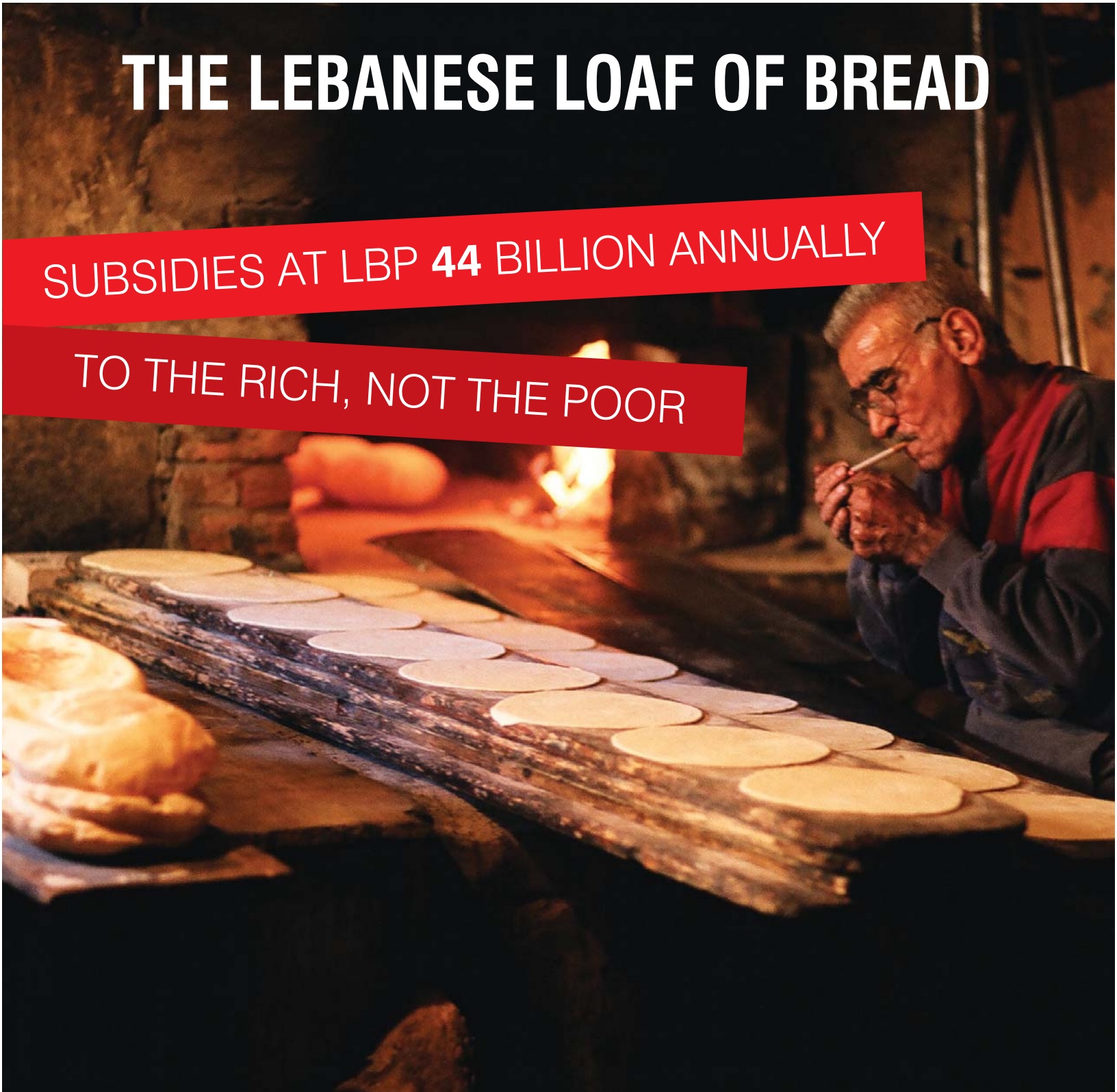


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WHAT AFTER ASSI, FAIROUZ AND ZIAD?

When asked about the most prodigious phenomenon that has marveled the Lebanese since 1943, the Fairouz-Rahbani legacy is the first answer that would pop into one's mind. Music in the Levant was fixated on Syrian hymns for many decades, before Ziryab came and established a unique and influential school of music in Al-Andalus in the 9th century. Much later, in the early 1920s, Aleppine and Iraqi Qudouds rose to popularity as an eminent musical genre. Sayyid Darwish, Abdul Wahhab and others also left their mark on the musical scene. However, the most sublime contribution offered to music in the Arab world was that of Assi Rahbani and Fairouz. Assi's artistic works, songs and plays revived music in the Levant and gave it its most radiant luster, until his lyrics became part and parcel of our daily musical dictionary. If it weren't for Fairouz, we and our children wouldn't have had anything to listen to, except the exquisite lullabies that our grandmas used to sing us before bedtime, or the hit "Bous el-Wawa" and the like, which, our society is, sadly, mesmerized by.

Fairouz has become a symbol of unity in the Levant through her melodies, lyrics and plays, which echoed folkloric classics of Sham and Andalusia and dreamed of returning to Palestine, in an era, which was ripe for aesthetic creation in the fifties and the sixties. In Lebanon, each of the parties and groups chose to believe that she was singing for them and relished the thought. In the 1960s, members of the SSNP sang with her "Menkaffi Belli Be'eyou". "Khabet Adamkon A'al Ard Haddara" tugged at the heartstrings of the Lebanese Army, and the Free Patriotic Movement allies chanted "Bokra Berja'a Bouaf Ma'akoun" with the utmost passion. "Ya Trab I Janoub" resonated deeply with Hezbollah and the Amal Movement, while "Li Beirut" sent chills down the spine of the Future Movement loyalists. Similarly, the PSP seemed to never get tired of "Ya Qamar Mashghara", nor did the Lebanese Forces stop replaying "Tlo'na Ala Shams". It all boils down to the emergence of fine musical pieces after long periods of hibernation, so that the maqamat, tones and lyrics would become symphonies chanting the history of our region.

Fairouz's all-time hit "Bhebbak Ya Libnan" became tantamount to the Lebanese National Anthem, recited by the

Lebanese masses from the north to the south, passing through Beqa'a and Mount Lebanon and echoing in every corner, house and neighborhood.

Ziad Rahbani's plays were acclaimed nationwide and beyond, even by his most staunch critics, and we can hardly find a person in this torn Levant or elsewhere for that matter, who does not copy Ziad or imitate his genius or quote his lines and wit. On a relevant note, it is worthwhile to quote Antoun Saadeh who, however strange people might find it, offered great insight on the relation between music and politics¹:

"..He (the musician or the political leader) is a man heedful of the innate virtues of liberty, peace and love rooted inside his people. He never aims for political goals, but instead, sets for loftier and more efficient destinations. He is someone who views the political flurry as trivial, when not grounded on a sturdy spirit inculcated into the core of all individuals, men and women, young and old, through vivid literature and music capable of uniting all emotions under one superior banner. This way, people would have common social faith based on love, which, when found within the entire nation, may give rise to phenomenal cooperation and compassion that fills life with hope and vigor. Only then will political effort become productive because the patriotism built on archaic and worn-out traditions remains forever fruitless, even if it yields political freedom..." Therefore it is imperative to wonder why we can't see and hear Fairouz on Al-Manar TV. Isn't she the spring and winter of this country? Isn't she the one who chanted Barada, Jerusalem, Baghdad and Sham to stellar heights with her celestial voice? Or has she become a "bird of sorrow without a land?"

What would remain of a Lebanon devoid of Assi, Fairouz and Ziad?

Jawad N. Adra

1 The Complete Works published by Saadeh cultural Foundation, Vol 6, 331-332

Shalit First

Statement of the US State Department on November 14, 2012:

"We strongly condemn the barrage of rocket fire from Gaza into southern Israel, and we regret the death and injury of innocent Israeli and Palestinian civilians...There is no justification for the violence that Hamas and other terrorist organizations are employing against the people of Israel... We support Israel's right to self-defense."

However, when Shalit was detained by Hamas, the White House issued on June 24, 2011 the following statement:

"..As the anniversary of his capture approaches, the United States condemns in the strongest possible terms his continued detention, and joins other governments and international organizations around the world in calling on Hamas to release him immediately."

It seems that Shalit's case shook the world while the killing of Palestinians remains, paradoxically, a debatable matter.



Four-year-old Rana Arafah killed during an Israeli airstrike

THE LEBANESE LOAF OF BREAD

SUBSIDIES TO THE RICH, NOT THE POOR, AT LBP 44 BILLION ANNUALLY

The loaf of bread is a typical symbol of nourishment and sustenance in the poor countries around the world and its scarcity or high prices are usually indicative of inherent social and economic crises. In Lebanon, the loaf of bread is no exception to this general rule, and our government often gives out subsidies to help supply the bread at affordable prices. The saga of the Lebanese loaf of bread is a complicated one, starting from wheat production, import and milling, and ending with the baking and selling processes. Every step of the way, there is room for squandering under the pretense of supplying and subsidizing bread. However, the subsidies remain far from the reach of the Lebanese, as the price of the standard pack of bread continues to soar.

Demand and subsidies

Lebanon consumes around 400 000 tons of wheat per year, provided by imports and domestic production.

The private sector has been undertaking the import of wheat since March 13, 1991, the date of lifting flour subsidies. Wheat imports provide 85% or around 340 000 tons of Lebanon's annual need.

Domestic wheat production provides the remaining 15% of the market demand, which amounts to 60 000 tons. The government purchases wheat from farmers at above market prices, then sells it to mills at market prices. Table 1 illustrates the wheat planted areas, the amounts handed to the government annually, and the cost of subsidies, which is estimated at LBP 15 to 17 billion. Unfortunately, the subsidies offered to the wheat sector offer little benefit to small farmers, but remain to the advantage of the well-established ones, which is at odds with the primary purpose of any subsidy policy. When international wheat prices soar, farmers opt for selling their quality crops to foreign markets and hand the state the flawed crops, which are difficult to dispose of. In 2008, the state failed to receive any domestic wheat due to the increased prices in the global market. Again, in 2010, it was only handed 15% of the total wheat production, while the remaining was exported to overseas markets. However, the government still adheres to its subsidy policy, and continues to believe that it is capable of generating significant profits in certain years. Sadly, the final calculations reveal a loss of around LBP 56.8 billion distributed as follows:

- 2000: selling domestic wheat awarded the state around LBP 3.2 billion in net profit.
- 2001: net profit amounting to LBP 3.4 billion.
- 2002: net profit amounting to LBP 3.2 billion.
- 2003: net loss amounting to LBP 6.7 billion.
- 2004: net loss amounting to LBP 7.6 billion.
- 2005: net loss amounting to LBP 11 billion.
- 2006: net loss amounting to LBP 9.8 billion.
- 2007: net profit amounting to LBP 1.1 billion.

- 2009: net loss amounting to LBP 7.6 billion.
- 2010: net loss amounting to LBP 25 billion (this figure is not final).

35% of Lebanon's wheat imports come from the USA, 27% from Argentina and 25% from Australia, in addition to other wheat imports from Russia, Croatia, Ukraine and Romania. The import of wheat is not discarded entirely, for, since before the global rise in wheat prices in the past few years, the government used to grant mills permits to import five tons of wheat, provided that they purchase one ton of domestic wheat at above the market prices, in an attempt to encourage wheat production. However, the Shura Council issued at the end of 2010 a decision that exempted mills from this requisite. Indeed, the international rise in wheat prices had wiped out this condition, even before the Shura Council's decision, for farmers had started to export their wheat production to foreign countries as the global prices had become higher than those paid by the state. The problem with mills is that they refrain from importing wheat when international prices wind up, for fear that they might drop down later and put them at risk of loss. Furthermore, the mills are bound to sell flour to bakeries at a fixed price (LBP 480 000 per ton) so as to maintain the price of the loaf of bread at a stable level. All this has often driven the state to import wheat at its own expense and sell it to bakeries at subsidized prices to ensure the stability of prices. This was the case during the second half of 2010, when the state imported 25 000 tons of wheat at USD 333.4 per ton, thus amounting to around USD 8.34 million. It later imported another 26 000 tons at USD 357.6 per ton, i.e. a total cost of USD 9.4 million.

The Ministry of Economy and Trade granted bakeries 20 864 tons at USD 260 per ton, which translates into a loss of USD 1.8 million, in a bid not to increase the price of the Lebanese loaf of bread, amid an international rise in wheat prices.

Amounts of wheat received by the state (1997-2010), wheat-planted areas and cost of subsidies
(amounts in ton)

Table 1

Year	Beqa'a	North	South	Total	Planted areas (Donum)	No. of farmers	Subsidized price per ton (LBP)	International price per ton (LBP)
1997	22,778	1,602	-	24,380	-	-	400 000	280 000
1998	27,751	1,270	121	29,142	-	-	400 000	210 000
1999	35,138	2,952	104	38,194	-	-	400 000	225 000
2000	61,459	5,349	516	67,324	-	1,035	400 000	210 000
2001	65,712	4,452	252	70,416	-	1,418	400 000	210 000
2002	61,307	4,498	571	66,376	154,792	1,270	375 000	195 000
2003	50,473	2,818	377	53,668	161,090	1,207	375 000	225 000
2004	55,413	4,642	674	60,729	190,692	1,248	375 000	225 000
2005	64,898	6,622	1,391	72,911	158,953	1,276	375 000	225 000
2006	58,241	5,655	1,492	65,388	185,622	1,302	375 000	225 000
2007	5,789	2,279	278	8,346	162,735	1,069	375 000	300 000
2008	-	-	-	-	-	-	375 000	525 000
2009	35,095	1,010	583	36,688	130,595	688	475 000	300 000
2010	9,981	585	328	10,894	150,433	898	375 000	525 000

Flour supply

There are 13 mills in Lebanon that supply an annual average of 220 000 tons of flour to Lebanese bakeries. The supply is distributed as illustrated in Table 2.

Flour supply by mill

Table 2

Mill	Average annual flour supply (ton)	% of total supply
Baqalian	50,400	23.2
Al-Taj	18,400	8.4
Al-Haditha	27,100	12.4
Al-Janoub	34,500	16
Al-Barakeh	16,200	7.5
Dawra	16,600	7.6
AL-Shahbaa	3,500	1.6
Al-Wataniyah	20,000	9.2
Al-Awsat	5,000	2.3
Jlala	5,100	2.3
Litani	8,500	3.9
Assaf al-Haditha	10,600	5
Jabal Amel	1,300	0.6
Total	217,200	100

Source: Ministry of Economy and Trade

The government has subsidized flour recently, especially from summer 2007 to October 2008, and from February 2011 to July 2011. It has also granted mills USD 50 for each of the near 30 000 tons imported every month, which amounts to USD 1.5 million. It is known that the quantity of wheat needed to bake Arab bread does not exceed 20 000 tons, meaning the government is also subsidizing pastries and other bakery recipes. Tables 2 and 3 show that only 3 mills are controlling the market and providing 52% of the total supply delivered to bakeries, which makes them among the top beneficiaries of government subsidies.

Price of a loaf of bread

Although the price of the pack of bread remained LBP 1500, its weight was reduced from 1120 grams to 1000 grams, which implies that the assistance given to mills failed to prevent the price from soaring indirectly. In the past, people used to pay LBP 1500 for a pack of 1500 grams.

Table 3 illustrates the price and weight of the standard pack of bread. The price soared by LBP 1000 amounting to 67% from 1997 to 2012.

Price and weight of the standard pack of bread		Table 3
Year	Weight (grams)	Price (LBP)
December 1997	1,500	1,500
February 2005	1,400	1,500
May 2006	1,300	1,500
December 2006	1,170	1,500
June 2007	1,120	1,500
September 2010	1,000	1,500
May 2012	900	1,500

The government supports wheat growing, and the Beqa'a senior landowners remain the primary beneficiaries of this assistance. It also subsidizes, in certain periods during the year, the wheat imported by the mills, or undertakes to import wheat and sells it to mills at subsidized prices, which either way, remains to the advantage of Lebanon's mills.

Despite the constant support of the government, the price of the standard pack of bread increased by 67%, thus confirming that the poor were the least targeted segment of the subsidies, which makes one wonder why the state is still clinging on a subsidy policy that fails to reach those living below poverty line. ●



SALARIES AND INDEMNITIES OF THE MILITARY

AN INCREASE BETWEEN 474% AND 975%

Unlike Lebanese University professors and other civil servants, the military could not go on strike and stage protests in demand of higher pay and thus their solicitation assumed a quieter form. However, when the government approved the ranks and salaries scales, the military benefited from the pay increases like the rest of the state-employees. Being the largest in terms of numbers, the military personnel, which includes around 100 000 serving members of the armed forces, will probably place the heaviest burden on the government. This article is dedicated to the military's pay increases by rank and grade.

Pay rise laws

The salaries and indemnities of the military have been subjected to numerous amendments in accordance with the following laws:

- Law No. 176 dated December 22, 1992
- Law No. 372 dated August 1, 1994
- Law No. 464 dated December 8, 1995
- Law No. 718 dated November 5, 1998
- Law No. 63 dated December 31, 2008

The current law that was approved by the government and still awaits ratification in Parliament

General

The rank of General in Lebanon is only assigned to the Lebanese Army Commander. According to the above-mentioned laws, the General's salary has evolved as illustrated in Table 1. Five grades, starting with Grade 1 and ending with Grade 5, fall under this rank.

Evolution of the General's (Lebanese Army Commander) salary- Amounts in LBP						Table 1
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 General	533 000	732 000	880 000	3 900 000	4 100 000	6 650 000
Grade 3 General	563 000	768 000	924 000	4 100 000	4 310 000	7 150 000
Grade 5 General	593 000	804 000	968 000	4 300 000	4 520 000	7 650 000

In addition to their monthly salary, Generals profit from other monthly benefits amounting to LBP 3 300 000, thus bringing the total pay to LBP 9 833 000 for Grade 1 Generals and LBP 10 953 000 for Grade 5 Generals.

The benefits are distributed as follows:

- Service indemnity equal to the net salary of a Grade 1 soldier or LBP 900 000
- Military equipment allowance amounting to 45% of the salary of a Grade 1 Lieutenant or LBP 585 000
- Rank allowance equal to the net salary of a Grade 1 soldier or LBP 900 000
- Housing allowance amounting to 12% of the General's basic salary if married, which is somewhere between LBP 798 000 and 918 000

Major General

The rank of Major General has seven grades and the Major General's salary has evolved as illustrated in Table 2.

Evolution of the Major General's salary- Amounts in LBP						Table 2
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Major General	488 000	678 000	814 000	3 020 000	3 268 000	5 100 000
Grade 2 Major General	503 000	696 000	836 000	3 110 000	3 363 000	5 300 000
Grade 4 Major General	533 000	732 000	880 000	3 290 000	3 553 000	5 700 000
Grade 5 Major General	548 000	750 000	902 000	3 380 000	3 648 000	5 900 000
Grade 7 Major General	578 000	786 000	946 000	3 560 000	3 838 000	6 400 000

Major Generals are entitled to the same benefits as assigned to Generals with the exception of service indemnities. The benefits stand between LBP 2 253 000 to LBP 2 970 000 per month, thus bringing the total pay of Grade 1 Major Generals to LBP 8 007 000 and Grade 7 Major Generals to LBP 8 653 000.

Brigadier General

The rank of Brigadier General is composed of eleven grades. The Brigadier General's salary has evolved as illustrated in Table 3.

Evolution of the Brigadier General's salary - Amounts in LBP						Table 3
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Brigadier General	428 000	606 000	727 000	2 140 000	2 340 000	3 200 000
Grade 2 Brigadier General	443 000	624 000	749 000	2 210 000	2 424 000	3 350 000
Grade 5 Brigadier General	488 000	678 000	815 000	2 480 000	2 698 000	3 800 000
Grade 6 Brigadier General	503 000	696 000	837 000	2 570 000	2 793 000	3 975 000
Grade 10 Brigadier General	563 000	768 000	925 000	2 930 000	3 173 000	4 700 000
Grade 11 Brigadier General	578 000	786 000	947 000	3 020 000	3 268 000	4 900 000

Brigadier Generals are entitled to the same benefits as assigned to Generals with the exception of service indemnities. The benefits stand between LBP 1 869 000 to LBP 2 073 000 per month, thus bringing the total pay of Grade 1 Brigadier Generals to LBP 5 069 000 and Grade 11 Brigadier Generals to LBP 6 973 000.

Colonel

Twelve grades fall within the rank of Colonel. The Colonel's salary has evolved as illustrated in Table 4.

Evolution of the Colonel's salary - Amounts in LBP						Table 4
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Colonel	323 000	480 000	576 000	1 335 000	1 546 000	2 300 000
Grade 2 Colonel	338 000	498 000	597 000	1 385 000	1 599 000	2 400 000
Grade 5 Colonel	383 000	552 000	662 000	1 545 000	1 768 000	2 725 000
Grade 6 Colonel	398 000	570 000	684 000	1 605 000	1 831 000	2 850 000
Grade 11 Colonel	473 000	660 000	792 000	1 925 000	2 168 000	3 525 000
Grade 12 Colonel	488 000	678 000	814 000	1 995 000	2 242 000	3 675 000

Colonels are offered the following benefits:

- Military equipment allowance amounting to 30% of the salary of a Grade 1 Lieutenant or LBP 390 000
- Rank allowance equal to 60% of the salary of a Grade 1 soldier or LBP 540 000
- Housing allowance constituting 12% of the Colonel's basic salary; that is between LBP 276 000 and LBP 441 000

Therefore the total monthly income would range between LBP 3 506 000 for Grade 1 Colonels and LBP 5 046 000 for Grade 12 Colonels.

Lieutenant Colonel

This rank includes thirteen grades and the salary of the Lieutenant Colonel has evolved as illustrated in Table 5.

Evolution of the Lieutenant Colonel's salary – Amounts in LBP						Table 5
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Lieutenant Colonel	283 000	432 000	518 000	1 205 000	1 409 000	2 000 000
Grade 2 Lieutenant Colonel	296 000	448 000	537 000	1 245 000	1 451 000	2 100 000
Grade 5 Lieutenant Colonel	338 000	498 000	597 000	1 385 000	1 599 000	2 400 000
Grade 6 Lieutenant Colonel	353 000	516 000	619 000	1 435 000	1 652 000	2 500 000
Grade 10 Lieutenant Colonel	413 000	588 000	705 000	1 665 000	1 894 000	2 975 000
Grade 13 Lieutenant Colonel	458 000	642 000	770 000	1 855 000	2 094 000	3 375 000

Lieutenant Colonels are granted the same benefits as those of Colonels ranging between LBP 1 170 000 and LBP 1 335 000. Therefore, the total monthly pay would become LBP 3 170 000 for Grade 1 Lieutenant Colonels and LBP 4 710 000 for Grade 13 Lieutenant Colonels.

Major

This rank is made up of thirteen grades and the salary of the Major has evolved as illustrated in Table 6.

Evolution of the Major's salary – Amounts in LBP						Table 6
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Major	260 500	404 000	484 000	1 125 000	1 325 000	1 800 000
Grade 2 Major	272 000	418 000	501 000	1 165 000	1 367 000	1 900 000
Grade 5 Major	309 500	464 000	556 000	1 285 000	1 493 000	2 200 000
Grade 6 Major	323 000	480 000	576 000	1 335 000	1 546 000	2 300 000
Grade 10 Major	383 000	552 000	662 000	1 545 000	1 768 000	2 725 000
Grade 13 Major	428 000	606 000	727 000	1 725 000	1 957 000	3 100 000

Majors are entitled to the same benefits as those granted to Colonels and standing between LBP 1 146 000 and LBP 1 302 000. Therefore, the total monthly pay would range between LBP 2 946 000 for Grade 1 Majors and LBP 4 402 000 for Grade 13 Majors.

Captain

This rank includes thirteen grades and the Captain's salary has evolved as illustrated in Table 7.

Evolution of the Captain's salary – Amounts in LBP						Table 7
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Captain	240 000	377 000	453 000	965 000	1 173 000	1 620 000
Grade 2 Captain	249 500	390 000	468 000	1 000 000	1 210 000	1 705 000
Grade 5 Captain	282 500	432 000	518 000	1 115 000	1 331 000	1 965 000
Grade 6 Captain	296 000	448 000	537 000	1 155 000	1 373 000	2 055 000
Grade 10 Captain	353 000	516 000	619 000	1 320 000	1 547 000	2 425 000
Grade 13 Captain	398 000	570 000	684 000	1 455 000	1 691 000	2 725 000

Captains benefit from the following:

- Military equipment allowance amounting to 20% of the salary of a Grade 1 Lieutenant or LBP 260 000
- Rank allowance equal to 40% of the salary of a Grade 1 soldier or LBP 360 000
- Housing allowance constituting 12% of the Captain's basic salary, that is between LBP 194 000 and LBP 327 000

Therefore the total monthly income would range between LBP 2 434 000 for Grade 1 Captains and LBP 3 672 000 for Grade 13 Captains.

First Lieutenant

This rank consists of fourteen grades and the First Lieutenant's salary has evolved as illustrated in Table 8.

Evolution of the First Lieutenant's salary – Amounts in LBP						Table 8
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 First Lieutenant	221 000	351 000	421 000	895 000	1 099 000	1 450 000
Grade 2 First Lieutenant	230 500	364 000	437 000	930 000	1 136 000	1 535 000
Grade 5 First Lieutenant	260 500	404 000	484 000	1 035 000	1 247 000	1 790 000
Grade 6 First Lieutenant	271 500	418 000	501 000	1 075 000	1 289 000	1 875 000
Grade 10 First Lieutenant	323 000	480 000	576 000	1 235 000	1 457 000	2 235 000
Grade 13 First Lieutenant	368 000	534 000	640 000	1 365 000	1 595 000	2 525 000
Grade 14 First Lieutenant	383 000	552 000	662 000	1 410 000	1 643 000	2 625 000

First Lieutenants receive the same allocations as those given to Captains and ranging between LBP 801 000 and LBP 935 000. The total pay thus becomes LBP 2 251 000 for Grade 1 first Lieutenants and LBP 3 560 000 for Grade 14 First Lieutenants.

Lieutenant

There are thirteen grades within this rank and the salary of the Lieutenant has evolved as illustrated in Table 9.

Evolution of the Lieutenant's salary – Amounts in LBP						Table 9
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Lieutenant	202 000	325 000	390 000	825 000	1 025 000	1 300 000
Grade 2 Lieutenant	211 500	338 000	406 000	860 000	1 062 000	1 375 000
Grade 5 Lieutenant	240 000	377 000	453 000	965 000	1 173 000	1 620 000
Grade 6 Lieutenant	249 500	390 000	468 000	1 000 000	1 210 000	1 705 000
Grade 10 Lieutenant	296 000	448 000	537 000	1 155 000	1 373 000	2 055 000
Grade 11 Lieutenant	309 500	464 000	566 000	1 195 000	1 415 000	2 145 000
Grade 13 Lieutenant	338 000	498 000	597 000	1 275 000	1 499 000	2 325 000

Lieutenants are entitled to the same indemnities as those given to Captains and ranging between LBP 776 000 and LBP 899 000, which bring the total pay of Grade 1 Lieutenants to LBP 2 076 000 and Grade 13 Lieutenants to LBP 3 224 000.

Special officers (medical practitioners, engineers, dentists, veterinarians, pharmacists, specialist doctors) are granted benefits similar to those of regular officers, in addition to specialty indemnities determined according to their rank and specialty.

Non-commissioned officers and enlisted men

Each rank within the category of the non-commissioned officers and enlisted men is composed of 20 grades and their salaries have evolved as illustrated in Table 10.

Evolution of the salaries of non-commissioned officers and enlisted men – Amounts in LBP						Table 10
Rank and Grade	Salary on December 31, 1993	Salary starting January 1, 1994	Salary starting January 1, 1995	Salary starting January 1, 1999	Salary starting May 1, 2008	New salary
Grade 1 Chief Warrant Officer	181 000	295 000	356 000	690 000	900 000	1 225 000
Grade 10 Chief Warrant Officer	261 000	404 000	485 000	980 000	1 208 000	1 655 000
Grade 20 Chief Warrant Officer	398 000	570 000	684 000	1 360 000	1 608 000	2 255 000
Grade 1 Warrant Officer	174 000	285 000	344 000	660 000	868 000	1 185 000
Grade 10 Warrant Officer	250 000	390 000	468 000	946 000	1 172 000	1 605 000
Grade 20 Warrant Officer	383 000	552 000	662 000	1 322 000	1 568 000	2 195 000
Grade 1 First Adjutant	167 000	275 000	333 000	634 000	840 000	1 145 000
Grade 10 First Adjutant	240 000	377 000	452 000	912 000	1 136 000	1 555 000
Grade 20 First Adjutant	368 000	534 000	641 000	1 284 000	1 528 000	2 135 000
Grade 1 Adjutant	160 000	265 000	321 000	608 000	812 000	1 105 000
Grade 10 Adjutant	231 000	364 000	437 000	878 000	1 100 000	1 505 000
Grade 20 Adjutant	353 000	516 000	619 000	1 246 000	1 488 000	2 075 000
Grade 1 First Sergeant	153 000	255 000	310 000	582 000	784 000	1 065 000
Grade 10 First Sergeant	221 000	351 000	421 000	844 000	1 064 000	1 455 000
Grade 20 First Sergeant	338 000	498 000	598 000	1 208 000	1 448 000	2 015 000
Grade 1 Sergeant	146 000	245 000	298 000	556 000	756 000	1 025 000
Grade 10 Sergeant	212 000	338 000	406 000	810 000	1 028 000	1 405 000
Grade 20 Sergeant	323 000	480 000	576 000	1 170 000	1 408 000	1 955 000
Grade 1 Corporal First Class	153 000	255 000	309 500	521 000	727 000	1 005 000
Grade 10 Corporal First Class	221 000	351 000	421 200	759 000	983 000	1 345 000
Grade 20 Corporal First Class	338 000	498 000	597 600	1 085 000	1 329 000	1 825 000
Grade 1 Corporal	146 000	245 000	298 000	499 000	703 000	970 000
Grade 10 Corporal	212 000	338 000	405 600	730 000	952 000	1 305 000
Grade 20 Corporal	323 000	480 000	576 000	1 052 000	1 294 000	1 775 000
Grade 1 Soldier First Class	139 000	235 000	286 500	477 000	679 000	935 000
Grade 10 Soldier First Class	202 000	325 000	390 000	701 000	921 000	1 265 000
Grade 20 Soldier First Class	310 000	464 000	556 800	1 019 000	1 259 000	1 725 000
Grade 1 Soldier	132 000	225 000	275 000	455 000	655 000	900 000
Grade 10 Soldier	195 000	315 000	378 500	672 000	890 000	1 225 000
Grade 20 Soldier	296 000	448 000	537 600	986 000	1 224 000	1 675 000

Non-commissioned officers and enlisted men benefit from the following:

- Housing allowance for married personnel amounting to 12% of their respective salaries.
- Field service indemnities for soldiers, first class soldiers, corporals and first class corporals amounting to 20% of a Grade 1 soldier's salary or LBP 180 000 should the new scale be ratified
- Field service indemnities for sergeants, first sergeants, adjutants, first adjutants, warrant officers and chief warrant officers amounting to 16% of a Grade 1 soldier's salary or LBP 144 000
- Military equipment allowance for warrant officers and chief warrant officers amounting to 12% of a Grade 1 lieutenant's salary or LBP 156 000, in addition to a rank allowance standing at 25% of a Grade 1 soldier's salary or LBP 225 000. The beneficiaries can have access to these allowances only after retirement.

NB: Family and transportation allowances were excluded from the above-mentioned allocations.

The increases given to the military have widened the gap between personnel members. For instance, the salary and indemnities of a Grade 1 General have increased by 933% and those of a Grade 5 General by 975% compared to 595% for a Grade 1 Lieutenant colonel and 548% for a Grade 1 Lieutenant. The poorest increase standing at 474% went to Grade 20 soldiers as illustrated in Table 11.

Evolution of the salaries of officers and soldiers between 1993 and 2012

Table 11

Rank and grade	Salary and benefits on January 1, 1993	Salary and benefits in 2012	Increase (%)
Grade 1 General	952 000	9 883 000	933
Grade 5 General	1 019 000	10 953 000	975
Grade 1 Major General	770 000	8 070 000	948
Grade 7 Major General	870 000	8 653 000	895
Grade 1 Brigadier General	702 000	5 063 000	622
Grade 11 Brigadier General	870 000	6 973 000	702
Grade 1 Colonel	502 000	3 506 000	598
Grade 12 Colonel	686 000	5 046 000	635
Grade 1 Lieutenant Colonel	456 000	3 170 000	595
Grade 13 Lieutenant Colonel	653 000	4 710 000	621
Grade 1 Major	431 000	2 946 000	583
Grade 13 Major	619 000	4 402 000	611
Grade 1 Captain	362 000	2 434 000	572
Grade 13 Captain	539 000	3 672 000	581
Grade 1 First Lieutenant	340 000	2 251 000	562
Grade 14 First Lieutenant	522 000	3 560 000	582
Grade 1 Lieutenant	320 000	2 076 000	548
Grade 13 Lieutenant	471 000	3 224 000	585
Grade 1 Soldier	174 000	1 188 000	583
Grade 20 Soldier	358 000	2 056 000	474

HOW MANY POOR PEOPLE ARE THERE IN LEBANON

A MILLION OR A QUARTER OF A MILLION?

Poverty is a reality in Lebanon. The poor are dispersed across the country and sects, while the upper class consists of a few wealthy members who conceal the poverty that most people are wallowing in and depict Lebanon as an opulent country having luxurious buildings, expensive cars and restaurants and so on .

However, an in-depth scrutiny of the Lebanese social fabric reveals an alarming number of people living at or below subsistence levels.

Historical overview

A development study conducted in 1959 by IRFED Mission revealed that half of the Lebanese population was poor, out of which 9% were extremely poor. According to the study, the distribution of population according to income levels can be summarized as follows:

- Rich: 4% earning over LBP 15 000 per year
- Well-off: 14% earning between LBP 5000 and LBP 15 000 per year
- Middle class: 32% earning between LBP 2500 and LBP 5000 per year
- Poor: 41% earning between LBP 1200 and LBP 2500 per year
- Extremely poor/ deprived: 9% earning less than LBP 1200 per year

At the time, the minimum monthly wage was LBP 100 and the average exchange rate was LBP3/US\$1.

Another study on poverty conducted by researcher Dr. Antoine Haddad and published by ESCWA in 1996 showed that 7.25 % of the Lebanese families lived below the lower poverty line and their income was insufficient to buy them food, while 28% lived below the ultimate poverty line and their income failed to provide food and other basic needs, like housing, clothing, health, education and transportation. The study assumed a total population of 3.5 million, of which 1 million was “poor”, out of which 250 000 were “extremely poor”.

In 1997, the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) conducted a study on the living conditions and the income of the Lebanese families. The findings

concluded that the unemployment rate stood somewhere between 8.1% and 8.9%, which translated to around 116 000 unemployed people. Income-wise, 18.8% of the families earned less than LBP 500 000 per month, while 3.1% brought in over LBP 5 000 000 as illustrated in Table 1. Therefore, it was possible to infer that about 28% of the Lebanese families were poor or deprived and that the number of poor individuals amounted to roughly 1,035 million. However, some believed that those numbers were staggering and exaggerated.



Distribution of families by income (1997) Table 1

% of Families	Monthly Income (LBP)
5.8	<300 000
13	300 000 – 499 000
21	500 000- 799 000
21.1	800 000- 1 199 000
13.4	1 200 000- 1 599 000
12.1	1 600 000- 2 399 000
5.9	2 400 000- 3 199 000
4.3	3 200 000- 4 999 000
3.1	5 000 000
0.3	Not specified

Source: 1997 CAS study on living conditions

Status quo

The Lebanese government has recently launched in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs the National Program to Support the Poorest Families. 55 000 families have applied for assistance, meaning that there are around 237 000 poor people in Lebanon, if the information presented is correct. The Ministry has so far studied 33 000 files for applicants who qualified for assistance, but the first stage would only include 13 929 families who were considered the poorest according to the poverty line of USD 3.84 per individual per day.

The largest number of the poor to benefit from the National Program in its first stage is living in the

North Mohafaza while the lowest is in Nabatieh. The poorest beneficiary families are distributed according to Table 2.

Distribution of the poorest beneficiary families Table 2

Mohafaza	No. of the poorest beneficiary families
North	6,067
Beqa'a	3,730
South	1,448
Beirut	1,329
Mount Lebanon	841
Nabatieh	514
Total	13,929

Nobody can deny the presence of a poverty dilemma in Lebanon but the question is how big and severe this dilemma is? How large is the poor population? Does it amount to one million or more or is it a matter of hundreds of thousands or less? There is no precise answer to this question but what we know, based on the above, is that the number does not exceed 250 000, provided that the Lebanese were honest in their answers and did not over-dramatize their conditions to benefit from further assistance. Still, this means that around 5.5% of those that the Ministry deem poor are receiving aids, noting that no one can tell whether all the poor were registered nor whether the beneficiaries were all poor. ●●



REPORT FINDS THAT PALESTINIAN YOUTH HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM POLITICAL ACTIVISM

The Norwegian Peace-building Resource Centre has recently published a study that examines the participation of Palestinian youth in politics taking into account the regional uprisings over the past two years. The factors behind these uprisings, present in Palestine, are further complicated by the occupation. The study looks at two landmark events: the “Arab Spring”, and the 2011 bid for statehood to the UN by the Palestinian Authority. The research was conducted by the Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies in Oslo and was composed of 425 Palestinian respondents between the ages of 15 and 24, of which 70% were students. The survey was structured around 3 dimensions: the priorities of the youth, their interest in politics, and their perception of their role in it.

Employment and Life Satisfaction

Taking into consideration the high levels of unemployment among the youth (58% and 40% for the age groups 15-19 and 20-24 respectively), the survey inquired about the way these youth rate their own lives. In the West Bank, around 56% expressed satisfaction with the state of their life at present, but in the Gaza Strip this number drops down to 23% (Figure 1). These results could be related to the economic situation in the strip that has been cut off from the rest of the world. Through qualitative interviews that the study conducted with 30 of the respondents, similar opinions were revealed. The impression among the youth is that it is difficult to find a good job regardless of education, and that *wasta*, or “connections of the right political kind”, is still essential for landing certain jobs (6). The spread of political favoritism means that belonging to one political faction or another can make it very hard to find a job.

Governance

The individual interviews compared the situation in the West Bank to that of regional countries; respondents said that their conditions for freedom of expression and human rights are much better. Similarly, the interviewees in Gaza were unanimous about the success of Hamas in improving security. But the quantitative research demonstrated a general trend of skepticism with democracy. 54% of the respondents said that democracy was satisfactory in the West Bank, while 36% said it was not. For the Gaza Strip, these numbers are at 24% and 76% respectively (Figure 2).

This indicates that while there is a general perception of authoritarianism, this is more relevant to the second case. An earlier Fafo survey is referred to where trust in PM Salam Fayyad was found to be between 30% and 45% in the West Bank, and 24% for Ismail Haniya’s government in Gaza.

Level of Interest in Politics

Through the qualitative interviews, the study detected 3 categories of political involvement among youth. There are those who are not interested, those who are but have opted out, and those who are active but are hindered by internal and external factors. The first group said they felt helplessness in the face of government control, and that they will not be able to make a contribution. The second group mostly cited fear of arrests, surveillance and prison. In the third category are those who avoided the factionalism and polarization of politics and instead looked to NGOs as a channel for their interest. But in this case, respondents spoke about having to be dependent on the sources of funding and what types of activism they usually advocate (i.e. not that of active resistance).

When looking at the level of interests, the survey was narrowed down to two events; the first was the bid for statehood at the UN. The quantitative section illustrated that support for the bid was identified for 69% of respondents from the West Bank, and 61% of respondents from the Gaza Strip. But through the qualitative interviews, the study was able to deduce

that the bid ‘failed to inspire enthusiasm’ (12). Those with the highest levels of activism opposed the bid because they saw it neglecting the UN resolution 194, a surrender of all lands outside the 1967 border and a potential threat to the refugees’ right of return. There is then only passive acceptance, and in some cases even hostility to the plan. The second event is expanded on below.

Role in Palestinian Politics

The survey picks up on signals that suggest the youth are not really capable of challenging the dominance of Hamas and Fatah. One notable popular movement that could have been inspired by the “Arab Spring” is the March 15th movement demanding political unity between Hamas and Fatah. A surprising finding though was that only 39% of West Bankers had heard of the movement. This could be attributed to Fatah adopting the movement rather than suppressing it. Both governments managed to contain the movement before it developed into an organized opposition. There has not been any notable youth movement since then.

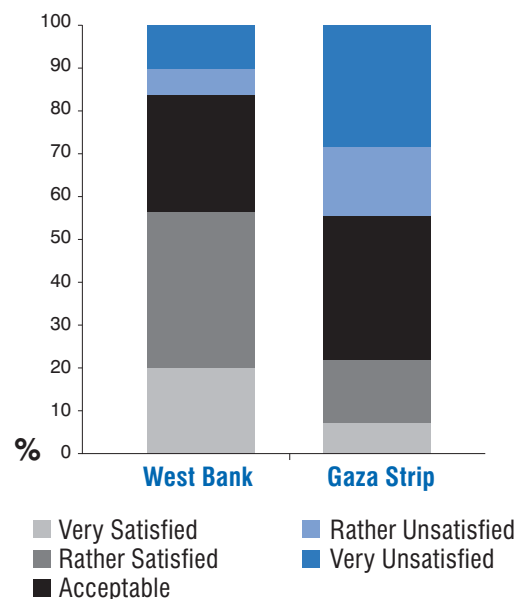
The study provides two possible explanations that could be leading to this lack of interest. First is the Israeli occupation that makes it very difficult for people to direct their criticism towards their own government. Their main focus remains resisting the Israeli state. Second is the split between the two Palestinian territories, where each one is run by a separate government with deeply entrenched ideological differences. The split that came in 2007 was not only a political one but was also extended to affect all institutions. However the interviewees themselves alluded to other reasons, such as the necessity of having a Palestinian state as a condition for change, and unity as a condition for resistance.

Conclusion:

To conclude, the study identifies a set of structural problems that have affected participation. To begin with, the perception among the youth that there exists a political class that has monopolized resistance discourages from taking it into their own hands. Moreover, there seems to be a widespread culture of fear and apprehension of an authoritarian approach to activism. However, this could be seen as a loophole in the explanations given that youth throughout the Arab world had these same concerns but still took to the streets. A third reason is that the determination of international aid to remain within the boundaries of the peace process makes it difficult for NGOs to work

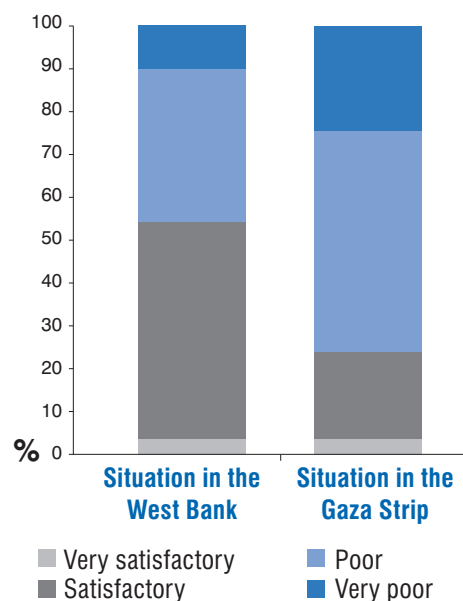
towards their goals. Finally, the Palestinian youth do not really view their situation as worthy enough of a revolt since they do not exactly live in a dictatorship. Though there is a high degree of dissatisfaction with the two governments, their small successes still keep the majority indifferent to politics. ●

Figure 1 Satisfaction with Life at Present



Source: Noref report

Figure 2 Perception of the state of democracy



Source: Noref report

VACANT POSTS AWAITING SECTARIAN BALANCE IN BEIRUT MUNICIPALITY

The Municipality of Beirut is the largest municipality in Lebanon as to the size of its population and financial revenues, which exceed LBP 400 billion according to some estimates. Of the numerous plights and dilemmas preventing the municipality from responding to the needs of the citizens are the high vacancy rates, which reach up to around 90% in some departments and divisions. Despite the contests performed by the Civil Service Board to fill in the vacant posts, the sectarian balance has delayed the necessary appointments as the number of successful Muslim candidates by far surpasses that of the Christians.

Contests

Upon the request of the Municipality of Beirut, in 2009 the Civil Service Board performed a number of contests aimed to appoint employees for the vacant posts in the municipality. However, the majority of the successful participants (240 participants) were Muslim and their appointment did not materialize so as not to prompt sectarian imbalance in the municipality, noting that the vacancies were in Grade 2 posts and below, and the legal provisions requiring sectarian equality in appointment are restricted to Grade 1 posts only. By adopting the results of the CSB contests and contracting 95 other persons to the jobs resolved this dilemma. And so, some candidates entered into the municipality after passing their CSB exams while a good few of the deserving candidates were deprived from the chances of employment and were replaced by contract employees so as not to disturb the sectarian balance in personnel. The following Table 1 illustrates the vacant posts filled by contests or contracts.

Post	No. of posts	No. of vacant posts	Successful candidates	Contract employees
Dentist	3	2	9	1
Head of department/ Division	66	52	21	10
Tax Officer	50	46	38	11
Accountant	66	58		10
IT and Code Auditor	3	3		3
Editor	298	259	23	30
Health Inspector	24	24	8	15
Health Officer	75	69	21	10
Clerk	38	31	29	5
Total	623	544	149	95

Source: Cabinet session on May 12, 2010

Filling the vacancies in the Municipality of Beirut brings to the fore the perils of sectarian quotas, which obstruct the work of the state and the central and local administrations, affecting the interests of the citizens and violating the criteria of science and competency. Filling the vacancy is paramount and the delay in the process in favor of sectarian balance is a national tragedy, especially that the exclusion of competent candidates for the sake of others who only happen to belong to a certain sect is an offensive discriminatory practice that no longer exist except in underdeveloped countries. ●

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH SECTARIAN QUOTAS EVEN IN EDUCATION

Numerous are the public institutions in Lebanon that most of the Lebanese have not heard of, and those who know that such bodies exist, fail to understand the specific missions and functions they assume as they are not concerned with them in their day-to-day life. The National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS), which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, is one of those institutions.

Establishment

The CNRS was established pursuant to the law issued on September 14, 1962 as “a public institution enjoying moral personality and granted administrative and financial autonomy. It operates under the authority of the Prime Minister and consults him regarding all its internal affairs.”

Functions

The Council has an advisory function and is tasked with drawing the general outline of a national scientific policy aimed to develop scientific research and exploit the scientific resources of the country for the public interest. It also has an executive function including:

- Initiating and encouraging scientific research in consideration with the general outline of the scientific policy approved by the government.
- Coordinating scientific researches that contribute to the social and economic development of the country. To this end, the CNRS grants scholarships for doctoral and advanced studies, supports top-ranking scientific labs, ensures the publication of scientific works, conducts major scientific research and grants assistance to researchers.

The Council's programs include all types of sciences such as:

- Mathematics, modeling, physics and astronomy
- Energy and the safe use of nuclear energy
- Information and telecommunication technology
- Technical, engineering and chemical sciences and industrial research
- Life sciences (biology, heredity, medicine, pharmacy, general health and others)
- Ecology, earth and natural disasters' science and climatology
- Anthropology and sociology (social, economic, administrative, financial and legal sciences in addition to linguistics, archeology, history and ethics of sciences, arts, natural history, humanities, demographics and others)

Administration

The CNRS is managed by a Board of Administration composed of 7 to 15 members, appointed for a six-year renewable term pursuant to a ministerial decree. The members shall be high-ranking Lebanese intellectuals

having vast scientific and technical experience and belonging to various scientific arenas in both private and public fields. A president and a vice president are appointed from among the members for two years and the Prime Minister assigns a high-ranking employee (usually the Secretary-General in the Cabinet) to serve as the government commissioner at the Board. The Minister of Finance also delegates a senior employee to act as a financial advisor for the Council.

A secretary general tasked with running the CNRS is appointed pursuant to a ministerial decree. The Council convenes in regular sessions that shall not exceed 60 sessions per year. The president and the vice president shall receive LBP 150 000 for every session they attend while the members receive LBP 100 000.

Sectarianism is not alien to this Council either, for the appointment of its members occurs in alignment with the sectarian balance. It has been traditionally agreed to grant the Greek Orthodox presidency over the Council. The vice president post goes for the Sunni and the secretary general's for the Shia'a.

Organizational structure

The CNRS consists of:

Financial and Administrative Affairs Department including:

- Accounting Office
- International Relations and Cooperation
- Programs Follow-up
- General Secretariat

Scientific consultants:

- Medical Sciences and Public Health
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
- Basic and Engineering Sciences

CNRS research centers:

- Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission (around 70 employees)
- National Centre for Remote Sensing (10 employees)
- National Centre for Marine Sciences (16 employees)
- National Centre for Geophysics (7 employees)

Budget

Similarly to the budget set for the CNRS in the years 2009, 2010 and 2011, the 2012 draft budget allocated LBP 6.5 billion for the Council. ●



Dr. Hanna Saadah

FALSE SHORTNESS OF BREATH (PSEUDO-DYSPNEA)

Dyspnea, which means shortness of breath, has numerous causes. The five major body systems that can cause dyspnea are the a) lungs, b) heart, c) muscles, d) blood, and e) circulation. Disturbances of these five systems-such as a) lung asthma, b) heart failure, c) muscle weakness, d) blood anemia, e) and circulation dehydration-all lead to shortness of breath, especially upon exertion. True shortness of breath, therefore, is worsened by exertion (because exertion increases the demand for oxygen) and improves with rest (because rest reduces the demand for oxygen).

Pseudo-dyspnea, which means false shortness of breath, is the opposite of true dyspnea. It is improved by exertion and worsened by rest. One of the best clinical tools that can differentiate between true and false shortness of breath is exertion. Simply asking the patient who suffers from dyspnea if the shortness of breath is made worse or better by activity will clarify the diagnosis. The three main causes of pseudo-dyspnea or the false shortness of breath are **a) esophagitis, b) anxiety, and c) panic.**

a) Esophagitis, or inflammation of the esophagus, is mostly caused by acid reflux, which is the backlash of stomach acid into the esophagus. Whereas the stomach is constituted like the mouth, the esophagus is constituted like the eye. A drop of lemon juice in the mouth tastes good but the same drop in the eye causes a red eye. Similarly, acid in the stomach is well tolerated because the stomach has a thick mucous coat whereas acid backlash into the esophagus burns and causes inflammation or esophagitis.

Esophagitis is like an iceberg, silent in the majority but causes symptoms in a small minority. Unaware, all of us backlash acid into the esophagus many times a day but anti-reflux defenses come to our rescue and wash the acid away. When our anti-reflux defenses fail, we develop esophagitis and some of us develop symptoms.

The common and well-known symptoms of esophagitis include heartburn, indigestion, abdominal pain, cough, chest pain, sore throat, and hoarse voice. A less known but more worrisome symptom is the feeling of shortness of breath, which usually occurs without the other, more common symptoms. Undiagnosed, this false shortness of breath or pseudo-dyspnea may lead to frequent heart and lung investigations and inappropriate treatments.

There are sensory nerve endings in the esophagus that can send false messages to the brain. When the esophagus is burned by refluxed acid, these nerve endings fool the brain into feeling short of breath, as though the lungs were not providing enough oxygen. Reacting to this feeling, the individual takes in deep sighs in an attempt to alleviate the perceived shortness of breath. But, the more and the deeper the sighs, the worse the perceived shortness of breath gets,

rendering the individual restless and anxious. This restless anxiety leads the individual to pace or exercise, which temporarily relieves the shortness of breath. When motion ceases and the individual sits or lies down, the shortness of breath returns.

Treatment of this false shortness of breath relies on suppressing stomach acid and coating the esophagus with acid neutralizing agents. A combination of Omeprazole (or other acid suppressing medicines) plus Simethicone (or other acid neutralizing medicines) will give prompt relief and reassurance that there is nothing wrong with the heart or lungs.

Esophageal pseudo-dyspnea cannot be diagnosed with tests, examinations, or procedures. This diagnosis is entirely clinical, based on the history alone, and can only be confirmed with a therapeutic trial. Obtaining relief with acid suppressing and acid neutralizing agents confirms the diagnosis and cures the condition.

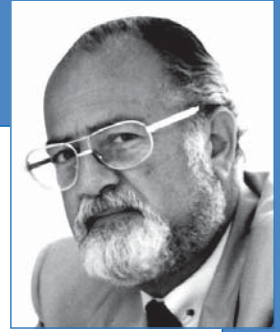
b) Anxiety or worry often lead to feelings of shortness of breath, and exercise is again helpful because it temporarily alleviates anxiety. Specific anti-anxiety medicines given by experienced physicians or specific anti-anxiety psychological therapies are both effective in controlling these false symptoms.

c) Panic attacks come on unexpectedly, cause sudden air hunger with feelings of choking or strangulation, and prompt the patient to run away into the open air. Unlike esophageal pseudo-dyspnea and anxiety pseudo-dyspnea, they are self-limited, last no more than an hour, and leave the patient drained and dreading. Like anxiety, treatment depends on both medications and psychological therapies.

To conclude, in all varieties of pseudo-dyspnea, the feeling of shortness of breath leads to hyperventilation. Hyperventilation leads to low carbon dioxide. Low carbon dioxide leads to dizziness, numbness, worry, and restlessness. The diagnoses are entirely clinical, tests and procedures are of little value, successful therapeutic trials confirm the diagnoses, and the prognoses are good. A great deal of suffering occurs because, unlike true dyspnea, pseudo dyspnea is less known and often misdiagnosed and mistreated. ●

IS DEATH AN ILLUSION? (1)

Antoine Boutros



We live in the midst of illusions. No truth, however evident and final, can stand against the challenges lurking in the shadows. In good weather, we look at the skies and see them blue. However, our brain cells are prone to change and a bit of genetic engineering is sufficient to alter all that is blue to red, and every red can boost our sexual drive, similar to what happens with birds. We might be disturbed by heat and humidity, but to a tropical frog, such weather can be exemplary to croak and to produce mating signals. There is no truth outside the frame of our consciousness, and this logic applies to death as well. What we conceive as existing depends on the nature of our consciousness.

In 2007, Robert Lanza, an American scientist and stem cell expert and a Chief Scientific Officer of Advanced Cell Technology at the Institute for Regenerative Medicine in Wake Forest University, published an article titled "A New Theory of the Universe" in the *American Scholar*. The article addressed Lanza's theory, Biocentrism, as the highest scientific discipline and deemed it a benchmark for reaching a single unified theory, which has all the answers. Lanza's theory questioned the relativity of time and space, two concepts at the very core of science nowadays. Not only did Lanza dethrone these two concepts, but also labeled them as abstracts formulated by the human mind in its attempt to understand certain scientific phenomena. Lanza concluded by disputing the inevitability of the end, that death is nothing but an elusive phenomenon incapable of surpassing the body.

In 2009, Lanza acknowledged in his book *How Life and Consciousness are the Keys to Understanding the True Nature of the Universe*, the existence of an immortal soul outside the spatio-temporal context. He slammed the prevailing theories on the physical world as inappropriate for not paying heed to biocentrism and consciousness. Lanza's book was followed in November by an article published in *Psychology Today*, where the scientist keeps on pouring his insights regarding the delusive nature of death. Our classical way of thinking, according to Lanza, is a misleading tool forcing us to believe that the universe is independent of our conceptions and experiences with life and death, and that it has an objective autonomous presence separate from our thoughts and observations. The universe has its own system, and we have ours.

Lanza criticizes our conception of life as a mere Carbon activity and a mixture of molecules, which flourish, wither, melt and end up rotting into the ground. The approach we establish towards death is due to our presence in a culture where everything is doomed to death. Also, of course, because we associate ourselves with our body, and we know bodies die. Lanza says that death may not be the terminal

event we encounter, but rather a temporary phase in line with the law, which governs the sub-atomic world, including particles like the electrons, photons and protons found inside the atom in the form of energy.

Talks about a connection between life and physical elements seem to echo the complicated theory of quantum mechanics, which dates back to the early 20th century and addresses energy, natural forces and the influence they wield on the living and static matter.

The quantum mechanical theory is one the greatest scientific breakthroughs in history. Ironically, it agrees and disagrees with the relativity theory at the same time in explaining the phenomena of the universe; the latter deals with macrocosm and the former with microcosm. The non-specialized might view the principles of quantum mechanics as too simple, and its effects as too big. The theory suggests that light travels as particles, not waves, and takes contradictory and different patterns at once. This is not as simple as one might think and stands at odds with all the laws of nature. The theory is ultimately self-contradictory, as if the object is a single yet multiple being, of a single or a two-fold nature. It is pretty much like to be and not to be at the same time.

If we emit a pair of photons from a light source, with each photon sent off in opposite directions, then subject one of them to a polarizer, the second would immediately and spontaneously change directions, no matter how many light years separate between the two photons. In other terms, modifying something in a certain object at a certain place would translate into an immediate change in anything associated with this object, as if there were no time or space in the universe. However hard for the mind to believe it, such intricacies do occur in the sub-atomic world. ●

How is that relevant to our subject? This is what you will find out in our next article.



Said Chaaya

Researcher at the Paris-Sorbonne University

FOUNDATIONS OF OTTOMAN JUSTICE IN LEBANON

LETTER FROM AN UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT DURING THE QA'IM MAQAMATEIN RULE.

In this article, we will look at a sample letter from an unpublished manuscript including over 400 documents dating back to the years 1844 to 1846 during the Druze and Christian Qa'im Maqamatein rule. The manuscript is written almost entirely in Arabic with the exception of a few documents penned in the Ottoman language. It is hoped that the entire content of the manuscript will be revealed in the near future.

It is commonly known that the Qa'im Maqamatein era laid the social and administrative foundations in our country and set the principles for a political consensual and proportional rule, especially that the multi-sectarian social fabric of Lebanon requires exceptional systems that guarantee fair representation of its multiple parties. Naturally, the concept of fair representation applied to the Druze Qa'im Maqamiya too, which enfolded heterogeneous districts consisting of Druze, Christian and Muslim citizens. This era also paved the way for the Mutasarrifiyya system, which lasted over half a century and was marked by relative stability.

We have chosen this sample, as it reflects an image of the status of the law and its implementation methods throughout the Ottoman Empire and sheds light on how justice was, and should always be, the foundation of governance, and how it equalized the rights among people in Mount Lebanon.

Duplicate copy of the letter

“As you must all know, the Sublime's Porte decision to arrange a Shura Council is applicable to all these districts to settle the lawsuits emerging between residents. Accordingly, the senior members of this Council convened Monday and it has become necessary that all the disputes and grievances arising between people of any denomination be resolved in the said Council to best serve justice and equity, and relieve the citizens. In the case where the defendant and the prosecutor are Druze, they shall be referred to Sheikh Mohammad Qadi...

Upon examination of the letter, one must stop at three points that deserve more attention than any of the others: The writer of the letter starts with urging the execution of the orders issued by the Sublime Porte since the will of the Sultan was effective and unquestionable at the time. We may notice that the rule in Mount Lebanon was based on hierarchy, which is a cornerstone, on which one can build a sturdy building. The Druze Qa'imaqam, the prince governing Mount Lebanon, was the link between the Vali and the Sublime Porte on the one side, and him and the Mashayekh, governors and dignitaries on the other. Evidently, all those respected his rank and status and knew what his rights and duties were. Although the Mount Lebanon's rule wasn't any easier or smoother in the early nineteenth century than it is today, each used to carry their own load and respect the boundaries of others back then,

contrarily to what we witness nowadays where everyone rules by their own discretion.

The establishment of a Shura Council including the diverse sects was a matter of the utmost importance, given the significance of this representative system, which was second to none in the Middle East during the Ottoman rule. Since the first half of the nineteenth century the Lebanese have learned to employ this unique system to claim further privileges and rights, and naturally, further independence.

The Council used to resolve outstanding matters and cases fairly, and its representative capacity constituted a beacon of “democracy” in the Middle East. But how was justice achieved and what were the foundations used in the process?

Similar to the rest of the Empire's subjects, the non-Muslims and non-Druze were also entitled to present their cases before the Council, just like their peers, without any discrimination or bias, and the multi-sectarian aspect of the Council constituted a guarantee to claim their rights and achieve equity among them.

Applying this to everyone was pretty much meant to encourage people to practice their rights, which the Sublime Porte fosters, by voicing their complaints and protests before the Shura Council. This has helped generalize the culture of objection among the Mount Lebanon residents, who were peasants and workers in their majority. Thus, peasant and commoner movements surfaced and petitions protesting taxes and harsh living conditions grew by leaps and bounds. Hereby, it seems essential to note that the emergence of an uprising or a revolutionary movement can only happen if humans are aware of their rights, and the exigency of practicing, defending and claiming them when disrespected.

Not only is this letter published to shed light on a paramount phase of the history of Lebanon, the nineteenth century, but also to emphasize that the rule can only stand upright when justice is served, whether before the Shura Council, or before a judge, a court, or a Sultan. Mistaken is he who thinks that one can run a country and a nation if he is incapable of achieving justice and putting all citizens on trial equally. ●●

FACING WESTERN INTERVENTION IN LEBANON

Maëva Drevet



Despite the various and endless international interventions that have been part of Lebanon's history since its present form was founded in 1920, few have written about the Lebanese reactions against such interference. This work is complex as there is no unanimous public opinion on the subject, which often underlies contradictory interests at stake. Two groups, each carrying different points of view can be distinguished in this respect. The first group includes the Lebanese rulers or leaders, whose interests for external intervention are significant, while the second includes the Lebanese civilians. However large, the latter is far from being homogeneous, but here again we will see that its interests or opinions are different from those of its rulers.

There is no need to recall the various international influences and dominations over Lebanon since its independence from France in 1943. As Georges Corm – a Lebanese historian and ex-politician – calls it, Lebanon is “a buffer State”. This young country has never enjoyed full sovereignty; its policies and leaders have always been influenced by external powers. Why is it that such a small country attracts so much attention and becomes the proxy battlefield for international actors?

One of the reasons lies in the political system, which prevents national consensus, thus leading to the emergence of competing forces. In fact, the three pillars for state building, namely an independent judicial system, a representative electoral system and a well-structured and free civil society, are missing in Lebanon. The lack of responsibility leads to the emergence of competing groups of interests usually embodied in communal entities or political groups. In order to defend their turf, those competing forces find it necessary to call for external support, making Lebanon a buffer State. Lebanon's history testifies to such external interferences under the name of brethren's protection, even though interests and actions on the field went beyond and claimed many casualties and caused damage. Before the country gains its complete independence, communal groups argue which country should support Lebanon according to their interests. Not only is external support guaranteeing protection against alleged attacks from another internal group but it also guarantees leaders to remain in office and enjoy a certain leeway.

Lebanese political leaders have no other interests in Western or external interventions in general. Whereas some of them owe their political responsibilities to external support, others lost their life because of their virulent column and their radical stance against external interference. Lebanese rulers never succeed in being detached from external support. As a matter of fact, the geopolitical situation

and the political system make it impossible to avoid such interferences. Politicians rapidly understand that their fate depends on these external intrusions and deem it better to side with super powers, which are namely Western powers (and which rule the so-called International community). The United Nations Security Council 1559 resolution adopted on 2 September 2004 is very helpful to illustrate such international interference in Lebanese political life and its major consequences in the country. In fact, the resolution claiming the disarming of any kind of militia in Lebanon (pointing at Hezbollah and Palestinian entities) and the respect of Lebanon sovereignty, that is the withdrawal of Syrian troops, would obviously trigger violent reactions. International interventions in Lebanon, whether their nature was diplomatic or military, have only succeeded in causing damage and claiming casualties including civilians.

The Lebanese population is far from being a homogenous group that can claim one uniform point of view. The Lebanese nationalists voice annoyance every time the French Prime Minister or the American Secretary of State lectures on our state's apparatus, while others trapped in the game of communal fears would favor the intervention of the country that better serves their personal interests. Those who embrace a more realistic point of view, consider Western interventions as normal. Indeed, given the regional situation and the general violation of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations, the strongest prevail over the weak, which is why the Lebanese leaders seem not to retaliate on such interferences but rather encourage them.

Albeit the heterogeneity of mind, it is quite common to consider that such external interventions are due to the lack of decent political system. Lebanon still continues to be advised and consequently stays under international sway as Lebanese leaders always seek help and recognition from external entities. ●●

THE MONTHLY INTERVIEWS

NADINE TOUMA

DAR ONBOZ

Nadine Touma is a Lebanese author and publisher whose works have enriched the artistic scene in Lebanon and granted Arabic books greater attention on the international stage. *The Monthly* interviewed Touma for deeper insights into her publishing house, Dar Onboz.

Could you brief us on the history of your publishing house? When was it established and who took the initiative of starting Dar Onboz?

Dar Onboz was established on May 1, 2006, a date quite dear to my heart as it coincides with the International Labor Day. We launched our publishing house at a very critical phase in Lebanon's history and everybody was warning us that the timing and the then prevailing turbulence were not exactly ideal for such ventures. But our project had reached full maturity at the time and refused to wait any longer. And so, I joined hands with Rayya Khalaf and Sivine Ariss to initiate Dar Onboz and our efforts were aimed to combine ideas, words, pictures, and subtle sensations in a unique artistic realm, with the hope of giving the Arabic language new dimensions, and proving its ability to renew itself, adapt to the trends of our era and address modern generations. The inception of Dar Onboz was a flicker of hope, which illuminated that pitch-dark stage and alleviated the frustrations of that era.

Who gave your publishing house its name, Dar Onboz, and what inspired it?

I was born in a Beqa'a town, which honors family cohesion and ancestor worship and I have had a nurturing family life where love and respect have always been central. Therefore, my childhood wielded great influence on my life in general and on my selection of this name in particular. My grandmother was a veteran



Nadine Touma

story-teller who used to tell us incredibly inspirational stories. She had salt cravings and always kept a handful of Onboz in her apron's pockets or in her cupboard. My solid attachment to roots and to my matriarchal lineage must have been responsible for evoking in my memory that connection between stories and Onboz, and this is how the name popped out.

We were keen from the very start to adopt a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach, which enfolds diverse specialties. Some may categorize us among the publishers of children's books but Dar Onboz does not address children alone. Our main purpose is to create picture books, which attract parents in the first place and incite their curiosity to flip through the pages and explore the stories with as much pleasure as their children. The ideal and successful book, in my opinion, is that, which addresses and resonates with all the members of the family. Certainly, the lack of children's literature in the Arabic library provided an additional incentive for us to embark on this mission. As a matter of fact, 70% to 80% of our publications

target children between 0 and 18 years; the remaining is aimed at adults and includes reference books such as the book of folk songs, which is a sociological and anthropological documentation of our oral heritage. Although Dar Onboz does not publish textbooks, our books have an educational content of the highest quality in a different and lively manner, which is far from the dull and systematic patterns found in schools.

How do you promote Arabic among children and young adults amid an evident domination of foreign languages and cultures?

Unfortunately, academic and technological communication is mostly produced in foreign languages, English in particular. The spread of English has become a global phenomenon and we are not the only country affected by its dominance. Even the French, who have always stood their ground when it comes to their mother tongue and refused to align it with its counterparts, are now displaying more flexibility in using and borrowing English terminology. Our aspired goal in Dar Onboz is to liberate the Arabic language from its tight archaic mold and employ it as a flexible and modern tool that flows smoothly and touches the child far from the traditional sanctimonious tone found in most Arabic books, but hundreds of miles still separate us from the desired destination.

We were pioneers in combining and unifying the realm of words with that of the visual, and few, if any audio books were made prior to our establishment. Knowing that one can fall in love at first sound, not only at first sight, we were also the first to introduce music into our stories. Dar Onboz is credited for ameliorating the esthetic aspect of children's books at a time when our community remains lacking in the culture of arts and reluctant to embrace it. Unfortunately, our societies still fail to picture art as one of the fundamental sublime values, which contribute to the development and growth of human beings.

How many books have you issued so far and how do you communicate with writers and illustrators?

Our annual output is not as enormous as that of other publishing houses. In fact, we are committed to producing quality material and therefore we publish only three to four books every year. We have so far published a total of 21 books for diverse age groups. Rayya Khalaf is responsible for art direction, Sivine

Ariss handles the audio-visual supervision and I offer my share of writings. We receive countless submissions from writers and illustrators every day and those not meeting basic specification are instantly rejected. We only accept the manuscripts and portfolios that match the vision of our house. Sometimes, we have a hard time selecting manuscripts due to their weak structure, traditional style or plain content, but at other times, we receive astonishing masterpieces that take us by surprise and propel us forward. In addition to books, Dar Onboz also creates awareness videos aimed to educate people on matters of social interest like “mines”, “women in politics”, and the like.

What do you think is the best way to persuade children to read with the media onslaught of movies and video games?

Our children are surrounded by various distracting sources and reading is unfortunately becoming a lost art. I believe that children must be trained to read from birth and this is where the role of parents, before schools, should come into play. Reading to young children and taking them to public libraries should become an every-day trend to pull the children back from the technological onslaught. Shared parent-child book reading during children's preschool years leads to greater enthusiasm for reading and learning and helps children build language awareness and literacy skills, which in turn sets the stage for later school success. ●



A PERFECT WORLD

If I could change one thing about my life, I would probably choose to be a Na'vi in a world of my creation. In my mind, Na'vis live in a world where dinosaurs exist, but have tiny hands, and a huge mouth, so they can't really pick you up and demolish you since their mouth gets in the way. So in order to survive, they turned into vegans. It's a world where the main environment colors are cyan, teal and purple; where double rainbows are made by cyan cats' farts. All in all, it's really magical. People don't care if you're black, white or yellow, mostly because all Na'vis are the same color: blue. People don't care if you're gay, straight, dinosaur, or a cat. You don't get judged by who you are, or who you want to be. Everybody is different, and we embrace the unicorn in all of us. In my world, everybody has a faith in a higher power, a faith that can't be broken by anyone with a theory.

I'd choose this world because I think it's perfect, but we all know unicorns don't exist, cats are not cyan or rainbow farting creatures and dinosaurs are extinct. People are still judgmental, self-destructive, and are mostly all the same. Lastly, Na'vis only exist in a movie made by a genius.

Nour Mufti
Al-Ahliah School

PARTIAL BREAKTHROUGH

Typically, I've been down in the lows and then so high that it has exhausted me. When I say down in the lows, thoughts like misery, low self esteem, anxiety and other slow and dreary emotions come around and make me fall with them until I'm exposed to tiredness and hate. The highs are always the moments that one would wish to hold onto by stopping time in these moments because you're afraid of the lows watching you build up the happy suit of armor. That's what I think of happiness; a border protecting me from all that which I fear succumbing into.

However, life is usually going through the rock bottom or floating up in the clouds. I know each and everyone's mission is achieving a balance in life; a way to protect yourself from going crazy because things are not going your way and being cautious when you're content. I know that I want to be able to live with a peace of mind; it's tiring to be left with a fragile mind after all the extremes I experience. That's why I try, no matter how much, to push it to achieve a balance. I mean, how can one be satisfied and always ready to face it if one doesn't have mind control? I'm feeling so low and down from all which has disappointed me, and so high from all which has done me good that I'm blinded by all other factors that would ruin it and shock me. I understand all these changes and extremes, and I've wondered if this was just a phase, but it isn't.

Humans will always change; people will always go through this constant battle. It is not a "searching for an identity crisis" sort of thing or a "hormones raging" phase. Everyone will be able to handle one's own situation and sort it through. There is no such thing as settling down because once you have settled down, there's always something that will make you move. Our frequent highs and lows are a reason for us to wake up the next day and look for what's in between, and try constantly to hold onto that.

Fida Fneiche
Al-Ahliah School

NOBEL PRIZES IN PEACE (2)



In what follows, we publish the second part of the Nobel Peace Prizes awarded to those who have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations from 1901 to 1949.

Peace Prizes (1901-1949)					
Year	Name	Nationality	Born	Division of Prize	Purpose
1949	Lord (John) Boyd Orr of Brechin	Scotland	1880		<i>For his scientific research into nutrition</i>
1948	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1947	Friends Service Council (The Quakers)	UK	Founded 1647	<i>was awarded jointly to Friends Service Council (The Quakers) and American Friends Service Committee (The Quakers)</i>	<i>Humanitarian work, peace movement</i>
	American Friends Service Committee (The Quakers)	USA	Founded 1917		<i>Peace movement</i>
1946	Emily Greene Balch	USA	1867	<i>was awarded jointly to Emily Greene Balch and John Raleigh Mott</i>	<i>For her work with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom</i>
	John Raleigh Mott	USA	1865		<i>For his work in establishing and strengthening international Protestant Christian student organizations that worked to promote peace</i>
1945	Cordell Hull	USA	1871		<i>For his role in establishing the United Nations,</i>
1944	Comité international de la Croix Rouge (International Committee of the Red Cross)	Switzerland	Founded 1863		<i>Humanitarian work</i>
1943	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1942	No Nobel Prize was awarded this year				
1941	No Nobel Prize was awarded this year				
1940	No Nobel Prize was awarded this year				
1939	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1938	Office international Nansen pour les Réfugiés (Nansen International Office for Refugees)	Switzerland	Founded 1921		<i>Humanitarian work</i>
1937	Cecil of Chelwood, Viscount (Lord Edgar Algernon Robert Gascoyne Cecil)	UK	1864		<i>For his contribution to the League of Nations</i>
1936	Carlos Saavedra Lamas	Argentina	1978		<i>Negotiation</i>
1935	Carl von Ossietzky	Germany	1889		<i>Human rights, arms control and disarmament</i>
1934	Arthur Henderson	Scotland	1863		<i>World organizing, arms control and disarmament</i>
1933	Sir Norman Angell (Ralph Lane)	UK	1873		<i>In recognition of his book "The Great Illusion"</i>
1932	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1931	Jane Addams	USA	1860	<i>was awarded jointly to Jane Addams and Nicholas Murray Butler</i>	<i>Peace movement</i>
	Nicholas Murray Butler	USA	1862		<i>Negotiation, peace movement</i>
1930	Lars Olof Jonathan (Nathan) Söderblom	Sweden	1866		<i>Peace movement</i>
1929	Frank Billings Kellogg	USA	1856		<i>Negotiation</i>
1928	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1927	Ferdinand Buisson	France	1841	<i>was awarded jointly to Ferdinand Buisson and Ludwig Quidde</i>	<i>Negotiation, peace movement</i>
	Ludwig Quidde	Germany	1858		

Peace Prizes (1901-1949)					
Year	Name	Nationality	Born	Division of Prize	Purpose
1926	Aristide Briand	France	1862	<i>was awarded jointly to Aristide Briand and Gustav Stresemann</i>	<i>For restoring the cordial relations between Germany and France</i>
	Gustav Stresemann	Germany	1878		
1925	Sir Austen Chamberlain	UK	1863	<i>was awarded jointly to Sir Austen Chamberlain and Charles Gates Dawes</i>	
	Charles Gates Dawes	USA	1865		
1924	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1923	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1922	Fridtjof Nansen	Norway	1861		<i>Humanitarian work</i>
1921	Karl Hjalmar Branting	Sweden	1860	<i>was awarded jointly to Karl Hjalmar Branting and Christian Lous Lange</i>	<i>For his work in the League of Nations</i>
	Christian Lous Lange	Norway	1869		
1920	Léon Victor Auguste Bourgeois	France	1851		<i>World organizing</i>
1919	Thomas Woodrow Wilson	USA	1856		<i>World organizing</i>
1918	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1917	Comité international de la Croix Rouge (International Committee of the Red Cross)	Switzerland	Founded 1863		<i>Humanitarian work</i>
1916	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1915	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1914	No Nobel Prize for peace was awarded this year				
1913	Henri La Fontaine	Belgium	1854		<i>Peace movement</i>
1912	Elihu Root	USA	1854		<i>Negotiation</i>
1911	Tobias Michael Carel Asser	The Netherlands	1838	<i>was awarded jointly to Tobias Michael Carel Asser and Alfred Hermann Fried</i>	<i>For their role in the formation of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the first Hague peace conference</i>
	Alfred Hermann Fried	Austria	1864		
1910	Bureau international permanent de la Paix (Permanent International Peace Bureau)	Switzerland	Founded 1891		<i>Peace movement</i>
1909	Auguste Marie François Beernaert	Belgium	1829	<i>was awarded jointly to Auguste Marie François Beernaert and Paul Henri Benjamin Balluet d'Estournelles de Constant - Baron de Constant de Rebecque</i>	<i>Peace movement, world organizing</i>
	Paul Henri Benjamin Balluet d'Estournelles de Constant - Baron de Constant de Rebecque	France	1852		
1908	Klas Pontus Arnoldson	Sweden	1844	<i>was awarded jointly to Klas Pontus Arnoldson and Fredrik Bajer</i>	<i>Peace movement</i>
	Fredrik Bajer	Denmark	1837		
1907	Ernesto Teodoro Moneta	Italy	1833	<i>was awarded jointly to Ernesto Teodoro Moneta and Louis Renault</i>	<i>Peace movement, world organizing</i>
	Louis Renault	France	1843		
1906	Theodore Roosevelt	USA	1858		<i>Negotiation</i>
1905	Baroness Bertha Sophie Felicita von Suttner (born Countess Kinsky von Chinic und Tettau)	Czech Republic	1843		<i>Peace movement</i>
1904	Institut de droit international (Institute of International Law)	Belgium	Founded 1873		<i>Peace movement, world organizing</i>
1903	William Randal Cremer	UK	1828		<i>Peace movement, world organizing</i>
1902	Élie Ducommun	Switzerland	1833	<i>was awarded jointly to Élie Ducommun and Charles Albert Gobat</i>	<i>Peace movement</i>
	Charles Albert Gobat	Switzerland	1843		
1901	Jean Henry Dunant	Switzerland	1828	<i>was awarded jointly to Jean Henry Dunant and Frédéric Passy</i>	<i>Humanitarian work, peace movement</i>
	Frédéric Passy	France	1822		

TEACH A CHILD

Lebanon has a long history of NGOs. In their varying shapes, sizes and views, Lebanese NGOs have played a major role in diverse people-oriented programs, including but not limited to health, environment, and education. This article will shed light on the goals, mission and activities of Teach a Child, a Lebanese NGO geared towards advocating every child's right to education.



Establishment and mission

Teach a Child was established in March 2011 as a non-profit organization whose mission is to help children of 5 to 15 years old attend public schools and receive the education they need. Although we have free public schools in Lebanon, the expenses required to enroll in such schools remain beyond the financial capacity of many families. This is where the Teach a Child comes in handy to cover school registration fees (around LBP 70 000 paid by the government), parents' committee fees, transportation costs to and from school and to pay for books and stationery.

In keeping with its mission of protecting the right of all children to education and a brighter future, the Teach a Child organization campaigns against child labor and directs its lobbying efforts to pass legislations and enact more effective laws that impose compulsory education on all children under 15 and penalize parents, who fail in their obligation of sending their children to school.

Structure

The Teach a Child association consists of 22 volunteer members, 9 of whom constitute the Executive Committee. The Committee takes all decision by plurality vote and consists of:

- Zeina El-Khalil: President
- Maha Makki: Secretary
- Ghada Abou Alwan Atallah: Head of Legal Committee
- Lina Assaf: Head of Education Committee
- Christine Ayad Daher: Head of Fundraising Committee
- Nadine Bissat Irani: Head of Youth Awareness Committee
- Nayla Bassil: Vice President
- Karima Azhari: Treasurer
- Yasmine Ariss: Head of International Committee



Action plan

The Teach a Child organization reaches out to all poor and needy children irrespective of their gender, religion, location and performance; children of broken families or of deceased or divorced parents are always of the highest priority and the organization also lends a helping hand to those born to Lebanese mothers but foreign fathers. In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the organization outlines an assessment of the regions and the families where the financial aid is most needed and communicates with the principals of the public schools in those regions to verify the authenticity of the referrals. Once the authenticity is verified, the Teach a Child specialists meet with the children and their families in order to offer the needed assistance and educational supplies.

Achievements

The Teach a Child organization started its work in mid-2011. Despite its limited start-up facilities, its tireless efforts and full dedication to provide children with education has enabled them to enroll 105 children in public schools by October of 2011, with 47 families benefiting from their assistance across Lebanon. This year, the number has increased to include 400 students with a budget estimated at roughly USD 90 000. According to Mrs. Lina Assaf, Head of the Education Committee, no other region of Lebanon is in more dire need of such interventions than the remote areas of Akkar and the Beqa'a, where most of the families are facing appalling living conditions.



“Despite its limited start-up facilities, its tireless efforts and full dedication to provide children with education has enabled them to enroll 105 children in public schools by October of 2011, with 47 families benefiting from their assistance across Lebanon.”

Donations

Since its inception, the Teach a Child organization has strived to keep its overhead and rental costs low to ensure that no child is left illiterate because of lack of funds.

The Teach a Child organization wouldn't have existed or flourished had it not been for the generous contributions of its donors. All contributions including corporate and private donations, on both national and international levels are welcomed and invested solely in education. ●●



AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SWEAT AND STRUGGLE

We did not ask my uncle to give me a mule ride to Beirut this time, for, thank god, a car had become available in our village! One of the villagers had sold his property and bought a small Fiat, which was second to none in the village. In the evenings, throngs of Beirut commuters would hustle to register their names! The Fiat would take off in the morning and return at dusk. It was a small car for so many passengers. I registered my name, and the very next morning, with the car packed, we headed to Hammana then Sawfar, Bhamdoun, Aley, and finally Beirut. We hadn't had any shortcut to offer us a more direct route.

A few classmates from Souk El-Gharb -Gabriel Jabbour, Moussa Ghantous, Amine Khalifeh et al - had preceded me to college and became senior students. Thus, I turned to Moussa Ghantous, may he rest in peace, to help me through the registration process. After all, admission for first time in college is not a cushy job. The university is a wide world compared to Choueifat and Souk El-Gharb.

At the time, the American University was still a small university run by a group of missionaries who dedicated themselves to serve education, with the assistance of a number of Lebanese professors keen on inculcating knowledge of science and technology into young brains. But the world and the concepts have changed today, and it's pointless to keep on lamenting the old glories.

“Where is the registration office Moussa? What should I do? I need your help Moussa?”
“It's easier than you could imagine,” Moussa said. “You should head to the faculty's block, first floor, room 112. There, you can meet Mr. Day, Dean of Humanities, and he will take care of you.”

I knocked on the door and was informed that the dean was not there yet as he was checking his small garden, where he collected samples of plants that he used for demonstration purposes in his class, for he was a botany professor.

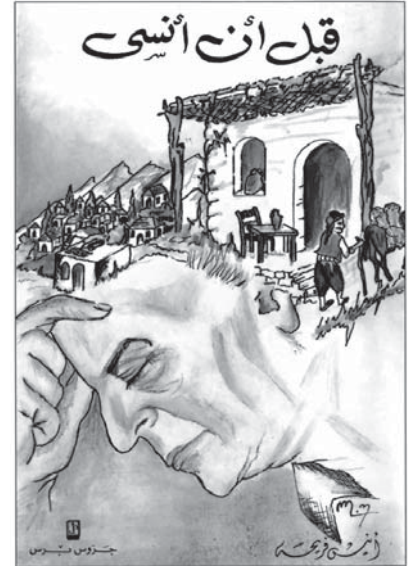
I left and came back to knock again. I, then, walked into a simple room accommodating a desk and two chairs, with a pen and an oblong notebook on the desk.

What's your name?

Anis Fraiha.

Where did you study? Do you hold a secondary degree?

Yes, I do. I studied in Souk El-Gharb.



THE ARAB SPRING

A SOCIAL MEDIA REVOLUTION

Myth: *The internet was a main driver behind the uprisings of the Arab spring has become widely spread.*

Reality: Examining the usage of internet in the Arab world and the nature of these uprisings, we find that the internet was not as important a component as it is thought to be.

The popular uprisings that have taken place across several Arab countries have been largely attributed to the population's online activity. News across the world headlined stories of sit-ins being amassed through Facebook and Twitter connectivity. Egypt's Wael Ghoneim, the Regional Marketing Manager of Google Middle East and North Africa, was even thought to be the 'leader' of the Egyptian revolution. It is important to note that the usage of the internet as a tool to facilitate the revolution in Egypt was an unprecedented first in the Arab world.

We cannot deny that the internet has transformed the way we communicate and share information, but when it comes down to it, it is only another tool or medium. It is perhaps the most interactive type of media. Unlike traditional media; TVs, books, or newspapers, social digital media is very much about the viewer's input. In the first case, the viewer or reader could only take in the information and not respond to it. The internet, with its accessibility, is formed by the continuous participation of individual users and organizations. Therefore, it cannot be a successful means to channel control.

The heavily populated protests that took place in a number of Arab countries, and in Cairo specifically, show that the people actually presented themselves in person when it came to taking on the restrictions of the government. Their activism was therefore not limited to the internet. The slogans raised by these movements, of economic hardships and the freedom of expression, echo the conventional motivations behind uprisings the world over. The internet itself could not have made such an influence, but the thoughts and writings of the cyber-activists, who are themselves the angry youth of these countries, were critical. More importantly, demonstrations require logistical planning, transportation and funding for transportation. This of course is not done by the internet, but by a determined organizing body, whether manifest or clandestine.

It is impossible to demonstrate that the internet and social media started these revolutions. In the low income countries of the Arab world, internet penetration, though speeding up, remains relatively low. And the high monthly rates of internet connectivity make it inaccessible for people in the lower income groups. Internet penetration is much higher in Persian Gulf countries than in countries that have been affected by popular uprisings. In 2011, internet users as a percentage of the population were as follows in a number of Gulf countries: 42.4% for Kuwait, 69% for the UAE, 66.5% for Qatar, and 43.6% for Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, Yemen and Syria had 10.8% and 19.8% respectively (www.internetworldstats.com). Moreover, according to The Economist, only 12% of the Egyptian population actually has Facebook accounts. What remains the tipping scale for these countries then? Their standards of living. ●●

HOW THE ECONOMY WAS LOST THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

The assumption that out-sourcing and off-shoring are beneficial to First World economies is broken down by Paul Craig Roberts, an economist well-known for his unyielding writing style, in his book *How the Economy was Lost: The War of the Worlds* published by CounterPunch. Roberts has served as an assistant secretary of the US Treasury, and was an assistant editor of *The Wall Street Journal*. The book puts together a number of online articles discussing the American economy, mainly focusing on the process of out-sourcing. The author does not praise its quick profitability or cheap labor, but rather criticizes the negative effect on the country that is out-sourcing; in this case, the United States. What he wishes to establish is that the assumption about out-sourcing being a driver of growth should no longer be taken for granted.

The book, though somewhat disorganized and very repetitive, details the onset of out-sourcing, its developments within the American economy and the dire consequences it is beginning to exhibit. Roberts dates the start of this trend to the 1990s. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the loosened grip of communism in China and India, and the spread of the Internet made way for more free trade with Asia. By replacing local labor with cheaper foreign labor, corporations easily maximize profits and allow bigger bonuses for their CEOs. The logic presented to the public was that all the dirty jobs were sold to China, and that Americans would no longer have to be employed in manufacturing jobs.

Advocates of free trade praise this profitability and explain the need for foreign labor through claiming a shortage of American workers. On the other hand, foreign labor is now being employed in the United States simply because it is cheaper. One example that the author gives is that of Indian university students who were hired for 240\$/month. That rate is actually a fraction of the US poverty level income (page 65). Today, many job listings advertise just for foreigners. Roberts finds that if an ad is actually specifying the nationality of candidates, then the shortage of American workers is a myth, and that in reality they are just not wanted.

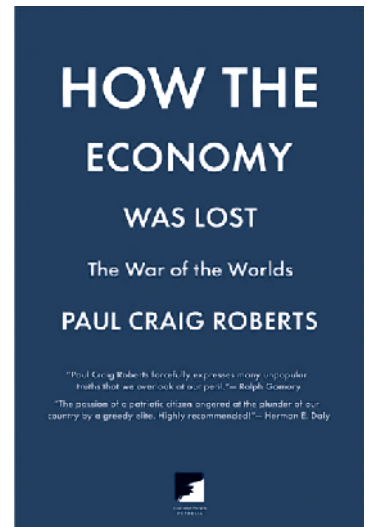
This system has detached corporations from the needs of the American economy and society. When American labor is replaced with foreign labor, big job losses are implied in the equation. And when large numbers of

Americans lose their jobs, the government diminishes its tax base. Along with out-sourcing, many Americans are having their jobs moved abroad. In 2005, it was estimated that the number of such jobs would reach 14 million (11). Of employees who are displaced, 1 in 3 go on to be unemployed. During the Bush years, higher-paid manufacturing and IT jobs changed to service jobs. These white collar jobs are thought to be the ones that drive upward social mobility. When these jobs are lost, income growth is slowed down. The author speculates that this could cause a decline in university enrollment in scientific fields because of lack of trust in the job market.

In this manner, American corporations, with the aim of minimizing their costs, become benefactors of Indian and Chinese workers as opposed to Americans. The author speaks of huge misunderstanding of free trade and a state of denial on behalf of corporations and policy makers. The free trade that is so much extolled is no longer in this case creating jobs for Americans. This threat cannot be undermined, because unlike the recessions of the 20th century, this time around jobs cannot be brought back. In previous cases, interest rates were lowered in order to regenerate the economy and create more jobs, but today most jobs are abroad.

Though his tone is at times exaggerated, Roberts raises an important issue that needs to be addressed sooner rather than later. Such a book is highly recommended for American readers. Though it is not the most consistent read, it is still an insightful look into the forces driving the American economy. The warnings presented by Roberts are very much worthy of consideration.

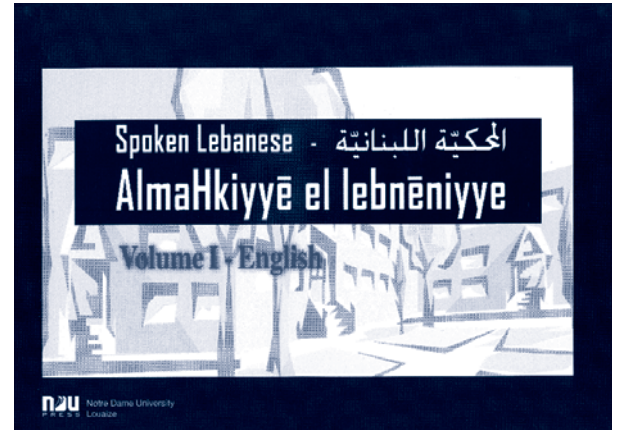
Roberts, Paul Craig. *How the Economy was Lost: The War of the Worlds*. Petrolia, California: Counterpunch, 2010. ●



AL MAHKIYYEH AL LIBNANIYEH (SPOKEN LEBANESE)

Al Mahkiyyeh Al Libnaniyeh or *Spoken Lebanese* is an English-Arabic book issued by the Human Sciences Department at the Notre Dame University (NDU) with the aim of teaching the Lebanese children living abroad (and their parents) the Lebanese dialect in a modern and entertaining way. According to NDU, the book falls within the program of teaching Arabic to Lebanese expatriates and is part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen the social and academic ties between Lebanon and the Lebanese diaspora.

Al Mahkiyyeh Al Libnaniyeh aims to teach spoken Lebanese language over 16 episodes including all the tips that one might need to communicate with others and get introduced to their homeland. The themes addressed in the episodes include university cafeteria gatherings, weather bulletin, prices and numbers, family, transportation and landmarks to name only a few.



Below is an excerpt of the book:

Sixteenth Episode: Tourist Sites Place: On a Bus.	AlHal'a sitta'sh: Lma'ālim ssiyēHiyye Lmakēn: bil bas	الحلقة الستة عشر: المعالم السياحية المكان: بالباص
Mona: I have not come to Lebanon in ten years. When my parents emigrated, we were little kids.	Mona: ana Sar le 'ashr sneen mish jēye 'ala libnēn. Ghtarabo ahlē min wa't elli kina wlēd zghār.	منى: أنا صار لي عشر سنين مش جابي على لبنان. اغتربو أهلي من وقت اللي كنا ولاد زغار.
Khaled: how do you find Lebanon?	Khaled: keef shēyfe libnēn?	خالد: كيف شايفه لبنان؟
Mona: Wonderful. The nice things about it are the short distances and the change in the nature from one area to another.	Mona: bijannen. elHelo fee hiyyē lmasēfēt l'aSeerē w tteghyeer bi TTabee'a min manT'a la manT'a.	منى: بجنن. الحلو فيه هيي المسافات القصيرا والتغيير بالطبيعة من منطقة لمنطقة.

This book is the first in a series of four books that will follow later in French, Italian and Spanish. It also includes DVDs that facilitate the pronunciation. ●

QANDALAFT FAMILIES

CHRISTIANS DISPERSED MOSTLY IN BEIRUT

There are many families with the name “Qandalajt”, thought to be of Syrian origins. “Qandalajt” means a post and a title given to the person who assists Catholic priests in the performance of their tasks during mass.

It is rumored that the Qandalajts hailed from Akka in Palestine and that they belonged to the Sabbagh family. A Qandalajt member headed for Al-Nasira and served in the Catholic Church thus bearing the name Qandalajt and passing it to his children. Some Qandalajt members moved later from Al-Nasira to Rashaya in Lebanon. In the 18th century, some headed for Damascus and others settled in Beirut and other regions, e. g. Zahle.

The Qandalajt family includes 290 Christian members with a Greek Orthodox majority. They are distributed as follows:

Greek Orthodox:

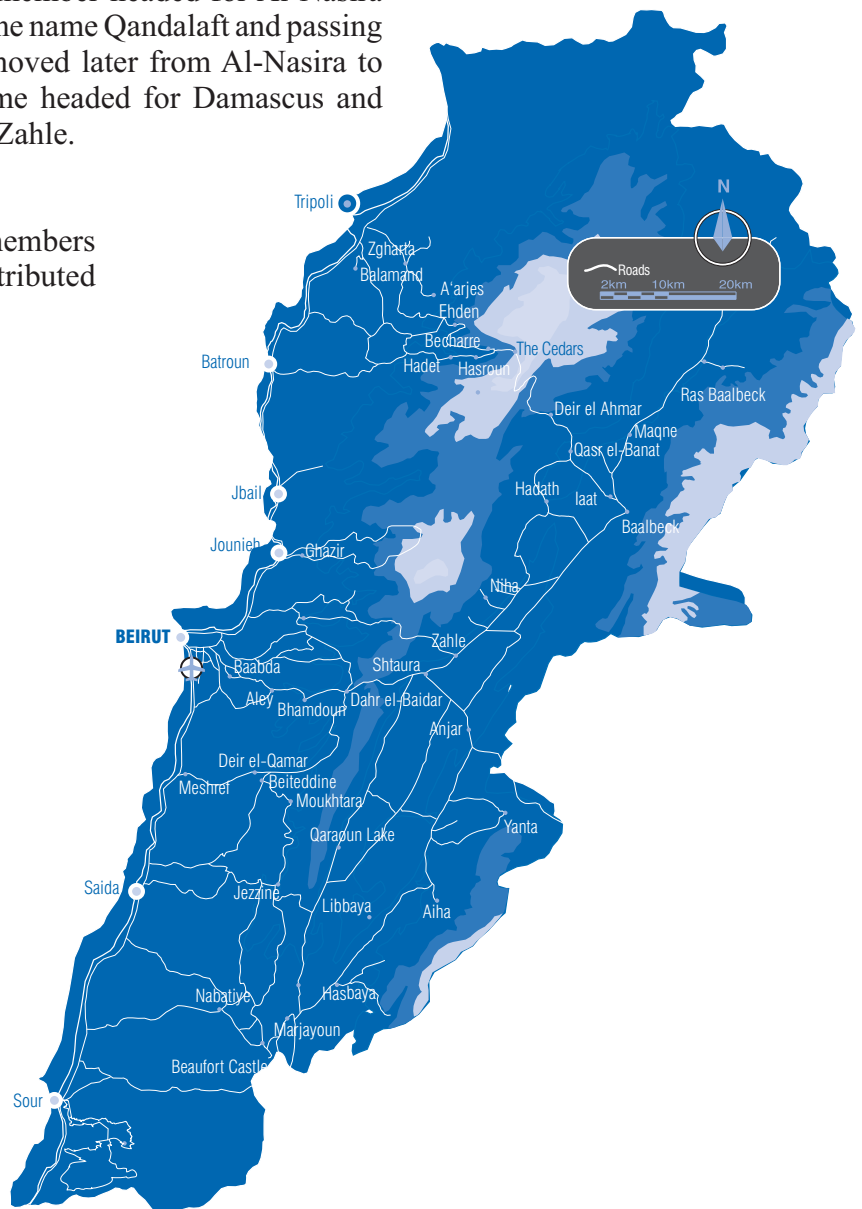
Ashrafieh: 88
Rmeil: 15
Msaytbeh: 10
Mdawar: 4
Saifi: 3
Zahle: 80
Chekka/ Batroun: 15

Greek Catholic:

Mazra'a: 15
Jbeil: 15

Latin:

Tall/ Tripoli: 20



KFERTAY

IN MATN AND KESSROUAN

Etymology

There are two likely theories for the origin of the word Kfertay:

- It is a compound word, where “Kfer” means “a town” and “tay” means “the miserable” and thus it implies “the town of the miserable”.
- The second part might have stemmed from the word “tay”, a Bedwin Aramaic tribe that might have lived in the town at some point. Lebanon is home to two Kfertay towns, one in Matn and another in Kessrouan.

Location

Kfertay is located in the Qada'a of Kessrouan in the Mount Lebanon Mohafaza at an altitude of 1100 m above the sea level. It lies 45 km from Beirut and spreads across 145 hectares. Kfertay may be reached through Kfardebian- Bkaatouta.

Population

The number of registered inhabitants in the town's personal status register is estimated at 400 people belonging to the Maronite community. Kfertay includes 80 houses and 5 commercial shops.

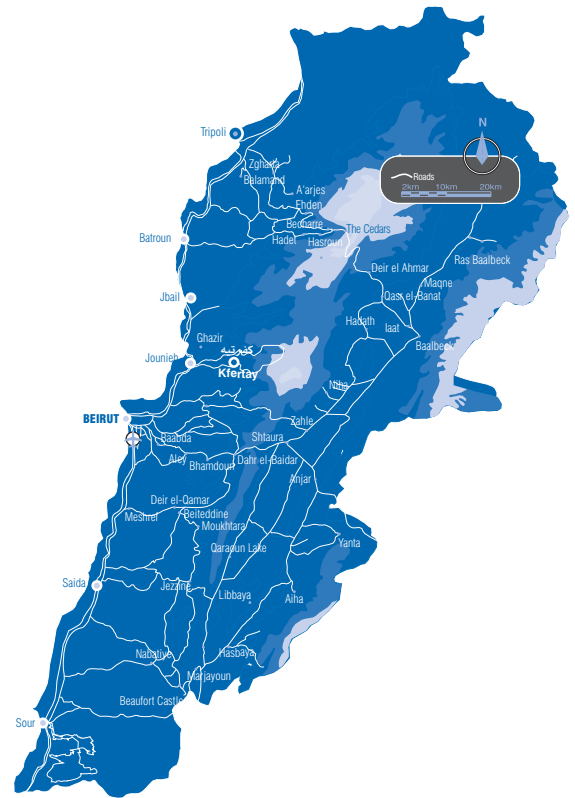
Voters

In 2000, the number of voters was 241 of whom 140 cast their ballots. This number increased to 260 in 2005 and 272 in 2009 with 126 and 158 voters casting their ballots respectively. Voters are distributed amongst the following families:

- Njeim: 80
- Hajj: 67
- Zoghbi: 48
- Moubarak: 20
- Salameh: 16
- Yaghi: 14
- Ibrahim: 12
- Korkomaz: 10

Local Authorities

Kfertay municipality was established by virtue of decision No. 693 dated May 16, 2009. The municipal council is currently composed of 9 members and headed by Elias Nicolas Njeim Hajj. Kfertay received its share in the Independent Municipal Fund for the first time



in 2008. This share amounted to LBP 13.3 million and rose to LBP 17.8 million in 2009 and further to around LBP 40 million in 2010.

Only one Mokhtar is present in the town.

Archaeological sites

The town includes stone tombs and sarcophagi from the Ancient Roman era with engraved inscriptions.

Educational institutions

There are no schools in Kfertay and its students are educated in neighboring towns.

Economic activities

At first, Kfertay's residents used to rely on agriculture but soon shifted to commerce and free professions or held jobs in both public and private sectors, which resulted in neglected land. In the past few years, Kfertay attracted scores of Khalijis who bought property and built homes, thus stirring momentum in the town.

Although small, Kfertay has offered Lebanon great statesmen including first and foremost, LAF Commander General Jean Njeim, who came to office on January 7, 1970 but died the following year in a helicopter crash while heading from the presidential palace in Ehden to Yarzi. ●

FROM STRIFE TO WAR (10)

NO. 1 ANNOUNCEMENT: A FAILED COUP D'ÉTAT

Lebanon has remained immune against the No.1 announcement infection which spread in Egypt in 1952 and in Syria between 1949 and 1970 heralding military coups in both countries. In Lebanon, one military coup was attempted by the Syrian Social Nationalist Party against President Fouad Chehab on December 30, 1961, but it did not succeed. However, during the war, the commander of Beirut garrison Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab made the No.1 announcement, declaring himself as an interim military governor of the country. His coup, however, did not go beyond TV and radio stations for the Lebanese Army had split into several factions that remained inside their barracks while the militias took over the field. It was said that the coup came about upon the instructions of Abou Iyad, a Fateh movement official, who wanted to forestall a serious coup by the army aimed at occupying a couple of regions. Below are some facts about the military coup attempted on the night of Thursday, March 11, 1976.

Ahdab announces temporary military coup

Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab started what he called a reformative movement through the No.1 announcement he made on TV at 8:45 pm at the end of the local newscast, by proclaiming himself an interim military governor. The announcement was later broadcasted on Lebanon's radio after Ahdab's allies gained control over the Ministry of Information building. The statement demanded the resignation of the government within 24 hours and called on the President of the Republic to resign his post willingly or else to consider himself resigned, and urging the parliament to elect a new president within 7 days.

However surprising the appearance of Ahdab on TV was to the Lebanese, the political circles seemed to have been expecting it. Soon, the Ahdab movement grew to become a huge issue stirring supportive and opposing military and political reactions.

Questions and conflicting answers

Upon the emergence of the reformative movement, the political circles went abuzz with a series of questions of which we mention:

First: Who stands behind the Ahdab movement? Is it a group of officers or the entire Lebanese army with its higher command?

The wide support that Ahdab has received from the army divisions and other high-ranking officials suggested that the Lebanese Army in its majority was siding with the movement. However, confusion still shrouded the stance of the Army Command and some staff officers.

Second: Who knew and who did not know about the Ahdab movement prior the announcement?

Answers to this question were very contradictory. Some claimed that another coup was being prepared but Brigadier General raced ahead of it. However, it was certain that an announcement was going to be made at night to settle the situation. Some political parties hurried to assure the Lebanese that a proclamation would be broadcasted at 8:30, while other circles believed it would be adjourned until today.

Furthermore, informed sources mentioned that a number of officials and senior officers had known there could be some military developments that would manifest in a coup or a reformative movement.

Rumors also circulated that PM Rashid Karami knew about the prospective coup, which is why he ceased all contact with his allies Saeb Salam and Raymond Eddeh and many others.

Third: What is the plan of the government which was stuck between resignation and non-resignation after Karami's statement? And what about the President of the Republic who would be considered resigned if he refused to comply with the announcement and relinquish his post?

The government will not be able to convene to take a final decision as to its resignation and it is likely that its state would remain tied to the anticipated developments in the upcoming hours. ●

Stances on the coup

A few hours after the announcement, supportive telegrams started to arrive from certain officers and army leaders. On its part, the Higher Command chose to remain silent, although informed sources and Arab and foreign radio stations asserted that the Command was sympathizing with the movement.

Most political forces reacted with silence as if reluctant to make any decision before the stance of the Command took shape.

Even those who displayed explicit or implicit support for the Ahdab movement refrained at first from making any pro or opposing statements.

No official statements were issued by the Phalanges until late at night, although rumors circulated about a concealed Phalanges advocacy of the movement.

As for the rivals of the President, who had been demanding his resignation way before the reformative movement reached the TV and the radio stations, they also preferred to play it by ear and observe the reactions of the various political blocs and military groups before committing to one final stance. They refused to make any statements or to reply to any queries raised by journalists.

Frangieh

Channel 5 broadcasted at 12:45 am last night a message addressed by President Suleiman Frangieh to the Lebanese people. Adel Malek read the message after Dr. Lucien Dahad had delivered it to the Channel 5 headquarters in.

Below is the content of the message:

“Dear Lebanese,

Vis- à- vis the accelerated events taking place in our beloved Lebanon and the attempts aimed at destroying its entity, institutions and the unity of its people on its land, our national duty urges us to confront all the campaigns set to dismantle the country and to defy all the illegitimate means used to that end.

Legitimacy in our parliamentary democratic system and in the Lebanese constitution stems from the Lebanese people only. The people are the source of power and the backbone of this country. For this legitimacy we shall always stand, and for Lebanon we shall give our lives.

Chamoun: With legitimacy and against any insurgency

Former President Camille Chamoun made the following statement at 1:00 am in the morning:

“We are opposed to all forms of insurgency. I’m an advocate of legitimacy, parliamentary system and political freedom and I hereby call on the Lebanese to refuse this movement for it targets Lebanon and its system in the first place. It is aimed against the will and the entity of the Lebanese people. I am with legitimacy till the very end and I urge the Lebanese to cling tightly to it.”

Jumblat: Against any military coup

In a statement issued last night, Kamal Jumblat announced his opposition to the military coup:

“We resist strongly the military coup and the Lebanese are committed to the basic rights and liberties established by the political leadership in Lebanon.

We were taken aback by the fallacies present in Ahdab’s statement, for he had given himself legal and constitutional capacities that should not be issued by someone who supposedly has enough expertise in the law and the constitution.

The army is a silent power and must always remain silent. Should there be any conflict between the Army Command and the Presidency of the Republic, it must be resolved silently, similarly to what happened during the term of Sheikh Bechara Khoury.

The issuance of such announcements in such a manner is an unprecedented first which we find hard to accept.

The President of the Republic must undoubtedly resign his post, but in a different manner and using different means.

It is the government, not any officer or military command, who has the capacity to announce the state of emergency. In any case, we refuse such a state, for it violates the basic political and individual rights and freedoms not to mention that declaring oneself a military governor is a strikingly peculiar move.”

No. 1 Announcement

The following is the content of the No.1 announcement made by Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab:

“Whereas we are keen on reuniting the Army and halting the deterioration of events,

Whereas my constant warnings had gone with the wind, Whereas we are devoted to safeguard the higher Lebanese interest and restore the integrity of the Lebanese people,

And inspired by the military conscience and authenticity I have, and my responsibility before God and history, I declare the following:

- I urge the government to tender its resignation within 24 hours. Otherwise it should be deemed to have resigned.
- I urge the President of the Republic to protect the Lebanese unity and resign his post following in the footsteps of his predecessor Bechara Khoury. Otherwise, he should be deemed to have resigned.
- I call on all civil and military sectors to support my reformatory movement and abide by peace and quiet or else subject themselves to potential liability.
- I announce a state of emergency and curfew in Beirut until further notice.
- I call on Parliament to elect a new president for the country within 7 days from the date of this decision
- I urge the newly elected president to form a new government upon his election
- I demand the directors-general to run the work at their respective ministries as usual
- I demand the armed forces to open fire at whoever takes liberties in rioting or looting and to hold them accountable for that
- I endorse the announcement made by the Army Commander on March 10, 1976
- I support the fraternal Syrian initiative aimed to rescue the country and the conflicting parties from the catastrophic crisis they are wallowing in
- I reaffirm our commitment to the previous agreements signed between the Lebanese government and our fellow Palestinians
- I declare that the Army is committed to protecting President Suleiman Frangieh for a lifetime
- I assure you that I am not covetous of power and I do not believe in military rule unless it is a means to save a collapsing regime. Therefore, I decided to retain my natural position as a commander of Beirut garrison and I shall pass power to the right people as soon as the new president is elected. Man proposes and God disposes.

*Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab
Commander of Beirut and interim military governor*

No. 2 Announcement

“According to legislative decree No. 10 dated July 7, 1967 and decree No. 4343 dated November 12, 1972, the interim military governor decided the following:

Article 1: imposing curfew in Beirut and the suburbs starting 10:00 pm on the 3rd of November 1976 until further notice

Article 2: excluded from the provisions of Article 1 are diplomats, MPs, medical bodies, public employees, journalists and reporters, workers and employees in TVs and in water, electricity and telephone companies, airline staff, bakers, paper boys, printing house staff, cleaners in municipalities, employees and security guards at the port of Beirut, maritime agents and their teams and the Lebanese Red Cross. Official personal IDs and business cards shall serve as verification of their identity.

Article 3: lifting curfew hours shall be specified for citizens on a daily basis according to future announcements to be issued by the media

Article 4: fire shall be opened on those who are seen carrying weaponry and refuse to comply with the first warning.

Article 5: the armed forces are in charge of enforcing the provisions of this announcement and all transgressors shall be referred to the relevant courts

NB: the suburbs of Beirut are determined by a line starting from Nahr el-Kalb in the north and running downward to Dbayyeh, Beit Shaar, Antelias, Jal el-Dib, Jdeideh, Mkalles, Tal el-Zaatar, Fayyadiéh, Hadath, Choueifat and Khaldeh.

Beirut, March 12, 1976

Interim military governor Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab

No.3 Announcement

“According to legislative decree No. 10 dated July 7, 1967 and decree No. 4343 dated November 12, 1972, the interim military governor decided the following:

Article 1: curfew shall be lifted in Beirut and the suburbs starting Friday, March 21, 1976 from 9:00 to 11:00

Article 2: citizens shall be reminded that demonstrations and gatherings are prohibited entirely

Article 3: the armed forces are assigned to execute this announcement

Beirut, March 12, 1976

Interim military governor Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab”

No.4 Announcement

“In reply to the statement issued by former President Suleiman Frangieh, we declare that we now have legitimacy as we have gained the support of the majority of civil and military sectors through hails of telegrams urging us to save democracy and restore the legitimacy of Lebanon.

Beirut, March 12, 1976

Interim military governor Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab”

No. 1 Announcement on TV then the radios’ war

By the end of the local newscast at 8:45 pm, Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab appeared on TV and started fidgeting and looking around to inquire if everything was okay for him to start.

The image was then zoomed in and he began reading his statement. By the time he finished, the TV news director showed up and explained that the news department did not know beforehand about the announcement.

It was later known that Ahdab had made his announcement from the studios of the Lebanese Television in Tallet Khayyat while the news were usually broadcasted from the studios of Lebanon and the Orient Television in Hazmieh. Therefore, the announcement was only aired on channels 7, 4 and 2.

At 10:15 pm, it was aired again, but this time on all TV channels: 7, 4, 2, 5 and 11.

The announcement did not make it onto state radio until 10:00 PM, and the group tasked with the protection of the radio declared their support for the reformative

movement at 9:45 and hurried to phone Brigadier General Aziz Ahdab.

General Ahdab arrived to the studio accompanied by a motorcade and was greeted with heavy gunfire. The soldiers carried him into the studio where he saluted the staff and asked them to play military music. Ahdab listened later to his recorded speech which was broadcasted at 10:00 pm while he was still in the studio.

Afterwards, the residents of Jounieh and northern Matn started getting signals of a radio station on the Beirut radio wave broadcasting a message for the President of the Republic urging the military to remain united against the attempted coup. It was later known that the broadcasting was from Amsheet.

Later, interference was recorded between two radio stations and two waves overlapped, while one of them continued to broadcast the message of President Frangieh until early morning, interrupted every now and then by the following statement “all statements and announcements made by separatists are deemed cancelled, for lack of legal capacity. Therefore, we encourage you to wander normally, attend to your daily routines and adhere to all the laws in force.”



CONSENSUS ON THE LEBANESE ARMY, BUT...

Since the end of the Lebanese War in 1990 and the consequent reconstruction of the Lebanese Army on newer, sound foundations, there has been a growing consensus for the support of the army's role in the protection of national unity and the preservation of peace and stability. Yet, many parties used to shift their stances every time the Lebanese Army adopted policies at odds with their interests.

Pro-Army statements

“Why can't they let the Army assume its security responsibilities, knowing that it is fulfilling its duties in the most perfect manner? The Lebanese Army is above all the non-sense that emerges every now and it is a red line not to be crossed”

(Statement of Nabih Berri on September 24, 2012).

“The military institution has backed the resistance during the 2006 July War and fought Fatah El-Islam with absolute courage, receiving equal support from Akkar's residents back then... All this emphasizes the necessity to stand by the Army today, more than any other time, to secure internal stability and national peace and to avert lapse into internal wars”

(Weekly statement of Walid Jumblatt on May 24, 2012).

“The biggest mistake is to thrust the Army into the political disputes and over statements, which bloom right before the electoral season... Questioning the Army, from whatever source it may come, harms, not only the army, but the country and the people as well”

(Statement of PM Najib Mikati on September 11, 2012).

“The Lebanese Army is responsible, more than any other apparatus, for defending the country and protecting our national sovereignty and it is unacceptable to question its ability to accomplish this mission and confront the Israeli enemy to safeguard the people and the borders of Lebanon”

(Statement of former PM Saad Hariri on December 10, 2009).

“The Lebanese Army is the legal authority entrusted with the protection of the land and the people from any external hostility, and a land feeding on the blood of its martyrs shall never die”

(Statement of LF leader Samir Geagea on July 31, 2012).



“The Lebanese Army is irreplaceable and symbolizes the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon. Those who try to dash the spirits of the Army are in fact jeopardizing the country”

(Statement of Michel Aoun on September 21, 2011).

“We are staunch advocates of the Lebanese Army and its Commander and troops. I hope that the Lebanese will cooperate to preserve this institution and secure its unity so it can assume the heavy responsibilities assigned to it”

(Statement of Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah in August 2012).

Anti-Army statements

“The Army's Command and Intelligence in particular have missed the point that those who entered the country forcibly are different than those who came in fleeing... The Army is facilitating the passage of Lebanese and Syrian shabiha and giving them special IDs, especially that it has become a Hezbollah militia governed by Hassan Nasrallah”

(Statement of Mouin Merhebi in August 2012).

We do not want to see Lebanese Army soldiers standing at checkpoints. We need ISF and gendarmerie members to impose. ●●

OCTOBER 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

ASSASSINATION OF WISSAM AL HASSAN
 HEZBOLLAH FIGHTERS DEAD IN SYRIA
 DISCUSSIONS FLARE UP OVER ELECTORAL LAW
 HEZBOLLAH AND AYOUB'S DRONE
 PROTESTS AND SIT-INS AROUND THE GRAND SERAIL
 MARCH 14 FORCES BOYCOTT PARLIAMENT SESSIONS
 PATRIARCH AL-RAI APPOINTED AS CARDINAL

October 2

- The Appeals Chamber holds a public hearing on STL's jurisdiction.
- "The era of the 1960s electoral law is long gone", says MP Mohammad Raad.
- President Michel Suleiman continues his official visit to Peru.
- "What is happening in the Arab world will lead to its own destruction," says Patriarch Al-Rai during a dinner at the Lebanese Embassy in Hungary.

October 3

- President Suleiman continues his tour of Latin America and meets the King of Jordan.
- The Lebanese Civil Coalition shows solidarity to a number of Shia'a suspected of forging ties with the US embassy as stated by Al-Akhbar report, and assure they disagree with Hezbollah without quarreling with them.
- Future Bloc MPs reiterate their endorsement of the small districts' proposition just this one time and consider that the electoral project laid down by the government favors Hezbollah.
- Following his meeting with Speaker Nabih Berri, PM Najib Mikati voices his support for the government's electoral proposition and his opposition to any project at odds with the Taef Agreement.
- People take to the streets in Masnaa in protest of the arrest of Sheikh Hassan Ali under accusations of smuggling weapons to Syria.
- Hezbollah holds funeral for one of its

members in Budai and rumors circulate that he lost his life fighting in Syria.

October 4

- The Cabinet convenes at the Grand Serail and postpones the amendment of Law 140 and the telecom data law.
- 9 dead and 7 injured in an explosion that ripped through a Hezbollah arms depot in Nabi Sheet. Hezbollah reports that 3 of its members were killed in the blast.
- Minister Mohammad Safadi announces that he will not run in the 2013 parliamentary elections in Tripoli.
- President Michel Suleiman arrives in Argentina as part of his visit to South America. His visit was the first for a Lebanese President to Argentina since Camille Chamoun's.
- The UNHCR reveals that over 80400 Syrian refugees are present in Lebanon.

October 5

- Future Bloc MPs assert that Hezbollah members are partaking in the fights alongside the Syrian regime, stressing that Nabi Sheet is not Kiryat Shmona and Al-Kassir is not Galilee.
- The ISF Intelligence Branch confiscates weapons from a depot in Btaaboura in Koura, without revealing the identity of their owner.
- Parliamentary committees continue discussions over the electoral law amid ongoing disputes between MPs.

October 6

- President Michel Suleiman arrives in Paraguay as part of his South American tour and reiterates that Lebanon and Syria are two fraternal countries, stressing that all weapons used internally shall be removed.
- Minister of Interior and Municipalities Marwan Charbel asserts that the Nabi Sheet explosion was the result of the over-heating of old bombs stored in the warehouse.
- US Ambassador Maura Connelly reiterates that efforts shall proceed earnestly to immunize Lebanon against Syria's violence spillovers, stressing the need for free and transparent elections.
- Media reports emerge saying that Syrian Minister Bouthaina Shaaban might be involved in the Samaha case.

October 8

- President Michel Suleiman makes his last stop in Uruguay, stating that Lebanon shall no more be a proxy battlefield for foreign players.
- Minister Wiam Wahhab slams President Suleiman's tour of South America, saying that they offer nothing to Lebanon.
- Minister Mohammad Safadi receives the North Lebanon Mufti Malek Shaar and underlines that his refrain from running for Parliament does not mean his withdrawal from political life.
- Sheikh Ahmad a-Assir reiterates during Saida's protest on Sunday that there will be weekly sit-ins aimed to

remove Hezbollah's weapons, urging his supporters to participate in the forthcoming protest to be held in the Martyrs' Square in downtown Beirut.

- Religious Representative of Imam Ali Khamenei's in Lebanon, Sheikh Mohammed Yazbek, stresses on the occasion of the one-week commemoration of Ali Hussein Nassif's death, that Nassif was killed while defending the ill-treated Lebanese.

October 9

- Hezbollah denies Al-Arabiya leaks on its involvement in the assassination of Gebran Tueini with the cooperation of Syrian intelligence, waiting for the judiciary to have its say in the matter.

- The Cabinet approves draft laws aimed to amend regulatory laws on the Audit Court and the Central Inspection as part of the administrative modernization process.

- Syrian shelling targets the village of Aboudiyeh in North Lebanon.

- UN Special Coordinator Derek Plumbly asserts that the elections will be held on time after meeting PM Najib Mikati.

- MP Walid Jumblatt accuses security and political figures of depriving the state of customs' revenues.

- The UNIFIL denies having spotted a reconnaissance aircraft flying from Lebanon to Israel.

October 10

- Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea meets Saad Hariri and Saudi officials during his visit to the KSA.

- Following examination of the state's accounts for the past 10 years, Director General of the Ministry of Finance Alain Bifani refers 10 files to the judiciary after detection of accounting-related errors.

- The Future Bloc demands the issuance of an indictment into the case of Michel Samaha, Ali Mamlouk and Bouthaina Shaaban.

October 11

- The Lebanese Cabinet approves, during its session at the Presidential Palace, a series of administrative appointments.

Jean Daoud Fahed is appointed as head of the Higher Judicial Council, Judge Hatem Madi as attorney general and Judge Marwan Abboud as head of the Higher Disciplinary Committee.

- President Michel Suleiman says to NBN that he will not accept the extension of his presidential term.

- Public teachers and employees hold a strike, demanding the referral of the salaries scale to Parliament for ratification.

- Former PM Fouad Seniora urges rational Shia'a to intervene and prevent Hezbollah from lapsing into the internal conflict in Syria, as this might herald a vicious strife.

October 12

- Hezbollah's Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah confirms that the party was behind the drone flight over Israel, denying having sent fighters to Syria, as the Syrian regime does not need any assistance.

- General Michel Aoun says that the security situation in North Lebanon might prevent the holding of elections.

- Formation of an ad-hoc advisory parliamentary committee to discuss the electoral law during a 3-week period.

- Former PM Saad Hariri holds meetings with LF leader Sami Geagea, and an agreement is reached over the electoral formula.

October 13

- Commenting on Hezbollah's drone, President Michel Suleiman says "this drone demonstrates the need to approve a defense strategy that can organize the capabilities of the resistance in defending Lebanon."

- PM Najib Mikati leaves for Congo to participate in the francophone summit.

- Hezbollah's drone stirs a series of conflicting reactions.

- Three Fatah Al-Islam inmates escape from the Roumieh prison.

October 15

- Sheikh Ahmad Al-Assir holds a ceremony in downtown Beirut in support of the Syrian opposition. In his speech,

Al-Assir lashes at Hezbollah and Iran, wondering whether the images of Hariri were taken by an Iranian or an Israeli plane. Skirmishes erupt between Al-Assir's supporters and their Hezbollah rivals following the ceremony.

- Seniora deems the drone flight over Israel a violation of Resolution 1701.

- The Free Patriotic Movement holds mass in Deyr al-Qala'a in Beit Meri in commemoration of the ouster/removal of its leader General Michel Aoun on October 13, 1990. Aoun delivers a speech accusing some parties of backing the Syrian opposition and stressing that the FPM has started to achieve the goals it has fought for.

- Investigations into the escape of Fatah Al-Islam inmates from Roumieh result in the arrest of two officers and five soldiers under charges of dereliction of duty and collusion respectively.

October 16

- During his visit to Qatar, PM Najib Mikati meets Qatari Prince Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al-Thani, who signs a number of agreements with Lebanon and voices his keenness on the well-being of the Lebanese expatriates in Qatar.

- Speaker Nabih Berri holds a banquet in Ain Tineh in honor of the tribes and dignitaries of Beqa'a, stressing that development is the first step towards stability and that the Beqa'a region is not above the law.

- The scandal of the customs is put before the Cabinet.

- LF leader Samir Geagea assures that he agreed with Hariri over the small districts' proposition and criticizes Hezbollah's drone flight over Israel.

- Grand Mufti Sheikh Mohammed Rashid Qabbani believes that sending the drone over Israel is an excellent strategic action.

- Inauguration of a new courtroom at Roumieh prison to speed up trials.

October 17

- Parliament convenes to elect a secretary general, 3 commissioners, and members of the parliamentary

committees. During the session, the Parliament ratifies the minutes of the legislative session held on the 2nd of July and postpones the file of contract workers until other sessions to be held in November, with Berri criticizing the absence of certain MPs from parliamentary committees.

- The Cabinet convenes at the Grand Serail and approves the importation of 92 octane-graded gasoline.

- General Michel Aoun holds Major General Ashraf Rifi and Brigadier General Wissam Hassan accountable for the escape of inmates from the Roumieh prison.

- Security Forces come under gunfire for arresting a van belonging to an Al-Zuaiter member in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

- The Future Bloc MPs denounce the statements made by Minister of Foreign Affairs Adnan Mansour in support of Ayoub drone, and Mansour denies having said that the drone constitutes no violation of Resolution 1701.

October 18

- The UN-Arab league envoy Akhadar Ibrahim arrives in Lebanon and holds discussions with the President, Prime Minister and Speaker over the Syrian crisis, warning of a huge explosion that might destroy everything and everyone.

- The Cabinet convenes at the Baabda Palace to reach an agreement on the sources of funding for the new salaries scale and sets October 31 as a final date to decide on the funds.

- The March 14 General Secretariat demands the establishment of a joint committee consisting of the Lebanese Army and the UNIFIL, calling for their deployment along the border with Syria.

- The Lebanese Army launches a security plan in the Baalbeck- Hermel region in order to eliminate all theft rings and arrest fugitives.

October 19

- PM Najib Mikati calls for a Taef-like economic agreement adding: “mistaken is he who thinks that the ouster of government would resolve the salaries scale issue.”

- President Michel Suleiman chairs a meeting discussing the non-enforced clauses of the Taef Agreement.

- “The role of MP Okab Sakr in the Syrian opposition movement is political and humanitarian,” says former PM Saad Hariri.

- Speaker Nabih Berri hits back at remarks made by LF leader Samir Geagea, in which the latter expressed his inability to stand against Berri as Speaker of Parliament in 2013.

- The public and education sectors paralyzed due to the strike demanding the approval of the salaries scale and its referral to Parliament.

October 20

- A car bomb explodes in Ashrafieh killing the Head of the Intelligence Branch, Brigadier General Wissam al-Hassan and 3 others and wounding a further 100. The explosion damages the houses and shops in the area.

- PM Saad Hariri, MP Walid Jumblatt and LF leader Sami Geagea accuse Syrian President Bashar Assad of being behind the assassination, which came in response to the arrest of Minister Michel Samaha.

- Roads blocked in Tripoli and Beirut in protest of the assassination.

- PM Najib Mikati ignores the calls for his resignation and assures that he will not take personal responsibility for the death of Al-Hassan.

- “Al-Hassan confronted direct threats following the arrest of Samaha,” says Major General Ashraf Rifi.

October 22

- Al-Hassan and his companion buried next to the assassinated former PM Rafic Hariri following their funeral in downtown Beirut.

- Calls on the protestors to break into the Grand Serail following Al-

Hassan’s funeral result in clashes between them and the Serail police. The clashes end with the withdrawal of the demonstrators in compliance with the demands of Hariri and Seniora.

October 23

- The ambassadors of the five permanent UN Security Council members meet President Michel Suleiman and express their determination to support the government, stressing that they would accept its resignation only if there was consensus over a new government that saves the country from slipping in to void.

- The Lebanese Army succeeds in containing the tension that intensified in the region of Qasqas following sniper fire and clashes with gunmen in the neighborhood. Similar fighting rounds break out in Tripoli between Baal Mohsen and Bab Tebbaneh, leaving 9 dead.

- The Minister of Health announces that the Ashrafieh bombing death toll is 3 in addition to 123 injured, of whom 16 are still receiving treatment.

- An FBI team is expected to arrive in Beirut in a couple of days to offer assistance in the investigation into Al-Hassan’s killing.

- March 14 MPs receive threatening messages to their cell phones from a Syrian number.

- March 14 youth groups to proceed with their open-ended sit-in outside Mikati’s house in Tripoli until his resignation.

- The Lebanese Forces boycotts Parliament sessions until the ouster of government.

October 24

- EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton arrives in Lebanon and meets PM Najib Mikati, underlining EU’s support of stability and institutional work in Lebanon.

- The Future Bloc boycotts Parliament session and former PM Fouad Seniora informs President Suleiman that the

bloc will not engage in any dialogue before the resignation of government.

- The Lebanese Army arrests 100 holders of weapons in the past few days including 34 Syrians and 4 Palestinians.

- Clashes in Tripoli leave 11 dead (7 in Bab Tebbaneh and 4 in Jabal Mohsen) and 60 injured.

- Mikati signs decree to transfer Al-Hassan's case to the Justice Council and assigns Judge Nabil Wehbi as a judicial investigator.

- The High Relief Committee offers each of the 59 families affected by the Ashrafieh blast \$ 1000 for temporary accommodations.

- The UNHCR says the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has surpassed 100 000.

October 25

- Pope appoints Maronite Patriarch Mar Bechara Boutros Al-Rai as new Cardinal and sets November 24, 2012 as the date for the consistory.

- STL's Appeals Chamber rejects an appeal challenging the court's legality.

- General Prosecutor judge Hatem Madi says there are no updates regarding the assassination of Brigadier General Wissam Al-Hassan.

- Syrian Ambassador Ali Abdul Karim Ali meets his Lebanese counterpart Adnan Mansour and says that Israel is behind the assassination of Al-Hassan, commending the stances of Major General Ashraf Rifi who did not rule out the possibility of an Israeli involvement in Al-Hassan's killing.

- Political official at the Arab Democratic Party, Refaat Badr, reports that Tripoli's most recent battle was fought by the Free Syrian Army.

October 26

- PSP leader, MP Walid Jumblatt reveals to Kalam El-Nas TV show that Saad Hariri asked him to resign but he refused. Hariri retaliates complimenting him for his alliance with Syria and Iran.

- The Iranian ambassador, a Hezbollah delegation, and others head to the ISF

General Directorate to offer condolences over the death of Brigadier General Wissam Al-Hassan in the presence of Major General Ashraf Rifi.

- US Ambassador Maura Connelly meets Hariri's advisor, Nader Hariri, and reiterates her support for institutions.

- An FBI investigative team arrives in Beirut to assist in the investigation into Al-Hassan's assassination.

October 29

- Grand Mufti Sheikh Mohammad Rashid Qabbani denounces the attack against the Serail and says that the ouster of the government through protests is unacceptable.

- PM Najib Mikati stresses upon return from France that his resignation has become out of the question today.

- Al-Hassan's father continues to receive condolences over the death of his son in Tripoli and reiterates that PM Mikati is a good friend and he is not responsible for Al-Hassan's death.

- 3 officers and 3 soldiers arrested following a clash that erupted in Zahle's prison and resulted in the death of a Zaeiter inmate.

- March 14 leaders meet in Meerab in the presence of Amine Gemayel and Fouad Seniora and assert their commitment to exert more efforts to overthrow the government. LF leader Samir Gegae holds March 8 forces accountable for the assassinations.

- MP Michel Aoun continues his tour in Canada and accuses Zionists of targeting the Christians in the east.

October 30

- ISF arrests two Malaysians suspected of having links to al-Qaida.

- STL Pre-trial Judge Daniel Franseen approves the amendment of the indictment, without involving any new names.

- Public Prosecution refers journalist Nadim Qteish to the Central Criminal Investigation, after he called on mourners to storm the Grand Serail.

- The Lebanese Military Judiciary

arrests 8 Syrians, 6 of whom are members and 2 are supporters of the Free Syrian Army for holding unlicensed weapons in the Beqa'a town of Masharee al-Qaa.

- Patriarch al-Rai returns from Rome as Cardinal.

- MP Walid Jumblatt receives PM Najib Mikati in Mukhtara after having seen President Michel Suleiman in Baabda.

- March 14 Forces declare from Beit al-Wasat full boycott of Mikati's government, calling for its ouster, a timeline for the handover of Hezbollah's weapons and the formation of a rescue government in charge of running the elections. Geagea and Fares Soueid make no appearance at the meeting, thus confirming the divides within the March 14 General Secretariat.

November 1

- The Cabinet convenes at the Presidential Palace and approves the diplomatic appointments that have been on hold for 7 years.

- Speaker Nabih Berri chairs parliamentary bureau committee meeting in the absence of the opposition MPs, except for Robert Ghanem.

- Lebanese Journalist Fidaa Itani, who was abducted by the Free Syrian Army, is released and arrives in Turkey.

- Families of the Lebanese abducted in Syria stage a protest near the Turkish embassy and threaten to kidnap the ambassador and Turkish citizens and soldiers in the UNIFIL.

The Lebanese Army finds a tapping device in the Southern town of Blida.

Inauguration of the Persian Language Department in the Lebanese University in cooperation with the University of Tehran.

The Maronite League convenes in the presence of the representatives of the Christian parties in Bkerke's committee and assures its rejection of the 1960 electoral law.

Wiam Wahhab visits Walid Jumblatt in Mukhtara. ●●

THE MORE THEY LIE, THE MORE THE LEBANESE BELIEVE THEM

The Lebanese wait eagerly for the horoscope predictions at the beginning of every year. Amid the abundance of astrologers, seers, and fortune tellers on the one hand and the coincidences and the subtle perceptions of the predictions on the other, the Lebanese have been left confused and on the verge of losing their minds.

We thought that only a few of those who read horoscopes believe what they say and run their lives accordingly. We were taken aback, however, by the vigor and seriousness with which astrologers and seers strive to convince the Lebanese with their visions. But amid their far-sighted flagrant predictions, the Lebanese went adrift, fearful at times of the ambiguous undertones, shuddering at others at their pessimist connotations and forever hoping that the promising predictions would materialize some day.

We have preferred not to mention any names in order not to stir any grudges or anger of the sixth sense holders and thus fall under their magic spells. But readings into their predictions assure us that they are no more than a simple analysis that can be mastered by the most ordinary politicians or journalists.

“Flood water will cover many Lebanese regions due to incessant rainfall”

- isn't that a natural incident in a country known for its abundant winter rains?

“Earthquakes in the US and Japan”

- isn't that a reasonable occurrence in countries located on the seismic lines?

“An assassination attempt will target a Lebanese politician”

- hasn't this been the case for decades?

There is no room to pinpoint the generous wisdom that the predictors and fortune tellers have overwhelmed us with through their frequent announcements. However, to give each their dues, it is necessary to admit that a substantial part of their predictions have been correct most of the time... Indeed, they were correct, but thanks to a reasonable,

meticulous and logical follow-up and analysis of everyday events, and not to powers and visions of intuition.

Let us quit talking of premonitions and attend to some statistics instead:

53.3% of the Lebanese population holds astrologers in high regard, which reflects that they are prone to accept, believe and promote superstitions instead of rationalizing a logical explanation of the facts.

12.8% of the Lebanese population believes completely in astrology and spends USD 21 million annually on fortune-telling, which proves that the superstitious mentality is still dominant in our community.

33.9% of the population does not believe in astrologers and seers, deeming them heretics contradicting religion, especially that Islam and Christianity have prohibited fortune-telling and hold God as the only supreme knower of the fate of the world and the humans.

The above statistics leave us wondering about the actual reasons behind the deviance of the Lebanese, who supposedly are too cultured to fall for such banalities. Could the tight economic and social conditions be the motive that has driven our community into a magic world afar from the real one? Or is it just a matter of mental and psychological disorders that have lead, along with the misuse of religions, to the current phenomenon?

And finally, do fortune tellers and astrologers deserve to gain such a significant position in our media or have the Lebanese forgotten that they are Phoenician intellectuals born in “Switzerland of the East”? ●

REAL ESTATE PRICES- OCTOBER 2012

Following the slight momentum registered in the real estate sector in September, the sluggish activity that has been marking the market in earlier months returned to prevail in October, especially after the assassination of Wissam Al-Hassan and the ensuing unrest and calls for government resignation. Despite the passivity, stable prices were registered in Beirut and its suburbs, while other regions exhibited modest price decreases due to the abundance of offers and scarcity of demand. Table 1 and 2 illustrate the prices of some apartments and estates in October 2012.

Prices of some estates sold in October 2012				Table 1
Region	Area m ²	Price (USD)	USD/m ²	
Beirut				
Ashrafieh	1,200	5,580,000	4,650	
Karantina	2,000	13,000,000	6,500	
Corniche Mazra'a	800	5,760,000	7,200	
Baabda				
Yarzi	1,100	2,035,000	1,850	
Hazmieh	1,700	2,465,000	1,450	
Baabda	1,300	2,080,000	1,600	
Matn				
Ein Saadeh	800	400,000	500	
Qornet Chehwan	1,000	750,000	750	
Broumana	1,500	1,050,000	700	
Rabieh	800	2,880,000	3,600	
Aley				
Doha Aramoun	1,100	770,000	700	
Bchamoun (Maderes)	1,500	375,000	250	
Kessrouan				
Kfardeblian	2,500	375,000	150	
Ghazir	1,200	288,000	240	

Source: Information International- October 2012

Prices of some apartments sold in October 2012				Table 2
Region	Area m ²	Price (USD)	USD/m ²	
Beirut				
Ashrafieh- Sassine	180	603,000	3,350	
Ashrafieh- Rizk	150	420,000	2,800	
Hamra (City Café)	250	750,000	3,000	
Verdun (Bristol)	200	640,000	3,200	
Tallet Khayyat	260	910,000	3,500	
Mar Elias	180	540,000	3,000	
Sodeco	250	1,000,000	4,000	
Ras El-Nabe'e	150	390,000	2,600	
Baabda				
Baabda (Antounieh)	160	400,000	2,500	
Baabda (Brazilia)	200	648,000	2,400	
Hazmieh- Mar Taqla	200	420,000	2,100	
Ain Roummaneh	150	217,500	1,450	
Hadath	100	150,000	1,500	
Yarzi	290	783,000	2,700	
Haret Hreik	160	240,000	1,500	
Sfeir	120	192,000	1,600	
Matn				
Mansourieh	160	260,800	1,630	
Bsaleem	210	241,500	1,150	
Baabdat	220	330,000	1,500	
Ain Saadeh	200	330,000	1,650	
Awkar	150	210,000	1,400	
Awkar	130	214,500	1,650	
Broumana	200	360,000	1,800	
Broumana	250	300,000	1,200	
Aley				
Bshamoun (Yahoudieh)	160	208,000	1,300	
Doha Hoss	260	481,000	1,850	
Aramoun	150	165,000	1,100	
Choueifat	120	138,000	1,150	
Khaldeh	260	364,000	1,400	
Kessrouan				
Adma	300	480,000	1,600	
Adoniss	160	208,000	1,300	
Zouk Mikael	150	187,500	1,250	
Sahel Alma	160	224,000	1,400	
Ballouneh	180	288,000	1,600	

Source: Information International- October 2012

PRICES OF 100 FOOD PRODUCTS-OCTOBER 2012

The majority of the 100 food products we investigate every month maintained stable prices in October 2012, a trend that has been prevailing over the past few months. 37 items including oil, dairy products, cereals and some canned food registered higher prices, while the prices of 54 items remained unchanged and only 4 items increased slightly in price. Table 1 shows the prices of all 100 food products in October 2012.

Prices of 100 food products in October 2012 (in LBP) Table 1			
Item and Brand	Prices beginning of October 2012	Prices beginning of November 2012	% of price change
Oil			
Afia corn oil (3.5 liters)	17,250	17,900	+3.7
Mazola corn oil (3.5 liters)	16,250	17,000	+4.6
Mazola corn oil (1.8 liters)	8,250	8,900	+7.8
Slim corn oil (2 liters)	9,000	9,250	+2.8
Wesson corn oil (2 liters)	8,750	9,500	+8.5
Ghandour soya oil (3.8 liters)	14,500	17,000	+16
Alfa corn oil (4 liters)	14,750	17,100	+16
Al-Wadi olive oil (1/2 liters)	7,000	7,000	0
Ketchup and Sauces			
Libby's Ketchup (567 g)	2,100	2,200	+4.7
Extra Ketchup (340 g)	1,400	1,550	+10.7
Extra Ketchup (2.2 kg)	5,500	5,500	0
Dolly's Mayonnaise (500 ml)	4,100	4,100	0
Al-Wadi Mayonnaise (500 ml)	4,250	4,250	0
Al-Bsat Tahina (900 g)	6,950	6,950	0
Al-Bsat Tahina (450 g)	3,850	3,850	0
Taous tomato sauce (70 g)	750	750	0
Taous tomato sauce (425 g)	3,200	3,200	0
Tala tomato sauce (675 g)	3,000	3,300	0

Prices of 100 food products in October 2012 (in LBP) Table 1			
Item and Brand	Prices beginning of October 2012	Prices beginning of November 2012	% of price change
Dairy Products			
Candia full cream milk (1 liter)	2,500	2,600	+4
Candia full cream yoghurt (1 kg)	3,100	3,250	+4.8
Bonjus labneh (1 kg)	4,890	5,000	+2.2
Taanayel labneh (500 g)	6,000	6,100	+1.7
Candia labneh (500)	5,950	6,000	+0.8
Taanayel yoghurt (1 kg)	4,000	4,100	+2.5
Smeds cheese (400 g)	4,850	4,850	0
Picon cheese (360 g)	3,900	3,900	0
Picon cheese (160 g)	1,975	1,975	0
Double-crème cheese (1 kg)	11,000	11,000	0
Fresh country cheese (1 kg)	11,500	11,500	0
Kashkawan cheese (1 kg)	14,200	13,500	-5
Lurpak butter (200 g)	2,750	2,750	0
Tatra butter (200 g)	2,500	2,600	+4
Al-Malaaqtain margarine (2 kg)	9,850	9,850	0
Al-Baqara al-Haloub margarine (2 kg)	35,000	35,000	0
Vegetaline margarine (2 kg)	18,500	18,500	0
Nido full cream milk (bag) (2,250 g)	21,850	21,850	0
Nido full cream milk (bag) (2,500 g)	26,250	26,250	0
Tatra full cream milk (1,800 g)	20,500	20,500	0
Cereals			
Khater white lentils (1 kg)	4,000	4,000	0
Khater chick-peas (1 kg)	4,500	4,500	0
Khater beans (1 kg)	2,000	2,100	+5
Peeled wheat (1 kg)	2,000	2,250	+12.5

Prices of 100 food products in October 2012 (in LBP) Table 1

Item and Brand	Prices beginning of October 2012	Prices beginning of November 2012	% of price change
Pineal Lima Bean (1 kg)	4,250	4,350	+2.3
Brown Fine Burgul (1 kg)	2,000	2,250	+12.5
Egyptian rice (1 kg)	1,750	1,750	0
American rice (1 kg)	1,750	1,750	0
Italian rice (1 kg)	2,350	2,350	0
Al-wadi Hommos Tahina (380 g)	1,400	1,500	+7.1
Chtoura Hommos Tahina (380 g)	1,400	1,550	+10.7
California Gardens beans (450 g)	1,400	1,400	0
Al-Wadi beans (450 g)	1,100	1,200	+9
Chtoura beans (480 g)	1,100	1,100	0
Libby's corn (340 g)	1,450	1,450	0
Pasta			
Barilla spaghetti (500 g)	2,250	2,250	0
Antonio Amato spaghetti (500 g)	2,200	2,200	0
Monte spaghetti (500 g)	2,300	2,300	0
Sugar (2 kg)	3,500	3,400	-2.8
Al-Ousra sugar (5 kg)	8,250	8,250	0
Salt (700 g)	325	400	+23
Box of salt (738 g)	1,450	1,450	0
Meat, Fish and Eggs			
Zwan chicken (200 g)	2,550	2,550	0
Zwan beef (200 g)	2,500	2,500	0
Luncheon meat beef (198 g)	2,000	2,100	+5
Al-Mona chicken (200 g)	2,000	2,000	0
Al-Taghzia beef (200 g)	1,950	1,950	0
Al-Taghzia chicken (200 g)	1,750	2,000	+14.3
Geisha sardines (125 g)	1,250	1,500	+20
Deli sardines (125 g)	1,250	1,250	0
Milo sardines 125 g)	1,150	1,100	0
Geisha tuna (200 g)	4,000	4,000	0
White Bell tuna (200 g)	2,800	2,800	0
White Diamond tuna (200 g)	3,000	2,750	-8.4
Skipper tuna (185 g)	2,250	2,500	+11.1

Prices of 100 food products in October 2012 (in LBP) Table 1

Item and Brand	Prices beginning of October 2012	Prices beginning of November 2012	% of price change
Eggs (30 eggs)	8,000	8,250	+3.1
Beef (1 kg)	15,000	15,000	0
Lamb (1kg)	22,000	22,000	0
Coffee and Tea			
Najjar coffee (1 kg)	17,000	17,200	+1.1
Brazil coffee (1 kg)	13,000	15,000	+15.3
Al-Hisan tea (180 g)	2,750	2,750	0
Nestle (250 g)	2,000	2,000	0
Halvah and Jam			
Al-Wadi halvah (454 g)	4,000	4,250	+6.2
Al-Bsat halvah (450 g)	3,500	3,600	+2.8
Chtoura apricot jam (1 kg)	6,500	6,500	0
Al-Wadi apricot jam (1 kg)	5,250	5,250	0
Tissues and Detergents			
Mimosa tissues (500 g)	2,850	2,850	0
Fine tissues (200 tissues)	1,330	1,400	+5.2
Primo tissues (200 tissues)	1,400	1,400	0
Gipsy tissues (300 tissues)	2,650	2,650	0
Mimosa toilet paper (4 rolls)	6,100	6,100	0
Yes detergent (750 g)	2,600	2,750	+5.7
Clorox (1 liter)	1,500	1,500	0
Persil (4 kg)	19,500	19,500	0
Ariel (4 kg)	19,500	19,500	0
Fruit and Vegetables			
Oranges (1 kg)	1,000	1,500	+50
Tomatoes (1 kg)	750	750	0
Cucumbers (1 kg)	2,000	750	-62.5
Bananas (1 kg)	1,250	1,250	0
Lemons (1 kg)	750	750	0
Apples (1 kg)	2,000	2,000	0
Potatoes (1 kg)	600	750	+25

Source: Information International

Facebook facts and figures (2012)

- **901 million** is the number of Facebook active users (up from last year's 680 million) in the world.
- **1 in 7.7 people** have a Facebook account around the world.
- **3.2 billion** comments and likes are posted on Facebook daily.
- **488 million** users access Facebook via their mobile every month, of whom 83 million were registered in March 2012.
- **300 million** photos are uploaded to Facebook daily.
- **\$1.058 billion** is the total Facebook's revenue for the first quarter of 2012, up from last year's \$731 million.
- **15%** of Facebook's revenue is contributed by Zynga (an online games company).
- **42 million** "Pages" on Facebook have 10 or more 'likes'.
- **9 million** is the number of apps and websites integrated with Facebook.

Ref: <http://cosmediaconsulting.com/blog/interesting-facebook-facts-figures-and-statistics>



Beirut International Airport

Rafic Hariri International Airport Traffic- October 2012

Rafic Hariri International Airport passenger traffic decreased in October 2012 by 13.5% (73 740 passengers) compared to September 2012 and an increased by 5.2% compared to the same period last year. A total of 5 052 059 passengers used Rafic Hariri International airport in the first ten months of 2012, compared to 4 743 953 during the same period last year, that is up by 6.5%. Table 1 illustrates airport traffic in October 2012 compared to September 2012 and October 2011.

Airport traffic in October 2012 compared to September 2012 and October 2011					Table 1
Traffic	September 2012	October 2012	October 2011	% of change September/October 2012	% of change October 2011/October 2012
Arriving airplanes	2686	2597	2697	-3.3	-3.9
Departing airplanes	2683	2597	2686	-3.2	-3.4
Total no. of airplanes	5369	5194	5365	-3.3	-3.3
Arriving passengers	232 024	223 551	215 875	-3.7	+3.4
Departing passengers	310 896	246 639	228 514	-20.7	+7.3
Transit passengers	3864	2856	4231	-26.1	-48.1
Total no. of passengers	546 786	473 046	448 620	-13.5	+5.2
Imported goods (per ton)	4155	4692	4124	+12.9	+12.1
Exported goods (per ton)	3766	3407	3242	-9.5	+4.8
Total amount of goods	7921	8099	7366	+2.2	+9.1

Source: Information International and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

Stats & Numbers

- **LBP 3165 billion** are the amounts of interests paid on Lebanon's public debt in the first seven months of 2012, i.e. around LBP 452 billion per month.
- **23000** new cars were sold in Lebanon in the first eight months of 2012, up by 7.5% compared to the same period last year.
- **LBP 5 million** is the donation granted to the Lebanese government to build a school in a town in southern Lebanon. Later, it turned out that the building is at risk of collapse, so another USD 500 000 was allocated to remove the building before it falls down.
- **LBP 134 million** is the compensation granted to the committees tasked with appraising the settlement of construction violations. The estimated revenues from these violations do not exceed LBP 860 million, which means that the members of the committees have received 17% of the revenues.
- **LBP 150 million** is the estimated cost for hosting the seventh session of the FAO-WHO joint commission in Lebanon in January 2013.



Photo by Alaa Sakr

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 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*
- 6- The Face of the Prophet, *Khalil Gibran and the Portraits of the Temple of Arts*
- 7- May Ziadeh,
- 8- USA in the Middle East
- 9- Alone Together

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?"
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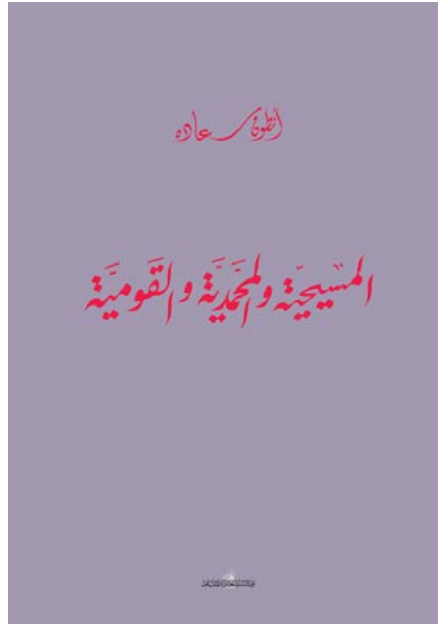
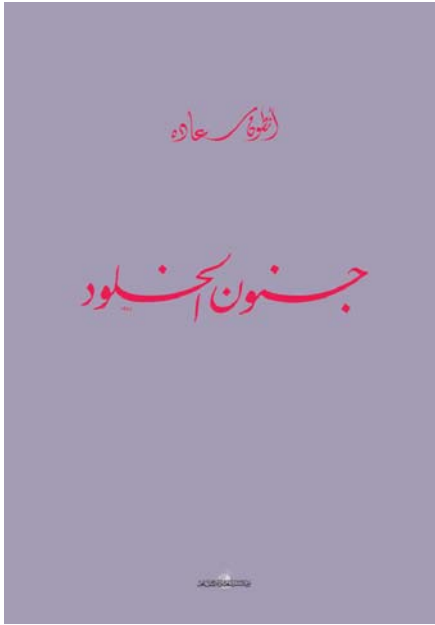
THE FOLLY OF IMMORTALITY (JOUNOUN EL-KHOULOD)

Published together with *Al-Masihyah Wal Mouhammadiyah wal Qawmiyah* by Saadeh Cultural Foundation.

This book is an attempt to correct the deficiencies in the 1978 and the 2001 editions of *The Folly of Immortality* series, which consisted of a number of analytical research articles written by Antoun Saadeh and published in *Al-Zawba'a* newspaper, in response to the criticism launched by poet Rashid Salim Khoury against the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and its leader.

This edition aims to treat the flaws and distortions of the previous editions and to remove everything that thwarts the natural fluidness and ease of the text, in order to serve the primary purpose, which is to deliver a profound critique to the rivals of the SSNP, who were using the religious and sectarian divides among the Syrians as a weapon to advance their personal political gains.

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