people who cannot differentiate between the two.”¹

Many of the immigrants sought after the New World in the hope of making a fortune. But why did they choose Jamaica? According to Ammar and her father’s narrative, most of the Lebanese immigrants “were fed up of oppression” so they decided to place themselves under the protection of the British flag, “which was the symbol of freedom and justice.” Moreover, America had not yet become a great nation in the 1860s and 1870s. Another reason for choosing Jamaica might have been that other relatives were already there, and they went to join them rather than travel to a completely new and foreign country. However, it is not known why these relatives came to Jamaica in the first place.

One reason given by Elias Issa, who arrived to Jamaica with his father in 1893, is that during the Great Chicago Exposition in 1891, immigrants discovered the trading restrictions of their destination country, Guatemala, and therefore changed their routes to the

more profitable and aspiring land of Jamaica.

Another theory forwarded by Aaron Matalon (the name suggests he was a Lebanese Jew), the son of one of the earliest Lebanese settlers, is that many actually had no idea where they were headed. In fact, they would continue their journey until they finally disembarked in a place they liked. It is also important to note that at the time, “immigration restrictions did not exist and passports and visas were not necessary for the majority of the countries to which they traveled.”²

As for what they did in Jamaica, many started out in the banana business. However, due to the frequency of hurricanes that sabotaged the banana industry, many turned to retail trading. They would start out on a very small scale as peddlers with the little money they possessed until they collected enough capital to open up retail stores, some of which still exist in Kingston.

An interesting comment that Ammar makes in her article is that, at the beginning, the immigrants were referred to as “Syrians” and this bore a negative connotation. She writes: “When they referred to someone as a ‘damn Syrian’ it was meant as such.”³ However, this name calling disappeared with time.

The Lebanese living in Jamaica integrated, to a considerable degree, with the community. “The language presented little difficulty. (...) Those who came from my father’s village, Schweifat, spoke English very well because it was taught in the schools there.”⁴ They married Jamaican women and their children are considered Jamaicans. One example is that of Deeb Hanna who took his Jamaican wife back to Lebanon. But the second generation of Lebanese-Jamaicans did not return to Lebanon to get married to Lebanese women as some of their parents did. And thus, the country motto “Out of many, one people” is slowly becoming a reality.

1 AMMAR, Nellie. “They came from the Middle East”, *Jamaica Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp 2-6, March 1970, p. 5.

2 *Ibid* 1, p. 3.
3 *Ibid* 1, p. 6.
4 *Ibid* 1, p. 4.



REAL ESTATE INDEX – JULY 2011

The real estate market was supposed to recover last July given that the country witnessed the return of many Lebanese from abroad but also received Arab tourists who come for their summer holiday and buy land and real estate, whether for personal use or investment. However, the events that the region has been going through, especially in Syria, along with the tension in Lebanon have reduced the number of people entering the country and prompted them to postpone large investments, which in turn has led to the stagnation of the real estate market. This stagnation is expected to continue throughout August and possibly the coming months.

Tables 1 and 2 list the prices of a number of estates and apartments sold in July 2011.

Prices of some estates sold in July 2011 Table 1

Region	Area m2	Price USD	USD/m2
Beirut			
Achrafieh (Jeeitaoui)	490	2,352,000	4,800
Achrafieh (Sodeco)	800	4,960,000	6,200
Tallet Al Khayat	600	5,100,000	8,500
Baabda			
Yarze	1,020	1,275,000	1,250
Yarze	1,280	2,560,000	2,000
Forn Al-Chebbak	650	2,925,000	4,500
Hazmieh	1,900	4,465,000	2,350
Matn			
Jisr Al Basha	750	1,650,000	2,200
Qornet Shehwan	1,000	930,000	930
Ain Saadeh	850	892,500	1,050
Broumana	1,200	936,000	780
A'aley			
Souq Al Gharb	950	256,500	270
A'aramoun	1800	360,000	200
A'aley	930	269,700	290
Keserouane			
Ghazir	940	1,334,800	1,420
A'ajaltoun	1,000	375,000	375
Klaiaat	2,300	713,000	310

Source: Information International – July 2011

Prices of some apartments sold in July 2011 Table 1

Region	Area m2	Price USD	USD/m2
Beirut			
Verdun (Dar Al Handassah)	175	843,500	4,820
Ras Al Nabei (Mohamad Al Hout)	190	437,000	2,300
Karakas	140	420,000	3,000
Achrafieh (Sioufi)	200	470,000	2,350
Achrafieh (Sodeco)	190	760,000	4,000
Achrafieh (Jeeitaoui)	150	394,500	2,630
Badaro	260	741,000	2,850
Aaisha Bakkar	130	325,000	2,500
Baabda			
Baabda	300	648,000	2,160
Yarze	180	581,400	3,230
Hazmieh	200	430,000	2,150
Hadath (Hay Amercan)	130	188,500	1,450
Forn Al Chebbak	125	156,250	1,250
Hadath (Saint Therese)	130	214,500	1,650
Ain Roumaneh	165	231,000	1,400
Matn			
Broumana	180	342,000	1,900
Rabieh	210	399,000	1,900
Antelias	150	240,000	1,600
Mansourieh	120	120,000	1,000
Biaqout	155	213,350	1,370
Fanar (Science department)	140	210,000	1,500
Roumieh	170	312,800	1,840
A'aley			
Bchamoun (Al Madares)	120	120,000	1,000
Doha Hoss	130	175,500	1,350
Dohat Aramoun	150	150,000	1,000
Dohat Aramoun	140	175,000	1,250
Khaldeh	180	180,000	1,000
Keserouane			
Ghadir	150	210,000	1,400
Adma	180	327,600	1,820
Sahel Alma	160	232,000	1,450
Zouk Mkayel	165	252,450	1,530

Source: Information International – July 2011

FOOD PRICE INDEX OF 100 PRODUCTS: JULY 2011

During the month of July, the price of 66 goods were stable and the price of 29 goods increased such as cereals, sugar, jam, detergents, and oil which has been increasing for the past two months, while the prices of 5 good decreased. Table 1 lists the price of products in July 2011.

Table 1: Price of products during July 2011 (in LBP)

Price of products during July 2011 (in LBP)				Table 1
Item and brand	Prices beginning of July 2011	Prices beginning of August 2011	% of price change	
Oil				
Afia corn oil (3.5 liters)	14,900	16,900	+ 13.4	
Mazola corn oil (3.5 liters)	16,000	16,850	+ 5.3	
Mazola corn oil (1.8 liters)	8,250	8,850	+ 7.2	
Slim corn oil (2 liters)	7,750	8,500	+ 9.6	
Wesson corn oil (2 liters)	8,000	8,500	+ 6.2	
Ghandour soya oil (3.8 liters)	13,000	14,750	+13.4	
Alfa corn oil (4 liters)	14,500	15,800	+8.9	
Al-Wadi Olive Oil (1/2 liters)	6,450	6,450	0	
Ketchup and Sauces				
Libby's Ketchup (597g)	1,500	1,500	0	
Extra Ketchup (340 g)	980	980	0	
Extra Ketchup (2.2 kg)	5,500	5,500	0	
Dolly's Mayonnaise (500 ml)	3,950	3,950	0	
Al-Wadi Mayonnaise (500 ml)	4,300	4,300	0	
Al-Bsat Tahina (900 g)	6,860	6,860	0	
Al-Bsat Tahina (450 g)	3,500	3,600	+ 2.8	
Taous tomato sauce (70g)	770	770	0	
Taous tomato sauce (425 g)	3,425	3,425	0	
Tala tomato sauce (675g)	3,250	3,250	0	
Dairy Products				
Candia full cream milk (1 liter)	2,450	2,450	0	
Candia full cream yoghurt (2 kg)	3,000	3,000	0	

Price of products during July 2011 (in LBP)				Table 1
Item and brand	Prices beginning of July 2011	Prices beginning of August 2011	% of price change	
Bonjus labneh (1 kg)	3,990	3,990	0	
Taanayel labneh (500 g)	4,650	4,650	0	
Candia labneh (500 g)	4,500	4,500	0	
Taanayel yoghurt (1 kg)	3,500	3,500	0	
Smeds cheese (400 g)	4,500	4,450	- 1.1	
Picon cheese (360 g)	3,850	3,850	0	
Picon cheese (160 g)	1,950	1,950	0	
Double-crème cheese (1 kg)	5,750	7,750	+ 34.8	
Fresh country cheese (1 kg)	9,000	9,000	0	
Khashkawan cheese (1 kg)	15,000	15,000	0	
Lurpak butter (200 g)	2,750	2,750	0	
Tatra butter (200 g)	2,750	2,750	0	
Al-Maalaqtain margarine (2 kg)	8,000	8,000	0	
Al-Baqara al-Haloub margarine (2kg)	33,000	35,000	+6%	
Vegetaline margarine (2 kg)	15,750	16,850	+7%	
Nido full cream milk (bag) (2,250 g)	21,850	21,850	0	
Nido full cream milk (2,500 g)	25,500	26,250	+ 2.9	
Tatra full cream milk (1,800 g)	18,500	20,000	+8.1%	
Cereals				
Khater white lentils (1 kg)	3,650	3,850	+ 5.4	
Khater chick-peas fahli (1 kg)	3,650	3,650	0	
Khater beans (1 kg)	1,750	2,000	+ 14.3	
Peeled wheat (1 kg)	2,350	2,350	0	
Pineal Lima Bean (1 kg)	3,500	3,850	+ 10	
Brown Fine Burgul (1 kg)	1,800	1,800	0	
Egyptian rice (1 kg)	2,000	2,250	+12.5%	
American rice (1 kg)	1,750	1,750	0	
Italian rice (1 kg)	2,100	2,750	+31%	
Al-Wadi Hommos Tahina (380 g)	1,450	1,450	0	

Price of products during July 2011 (in LBP) Table 1

Item and brand	Prices beginning of July 2011	Prices beginning of August 2011	% of price change
Chtaura Hommos Tahina (380 g)	1,450	1,450	0
California Gardens beans (450 g)	1,100	1,100	0
Al-Wadi beans (450 g)	1,100	1,100	0
Chtaura beans (480 g)	1,250	1,250	0
Libby's corn (340 g)	1,750	1,750	0
Pasta			
Barilla spaghetti (500 g)	2,300	2,200	- 4.3
Antonio Amato spaghetti (500 g)	2,200	2,100	- 4.5
Monte spaghetti (500 g)	2,250	2,250	0
Sugar and Salt			
Sugar (2 kg)	3,200	3,750	+ 17.2
Al-Ousra Sugar (5 kg)	9,750	10,500	+ 7.7
Salt (700 g)	275	275	0
Box of salt (738 g)	1,300	1,300	0
Meat, Fish and Eggs			
Zwan chicken (200 g)	2,450	2,450	0
Zwan beef (200 g)	2,450	2,450	0
Luncheon meat beef (198 g)	1,900	1,900	0
Al-Mona chicken (200 g)	2,250	2,250	0
Al-Taghzia beef (200 g)	1,925	1,950	+ 1.3
Al-Taghzia chicken (200 g)	1,750	1,750	0
Geisha sardine (125 g)	1,100	1,100	0
Deli sardine (125 g)	1,100	1,100	0
Milo sardine (125 g)	1,100	1,100	0
Geisha tuna (200 g)	3,600	3,600	0
White Bell tuna (200 g)	2,500	2,500	0
White Diamond tuna (200 g)	2,250	2,250	0
Skipper tuna (185 g)	2,000	2,000	0
Eggs (30 eggs)	6,000	5,750	- 4.1
Beef (1 kg)	14,000	15,000	+ 7.1
Sheep (1 kg)	22,000	22,000	0
Coffee and Tea			
Najjar coffee (1kg)	17,000	17,000	0
Brazil coffee (1 kg)	16,000	16,000	0

Price of products during July 2011 (in LBP) Table 1

Item and brand	Prices beginning of July 2011	Prices beginning of August 2011	% of price change
Al-Hisan tea (180 g)	2,750	2,750	0
Nestle (250g)	2,350	2,350	0
Halvah and Jam			
Al-Wadi halvah (454 g)	4,250	4,250	0
Al-Bsat halvah (450 g)	3,150	3,400	+ 7.9
Chtaura apricot jam (1 kg)	5,750	6,000	0
Al-Wadi apricot jam (1 kg)	4,500	5,000	+ 11.1
Tissues and Detergents			
Mimosa tissues (500 g)	2,750	2,750	0
Fine tissues (200 tissues)	1,250	1,250	0
Primo tissues (200 tissues)	1,100	1,100	0
Gipsy tissues (300 tissues)	2,750	2,850	+ 3.6
Mimosa toilet papers (4 rolls)	3,250	3,500	+7.7
Yes detergent (900 g)	2,290	2,290	0
Clorox (1 liter)	1,500	1,550	+ 3.3
Persil (4 kg)	18,250	18,750	+ 2.7
Ariel (4 kg)	19,000	19,000	0
Fruits and Vegetables			
Orange (1 kg)	1,500	1,500	0
Tomatoes (1kg)	500	750	+50
Cucumbers (1kg)	500	500	0
Bananas (1kg)	1,500	1,500	0
Lemons (1 kg)	400	700	+ 75
Apples (1 kg)	2,000	2,000	0
Potatoes (1 kg)	600	500	- 16.6

Source: Information International



Strange practices of football players

Many people around the world believe in superstition and strange and sometimes funny practices. This has nothing to do with their educational level or religiosity, but is related to optimism and pessimism and turns into a habit reassuring them or warning them of a disaster. Among these people, there are some famous football players who practice strange rituals they consider to be the key to their success.

- **Juan Sebastian Veron**, the Argentinean midfielder, began wearing a tourniquet on the lower part of his knee after he was injured in 1997 and he has not stopped wearing it since then. He believes that this tourniquet is a lucky charm.
- **Garry Lineker**, the famous English striker, named top scorer in the 1986 FIFA World Cup used to refuse to score while warming up before the match. Moreover, if he failed to score a goal during the first half of the game, he would change his shirt during halftime.
- **Gennaro Gattuso**, the Italian star and footballer of AC Milan, wore the same clothes throughout the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. He also used to read a few pages of books by the Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky and pack his bags as if he was getting ready to return home before every game.
- **Adrian Mutu**, a Romanian footballer, used to always wear the same underwear for every match.
- **Ivan Zamorano**, a Chilean footballer, believes that when he wears a white band on his wrist, he scores a lot of goals.
- **Rene Higuita**, the former Colombian goalkeeper nicknamed the Mad Goalkeeper, was always keen on wearing blue underwear.

Beirut International Airport

Rafic Hariri International Airport – Traffic July 2011

Traffic at the Rafic Hariri International Airport increased in the month of July 2011 by 37.2% in comparison with the month of June 2011 and by 3.9% in comparison with the month of July 2010. The total number of passengers that used the airport during the past seven months reached 3,141,626 compared to 3,113,905 during the same time of last year which indicates an increase of 27,721 passengers or 0.89%. Table 1 shows the airport traffic during the month of July 2011 compared to the month of June 2011 and July 2010.

Table 1: Airport traffic during the month of July 2011 compared to June 2011 and July 2010.

Airport traffic during the month of July 2011 compared to June 2011 and July 2010						Table 1
Traffic	Jun-11	Jul-11	Jul-10	% of change June/ July 2011	% of change July 2010 / July 2011	
Arriving airplanes	2,655	3,310	3,234	+24.6	+2.3	
Departing airplanes	2,670	3,312	3,235	+24	+2.4	
Total No. of airplanes	5,325	6,622	6,469	24.3	+2.3	
Arriving passengers	305,439	361,851	383,105	+18.5	-5.5	
Departing passengers	207,916	343,207	297,439	+65	+15.4	
Transit passengers	5,159	6,207	3,800	+20.3	+63.3	
Total No. of passengers	518,514	711,265	684,344	+37.2	+3.9	
Imported goods (per ton)	3,414	3,750	3,944	+9.8	-4.9	
Exported goods (per ton)	2,632	2,712	2,875	+3	-5.7	
Total amount of goods (per ton)	6,046	6,462	6,819	+6.9	-5.2	

Source: Information International and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation

Stats & Numbers

- ◉ **21,337** was the number of bank employees in Lebanon at the end of 2010 in comparison with 19,794 employees at the end of 2009, thus representing an increase of 1,543 employees. The estimated number of employees who left work (by resigning or retiring) is 270, which means that the banking sector offered around 1,813 positions. The cost of these employees reaches LBP 1,210 billion annually, LBP 53 billion of which are school grants.
- ◉ **65** is the number of banks operating in Lebanon. The first 5 banks account for 60% of deposits, while there are 35 banks that altogether account for 1.5% of deposits.
- ◉ **\$ 22.5 million** is the approximate cost of the Amchit - Mayfouq road project, which is to be 24 km long. It is expected to be completed by the beginning of 2013. In previous years, the Metn Highway project was constructed from Nahr El Mot to Baabdat with \$27 million. It is worth noting that the former project is being implemented during the mandate of President Michel Suleiman, (from Amchit) and the latter was implemented during President Emile Lahoud 's mandate (from Baabdat).
- ◉ **50/2011** is the number of the decision issued by Prime Minister Najib Mikati on July 8, 2011, which grants a permanent authorization to the Director General of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Dr. Suhail Bouji, to perform some of the prime ministerial functions and sign certain transactions, including administrative and financial transactions.

Publications

Publications by Information International (in Arabic):

- 1- Salaries and Remunerations in the Public Sector
- 2- Public Seaside Properties
- 3- Lebanon's Parliamentary History 1920-2000
- 4- Taxes and Fees
- 5- Lebanon in Figures 1992-2002
- 6- Lebanon in Figures 2003-2004
- 7- Lebanon in Figures 2005-2006
- 8- Lebanon in Figures 2007-2008
- 9- Lebanon's MPs and Lebanese Parliamentary Elections 1960 - 2009
- 10-2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession- North District
- 11-2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession- Beirut District
- 12-2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession- Mount Lebanon District
- 13-2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession- Beqa'a District
- 14-2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession- South and Nabatiyeh District
- 15- Municipal Elections 2010

Publications by INMA (in Arabic):

- 1- "I am Responsible, All of Us are Responsible"
- 2- "Our Environment is Our Home"
- 3- "My Society is My Responsibility"
- 4- "My Society is My Responsibility" Workbook
- 5- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building"
- 6- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building" Workbook
- 7- "Lebanon Wars, why?"
- 8- Discrimination in Lebanon



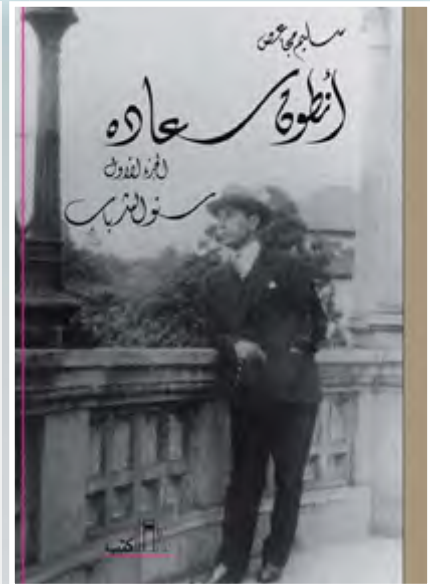
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Publications by Kutub (in Arabic):

- 1- Trablous Al-Sham
- 2- Jeniyat Al-Nabi
- 3- Mokhber Al-Konsoliya
- 4- Antoun Saadah 1932-1949
- 5- Antoun Saadah, A Biography, Volume 1. The Youth Years



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