

ndu spirit

جامعة سيّدة اللوزة - كانون الأول ٢٠١١، العدد ٥٣



Vincent Van Gogh

ndu spirit

Issue 53

December 2011

Born on 07/02/1979, this Yemeni woman—who has made her “President” the sole focus of her righteous indignation as if no other president exists elsewhere around the world—made the earliest public demand to topple the regime of Ali Abdullah Saleh in Yemen. Since 2007, she has written extensively in protest of the Yemeni president and his government in the newspaper, Thawri (The Revolutionist), and on the website, Ma’reb-Bars. She is a woman infected with the “virus” of literature, journalism, and politics; her father (Abdel Salam) is a jurist and politician, her brother (Tarek) is a poet, and her sister (Safa) is a journalist (Al- Jazeera). She further developed her talents by studying commercial sciences, politics, education, and journalism. She began storming “barbed wires” to reach all ghettos in order to defend human rights, primarily women’s rights (the abused and marginalized), and to support the freedom of expression, the fight against corruption, and the dialogue of religions, etc. She has never missed an opportunity, both inside and outside of her country, to voice her convictions firmly

in associations, organizations, unions, and conferences in which she partakes. She chairs the Women Journalists Without Chains (WJWC), an organization she founded in 2005, and is a senior member of the Yemeni Congregation for Reform, the main opposition party in Yemen. This iron lady was not intimidated from pursuing her cause despite threats by the authorities to kill or arrest her brother.

This human rights activist—mother of three—tirelessly led demonstrations and sit-ins. She was arrested and subsequently released on parole, but she defiantly led another protest, calling for a “day of rage”. Her untiring efforts in the quest for freedom won her the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011, making her the first Yemeni, or rather, the first Arab woman and the second Muslim woman (Iranian Shirin Ibadi won in 2003) to be awarded this prestigious honor - jointly with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (President of Liberia) and Leymah Gbowee (female Liberian peace activist).

This woman is Tawakkul Karman!

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(N.B. Opinions are those of the authors and do not engage the editors.)

NDU Spirit A periodical about campus life at Notre Dame University - Louaize.

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Once Again...

It was during the recent summer that the members of the Maronite Order of the Holy Virgin Mary, after their general assembly, elected Father Boutros Tarabay to be their Superior General. Father Tarabay, who served at NDU as President for twelve years thus became the Chair of the Supreme Council of our University. This Council together with the Board of Trustees of the University renewed my appointment as President of NDU. In as much as I sincerely appreciated their trust in me, I deeply felt the immense responsibility bestowed on me. Much more is expected from me now after six years of presidency. Indeed, NDU deserves more dedication and broader horizons.

Moreover, right after the renewal, I was entrusted with additional responsibilities by the members of the League of the Universities of Lebanon when I was elected President of this body of higher education institutions in our beloved country Lebanon. Higher education in Lebanon also deserves more commitment to academic excellence and engagement in the promotion of quality education.

In this atmosphere, and under the impact of globalization, NDU is totally aware of the necessity of operating according to international standards. Such standards will certainly lead to institutional academic development. Thus, NDU made the decision to pursue institutional accreditation as vital a means for providing quality education. NDU has made the efforts necessary to engage in academic development with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). As a matter of fact, the University has made a great deal of progress in this direction; in this process, we have now reached the stage of the self-study, where all members of NDU are significantly participating.

Along with this academic endeavor, NDU has been growing steadily. During the last five years, student population has increased by a yearly average of five hundred students, to pass this Fall the seven thousand mark. Consequently, the number of full-time faculty members is also increasing by a yearly average of twenty. This is an opportunity for me at this point to welcome all new members who have joined NDU community. At the same time, NDU is developing materially as well. After the second parking building the capacity of which may reach up to two thousand vehicles, a new building for the Faculty of Architecture, Art, and Design is coming up. Nor must we forget to mention the Astronomical Observatory in addition to the Green House and the Animal House in the Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences.

Many other great things are taking place at NDU. However, I must now close with my Christmas wishes to all. To all of us related to NDU, to the whole world: Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2012. Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, the Son of God, is born for our salvation, alleluia. May His unending blessing come upon us all through the intercession of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, and may it fill our hearts with joy and peace throughout the coming year.

Fr. Walid Moussa, O.M.M.

President

Council for Research in Values and Philosophy – RVP

Doctor Edward Alam of NDU has kindly sent us a report of his activities as General Secretary of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, the Head Office of which has been transferred from the USA to NDU Main Campus.

August 5, 2010, Chicago, USA: The RVP General Secretary delivered a paper on "Philosophy and Healing: Restoring an Ancient Alliance" at the 12th Annual Chicago Trauma Symposium and while there informed medical professionals about the work of the CRVP/NDU office.

Spring, 2010, Siracusa, Sicily, Italy: The RVP General Secretary presented a paper "Does Business Ethics Need Religion?", later published (as the first article) in the Articles section of *The European Journal of Law and Reform* 2010 (12) 3-4. The paper maintained that secular ethics are not enough to sustain human dignity.

October, 2010: CRVP Annual Fall Seminar, Washington, D.C.: The RVP directed the annual Fall Seminar, this time on "Human Nature: Changing or Stable" with fifteen representatives from all the world's continents. WEBSITE CRVP – www.CRVP.org

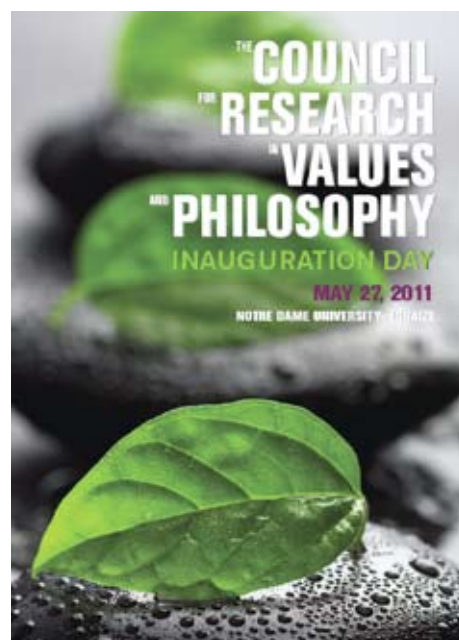
November, 2010: Tehran, Iran: The General Secretary gave a paper titled "The Role of Philosophy in the Development of Culture and the Family..." at the UNESCO World Day of Philosophy International Conference.

November, 2010, Moscow, Russia: The RVP co-sponsored an international conference with the People's Friendship University at which the General Secretary read a paper entitled "The place of Interreligious Dialogue in the Dialogue of Civilizations".

December 8, 2010, Wyoming, USA: The General Secretary was invited to present a lecture in Wyoming Catholic College's Guest Lecture Series. His subject was "The Immaculate Conception and Catholic Culture: Reflections on Globalization, Interreligious Dialogue and Fundamental Politics".

January 5-8, 2011, Bangalore, India: The RVP was an Event Partner at the international conference *Mysticism without Bounds*, organized jointly by Christ University and Dharmaram Vidya Kshetra for an exchange of views, findings, and expertise on the interdisciplinarity that mysticism makes possible among different disciplines and for the emergence of a new world-view which would create unity of humankind.

May 18-31, 2011, Notre Dame University (NDU), Lebanon: The first RVP Research Center was inaugurated at NDU on May 27th, with a three-week Spring Seminar



"Philosophy and Mysticism between Europe and Asia: The Cosmopolitan Dimensions of Islamic Thought and Spirituality". There was discussion of fundamental papers between leading Muslim and Christian philosophers from all around the globe. NDU professors Joseph Yacoub, Dina Nseir, Chadi Rahme, Doumit Salameh and Eugene Sensenig all took part.

June-July, 2011: China, Vietnam, Laos

June 26-28, 2011: Shanghai, China: The RVP held a conference inaugurating the new Center for the Study of Chinese Culture and Values in the Global Context (SCCV) at Fudan University School of Philosophy. The conference title was "Revitalizing Chinese Culture: Values and Virtues for a Global Age". The modernization of China has made possible the drawing of ideas from the West, the sharing of visions with the world, and the assumption of leadership in the shaping of the newly global times. There was also planning for the 2012 World Congress of Philosophy, treating Philosophy as Inquiry and Way of Life, to be held in Athens.

July 7-8, 2011, Hanoi, Vietnam: The RVP bi-annual Southeast Asian Conference was held in cooperation with the Philosophy Institute of the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences. It was titled "Cultural Traditions and Sustainable Development". UN agencies had discovered that a major indicator of sustainability was whether in the planning of projects the cultural traditions and expectations of those affected had been taken into account.

July 10, 2011, Vientiane, Laos: After many years of effort for the holding of meetings and encouragement of RVP philosophical activity in Laos, the Council was finally able to make headway. It is hoped that there will be more on this subject in the next issue (no. 54) of NDU Spirit.



August, 2011, Washington D.C.: Doctor Alam was in D.C. to meet with the CRVP Executive Board to discuss the future course of the CRVP, as it now has centers in Lebanon (NDU) and China (Fudan University).

August 25, 2011, Chicago, USA: The RVP General Secretary attended the 13th Annual Chicago Trauma Symposium and gave a paper "Who will Heal Healers?" It stressed the need for the medical profession to resist the ideology of transhumanism, urging that it should cultivate the age-old alliance between philosophy and medicine.

November-December, 2011: Nigeria, Ethiopia
Upcoming Events, see CRVP website www.crvp.org .

November 15-17, 2011, Awka, Nigeria: In collaboration with the Department of Philosophy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, the RVP held a conference celebrating 2011 UNESCO World Philosophy Day on the theme "Philosophical Perspectives in Africa and the Global Change". With the unenviable twin attributes of the cradle and the nadir of civilization, Africa faces challenging



choices for development and underdevelopment, so scholars and professionals searched for a comprehensive picture of the African situation and prospects.

November 20-21, 2011, Ibadan, Nigeria: The RVP sponsored a conference on The Idea of an African University – The Nigerian Experience, as a continuation of the 2007 RVP Volume of the same title.

January 11-13, 2012, Bangkok, Thailand: The RVP General Secretary has been invited to present a paper entitled "Asian Cultures in Dialogue" at the Assumption University of Thailand at a colloquium in the Graduate School of Philosophy and Religion.

May 2012, Spring Seminar: Together with philosophers from around the world, the RVP is planning its annual Spring Seminar, to be held at NDU in mid-May, 2012 on the theme The Value of Forgiveness in Christian, Islamic and African Philosophy.

Our photographs show participants in the 2011 CRVP Spring Seminar inaugurated at NDU.

New Doctors

To all faculty members

This year has been outstanding for the number of faculty members and administrators earning their Doctorate/Ph. D. degrees, during Spring 2011. The details (in chronological order) are as follows:

- 1. Dr. Gabriel El-Hage:** Doctorate in Civil Engineering, INSA – Toulouse, France, March 24, 2011.
- 2. Fr. /Dr. Bechara Khoury:** Doctorate in Economics, University of Bourgogne – Dijon, France, June 8, 2011
- 3. Dr. Fawzi Baroud:** Ph.D. in Educational Technology, E-Learning, Sheffield Hallam University (SHU), UK, June 21, 2011.

Congratulations for each fresh graduate Doctor, and for NDU with this enriching academic experience.

All the best,

Professor Ameen A. Rihani, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Notre Dame University

LERC Activities

The following reports, contributed by Elie Nabhan, Liliane Haddad, Clairissa Radyko, and Ben-Wadih Hamd, have been much reduced for reasons of space. The full text may be found at www.ndu.edu.lb/lerc

LERC's Prominent Visitors

LERC's local and international visitors included Mr. Taco van der Zwaag, Director of the Netherlands Institute in Beirut (NI-Beirut); Mr. George Youniss the Executive Manager of Four Accessories Ltd.-Zoppini in Saudi Arabia and founder of Lebanese Worldwide Community (LWC), a network that exceeds 8000 members worldwide; Dr. Konrad Pędziwiatr from Poland, Assistant Professor and Project Coordinator at the Tischner European University; Mr. Pierre Hage, Lebanese businessman in Burkina Faso, West Africa, and Coordinator Lebanese Forces for Africa ("Al Eghtirab" Department) as well as Regional Secretary General for Africa of the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU); Mr. José María Castellanos Elías, Mexican of Lebanese descent who came with his family to donate Dr. Martha Diaz de Kuri's latest book; coordinators at the new Economic Justice Center at Haigazian University in Beirut, Mr. Donald Goertzen and Mrs. Cyra Michelle Goertzen; two Brazilian couples of Lebanese descent, Mr. Samir Ary, award-winning lawyer, with his wife Mrs. Maria Elizabeth Jereissati Ary and Mr. Valter Antonio Chammas, company owner, with his wife Vania Juliano Chammas; and Mr. Munir Nellmeldin, Argentinean of Lebanese descent, President of Firket al Arz, folklore and Dabke club; Secondary pupils of St. Joseph's School, Cornet Chahwan; and Journalist-Anchor United Nations for Lebanon's New TV Ms. Samar Nader.

Renowned Lebanese-American doctor and philanthropist Moise Khayrallah visited LERC on Tuesday 6th September 2011. He is PhD in Psychology, University of Carolina, involved in drug development and is currently President and CEO of Neuronex Inc. He co-founded Adrenex Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and Alius Pharma, LLC, to partner companies in cancer drug development. He has held leading positions in such prestigious companies as Burroughs Wellcome and Glaxo Wellcome. Dr. Khayrallah emigrated from Ghbeleh in 1983. He and his wife regularly visit their families in Lebanon.

Dr. Khayrallah became main supporter of the new Khayrallah Program in Lebanese-American Studies at North Carolina State University (NCSU) directed by renowned scholar Dr. Akram Khatter. He is Public Relations Officer of the Triangle Lebanese Association,



❖ Dr. M. Khayrallah (center) photographed at the museum with his brother Mr. R. Khayrallah and Ms. G. Hourani (Sept 2011).

which is to "preserve and promote the Lebanese Culture and heritage." His brother Roger accompanied him on a tour of LERC.

Dr. Khayrallah invited Director Hourani and LERC associates to the international conference on Lebanese migration at NCSU due in the spring of 2012.



❖ Masaki pictured at the museum on his visit to LERC (Sept 2011).

Renowned Japanese scholar Dr. Uno Masaki visited LERC on Wednesday, 14th September 2011. He is professor at the Faculty of International Studies at Hiroshima City University specializing in cultural anthropology and folklore. He has published studies on the Druze, on Syria and on the Lebanese war. LERC provided him with material need for his research on Lebanese immigrants in Argentina.

Dr. Rigas Arvanitis, a visiting sociologist from the *Institut de recherche pour le développement* (IRD) in France now at the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the AUB, on Thursday, 14th July, met with Ms. Guita Hourani, Director of LERC, and LERC's Adjunct Researcher Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous.

International Conference for Lebanese Diaspora



In the persons of Mr. Elie Nabhan and Ms. Liliane Haddad, LERC attended a two-day international conference at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beirut, 20th-21st July, entitled World Wide Lebanese 2011, which called on the Lebanese government to acknowledge that expatriates were interested in investing in Lebanon but were held back by political and economic instability.

❖ LERC meets emigrant Australian MP: (from left to right) Mr. E. Nabhan, The Right Honorable A. Issa, and Mrs. Liliane Haddad (July 2011).

LERC at seminar at USEK

The Phoenix Centre for Lebanese Studies at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik held a training seminar, 1st-7th June, in collaboration with the CNRS-France-training seminar entitled Les archives monastiques: entre Orient et Occident historiographie, fonds, analyse et études comparatives. LERC was represented by Ms. Liliane Haddad, Chief Indexer and Archivist, who spoke about her technical activity and brought with her documents from the Lebanon Migration Museum of NDU.

LERC at Nigeria's Independence Day Celebrations



LERC was represented at Nigeria's 51st Independence Day celebrations by Mr. Elie Nabhan and LERC's Chief Indexer and Archivist Mrs. Liliane Haddad.

❖ LERC's Mrs. L. Haddad (left) and Mr. E. Nabhan pictured with H.E. Amos Oluwale Idowu, recently appointed Ambassador to Lebanon, at Nigeria's 51st Independence Day celebrations, 3rd October, at Coral Beach Hotel.

Mexico's independence



❖ H.E. G. Alvarez, his wife Mrs. Alvarez, and members of the Embassy staff.

Invited by H.E. Ambassador Jorge Alvarez, LERC was represented at the 201st Anniversary celebrations of Mexico's Independence at the Roman Theater in Zouk Mikael on 15th September, 2011.

LERC at Uruguay's Bicentennial



❖ Uruguay's Ambassador H.E. Dr. Jorge Luis Jure and LERC International Intern Ms. Clairissa Radyko.

Ms. Clairissa Radyko, International Research Intern with LERC, represented the Center on 21st June 2011 at the La Martingale of the Casino du Liban, to celebrate Uruguay's bicentennial of independence (1811-2011).

Director Hourani's Activities

Director of LERC Ms. Guita Hourani conducted two workshops in the USA on Lebanese migration in the world and lectured on the Kurds of Lebanon at The Eliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University. She discussed with two officials of the Federal Census Bureau about categorization of Middle Easterners for the 2020 Census. She discussed with Helen Samhan, ambassador-at-large for the Arab-American Museum, the museum's projects and activities.

She interviewed the Director of the Lebanese Information Center (LIC) Dr. Joseph Gbeily for her research on the role of homeland political parties and Lebanese Diaspora, and discussed the role of LIC in lobbying for out-of-country voting. She discussed with Lebanese from Virginia, Maryland and Washington D.C. about challenges faced in the US, and about out-of-country voting and returning to Lebanon.

She talked with Dr. Rita Stephan (LERC Associate), who works for the Federal Census Bureau, about the current classification of Lebanese emigrants in the census and with Dr. Andrew Arsan, one of the organizers of the conference "The Mashriq and the Mahjar: Migration from the Levant, 1800-2000", North Carolina State University, 20th to 22nd April, 2012, to discuss LERC's participation.

Lebanese-Canadian Translator Maud Houchane



❖ Mrs. M. Houchane at the Lebanon Migration Nucleus Museum at NDU on Tuesday.

Graduate of the Lebanese University in Sidon, Maud Francis Houchane, emigrated to Prince Edward Island, Canada, during the Israeli-Lebanese War of 2006. Her experiences as a Lebanese emigrant under harrowing circumstances inspired her to search out fellow Lebanese and other immigrants who had faced similar struggles. She enrolled in the Master of Arts course in Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, PE, and is researching Dutch and Lebanese immigrants.

Mrs. Houchane visited the Lebanese Emigration Research Center for access to its electronic archives and advice on Lebanese authors writing on emigration in Arabic.

LERC Published Research Work

Effect of Migration Policies on Human Rights in the European Neighborhood:

The Cases of Georgia, Kosovo and Lebanon, Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, *et al.* in cooperation with LERC, Directorate-General for External Policies: Policy Department, The European Parliament, June 2011.

Naturalized Citizens:

Political Participation, Voting Behavior, and Impact on Elections in Lebanon (1996–2007), Guita Hourani and Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, *Journal of International Migration and Integration (JIMI)*, published on line under (DOI) 10.1007/s12134-011-0203-7, July 2011.

The Global Financial Crisis:

Impact on Lebanese Expatriates in The Gulf, Guita Hourani, Basma Abdel Khalek and Suzanne Menhem, *In-depth Analysis Publications*, The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (CMRS), American University of Cairo, 2011.

Former LERC member Julie Issa



❖ Ms. J. Issa at the Lebanon Migration Nucleus Museum at NDU on Friday.

Former LERC member Ms. Julie Issa, US citizen with Lebanese father and French mother, is taking a Masters degree in Anthropology at the University of Sussex, UK, with thesis on the Maronites in Lebanon and the Church's role in forming their identity. Ms. Issa did research in LERC before being evacuated during the Israeli-Lebanese War in 2006. After a year in the USA, she worked for three years in Spain. Visiting Lebanon again, Miss Issa came to see how LERC had progressed and to obtain material for her thesis. Mrs. Houchane visited the Lebanese Emigration Research Center for access to its electronic archives and advice on Lebanese authors writing on emigration in Arabic.

US -Lebanese Student Amanda Rizkallah



❖ Ms. A. Rizkallah at the Lebanon Migration Nucleus Museum at NDU (Monday, 8th August 2011).

Ms. Amanda Rizkallah, born in Michigan to Lebanese parents and graduate in Political Science from UCLA, visited LERC on 8th August. Her father hails from the border town of Alma el-Shaab and her mother from Ashrafieh. They married after meeting in the US. After time spent in Saudi Arabia and Beirut, the family returned to Michigan and then moved to California. Ms. Rizkallah says, "The experience of my family in South Lebanon has always made me very aware of how politics can really effect and change people's lives. My two cases of interest are Lebanon and Algeria." She discussed her PhD topic with LERC Director Guita Hourani.

US Student Melissa Dzenis



❖ Ms. M. Dzenis at the Lebanon Migration Nucleus Museum at NDU (Friday, 11th August, 2011).

Ms. Dzenis, MA candidate in International Relations and Middle Eastern Studies at Brown University, USA, visited LERC to discuss her thesis with Director Guita Hourani and Dr. Sensenig-Dabbous. She has internship experience with NGOs in the USA and elsewhere, including Amnesty International, the East West Institute and MedVida-, a South-American based NGO mobilizing local physicians to give health care to impoverished indigenous populations.

Ms. Dzenis is of Latvian and Filipino descent and has worked as translator and researcher at the Latvian Occupation Museum in Riga. She attended the Qalam wah Lawh School of Arabic Language in Rabat to improve her Arabic and to study post-colonial Arab identity.

Mark Chahine-Warrington



❖ Mr. M. Chahine-Warrington at LERC (Wednesday, 8th June, 2011).

LERC welcomed Mr. Mark Chahine-Warrington, postgraduate candidate at the renowned Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland. He holds a BSc (Hons.) degree in Maritime Studies and an MA in Social Anthropology. He is an MPhil candidate at Trinity College, Dublin, and Managing Director of a London-based steel company. He is Chairman of the International Seafarers Assistance Network, a British registered charity. He was urged to visit LERC by Mr. Guy Younes, Chairman of the Irish-Lebanese Cultural Foundation and long time proponent of the Center.

Mr. Chahine-Warrington, of Lebanese-British descent, was born and raised in the United Kingdom. He is writing his dissertation on the workings of welfare policy in Lebanon and so sought out the services of LERC.

Visiting Researchers



❖ Ms. S. Fahrenthold mimics the Lebanese Emigrant statue at the Lebanon Migration Nucleus Museum.

LERC Research Affiliate Stacy Fahrenthold is PhD Candidate in World History at Northeastern University, USA. Her dissertation, "The Global Levant: Making a Nation in the Syrian-Lebanese Diaspora", focuses on emigrant participation in Lebanese and Syrian nationalist politics during 1913-1939. Stacy is at LERC this Fall (2011), examining material in the Center's digitized archive, the Patriarchal Archives (Bkerke) and the Centre des Archives Nationales (Beirut).

LERC International Intern

May 30th to July 8th 2011



❖ Mr. B. Hamd at the Lebanon Migration Nucleus Museum at NDU (June 2011).

Benjamin Hamd, a BA student in Middle East Studies at The George Washington University, Washington D.C., interned at LERC in the summer of 2011. He worked on out-of-country voting in post-conflict societies.

LERC International Intern

June 15th to 3rd August 2011



❖ Ms. Radyko at the Lebanon Migration Museum

Clairissa Radyko is a third-year law student at Wayne State University Law School, awarded an International Public Interest Law Fellowship for summer 2011 to work at the Lebanese Emigration Research Center. While at LERC Ms. Radyko did a report on US immigration policy towards Lebanon from 1975 to 2010. She graduated from Grand Valley State University in 2007 with dual major in French and International Relations and a minor in international business. She is a Senior Articles Editor of The Wayne Law Review.

"Living Between Two Worlds": Dr. Rosemary Suliman



❖ Dr. R. Suliman (Oct 2011).

Reported by Stacy Fahrenthold, LERC Research Affiliate

How do we adapt to life abroad? Does migration present us with a multicultural opportunity or a potential identity crisis? Most importantly, how does migration impact the second generation, young people born abroad who find mainstream and ethnic cultures competing for their affection? On October 28, Dr. Rosemary Suliman came to NDU to discuss these issues in her lecture "Living Between Two Worlds: Children of Migrant Families in Australia". The lecture was arranged by LERC in cooperation with the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities. Dr. Jamil Douaihi (Assistant Professor, Social and Behavioral Sciences) presided.

Dr. Suliman is Senior Lecturer at the University of Western Sydney, for Arabic Language and Education. Born in Khartoum of Egyptian parents, Dr. Suliman moved to Sydney in 1972, and has devoted her professional life to alleviating the obstacles that immigrant children face in Australia's education system. She is also a major player in developing Arabic language education for Australian universities, developing course syllabi and textbooks, and teaching Arabic. Her talk focused on the cultural predicaments that young Lebanese face in Australia.

Mr. Kozhaya Akiki donates historic material to the LERC Museum



❖ Dr. G. Abdelnour (left) officially receives the Kasheh from Mr. K. Akiki at the Lebanon Migration Nucleus Museum at NDU (28th September 2011).

Mr. Kozhaya Akiki, staunch supporter of LERC, has donated to the Nucleus Museum one of the primary artifacts of Lebanese migration, the Kasheh, a suitcase-like knapsack used for peddling goods by newly-arrived immigrants. This one was used by Mr. Said Maroun Salameh, Mr. Akiki's father-in-law, in the Tupper Lake region of New

York State between 1920-1924.

Mr. Kozhaya Akiki was born in Kfardebian, Lebanon, in 1938. He met his wife Nora Bernadette Maroun, of Tupper Lake, NY, in 1958, while on a visit to Lebanon. They married in Lebanon and then moved to Tupper Lake, where they taught at various local schools.

Mr. Akiki has already donated much family material. His commitment to LERC's mission as the collective memory of Lebanese emigration inspired him to establish a monetary grant to assist student interns at LERC. The Kozhaya and Nora Akiki Internship Grant provides financial assistance to local Lebanese students as they pass from undergraduate to professional life.

Akiki sons visit LERC



❖ The Akiki Family with the Kozhaya Akiki Collection at the Lebanon Migration Museum at NDU (24th June, 2011).

Following the two visits by his father, Mr. Kozhaya Akiki, earlier in May 2011, Mr. Michael Ephrem Akiki, visited LERC, accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Jeanine Farah-Akiki, and children, Samer and Maya. Michael Ephrem received his Master Degree from the University of Vermont in the United States. Mrs. Jeanine Akiki was born in Lebanon and, with her father Souheil Farah from the village of Joun and her mother Mathilda Korkmaz from Jouret el Termos, emigrated to the USA. Michael is a manager with Qualcomm Co. and his wife a manager with IBM. They reside in San Diego, California.



❖ The Akiki's pictured with the Akiki Collection at the Museum: (from left to right) Mr. A. Akiki, Mrs. M. Akiki, Mr. G.M. Akiki.

On Wednesday, 9th November, 2011, another member of the Akiki family, Mr. Geoffrey Maroun Akiki, Chemical Engineering graduate of Clarkson University, Potsdam, New York, visited LERC with his wife Maria and son Andrew. Mr. Akiki also has an MBA Degree from the University of Vermont. He lives with his family in Abu Dhabi, where he is in charge of Global Foundries division.

World Press Photo 2011 in Beirut

Roula Majdalani



❖ Opening Ceremony, general view.

The *World Press Photo 2011* exhibition was organized by Notre Dame University's Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design under the patronage of the Royal Netherlands Embassy and in collaboration with Solidere. The opening of the exhibition was held at the Venue in Beirut Souks on May 11.

Two age categories participated: 15 to 21 and 22 to 30.

World Press Photo is a prestigious non-profit organization based in Amsterdam. The exhibition was held for the first time in 1955 and has since been held in one hundred cities worldwide such as Berlin, London, New York, and Tokyo, drawing crowds of two million people. The mission of WPP is to encourage high professional standards in photojournalism and to promote a free and unrestricted exchange of information. The Press Photography Contest is held every year in February and is judged by an international committee of professionals. The exhibition displays the year's winning photos from each of the nine different categories in the contest, including Spot News, General News, People in the News, Sports, Contemporary Issues, Daily Life, Portraits, Arts and Entertainment, and Nature.

This year 108,000 photos were submitted and fifty-four photographers from twenty-three countries were selected. The winner of 2011 was South African Jodie Bieber's portrait of an Afghani girl, Bibi Aisha.

It is ten years since the WPP was last hosted in Lebanon and the official opening in Beirut Souks was attended by a crowd of officials, diplomats, social and artistic personalities, and representatives from the media.

The Director-General of Solidere, Munir Douaidy, stated: "The company hosting this exhibition offers a cultural and artistic space that allows visitors of Beirut to take part in the existing activities. This space is one

of the many artistic and cultural exhibition centers in Downtown Beirut, which aims to restore its leading role as a capital in Lebanon and in the region."

The chairperson of the organizing committee of the exhibition, Noel Nasr, followed by saying: "The aim of this exhibition is largely similar to the vision of Notre Dame University regarding the art of photography. And this similarity can be summarized in two words: awareness and freedom."

The President of Notre Dame University, Fr. Walid Moussa, emphasized that the image could not belong to the past or just be a silent scene within a specific framework, but was always alive and reflected sometimes the truth more than words themselves.

Finally, the Netherlands Ambassador in Lebanon, Hero de Boer, concluded: "Photojournalism is part of the expression of free opinion and reflects professional skills of photographers."

Countless individuals contributed to making this exhibition a reality and a success, including *The Beyond a Snap* competition jury who contributed their expertise and time.

The members of the organizing committee were Noel Nasr (chair), Linda Selwood Choueiri, Graziella Daghfal, Roula Majdalani, Simon Mhanna and Mary Angela Willis.



❖ H.E. Tarek Mitri, Mr. Munir Douaidy and H.E. Hero de Boer.



✧ Cutting the ribbon: NDU President Father Walid Moussa, Solidere Director General Mr. Munir Douaidy, H.E. Tarek Mitri, H.E. Netherlands Ambassador Hero de Boer, Netherlands Commercial Attaché Tarek Ouerghi.



✧ Organizing Committee: R. Majdalani, J. Voss, G. Daghfal, N. Nasr, WPP Project Manager E. de Kruijff, students A. Abou Jaoude and G. Haddad, and L. Choueri, M.A. Willis and S. Mehanna.

Other members of the NDU community contributed to the overall success, including Eugene Sensening-Dabbous, Jesse Voss, Tonnie Choueiri, and many students from a variety of student clubs such as Aline Abou Jaoude and Grace Haddad from the Photography Club.

Two Canon promoters were taking photos of those attending and gave them instant copies. Visitors also benefited from a Canon draw for prizes such as an Ixus Premium Camera, Eos 1100, Selphy CP-800 and a free check-and-clean service for their Canon camera.



✧ Winners of Beyond a Snap youth photo competition with jury members Najj Zahar (Director of Business Development, Solidere), Richard Azouroy and WPP Chairperson Noel Nasr.

FBAE

Hospitality and Tourism Achievement

Ghassan Beyrouthy (Ph.D. abd)

Chairperson

Faculty of Business Administration & Economics
Department of Hospitality & Tourism Management
Notre Dame University, NDU

The Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management (DHTM) is proud to announce that our student Marie Michel Nassar, who undertook a hotel front-office internship in the USA South Carolina (under the American Hospitality Academy AHA program), won the following awards in competition with 160 interns from around the world.

- **Trainee Achievement Award**
- **Best Front Office Agent Award**
- **National Star of Service Award**



Ericsson Competition



The Department of Electrical and Computer and Communication Engineering (ECCE) of the Faculty of Engineering (FE) at Notre Dame University (NDU) participated in the Ericsson Competition on LTE between Lebanese Universities. LTE stands for "Long Term Evolution", which is the state-of-the-art standard in mobile network technology. The event also included presentations by Ericsson engineers regarding the company itself and the engineering work that is being done at their Lebanese office. This is the first time that Ericsson has organized such an event in Lebanon.

The competition took place on May 5, 2011 at the Ericsson premises with the participation of more than seventy-five students from AUB, BAU, LAU, LU, NDU, UOB, and USJ. Participants had to answer thirty questions within the shortest time possible. The first three prizes consisted of an internship at Ericsson and went to the following students:

- . **First prize:** Jammal Hassan from USJ with a score of 29/30 in 29 minutes.
- . **Second prize:** Mohamad Ali Yassin from USJ with a score of 29/30 in 29 minutes.
- . **Third prize:** Jessica Abdallah from UOB with a score of 28/30 in 14 minutes.

The first place winner in every university received a Sony Ericsson mobile phone. For NDU, the first prize went to Rayan Khnaisser with a score of 27/30 in 11 minutes! This is very impressive especially when one considers that at the time of the competition, Rayan was still taking his first communications course at NDU. The competition results were announced and the prizes were distributed during a celebration on June 15, 2011 at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Cadence Academic Network

Jad G. Atallah, PhD

Assistant Professor,
ECCE/FE

The Department of Electrical, Computer & Communication Engineering (ECCE) at the Faculty of Engineering (FE) is proud to have become the first Lebanese member of the Cadence Academic Network.

Cadence Design Systems is a leading global electronic design automation (EDA) company. It provides software tools that are essential in the design of microelectronic systems. Its customer base includes some of the largest microelectronic companies in the world. NDU has acquired these tools and is currently using them in education and in research.

The academic network was launched by Cadence in order to promote the proliferation of cutting-edge technologies and methodologies at universities renowned for their engineering and design excellence. A knowledge network among selected universities, research institutes, industry advisors and Cadence was established to facilitate the sharing of technology expertise in the areas of verification, design and implementation of microelectronic systems.

Congratulations NDU! For more information, please visit the Cadence Academic Network webpages on the NDU and Cadence websites.

FH

NDU Students at Missolonghi

Dr. Naji Oueijan

Professor
Notre Dame University

Ms. Rouba Doueih, Ms. Hala Halaoui, Ms. Grace Nakhoul, and Ms. Tracey El Hajj, students of English at NDU, attended an International Student Literary Conference in Missolonghi, Greece, organized by the Greek Lord Byron Society. Professor Naji Oueijan, a member of the Organizing Committee, and Dr. Maya El Hajj accompanied the students, who competed with several English Literature students from the USA, Russia, Greece, Germany and Ireland. NDU students excelled in their scholarship and high academic level. In fact, Ms.

Rouba Doueih's work was chosen by the Organizing Committee as the best research; she discussed the impact of Sufism and Sufi poets, such as Hafiz and Firdausi, on the famous British poet Lord Byron as exemplified in his Oriental tales. Ms. Doueih was also chosen to write the proceedings of the conference, an honor given to the best student selected. This is not the first time NDU students of Literature have participated in international conferences and activities, and of course it will not be the last.

The Night of the AdEaters

Lebanon's favorite advertising show

"I have learned that any fool can write a bad ad, but that it takes a real genius to keep his hands off a good one." **Leo Burnett**

Advertising and Marketing students in the class of ADM 352 (Advertising Creativity and Copywriting) instructed by Ms. Sandra Younes were advised to watch and participate in this event taking place yearly in Lebanon. It aims at motivating students in developing a more creative and challenging spirit as is required in the real world of advertising.

Jad F. Nasser (Advertising and Marketing student in the ADM 352 class) Created and produced since 1981 by Jean Marie Boursicot, the Night of the AdEaters (La Nuit des publivores) took place this year on the 5th and 6th of November at Palais Unesco, Beirut bringing the best in advertising production and entertainment from different countries around the world. As it is an event held in almost sixty different countries, people wait for it anxiously every year since it has brought an entertaining and amusing taste to the advertising culture for over thirty years. This year's program included a 5-hour and 30-minute showcase of almost 324 TV and cinema commercials presented to the Lebanese audience. There were some amazing memorable ads for well known brands such as ADIDAS and VOLKSWAGEN taking on a Star Wars scenario, not to mention some amusing commercials that kept the audience laughing and whistling, such as Panda Cheese's ad *Never say no to Panda*, and also some heart-touching and emotional ads such as TAC's *Everybody Hurts* campaign warning against dangerous driving that literally brought tears to the eyes of many in the theater. Overall, the audience enjoyed the diversity of the ad



❖ Joelle Basbous, Lea Abou Ghazaly, Ms. Younes, and Jad Nasser

❖ Christelle Chebli, Ms. Younes, Lea Abou Ghazaly, and Razmig Papazian

campaigns created by different agencies from different cultures which have their own way of presenting their messages in commercials. We can clearly state that the AdEaters night has definitely brought a new way of entertainment to modern cinema, especially in Lebanon. Before and during the show, many of the event's sponsors such as Dunkin Donuts, the Famous Grouse and Tobasco, have been offering special goods (coffee, drinks, sushi, donuts...) and other sponsors such as IBL Bank and Beirut.com have been taking fun pictures of people to keep up an amusing ambiance. Impact BBDO was the official advertising agency responsible for this event in Lebanon, but many agency personnel were invited to the event, from Leo Burnett to Purple to JWT to Grey Group and other agencies. To conclude, the Night of the AdEaters is an outstanding and entertaining event that most of the Lebanese audiences enjoy from kids to families to university students and even Company managers and executives. This night truly brings all these people together to enjoy the beauty of advertisements in the world, but it is far more than just an entertaining cinema event; it is also an educational and inspiring showcase for today's young Lebanese communication arts students who are motivated to be successful in this field.

Beirut Film Success

Dear NDU Family

I am very proud to announce to you that *Olive Warriors*, a short film written, produced, and performed by NDU students, and directed by Naji Bechara, won seven awards at the 48 hours Beirut Film Competition: Best Director, Best Actor Andrew J. Hachem, Best Use of Dialogue, 2nd Place for Best Film, Best Costume, Best Props, and the Audience Award.

The 48 Hours Beirut Film Competition is an international competition that was organized this year in Beirut for the first time. It consists of giving the participating teams the competition rules and elements on Friday night and the teams should present their 7-minute film in forty-eight hours, i.e. Sunday night.

More than twenty-five teams participated in the competition, being either from different film schools or independent. The NDU team obtained seven out of twelve awards

Congratulations for Naji and the team...

Sam Lahoud, MA

Lecturer

Head of Audio Visual Facilities, NDU

Adyan Foundation and NDU Faculty of Humanities



❖ At the panel: (from left to right). Dr. E. Sensenig-Dabbous, Prof. G. Auletta, Dr. E. Alam, Dr. Fr. G. Antaby (June 2011).

Notre Dame University, Louaizé, and Adyan recently co-hosted a two-day International Conference on Cross-Cultural Education, 2nd and 3rd June, 2011. Policy makers, academic leaders, and students from around the globe discussed cross-cultural topics ranging from the "Arab Uprising" to interfaith dialogue. Opening speakers included Dr. Fadi Daou, Chairman of the Adyan Foundation, Father Walid Moussa, President of NDU, and Minister of Culture H.E. Salim Wardy.

Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous of LERC lamented the ethnocentric policies of applied Western research methods in an Arab context and indicated that the application of these Western research tools in the current context was invalid. Dr. Sensenig-Dabbous highlighted LERC's efforts in rectifying these current errors.

FNAS

Health hazard!



These posters warning about smoking were prepared by the students of Doctor Tanos G. Hage, Ph.Dm., Associate Professor FNAS, as part of their ENS 201 project.

Computer Summer School

Reported by Hikmat Farhat.

Between the 4th and 9th of July, five world-class scientists converged on Notre Dame University-Louaize. The event was the First NDU Computer Science Summer School organized by the Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences (FNAS). The goal, as set by FNAS Dean, Dr. G. M. Eid, was to bring together students, faculty and professionals and introduce them to current research trends in hot topics in Computer Science. Such a meeting, he believed, would encourage and facilitate collaboration between local researchers and possibly pave the way for possible international collaboration. Toward that end, five researchers were invited to give each a 6-hour course on a topic in their area of expertise. The researchers were:

Dr. Mikhail Atallah, Purdue University, USA.

Dr. Philippe Balbiani, IRIT, Toulouse, France.

Dr. Bertrand Clarke, University of Miami, USA

Dr. Jennifer Clarke, University of Miami, USA.

Dr. David Dowe, Monash University, Australia.

These courses spanned six days, starting everyday at 9:30 a.m. and lasting until 6:00 p.m.. The audience was a mixture of students and faculty members, from NDU and other universities, as well as professionals in the computing field.

Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony started with a welcoming address from the chairman of the organizing committee Dr. Hikmat Farhat. He asked students and faculty alike to benefit from this opportunity, made possible by the vision of the FNAS Dean Dr. G. M. Eid and the support of NDU administration guided by the President, Fr. Walid Moussa. The Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. A. Rihani, stressed the importance of providing an additional teaching momentum as exemplified by the summer school. In her address Dr. H. Maalouf wished the speakers a pleasant stay in Lebanon. She encouraged everyone, especially students, to take advantage of this important event and thanked all who had made it possible, especially the President Fr. W. Moussa, the VPAA, the Sponsorship Office and the organizing committee chaired by Dr. Farhat. Finally, a thank-you address was delivered by Ms. Jocelyne Issa, Coordinator-Sponsorship Office. Ms Issa thanked the major sponsor MTC Touch for its generous support and also the other main sponsors TETRACOM and BMB.

Bertrand Clarke gave a quick overview and a comparison of bayesian and frequentist statistics. In his second lecture he presented different techniques for dimension reduction with examples for each technique. The last two lectures revolved around the concept of clustering and variable selection.



Jennifer Clarke "What is genome analysis?" was the main topic of Dr. J. Clarke's first lecture. It involved an overview of Bioinformatics. In the second lecture, she explained genomic and genetic expressions. In the third lecture she discussed several techniques for genetic analysis. Dr. Clarke ended her course by discussing future trends in Bioinformatics.

Mikhail Atallah Dr. Atallah explained in his first lecture the concept of a protocol. He also gave the criteria for a protocol to be deemed secure. He discussed secret sharing and blind signatures. In his second lecture he explained the basic idea behind Zero-Knowledge proofs and how they can be used to do computation without compromising the security of data. The third lecture was about digital cash and its implementation on the Internet. Dr. Atallah concluded his course by explaining the idea of secure multiparty communication and storage outsourcing.

Philippe Balbiani started by giving a mathematical definition of "formal concept". The lecture involved real world examples of formal concepts. In his second lecture, he introduced a mathematical structure called a lattice and explained its relation to formal concepts. In the third lecture the basic idea of association rules and its application in formal concepts was explained. In the last lecture application of the theoretical tools discussed in the previous lecture in data mining and ontologies was demonstrated.

David Dowe in his first presentation used his considerable wit to give an amusing presentation of the Minimum Message Length Principle, which involved some discussion of information theory. In his second lecture, he explained clustering in the Minimum Message Length framework. In the third lecture Bayesian networks were explained and Dr. Dowe wrapped up his course by discussing open problems.

CITIZENSHIP

A New GER Course at the FPSPAD

Adriana Bou Diwan,
Dina Darwiche

The Citizenship course is a new general education requirement introduced by the faculty of PSPAD. Any student may be enrolled in this course and it will be considered as part of the pool of citizenship (even if does not show yet on the contract sheet). It introduces students to the concept of citizenship and the relation between the individual and the state. Participants learn to recognize the rights and duties of the individual, thus reinforcing their capacity for critical thinking and active engagement in public affairs. The course was given for the first time during the spring semester of 2011.

Throughout the course, students are encouraged to become active citizens by developing and applying practical ideas in the field of citizenship, so finally they acknowledge the importance of being a good citizen. Students learn from the course that the concept of citizenship includes all aspects within society (business, education, civil society, politics, media, etc.) and that, if they function together properly, they build a good country.

According to students who took the course, they learned that being a good person on the individual level is not enough. It is important to be a good student, a good friend – and to work on developing oneself! However, what is more important is to be an active member who leaves an impact not only on himself but also on what is around him and what he is part of. It is very important to be a good citizen because it is the individual along with the other citizens who will be affected by the improvements achieved. No one can make a change alone, so being an active citizen along with others and having the feeling of belonging is crucial.

Doing the projects throughout the recent semester also contributed much to students' knowledge because they discovered that each one can come up with concrete and feasible ideas and plans that can actually be implemented, thus allowing the person to go beyond the theoretical level to a practical one even if he or she starts very simply. Class activities allowed students to experience the importance of participating in activities that benefit society in addition to working in groups with different people from different backgrounds and points of view.

One of the significant projects undertaken on the occasion of the commemoration of the Lebanese civil war on April 13th was the development of a document showing what the signatories commit themselves to doing in their daily life on a personal level in order to minimize the likelihood of war reoccurring. The students made a tour around NDU's different faculties and gathered around seven hundred signatures in one day, an activity that reminded the NDU community of the significance of this day and of the role each individual has to play in order prevent a new conflict.

At the end of the course, students committed themselves to different projects in order to be better citizens. Among the commitments, there was one that called for an end to blaming the past for everything taking place in the country and for developing practical ideas to be applied, starting with the small community. Another was for individuals to get politically involved in a proper way that rejects blind following and on the contrary plays a critical and innovative role whether inside political parties or outside them. A third commitment was to follow the laws and regulations in everyday activities at the University, on the roads, in the governmental institutions, etc...

Finally, as Mahatma Gandhi said: "Be the change you want to see in the world." Anyone can call for change and for a better society, but what distinguishes a good citizen is his willingness and his ability to actually implement what he is calling for and to believe that he personally has a role and can make a difference.

Lebanese-Palestinian Youth Dialogue

NDU- UNDP Peace Building Committee

Adriana Bou Diwan

Dina Darwiche

On behalf of the NDU- UNDP Peace Building Committee



In December 2010, upon the invitation of the United Nations Development Program, four students from the Faculty of Political Science, Public Administration and Diplomacy were selected to participate in a four-day workshop on Peace Building and Conflict Resolution. Adriana Bou Diwan, Dina Darwiche, Avo-Sevag Garabed and Youssef Farhat underwent the training and founded the Peace Building Committee at NDU under the ægis of the Faculty of Political Science, Public Administration and Diplomacy. The UNDP Peace building Project aims to ensure civic peace in Lebanon by addressing the root causes of conflict and engaging civil society, as well as local government actors, in “safe spaces” in dialogue, enhancing reconciliation and promoting peace-building efforts in Lebanon.

Peace-building Clubs and Committees at universities will serve as neutral “safe spaces” bringing together youth from different backgrounds and affiliations to discuss current, critical issues of concern and to share values of tolerance, peace, equality, and citizenship as well as civic responsibility. Student leaders will plan and implement activities around four main themes simultaneously on their respective campuses and where possible implement inter-campus activities. The four themes are Volunteerism and Youth Activism, History and Memory, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Human Rights with Citizenship.

All UNDP Peace-Building Clubs and Committees in various universities developed a common vision, mission and goals during the four-day training. The vision is to build a society guided by a culture of peace whereby individuals resort to non-violent approaches when dealing with one another. The Mission is to create safe common spaces where university students from different backgrounds can communicate in a positive manner, participate in periodic exchanges and build bridges across identity groups. Also the Peace-Building Youth Leaders aim to create an active network of students to propagate principles and values of peace, dialogue and openness at university campuses nationwide. The UNDP Peace Building Clubs and Committees believe in a number of values such as the concept of freedom and human

rights, openness and acceptance of the different “other”, a culture of dialogue, tolerance, non-violence, equality, active participation, citizenship and respect for diversity and pluralism.

The first project that the NDU-UNDP Peace Building Committee implemented was a Lebanese Palestinian youth dialogue. The project included in its first phase visiting the Mar Elias Palestinian Camp in Beirut and in the second a follow-up event during which representatives from the Palestinian Human Rights Organization visited NDU Campus. During the NDU students’ visit to the camp, they were conducted on a tour in the camp during which they were introduced to the difficult conditions of life that residents in Palestinian camps are facing. The students were also introduced to the objectives and attempts of the Palestinian Human Rights Organization. After the tour, a brief description of basic human rights was presented and students were divided into groups to discuss the different rights that Palestinians are lacking, ranging from political to civil, economic, social and cultural rights. A week later, NDU students received representatives from the Palestinian Human Rights Organization. During the visit, a feedback session took place where both students and PHRO representatives shared their views after the visit and discussed the various rights.

The NDU Peace Building Committee chose the Palestinian camp to create a link between Lebanese and Palestinian youth especially because the issue of the Palestinians is very controversial. The committee aimed from this visit to break the stereotype about Palestinian camps in Lebanon and to introduce students to the situation of human rights in the Palestinian camps.

Finally, the project was successful since almost all the participants changed, to a certain extent, their view about the issue of Palestinian refugees, acquiring the idea that we are all human and that human rights are inherent and inalienable.

ALUMNI AFFAIRS OFFICE

"The Big Meaning in the Smallest Movements"



❖ A small section of the 2011 Graduation Dinner

Fr. Walid Moussa's reappointment address struck the perfect balance between formality and decorum, so everyone could learn more about his vision of the future. After the Maronite Mariamite Order, led by Abbot Boutros Tarabay, reappointed him President of NDU for another mandate, he returns with full knowledge of the enormous challenges facing the University. Under his leadership, the university's profile and reputation have been significantly enhanced and its connections - nationally and internationally - have been strengthened. In his address, Fr. Moussa described his mandate in office as challenging. There have been high points, particularly in student enrollment, academic programs, and international relations, but also challenging issues to face and decisions to make.

It gave great pleasure to see NDU alumni, now collaborators in many projects in various multinational industries, such as Armen Balian, Wissam Matar, David Habchy, Nicole Tohme, Fadi Hanna, Emile Moukarzel, Tony Amine, Carine Barakat, Charles Khoury, Lara Ma'allem, and Shady Debs receiving recognition in the news. The Alumni Affairs Office endeavors to learn more about the achievements of our graduates, to engender pride in our alumni network and to demonstrate the value of an NDU education. "This is the responsibility of our Alumni," said Fr. Walid Moussa, "The vast majority of our graduates are doing great at their jobs. But, as in all things, you'll get few people out there who are doing things that just aren't right and they paint a bad picture."



❖ Inaugurating the Alumni College.

2011 marks the 20th anniversary of the first graduating class of Notre Dame University-NDU. Sixty-seven graduates walked the podium during the 1990/1991 graduation ceremony. When the first graduates tossed their caps into the warm July air, and blue and white balloons were released, a new tradition was born. These students were the pioneers who had enrolled in NDU's bold experiment in higher education.

To get an idea of how different NDU is today from the way it was nearly twenty-five years ago, just talk to people like Ms. Fadia El-Hajj, BBA '90 and Mrs. Joyce Harb Menassa, MA '91. To show this evolution, the Alumni Affairs Office brought the Class of 1990-1991 back to campus through a memorable ceremony: **Honoring Class of 1990-1991: Remember When...** It reunited fifty-seven of those first graduates with their alma mater to celebrate their unique place in the University's history. Some Alumni still work in Lebanon; others are scattered over the region and around the world. Some still work at NDU while others are less actively involved with the University, but still feel affection for it. They all get excited when talking about their work and their University days.



❖ Honoring the class of 1990-1991.

The reunion included two documentaries; one highlighted the first few years of NDU and the second included photos and testimonies from graduates of Class 1990-1991. At the end of the reunion, in the pathway, at the down entrance of the University, a plaque was hung with the names of the graduates of Class 1990-1991 assuring passers-by that "NDU does not forget its graduates." Fr. Walid Moussa, President of NDU. Alumni and faculty members who attended or taught at NDU during the late 1980s and early 1990s talked about their precious memories and the great lessons they learnt at NDU.

Pierre Battikha, Lina Bassil, Rima Maalouf and Joe Baroud had never met again since their graduation in 1990. So they had much to talk about. Although the university has changed dramatically in many ways – "... the forces that drive students to excel and to make their mark in the world are the same as they always have been." commented Professor Michel Kreidy, the Vice President for Academic Affairs in 1990-1991. Belinda Baduy, the first Advertising & Marketing graduate from NDU, and owner of an advertising agency, said, "It all started here and tonight is a tremendous honor and an august moment."

"Were you there?" asked Antoine Abi Ramia, the first president of the HTC Club. "I believe that this Alumni event identified reasonable goals and a direction for the future." Remarkable skill, energy, determination and ability to inspire trust are recurring themes when faculty members and colleagues describe Roland Khoury, the only President of the Student Cabinet from the HTM students. The Hotel Management & Tourism (HTM) program has always been one of the most popular majors at NDU, especially since Lebanon has booming tourism and hotel sectors. With knowledge, confidence and courtesy, our Hotel Management graduates have made NDU proud. To acknowledge the success of our HTM graduates and their continuous attestation to NDU's reputation as a great university, the NDU Alumni



❖ The NDU President expounds the Alumni College vision

Affairs Office, in collaboration with the Department of Hospitality & Tourism Management, hosted the HTM Alumni Reunion - Golden Years, Great Memories – The office even created a Facebook account for this reunion. Richard Haddad, an HTM graduate, came all the way from Abu Dhabi to attend the event. At the end of the reunion, shields of recognition were presented to Dr. Hratch Hadjetian, Dr. Youssef Zgheib, Mr. Ghassan Beyrouthy, and Miss Carole Assaf for their contribution in the advancement of the hospitality major at NDU.

The difficulty lies not in the new ideas but in escaping from the old ones. Many talk about being innovative but what does this really mean. How do we create a culture that unleashes creativity and translate this into functional objectives? Why Alumni Education? The answer is simple: we are all made better, smarter, and more informed by the continual growth of a vibrant learning community. Alumni College will become a stand-alone program designed to empower alumni through immersive, two-day educational experiences. Countless studies demonstrate the remarkable social, psychological, and even physical benefits of continuing the pursuit of knowledge. With that in mind, the NDU Alumni Affairs Office has developed the latest addition to a comprehensive catalog of alumni learning opportunities: Alumni College.

The launching date of the Alumni College: Always Be a Student... was held on Friday, July 22nd, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in Abou Khater auditorium, NDU Main Campus. The keynote address of the Alumni College for 2011 was delivered by the President of NDU, Fr. Walid Moussa, with an insightful note about NDU: Past, Present & Future. Pascale Chemaly, NDU graduate in Communication Arts, and currently a TV Presenter, mentioned that thousands of alumni are getting intellectual stimulation each year by contacts with experts and lectures and seminars. The College will consist of a series of lectures, in which participants showcase experiences of successful people. A board will be formed by the President of NDU, Director

of Alumni Affairs Office, Alumni members and various prominent specialists to help determine the topics of the lectures and decide on the keynote speakers. The Board will start meeting early January.

If there is a theme to NDU 21st Commencement, it was this "Making Our Own Meaning" –advice given at the beginning of the President of NDU's speech at the Commencement, "to embrace a lifetime of inevitable graduations." The Valedictorian of Class 2011 was Joan Fargo, who reiterated the message of the President by saying, "I can't believe today is upon us; that finally we are graduating from NDU! This is a colossal accomplishment. Did you ever imagine finally getting here with cap and gown and degree in hand?"

After the conferring of academic degrees and the award of an Honorary Doctorate to His Excellency Ambassador Gilbert Chaghoury and his wife Mrs. Mary-Rose Chaghoury, known for their philanthropy in Lebanon, Africa and around the world, came the Graduation Dinner 2011 – That's NDU with a You! held on Friday, July 8, 2011 from 10:30pm till early dawn at Rimal Beach Resort, Zouk Mosbeh Highway. Around eight hundred 2011 NDU graduates and their friends got together with the NDU President and top administrators.

"We have a mission and we have a vision, but without you we might not be able to get there." Last week, a group of NDU Alumni from different majors, gathered for a few hours to talk about a common subject: the Alumni E-newsletter, specifically, how to make the Alumni e-newsletter publication even better in the coming year. At this meeting, ideas and inspiration flew around. A new column that highlights the expertise of NDU faculty members! A photo competition on the breathtaking



❖ The HTM reunion.

landscape of NDU! NDU latest publications! A continuous briefing about NDU venture toward accreditation! Well, I don't want to give away all the good stuff. Suffice to say that the next year's NDU Alumni e-newsletter is shaping up to be informative, intriguing, and inspirational. Of course, there's only one way to find out: update your record at the Alumni Affairs Office and you will receive the 10th issue directly on your e-mail address.

We must be having fun working here in the Alumni Affairs Office, for time is flying by. As I write this article, my desk calendar in Mrs. Rose Mady's Office indicates that we have finished the first month of the fall semester – as shown by the fullness of the exam halls for the first course exam. Before we know it, it will be December, and we shall have enjoyed the First PSPAD Alumni Reunion end of November and the NDU Alumni Awards 2011 early December. Hopefully, the next time you check your e-mail, you will have received the 10th issue of the Alumni E-newsletter.

STAFF**Reformist Platform Workshop**

On July 15 and 16, 2011, the Reformists Platform Workshops reached their final stop: MOUNT LEBANON. The workshop was hosted by Notre Dame University in Zouk Mosbeh and gave very positive results! We had seventy people who attended the launching of the workshop and twenty participants who registered in the follow-up groups. The following people were present at the launching:

Ministry of Social Affairs:

1. Ms. Hala Helou
2. Ms. Emilie Kassis

Municipalities:

1. Jounieh: Mr. Roy El Hawa
2. Baakline: Mr. Omar Abi Shahla and Ms. Mirna Kassamany

NGOs and Development Agencies:

1. UNDP Live Lebanon
2. Lebanese Society for Children Capacity Building (LSCCB)
3. Nahnoo
4. Commune NGO
5. Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA)
6. PCDP

Companies and Research Centers:

1. Information International
2. Active Initiative for Development and Empowerment (AIDE)

Students from the following Universities:

1. NDU
2. AUB
3. LAU
4. USEK
5. Lebanese University

The workshop included three presentations:

1. Encouraging the Lebanese Diaspora to Invest in their Villages of Origin, Lebanese Emigration Research Center – Notre Dame University, | Dr. Eugene Sensing Dabbous, Chair of Political Science Department
2. Challenges of Collecting Public Policy Data in Lebanon, Information International | Mrs. Alicia Jammal, Senior Analyst
3. Volunteering, Public Interest Education in motion, Ministry of Social Affairs, National Volunteering Service Program | Ms. Hala Helou, Project Manager

It also included a general debate between the participants aimed at identifying the priorities of the region. The representatives from the municipalities offered their valuable experience during the debate.

The workshop also included two trainings:

1. Introduction to Public Policy | Dr. Karim El Mufti, Expert in Public Policy
2. Public Policies and Human Development, A New Approach | Mr. Cedric Choukeir, Expert in Local Development

The participants were divided into five groups targeting the following sectors:

1. Public Administration
2. Urban Planning
3. Housing
4. Education
5. Public Transport

NORTH LEBANON CAMPUS

NDU-NLC Dinner 2011 for School Heads



NDU-NLC held its annual dinner for High School principals on Friday May 6th, with NDU President Father Walid Moussa, Vice-president Dr. Assaad Eid, Treasurer Father Bshara Khoury, NLC Director Father Samir Ghsoub, Father Elie Sfeir, Ms. Mona Kanaan, Mr. John Mufarrej, Edgar Merhab-Harb, the Deans of Faculties and guest school principals attending.

Fr. Ghsoub mentioned new majors and referred to the increased number of students especially in the Faculty of Engineering. He also insisted on the readiness of NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa to consider suggestions and good new ideas. Father Walid Moussa explained that any academic issue discussed and treated involved the school principals since schools and university complement each other.

Dean's List



On Monday, June 6th, 2011, at 6 p.m., NDU's North Lebanon Campus (NLC), Barsa, honored its best-achieving students from its six faculties, namely Business Administration, Humanities, Engineering, Natural and Applied Sciences, Health and Nursing, and Architecture, Art and Design. Chairperson Nicole Ayoub welcomed the audience and then congratulated the students being honored. The Coordinator of Engineering, Doctor Shady Makary, referred to the new programs put forward by the University in view of the latest developments in science and scholarship as well as in the labor market. He referred to the updating of teaching methods and appropriate technological equipment as well as to the sporting, cultural and social activity that

created a suitable healthy atmosphere from which the students could profit as well as gaining knowledge. Doctor Makary added that the University not only assured success to sixty percent of the students but also helped them by providing them with transport. He then praised the families for the support they gave to their children. Certificates were then distributed to the top achieving students of the successive years in all six faculties. Students Joseph Saleh and Cecil Shahadeh then provided some instrumental and vocal musical entertainment before the event closed with refreshments.

Interview Skills Workshop



Thousands of students graduate every year from universities all over the country, resulting in a high selection ratio (expressing the number of job positions as compared to the number of job applicants). This high ratio creates a challenge for every student since the chances of getting a job are decreasing. Every student has to convince the employer that he/she is the ONE. This is done through the interview, which is a golden opportunity to prove one's qualities and skills.

The workshop conducted on the 6th of June at the NDU NLC premises illustrated the steps to follow in order to succeed and shine in any job interview.

The steps are as follows:

1. Preparing a neat and well structured CV as the first step in the pre-interview phase.
2. Anticipating all types of questions through practicing at home.
3. Respecting guidelines through the interview in order to leave a positive first impression. Topics such as dress code, body language, attitude, punctuality, handshake, smile, sending a thank-you note, etc. were discussed so as to stress the importance of projecting a professional image.

This Interview Skills Workshop had the clear aim of preparing NDU students to have a competitive advantage by shining and positively impressing any employer.

Many workshops (such as Communication Skills, Business Etiquette, Team Building, Presentation Skills, etc) will follow, hopefully by next fall. Their aim is to develop the soft skills required currently from the fresh graduate recruits.

NLC's first FAAD Exhibition, Grey



On Friday June 10, 2011 the Faculty of Business Administration and Economics at NLC invited Ms. Loyal Omran, Byblos Bank Marketing and Sales Manager, Product Development, of the regional department in North Lebanon. Ms. Omran emphasized the services of internet and phone banking and the convenience and security offered by Byblos Bank. She noted, "In this millennium when technology and e-Commerce have become a world-hanging phenomenon, e-Banking in the business environment has grown to be a must."

Student loans and other bank services were discussed to encourage awareness of financial benefits offered by Byblos Bank to NDU students. Students stated that although online communication was easy and fast, Lebanese clients still maintained their preference for face-to-face correspondence when dealing with financial matters. In the digital age these inclinations are being phased out as the virtual environment has become the global standard.

Opening of the Academic Year 2011-2012 at NLC



On Monday, October 17th, 2011, the new academic year opened at North Lebanon Campus with a ceremony in which NDU President Father Moussa Walid, Mr. Suheil Matar, V.-P. Cultural Affairs and P.R., Father Ziad Antoun, Director of Administration, Father Samir Ghsoub, Director of NLC, faculty, staff and students participated. The National Anthem was played and then speeches were delivered by Dr. Jean Touma, Father Samir Ghsoub and Mr. Mohsen Yammine, Media Researcher. The event closed with an inspiring address from Father Walid Moussa.

The NLC ceremony was the special focus of national newspapers such as *An-Nahar*, *Al-Mustaqbal*, *Al-Anwar*, *Al-Balad*, *Al-Joumhouria*, *Al-Sharq*, and *Al-Liwaa*, as well as of national and international TV channels, including *MTV*,

OTV, *LBC*, *TL*, *NBN*, *Al-Manar*, and *Al-Mustaqbal*. Regional newspapers and magazines such as *Haramoon*, *Al-Tamaddon*, *Al-Adib*, *Al-Wifak*, *Al-Inshaa*, *Tripoli Post*, and *Shabab News* assured local coverage.

Following the ceremony, guests were invited to a lunch organized by NDU.

Visit of His Beatitude



On Sunday, 13th November, 2011, NDU North Campus, Barsa, had the honor of receiving the visit of His Beatitude Patriarch Beshara al-Rahi, who was on his way to the Collège des Frères de la Famille Chrétienne for the celebration of the 125th anniversary of its foundation.

Awaiting him were NDU President Father Walid Moussa, NLC Director Father Samir Ghsoub, Director Father Beshara Khoury, Father Khalil Rahmeh, and NLC faculty, administrators and staff. His Beatitude promised to return for a special visit to the North Campus.

SHOUF CAMPUS

Shouf Campus Win

Dear all,

We are very happy to inform you that our students Farah Abou Shakra and Haitham Nasr were selected from more than twenty teams from different Lebanese universities to win the third place for their project ASTERISK the future PBX in the IEEE Lebanon Communications Student Competition 2011 (IEEE LCSC'11) held at NDU in collaboration with BERYTECH on Tuesday, June 28, 2011.

Best regards

Dr. Charbel Zgheib, Coordinator
Faculty of Engineering
Notre Dame University, Shouf Campus

Social Births



Kelly Maria Samaha was born to Cendrella Mjaes Samaha, part-time instructor in the Faculty of Business Administration, on 31st January, 2011. She is seen with her mother in the accompanying delightful photograph.



Doctor Jad Atallah and his wife Nora are happy to announce the birth of their son **Liam** on 17th September, 2011.



The Admissions Office and the Office of Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation received from their Director, Dr. Viviane Naimy, the announcement of the birth of her daughter, **Cécile Siham Abou Mrad**, on 15th June, 2011.



Daughter **Venus Sarah** was born to Firas El-Hachem and Amira El-Hachem, née Vanloan, Faculty of Humanities, on 4th November, 2011, at Houston, Texas, USA.

We regret that the above two announcements have been published only after considerable delay. NDU Spirit is glad to receive news of marriages and births, preferably with photographs, as soon as convenient after the occasion. – Ed.

Babies are angels that fly to the earth, Their wings disappear at the time of their birth. One look in their eyes and we're never the same, They're part of us now and that part has a name!

Obituaries



Nada Gerges al-Khoury Rahmeh: Nada Gerges al-Khoury Rahmeh, mother of Doctor Camille Rahmeh of NDU, passed away on Saturday, 4th June, 2011. The requiem was celebrated at 5 p.m. the next day in the Mar Saba cathedral in Bsharri.

Daoud Youssef al-Hayek: Daoud Youssef al-Hayek, husband of Muhassen Aissy and father of Doctor Michel al-Hayek, Chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering in NDU, passed away on 12th June, 2011, after receiving the sacraments. The requiem was celebrated at 5 p.m. Monday, 13th June, in the church of Saint Mora, Baqarzla.

Doctor Alexander Fares Saadeh: Doctor Alexander Fares Saadeh, brother of Lola, wife of George Beyrouthy, of FAAD, passed away on Saturday, 18th June, 2011. The Requiem was celebrated at 5 p.m. on Monday, June, 20th, in the Church of the Cross, Bzommar.

Khalilat Farhan Aaqleh: Khalilat, spouse of the late Jean-Pierre Elias, and mother of Jeanette Elias of the staff of the Faculty of Engineering in NDU, passed away on 30th June, 2011. The requiem took place at 4 p.m. on Saturday, July 2nd, in the Church of Saint Rafqa, Suheileh.

Engineer Hanna Elias Sarkis: Hanna Sarkis, husband of Diana née Shakrallah Yazbek of the staff of FAAD, passed away on Saturday, July 2nd, 2011. The requiem was celebrated at 4 p.m. on Sunday, July 3rd in the Church of Saint Fawqa, Kaftoon, Koura. Mass for the repose of his soul was offered at 12.15 on Monday, October 3rd, in the University Church.

Dolly Gerges Qozeh: All in NDU will share the grief of her husband Selim Edmund Awad, her two daughters Maria and Melissa, her parents, and her brothers and sisters at the passing away of the University's devoted nurse known to all as Dolly Awad, on Friday, 5th August, 2011. The requiem took place at 2 p.m. at the Greek Orthodox cathedral of St. Nicholas in Ballouneh, after which her mortal remains were transported to the family tomb in the Orthodox cemetery at Kfar Hbab, Ghazir. Mass for the repose of her soul was celebrated in the NDU Main Campus Church by NDU President Father Walid Moussa on Wednesday, August 17th. A 40-day requiem was celebrated at 10 a.m., Sunday 11th September, at St. Nicholas Cathedral, Ballouneh.

Father Antoine Youssef el-Rahy: Valued member of the Mariamite Maronite Order and nephew of Patriarch Mar Beshara el-Rahy, Father Antoine el-Rahy passed away on Friday, 12th August 2011. The requiem was celebrated in the Church of the monastery of Our Lady of Louaizeh at 5 p.m. on the next day, Saturday. Mass was also celebrated on Tuesday, September 13th, 5 p.m. at Hill of St. Rafqa, Hemlaya.

Elias Abboud Deeb: Elias Abboud Deeb, husband of Maria Nicola and father of Doctors George, Hasham and Robert Deeb (the last-named of NDU Science), passed away on Friday, 12th August, 2011. The requiem was celebrated on the following day at 5 p.m. in the Church of the Nativity, Tel Abbas.

Nicolas Yacoub, brother of Dr. Joseph Yaacoub of the NDU Faculty of Humanities, passed away on Friday, September 9th, 2011, in Saida (Sidon).. The funeral requiem was celebrated on the next day, Saturday, at the Greek Catholic cathedral of St. Nicholas.

Julien Elias Amine Chalhoub, NDU student, died tragically on Friday, 16th September, 2011, in a motor car accident.

Samia Khoury: On Tuesday, September 20th, 2011, the Faculty of Humanities announced the passing of Mrs. Samia Khoury, mother of Dr. Maha Mouchantaf, Assistant Professor of Education in the DETE. The funeral took place on Tuesday at 4 p.m. in Abra.

Mrs. Hana Khairallah, mother of Dr. Kamal Abouchedid, Assistant to the VP/AA, passed away on Thursday, October 20th, 2011. The funeral took place at 4 p.m. the next day at the Nativity of Our Lady Church, Batloun, Bhamdoun.

Hope

Father Boulos Wehbe



Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that ye should abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
(Ro. 15:13)

This message is from the letter of the Apostle Paul to the Romans. The original wording of the sentence is: "Now may the God who inspires or produces [Christian] hope fill you with joy and peace." It is significant that this verse starts with the word "now". We deduce from this preliminary key to the message of the verse that it is God who inspires, or better still, produces hope, and he does that **now**.

Hope is often the ingredient we find missing when we face failure or when things do not go in the direction or with the speed our plans envisaged. It is because, many times, the hope we put into our endeavors, whether in planning or execution, is the kind that **we** decided should be or should take place. We have to believe that it is God who should be the inspirer of hope, and if we adhere to this, He will produce it in us, so that we, by Him, will inspire and produce it in the people to whom our work is directed. Does not the Bible say, "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain"? (Psalm 127)

The Christian God is the God of **now**. In our Orthodox liturgy, the words *now* and *today* are among the most used words. When the Divine Liturgy (the Holy Mass) is about to begin, the deacon assembles the priests and addresses the bishop by saying: "Now is the time to work for the Lord," and when we are approaching the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, we chant "**Today** the Virgin comes to the cave or manger," and as of the day of the Feast of the Resurrection, we chant for forty days: "Today is the day of the Resurrection," to signify that in all cases the arena of the work of our Lord is now, and thus it always is **today**.

God therefore is the God of hope, and due to this stern belief, within the perspective we mentioned, we may be filled with joy and peace. Joy is different to happiness; happiness is what I feel when I get a new Jaguar or win the lottery, when I eat something delicious or buy some fine clothes, but joy is a function of the soul, to coin a phrase from the philosopher Socrates, a feeling that permeates sadness, sickness, the death of a loved one, or any other occasion of sorrow, as alluded to often by the Apostle Paul. In his farewell speech, as recorded in the Gospel according to St. John, Christ, who was about to be apprehended,

tortured and executed, said to His disciples (to us): "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11). This notion fills the letters of St. Paul. It is due to this feeling of joy, or rather this existential conviction, that we may experience peace, but not the peace that comes from the absence of conflict or war. Jesus, who was about to be apprehended, tortured and executed, said again to his disciples: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives peace, I give unto you." (John 14:27.) One more remark: notice that our Lord calls us to aspire to acquire full joy, the kind that remains in us. This is a very great challenge for all of us, especially in World Vision and in the Church at large: how can we retain this orientation despite all the difficulties and factors that may take us in an opposite direction?

We have to have faith, and as such belief becomes fortified by joy and peace, because they were instilled in us by the God of hope now. But for hope to abound in us, as promised by the Apostle Paul, it can be so only by the power of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Spirit of God who is, as we say in the opening prayer of most of the liturgical services in the Byzantine tradition, "the Comforter...the Spirit of truth, present everywhere (and in everyone)." Yes, in everyone, and it becomes thus our mission to seek Him in everyone and to help them to seek His presence in them. I know that this is precisely the work of World Vision, whose sole purpose is to serve God in the needy and to seek Him in them. It is the practical application of chapter 25 in the Gospel according to St. Matthew: "I was hungry..."

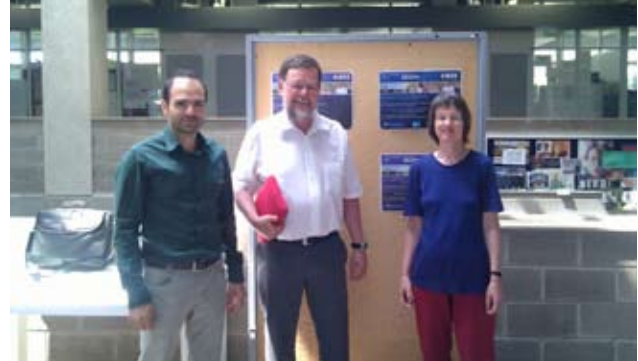
Christians are by definition the sons and daughters of hope, not the hope that is to come but the hope whose seeds are to be harvested each day. "Now may the God of hope fill you." Those undertaking the work of God have to be filled with Him. In the liturgical prayer I mentioned above, we address the Holy Spirit as the one who fills everyone. Fills does not mean simply is *present*. Unless we are filled, we cannot reach out. The very act of creation is the result of the overflowing love of God, and all our acts should aspire to emulate this, because in serving we are helping to restore dignity to people, to recreate in them a sense of worth, a sense of being cared for, of being loved, of being important. Isn't this what God did by sending His Son to us, ever present in our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit?

Germany and NDU: Increased Collaboration and Interest

By Doctor in Engineering Marwan Bou Sanayeh, ECCE



❖ A view from the Danube River to the city centre of Ulm.



❖ The representatives of the University of Ulm at NDU, June 2011. Left to right: Dr. Marwan Bou Sanayeh, Prof. Hermann Schumacher, and Dr. Katrin Reimer.

Since 2007, Notre Dame University and the University of Ulm (UULM) in Germany have followed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) designed to promote the exchange of qualified students and faculty and to engage in collaborative research in the fields of engineering and science. The MOA considers that both institutions recognize each other as centers of research and teaching of outstanding quality in their respective countries.

Since 2005, including this year, two UULM representatives, Prof. Hermann Schumacher and Dr. Katrin Reimer, have regularly visited NDU to recruit engineering students, especially from the Electrical and Computer and Communications Engineering Department, to pursue their Master studies at UULM. Moreover, the program of these visits includes presentations about advanced research topics in electrical engineering currently ongoing in UULM.

About Ulm

Ulm is a city in the Federal German state of Baden-Württemberg, situated on the Danube River. The city, whose population is estimated at 120,000 (2006), was founded around 850 A.D., and is rich in history and traditions as a former Free Imperial City. Today, it is an economic centre due to its varied industries, and it is the seat of the University of Ulm, which was founded in 1967. Internationally, Ulm is primarily known for having the church with the tallest steeple in the world (161.5 meters), and as the birthplace of Albert Einstein.

The city has very old trading traditions dating from medieval times and a long history of industrialization, beginning with the establishment of a railway station in 1850. The most important sector is still classical industry, including machinery, especially motor vehicles, electronics, and pharmaceuticals. The establishment of the University of Ulm was a milestone and today it is regarded as one of the best research universities in Germany. The University focuses on biomedicine, the

sciences, and engineering, and forms a strong synergy with hi-tech companies in Ulm such as Daimler Chrysler, EADS, Nokia, Siemens AG, Nokia Siemens Networks, Atmel, Intel, AEG, etc...

How It All Started

I graduated from NDU with a Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical Engineering in 2001. Afterwards, I started my Master of Engineering studies at the American University of Beirut and transferred after one semester to the University of Ulm after being accepted in their Master of Science in Communications Technology program. Shortly before I completed my Master's degree, I worked on the establishment of an exchange program between UULM and NDU and as a result the MOA between both universities was signed. Today, since my becoming an Assistant Professor at NDU in 2008, the ties between UULM and NDU have become even stronger. Several engineering students from NDU have joined the Master's program since then and this year one student is going to do her internship in UULM.

Meanwhile, the collaboration between a German University and NDU has drawn the attention of the German Academic Exchange Program (DAAD). The DAAD is the largest German support organization in the field of international academic cooperation. The DAAD grants are available to students of all academic disciplines and at each academic degree level, including undergraduates, graduates, doctoral students, PhD candidates and postdoctoral scholars, and faculty.

Around once a month, following the initiative of Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, the DAAD Lecturer in Lebanon spends a day at NDU to guide students and faculty interested in obtaining a DAAD grant. This year, after having a very positive experience with NDU, the DAAD is considering establishing its Lebanon office at NDU, which will further enhance the collaboration between Lebanon and Germany.



Dr. Louis Hobeika
Professor of Economics
and Finance at Notre
Dame University.

Salary Adjustments and Inflation

Social demands are surfacing as the Lebanese government starts to function, due to the growing mismatch between average income and average consumption for the ordinary family. It is not sufficient to adjust salaries, and it is equally important over time to provide affordable and quality medical care, proper public transportation and social benefits for all citizens. It will take a long time for these benefits to be provided at a satisfactory level. Moreover, the financing may not be available now. Therefore a sufficient salary adjustment is necessary to cover part of the loss in purchasing power and to preserve social stability and avoid future strikes. The recent salary correction is insufficient and does not serve those who earn over \$1200 per month. The government should elaborate solutions which benefit all citizens and not part of them as it did with the drivers. These discriminatory solutions are bound to be badly conceived.

If salaries should be further adjusted in the future, what then are the acceptable rates of increase favorable to both parties which will be negotiated under the auspices of the Ministry of Labor? Obviously, the public expects the government to be an efficient and honest mediator inspiring confidence in both parties and among the public at large. I propose the following scheme by tranches where the first L.p.500,000 is subjected to a 50% increase, the second L.p.500,000 to a 40%, the third to 30%, the fourth at 20% and the remaining at 10% on condition that the monthly raise does not surpass the one million L.p. ceiling. Obviously these corrections are applied to salary levels preceding the last adjustment. For example, a salary of L.p.2 million will become L.p.2,700,000. Government employees may have to wait for the new budget to come out in the next few weeks before a decision can be taken. The private sector can apply it immediately.

I am fully aware that this proposal does not fulfill the full aspirations of the labor movement but falls within the means of the business sector. It's a compromise which may not satisfy completely both parties, but it is a right one replying to a justified request for a salary adjustment. The increase could be applied as of 1/1/2012 as retroactivity in this type of calculation is not recommended and could jeopardize the health of many small firms in the rural areas. The main question to be addressed is the impact on the economy and especially on inflation.

Economic studies show that when an economy is operating at full employment, an increase in salary leads to an increase in the costs of production and therefore to a rise in prices. On the other hand, empirical studies show that, when an economy is operating below full employment, which is the case of Lebanon, there is no indication whatsoever of a relationship between salary increases and prices. The studies show that under the latter, a salary increase pushes businesses to organize themselves better i.e. to increase their productivity. Therefore a moderate salary increase under conditions of underemployment will improve the social climate and help businesses adjust their administrative and technical operations to the benefit of the economy and its growth.

What should be done to avoid a clash in the future? Salaries should be adjusted annually at a rate equivalent to half the overall inflation index as measured by the official Directorate for Statistics. Businesses can easily absorb annual increases but hate to have to do large adjustment in so many years. Moreover, the labor policy of the government should go beyond salary adjustments to concern about improving the productivity of labor and firms negatively affected by events in Lebanon and the region. This productivity can be helped by properly investing in education, training and development for management and workers.

Training by Initiatives of Change

Club of International Relations

It all started on Friday, 6th of May, when the participants started arriving at NDU, checking in their rooms, and getting acquainted. All around were smiling, excited faces... we had new names to memorise, and encountered different languages and dialects. The trainers were Zoryana Borbulevych from Ukraine, John Carlisle from England, and Yeonyuk Jeong from South Korea. Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, Chairman of the Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration in NDU, one of the main organizers, was accompanied by his daughter Nour, who indirectly contributed to the programme in her own way.

We began the program by defining change, as it was the main theme of the training. Each of the trainers presented certain parts of the programme, through theory followed by practice. The most important part of the programme was "quiet time". The trainers were very interesting people and time spent with them was time used wisely. Dr. John Carlisle is an English/South African/ Colonial professor who grew up in South Africa. His wisdom, knowledge, and care accompanied us throughout, making us more mature. Each moment spent listening to him was a fruitful one, and ten days were surely not enough for us. Ms. Zoryana Borbulevych from Ukraine was the main moderator of the programme. Her charming and cheerful character and her hard work made the training a success. Last but not least, Mr. Yeonyuk Jeong, a.k.a. "Y Y but don't ask me why", was from South Korea. His favourite quote is "My life is my message", which was said by Mahatma Gandhi.

On weekdays, the program started at 3 p.m., and ended at 9 p.m.; at weekends, it started at 9 a.m., and ended at 9 p.m.. The training went beyond the assigned activities, since all the participants had positive attitudes that allowed better communication, and thus we were able to cooperate and create our own little world. We spent mornings singing, and evenings singing and dancing, and all this, now, seems like a dream.

The talented gentlemen, Marwen from Tunisia and Ali and Karim from Lebanon, played the guitar, and even sang for us. Maha from Egypt, the computer expert, presented eye-catching presentations. Huda from Yemen made movies, and edited them beautifully. Our gifted writer and poet Rhea from Lebanon painted our thoughts with words. Trips to several parts of Lebanon, such as the enchanting Byblos and the mystical Jeita Grotto, were also part of the programme. One particular trip to Badaro gave us the opportunity to meet Muhieddine

Chehab and Assaad Chaftari, who were militiamen and former enemies in Lebanon's civil war. These two men explained how their lives changed, bringing regrets, and how they are currently trying to keep the young aware enough not to make the same mistakes they made.

...And the participants: (in no particular order) Ali Chamseddine (Lebanon), Fatima Mohammed A.Kareem (Sudan), Huda El Keksi (Yemen), Maha Ashour (Egypt), Karim Makhoul (Lebanon), Marwen Ben Alaya (Tunisia), Rhea Dagher (Lebanon), Rawad Raidan (Lebanon), Samir Haidar (Lebanon), Mary-Joe Alavalas (Lebanon).

Tout a commencé le 05 mai, 2011. Ça s'est passé à l'Université de Notre Dame de Louizé au Liban et ça a duré 10 jours. Nous étions à peu près une dizaine de participants, tous venus de pays différents et rassemblant en tout huit nationalités.

Pour ma part quand j'ai entendu parler de ce « workshop » je n'en avais pas très bien saisi le thème, ni le but, et c'était juste un training de plus dans mon CV. En plus j'aurais l'occasion de visiter le Liban, pays connu pour son charme à l'européenne.

Dès les premières heures de la formation on a parlé du changement, de la définition du changement, de ce qu'on pourrait bien changer dans notre vie et comment on voudrait voir le monde. Là je me suis dit : « Peut être que cette formation est bien intéressante en fin de compte ». Et au fur et à mesure j'avais réalisé que ce training n'était pas comme ses précédents et qu'il pourrait changer ma vision de la vie et du monde. Et c'était bien le cas ! Ce n'était pas seulement un simple atelier pour acquérir de nouvelles connaissances ou compétences, c'était une expérience humaine unique au cours de laquelle chacun de nous s'est aventuré au plus profond de son âme pour trouver des réponses à des questions, des questions que personne ne se pose ouvertement et qu'on essaye de fuir parce que les réponses pourraient nous déplaire et nuire à notre quotidien et casser cette routine qu'on aime tant.

On a abordé différents sujets, tous aussi intéressants les uns que les autres et à chaque fois ça nous a permis d'élargir notre vision de tout ce qui fait notre vie de tout les jours. J'ai adoré la relation qu'on avait avec les trainers et surtout la diversité de leurs personnalités, ce qui rendait chacun d'eux unique dans son genre.

J'ajouterais aussi que pour ma part, c'est vrai que le programme de la formation était très enrichissant, mais ce que j'ai appris de plus précieux je l'ai appris des gens qui étaient autour de moi. Chacun d'eux est un trésor qui te tend la main et tu n'a qu'a te servir. C'était donc une expérience humaine avant tout et d'une richesse inégalée.

Marwen Ben Alaya

Change. Is it really achievable? We all want to believe that, yes, it is. But we, human beings, are afraid of it. So we're told it's just a dream. But, dreams...they do come true, when you believe in them.

"When you really want something, the whole universe conspires in helping you achieve it," said Paulo Coelho. That was what Inside Change was all about. You have to know yourself and listen to yourself in order to change, and to act upon that change. It was a very personal training, with the main aim of just being YOU. Because in the end, that's the only thing you really own; yourself. Neither your car, nor your diploma, not even your family makes you purely just Yourself.

And then of course comes the Other; your "brothers in humanity". We are all part of this universe, and the universe is part of us. You have a duty not only towards yourself, but also towards the other.

Rhea Dagher

Poem written by Rhea Dagher:

We all want world peace
But we are told it's just a dream
Your voice will say:
Quiet time is how we start our days
Sharing stories and thoughts settles you down.

Honesty

How many times have you looked at yourself in the mirror and **truly smiled?**

Purity

How many times have you looked at yourself in the mirror and truly seen what your eyes have to say?

Unselfishness

How many times have you looked at yourself in the mirror and given yourself the strength to give someone else something they need?
How many times have you looked at yourself in the mirror and just hugged yourself?

Be honest to yourself so that you can honestly smile to others,
Be pure from inside so that others can see the **true you.**

Let **unselfishness** be your mirror,

Love yourself so that you **lovingly hug the other.**

The **Golden Rule** in all religions:

Treat the other as you want the other to treat you...
and also treat **yourself** as you want others to treat you...

Four absolute values

Purity, Honesty, Unselfishness, Love.

"I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service."

I acted and behold, SERVICE was JOY.

(Rabindranath Tagore)

Missolonghi, Greece

Ms. Hala Halaoui



❖ The NDU Delegation.

Visiting Missolonghi, Greece, for the first time, we felt like being home. Not only does it have the same Mediterranean biosphere, but the people there are extremely friendly and warm hearted, so I felt as if I were a part of a larger family.

After our registering for the conference, our cultural activities began with a visit to the Municipal Museum of History and Art, which is located in down-town Missolonghi. In the middle of the crowd of participants, the red carpets stretched along the steps and into the gallery, paving the way for sacred peace and quiet. Original paintings there date back to the Ottoman Empire, and some before. These paintings reflect the situation in Greece at the time of its liberation from Ottoman rule; they reveal a sense of patriotism marking the spirit of its town.

During the evening, the official conference reception dinner started with the Lebanese folk ballet dance by Ms. Grace Nakhoul, a student of English Literature at NDU; this was followed by the performance of the city's folk dance group. The rhythm of Greek music was energetic and expressive of the nature of the Greek way of life. Quick steps enlivened the feeling of friendship, love and acceptance of the other. Much as in the Lebanese folk dance, the dabkeh, arm in arm the dancers moved and created beautiful choreographed steps. The costumes the dancers wore were very bright, colorful and cheerful.

The academic conference was not merely about Lord Byron; it taught me and all who attended the history of Greece, its literature, and its people. I learned different perspectives of different literary authors, such as Mary Shelley's perception of Hellenism in *Euphrasia: A Tale of Greece* discussed by Dr. M. Schonja; for instance, I never knew the term euphrasia was a combination of both the European and Asian continents, both in an exchange and mingling of cultures as well as trade. Ms. Rachel McKee, a student at Susquehanna University, stunned us with her paper, in which she discussed her opinion on how Wordsworth and Byron teach us to belong; she limited



❖ During the Conference

the use of citations and mention of critics and authors who commented on this issue, and simply declared what she truly believed. Her paper was one of the many which even the professors and scholars listened to intently. From the University of Virginia, Ms. Anna Radcliffe discussed language in politics, so we all learned how language can be the most important weapon in war and also in politics. Professor D. Radcliffe, who happens to be Ms. Anna's father as well, formed a website titled *Putting Missolonghi Memoirs Online*. It is very easy to access, and he showed us as well how it works. A discussion arose after Professor D. Hubbell, from Susquehanna University, presented his paper on the Elgin Marbles. The conference not only added to our previous information about certain issues but also opened to us different perspectives.

The following day, Professor G. Kokkonis from the Music Department at TEI of Epirus introduced us to art and music in the time of Ali Pasha; Professor Kokkonis had different CDs he played for us to listen to, so we could differentiate between certain moods and effects evoked by musical instruments, of which he had photos ready for us. The conference, as I mentioned previously, took on a cultural curve of different perspectives of authors, art, music, and philosophy. Dr. M. El Hage, from Notre Dame University, discussed parts of Lord Byron's poetry translated from English into both the French and Italian languages.

Dr. El Hage explained the different levels and abuses of such translations. Professor N. Oueijan, also from Notre Dame University, described Lord Byron as an Aesthetic Historian, from his own perspective and analysis of reading his works. Other students from universities around the world made presentations which made me feel quite competitive with them. I discovered that my linguistic skills and knowledge were not less than theirs. This gave me a lot of self-confidence.

The students of NDU, Ms. Grace Nakhoul, Ms. Rouba Douaihy, Ms. Tracey El Hajj and myself, were the last



❖❖ Prof. Naji Oueijan Introducing NDU's Students.

ones to present our papers, but certainly not least; my friend Ms. Douaihy excelled in her paper regarding Byron and the Sufi Poets, such as Hafez and Firdausi, and her paper was selected by the Byron committee as the best. I personally congratulated Rouba not only for this, but for her excellent defense of her thesis. I said to Rouba: "May your future be filled with joy and success in whatever you do." Ms. Grace Nakhoul mentioned all the Western women the great poet had affairs with, or was in a relationship with, and the reason why he later on was seduced by the East and the Eastern women. Ms. Tracey El Hajj and I discussed politics in Byron's times and the reasons why Byron fought in the Greek Revolution, which made him have such great influence and impact not only on the Greeks but also on the world and future generations.

On Thursday morning, participants and guests in the conference all attended the wreath-laying ceremony at the site where Byron breathed his last on April 19, 1824, and where the University of Athens dedicated a memorial column to him, to commemorate the centennial of his death. Mrs. Rosa Florou, one of the organizers of the conference, touched us deeply while we were there when she bought a bouquet of lavender and gave each and every one of us a stem to lay in front of the spot where Byron closed his eyes, in respect of his memory. The sight was spectacularly emotional.

In order to regain our sense of ease and comfort, we paid a visit to the Garden of Heroes, an extensive memorial garden with many monuments, stretching alongside the defensive walls of Missolonghi. Next came a long journey to St. Symeon Monastery built in the 18th century on the slopes of Mount Arakinthos. In the middle of orange and pine trees, this small monastery includes a sacred church with marvelous architecture; on the ceiling are images of saints in expressive colors reflecting the religious mood of the location.

The next day was a bright sunny Friday, the perfect time and location to depart from Missolonghi port for a wonderful sailing experience, crossing the lagoon and visiting the isle of Vassiladi, where Byron landed on January 5, 1824 and whence his remains left on the ship Florida via Zakynthos for England in May 1824. And in the evening we visited the Engraving Museum of Vasso Katraki, where the Katraki writes stories of the human life and of the human condition in engravings of rock and stone. The day came to an end with the visit to the Folklore Museum, where I personally felt at home. Displayed were the day-to-day utensils, furniture, cooking techniques, and even wardrobes of Greek peasants.

All in all, the conference was a wonderful educational experience for every one of us. The most important thing we learned in Missolonghi was to appreciate what we have and to improve it. I would definitely like to go back to Missolonghi. The people I met are constantly in my thought and prayers. Thank you Notre Dame University and Prof. Naji Oueijan for giving us this wonderful educational opportunity; and thank you Missolonghi for teaching us to value what we have, and to interact with others with an open and loving heart, regardless of our differences.

Genetically Modified Food: Safety & Environment

Elsa Sattout , Ph. D.



Recent years have witnessed rapid advances in the application of modern biotechnology. Plantations of transgenic crops across the world have increased dramatically in the last few years. A transgenic crop is a plant crop that contains a gene which has been artificially inserted instead of acquired through natural pollination. The primary traits are herbicide tolerance and insect resistance. The traits are inserted using *Bacillus turengensis* [Bt] bacteria. The Bt genes have been incorporated into broccoli, cabbage, oilseed rape, cotton, maize, eggplants, poplar, potato, soybean, tobacco and tomato. By 1998, four crops dominated the agricultural sector. These were soybean, maize, cotton and oilseed rape. In 2009, transgenic field crops reached 134 million ha., while the number of farmers growing genetically modified crops increased to 14 million globally in twenty-five countries. Six countries produced 99% of the global biotech crop in 2003, while China and South Africa planted a third more biotech hectares than in 2002.

What GM plants are found on the markets today?

The GM plants available on the markets are Alfalfa, Argentine Canola, Carnation, Chicory, Cotton, Creeping Bentgrass, Flax, Linseed, Maize, Melon, Papaya, Petunia, Plum, Polish Canola, Poplar, Potato, Rice, Rose, Soybean, Squash, Sugar Beet, Sweet Pepper, Tobacco, Tomato and Wheat .

Examples of transgenic crops:

- A crop using genes from daffodils and a soil bacterium to produce golden rice {strain of rice containing Beta carotene converted by the body to Vitamin A}.
- Tomatoes with a gene that slows ripening inserted into the tomato DNA (known as "FLAVR SAVR").
- GM trial crops being tested to make celery stay crisp for a longer time.
- Soya engineered to contain a gene that gives resistance to weed killers containing glyphosate (herbicide).

What are the effects of GM food and crops on our health & the environment?

While the projected advantages of GM food and crops are better flavor, less spoilage and higher yields with less use of fertilizers and pesticides, the theoretical health implications arising from modern biotechnology reside in the adverse effects of the inserted gene such as toxicity, allergic reactions, antibiotic resistance, gut erosion and lower nutritional values.

The environmental impacts are summarized in the uncontrolled gene flow to other species and the damage to genetic resources, landraces and wild relative species; the development of secondary pests; the development of resistant populations which curtail the usefulness of the GM trait; damage to biological control organisms, and the loss of pollination services as well as the impact on soil organisms involved in recycling of soil nutrients and maintaining soil fertility.

What are the food safety and biosafety measures undertaken at global and national levels?

Food safety issues are treated differently in the US from other regions and countries. In the US, GM products are considered as substantial equivalent or they are Generally Recognized as Safe [GRAS]. According to the World Health Organization [WHO], conventional foods are generally considered to be safe if properly provided, prepared and handled. Novel foods, including recombinant DNA [r-DNA] foods, are required to undergo mandatory pre-market safety assessment in some jurisdictions as in Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, UK and the EU. In fact, new products with intentionally altered nutritional profiles challenge the ability to access unintended consequences such as

for GM low-gluten rice; the decrease in gluten levels was associated with an unintended increase in levels of prolamins. GM golden rice has been genetically modified to intentionally increased levels of beta-carotene, but it has unexpectedly been found that the modification was accompanied by higher levels of xanthophylls.

Environmental protection is managed through the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety [CPB] which was developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The protocol aims to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the safe transfer, handling and use of LMOs resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health. The protocol requires parties to make decisions on import of LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment in accordance with scientifically sound risk assessments [CPB- Art. 15].

Where are we in Lebanon?

A law on food safety has been developed and is under revision by the Lebanese Council of Ministers. The law takes into account consumer rights in terms of impact on human health and labeling of GM products. The law still needs approval by the Council. The CPB was ratified in 2008. A biosafety law was developed in 2005. The law takes into account the categorization of GM crops on the environment based on the level of risks. Accordingly four GM crop categories have been developed. The bill still needs approval by the council of ministers.

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Northern villages and green spaces: Akkar- Donnieh Area

Elsa Sattout , Ph. D.



Aubrieta libano



Orchid



Hypericum imberbe

Occupying a large area in the most neglected region in Lebanon, Akkar and Donnieh contain a natural heritage of great importance to the country and to the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Designated among the national hotspots requiring urgent protective action, the region was designated as National Park in the *Schema Directeur d'Aménagement du Territoire du Liban* [SDATL] developed by the Council of Development and Reconstruction [CDR] in 2004. The region extends over various Mediterranean life zones and a mosaic of all Lebanese Mediterranean forest types. The astonishing biological diversity which is the effect of biogeography, geology, ecology, and history and the diversity of social and cultural aspects are immediately perceived in the mosaic effect so typical of Mediterranean landscapes.

The Basin has been recognized as one of the eighteen world "hotspots" and as a melting pot and meeting ground for species of varying origins. The whole region has been shown to be a critical habitat of global importance for genetic resources; it comprises a wealth of more than 25,000 plant species, more than 50 % of which are endemic to the region, and a good proportion of which are relicts. Mediterranean mountains recurrently show up to 42% endemism among higher plants conducive to speciation. Extant faunas and floras of the Mediterranean are a complex mixture of elements deriving from *in situ* evolution or colonization from adjacent or far-distant regions in various periods in the past. The colonizers constitute the vast majority of present day-species. Although Mediterranean ecosystems can be considered young because of the relatively recent appearance of a Mediterranean climate, they are composed of species originating in almost all known biogeographic realms of the world. Located at the cross-roads of three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa), the region is recognized as the cradle of many civilizations supporting intensive anthropogenic activities.



Pischikina scilloides

Now come with me on a virtual hike tracking the lovely paths in northern valleys and on high mountain peaks where you can enjoy Mediterranean mountain landscapes and various forest types where stretches of plant associations thrive... *Dipping in silent valleys at 1200 meters altitude while aiming the highest peaks at 2000 meters, you can observe more than 450 flowering plant species among which seventeen are endemics...* The mosaic of patches of vegetation draws various forest associations among which are Calabrian pine, mixed Lebanese cedar and Cilician fir and junipers, evergreen oak, and turkey oak relic stands. We will start at low altitude in the Valley of Quemmamine [also called Wadi Jhanam] and we will reach the highest peaks of the Qammoua forests....

The trails in Qemmamine Valley, Hrar, Jayourn and Qabait will take you on an enchanting tour to see the Calabrian pine [*Pinus brutia* Ten.] forest mixed with Palestine pistachio [*Pistaceae palaestina*, Boiss], Syrian maple [*Acer syriacum*, Boiss & Gaill], oak [*Quercus calliprinos*], false olive tree [*Phyllirea media*], storax [*Styrax officinalis*, Boiss.], Oriental strawberry-tree [*Arbutus andrachne*, L.] and Judas trees [*Cercis siliquastrum*, L.] and to enjoy patches of flowering white everlasting [*Helichrysum virgineum* DC.], Mouterde groundsel [*Senecio mouterdei*, Arene] and salvia, etc. [Photos nb.].



Terraces at Mishmish



Hrar



Hrar

Tracking the steep slopes in the valley to reach higher altitude in Mishmish; you will be amazed to see the terraced fields reflecting the labors of the old farmers, our ancestors on the land. In the vicinity of these, the forests extending on the slopes present a mix of cedar [*Cedrus libani*, Boiss.], fir [*Abies cilicica*, Ant. & Ky.], junipers [*Juniperus oxycedrus*, L., *Juniperus excelsa* M.B. and *J. foetidissima*, Wild], Syrian maple, false olive trees, wild apple [*Malus trilobata*], Sawfar milk-vetch [*Astragalus sofarensis*, Thieb.] and Lebanon barberry [*Berberis libanotica*, Ehren.]

Reaching the highest altitude in this region you will pass by the Turkey oak [*Quercus cerris*, L.] forest in Fneideq located on the foothills of Qammoua Forest. In the glorious cedar, fir and juniper forests [*Juniperus excelsa*, M.B. and *J. foetidissima*, Wild] in this area lots of endemic plant species can be observed such as Lebanon aubrietia [*Aubrietia libanotica*, Boiss], Lebanon woodruff [*Asperula libanotica* Boiss.], Lebanon bedstraw [*Galium libanoticum*, Ehren.], milk-vetch species [*Astragalus angulosus*, DC., *A. cruentiflorus*, Boiss., *A. dictyocarpus*, Boiss., *A. hermoneus*, Boiss. & *A. kurnet-es-sauda*, Eig.], orchids and other flowering plants such as Hypecoum imberbe, puschkine, star-of-Bethlehem, tulip and snow romulea. If you manage to visit the region in early spring you will enjoy the seasonal wetlands formed in the plateau of Qammoua surrounded by juniper forest extensions ...

[Photo nb]

Ending the hike on the northern part of Qammoua forest on the shoulder of the mountain, you will enjoy gazing Akkar el-Attika...

How many realize that we "... can be as rich as we want BUT the loveliest things on earth cannot be bought" [Blyton]

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A Campus for Wheel-Chaired People

Although Notre Dame University is one of the most significant universities in Lebanon, yet it is not handicapped-friendly. This article shows how to enhance the University in order to attract the handicapped to join. At the end of the article, several recommendations are made regarding the benefits for the handicapped and for the University. In the age of science and technology, physically disabled people are still struggling to have their place as effective members of society. Some public utilities still do not apply the minimum requirements for handicapped accessibility to make life easier for physically disabled people. According to a survey conducted by NLC students, we found that out of eight universities, including NDU-NLC, none of them had full handicapped access. The benefit from our project would be to decrease discrimination among the students in Lebanon. Furthermore, it will not only increase the number of NDU students, but it will also give our University a pre-eminent image for it to be a "role model" for other universities. Here are some findings that can help most handicapped and wheel-chaired people to mingle in society:



Parking

As we all know, we have serious problems in the parking lot. It is so hard for us to reach the classes from the park since it is far away. What about wheel-chaired people? How could it be made easier for them to enter the University? Well, some action should be taken about this problem if we want to attract the handicapped in general. Some of these modifications may be summarized as follows:

- Provision for adequate passage and maneuvering space to accommodate handicapped transit from sidewalks and passenger loading zones to the closest serviceable building access.
- Parking spaces for disabled people (bearing the recognized symbol) at least 96cms in width, having an adjacent access aisle 60cms in width.
- A new parking lot for the handicapped next to the university building for easier access.



Nizam Daher

Major:
Marketing & Advertising



Classrooms and Cafeteria

The classrooms should be spaced for easy wheelchair access and desks should be removed upon request to make room for wheel-chaired people. In the case of a classroom with long tables, wheelchairs should be placed so that a handicapped person may be seated normally like the rest of the students.

OBJECTIVES

The project would help our University achieve these objectives:

- 1.Encouraging wheel-chaired people to join our University.
- 2.Improving the classes to fit wheel-chaired people.
- 3.Developing the parking lot for easier access.
- 4.Constructing ramps and rails.
- 5.Enhancing the restrooms for the benefit of wheel-chaired people.

Such a project will admittedly need a lot of money and time, but on the other hand it will certainly allow our University to become the first of its kind that has full campus wheelchair access. Applying this project would have benefits for both the University and the wheel-chaired people. The University would gain a public image as a leader in society and those in wheelchairs would gain their right to learn as ordinary students. We enjoyed working on this assignment and have gained good experience through this report in researching, analyzing, charting, preparing documents and data-collecting. We hope that this project will be taken seriously because the handicapped have the right to

Facebook and Cyber Awareness



Rivel Al-Massoudy

Business Computing,
NDU-NLC

Social networks are among the most interactive websites over the web. Facebook is a social networking service and website launched in February 2004. As of January 2011, Facebook has more than 600 million active users. Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg with a couple of his college roommates. Outrageously, people of all ages and all cultures chronicle their lives by building online profiles, finding and making new friends, sharing information and photographs, posting comments and doing much more.

I would like to draw attention to a cause called Cyber Awareness. Cyber Awareness means knowing how to keep your computer safe and secure. Most importantly, it means protecting your personal information. In the case of Facebook, there are several considerations to meditate before having an online profile.

Sometimes we get in contact with fake people. Such deleterious people are found to be thieves and sexual predators that exploit our personal information such as address, college location and phone numbers to harass us constantly. Another disadvantage of Facebook is the availability of our personal profile on the Internet for many people to see.

A second consideration is that Facebook affects users' social skills. Facebook made it possible to find out quite a lot about a person without ever speaking to them. This feature that Facebook provides forces people to avoid interacting socially, which makes

people avoid the essential part of getting to know a person. Although Facebook has made it easy for people to get to know each other, social Interactions are becoming less and less used due to the existence of social networks and instant messenger. If people continue to constantly use these social networks as their primary means of communicating, their social skills will slowly diminish and their daily lives will be drastically altered. Facebook is good for staying in contact with friends, but we need to understand that these sites can be used to some extent, but not beyond reasonable limits.

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How to live before you die

Rebecca Mourani



Steven Paul Jobs was born on February 24, 1955, to Joanne Simpson and Abdulfattah Jandali (of Syrian roots), two University of Wisconsin graduate students who gave their unnamed son up for adoption. After high school, Jobs enrolled at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Lacking guidance, he dropped out of college after six months and spent the next eighteen months dropping in on creative classes.

Jobs later recounted how one course in calligraphy developed his love of the art. "Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great... Ten years later, we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography and if I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them!" (Jobs, 2005).

In 1976, when Jobs was just 21, he and his friend Steve Wozniak, started Apple Computers in the Jobs family garage. At the time, they were highly credited for revolutionizing the computer industry by making the machines smaller, cheaper, and accessible to everyday consumers.

By the year 1980, Apple Computers became a publically traded company with a market value of \$1.2 billion on the very first day of trading.

In 1985, Jobs was fired from Apple and began a new hardware and software company called NeXT, Inc. The following year he purchased an animation company that later became Pixar Animation Studios, which produced wildly popular animation films such as *Toy Story*, *Finding Nemo* and *The Incredibles*.

In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, and Steve Jobs returned to Apple, putting it back on track with his ingenious products starting with the iMac, as well as the effective branding campaigns, and stylish designs that caught the attention of consumers once again.

In 2003, Jobs discovered he had a neuroendocrine tumor, a rare but operable form of pancreatic cancer. In 2004, he had successful surgery to remove the pancreatic tumor. Sadly, Steve Jobs' very public battle with cancer was over on October 5, 2011, when Apple Inc. announced his death at the age of 56.

Although I am a mac user, I did not know much about Steve Jobs before he publically resigned a couple of months ago. It was then that I began to explore this very complex character. What surprised me at the end of a thorough research was that Steve Jobs was a college drop-out, who did everything in his early days from documentation, sales, and sweeping floors, to putting together computers with his own hands. He trusted that the dots would somehow connect in the future, believed in destiny, life and karma, and eventually became the man behind not only Apple but behind much of the new technology that is changing our world.

Whether it be hardware or software, Steve Jobs has always pushed for excellency in the look of Apple's products. His sense of design, which he described as "taste", really made a difference in the computer industry as a whole. According to Steve: "Most people make the mistake of thinking design is what it looks like. Design is how it works." And although he had no formal training in management, and certainly not in engineering, many engineers he worked with were amazed at his capacity to take critical engineering decisions solely based on his instinct. Even Bill Gates said it was what he envied most in him: "I'd give a lot to have Steve's taste. I'd see him make decisions based on a sense of people and product that is even hard for me to explain. The way he does things is just different, and I think it's magical". (Gates, 2007)

If you have a cell phone, if you listen to music, if you use a computer at all, Steve Jobs has made a difference. He has been called one of the great visionaries, who changed the entire music business with the iPod, revolutionized the phone business with the iPhone and introduced a whole new category of computing with the iPad.

"People don't know what they want until you show it to them."

Steve Jobs

L'Autisme Infantile

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I- Le Tableau Clinique

L'autisme est un trouble précoce du développement, les premiers signes apparaissant avant l'âge de trois ans. Les anomalies se manifestent essentiellement dans trois domaines: les interactions sociales, la communication, et les comportements dont le caractère est restreint et répétitif. Les signes varient avec l'âge, mais il subsiste des déficits dans les communications sociales à l'âge adulte et les comportements manquent toujours de flexibilité.

a) Anomalies qualitatives des interactions sociales

Les anomalies touchent particulièrement les comportements non verbaux utilisés classiquement pour entrer en contact avec les autres. Les signaux non verbaux qui permettent de régler l'interaction sont absents ou ne sont pas correctement utilisés. L'utilisation du regard est ainsi souvent déviante: absence de contact oculaire, regard semblant traverser l'interlocuteur, regard périphérique (la personne regarde de côté), absence de coordination du regard avec les autres signaux sociaux. Les mimiques sociales sont appauvries ou exagérées et peuvent sembler peu adaptées au contexte: Par exemple, l'enfant rit sans que l'on comprenne pourquoi ou alors il sourit en regardant un rayon lumineux et ne sourit pas quand on lui parle.

L'expression gestuelle est appauvrie. Les gestes (ex: pointer du doigt), lorsqu'ils existent, sont rarement utilisés dans un but social de partage d'intérêt ou de demande d'aide.

La faible compréhension des émotions des autres (mettant l'accent sur un déficit de la théorie de l'esprit) entraîne une difficulté à s'harmoniser avec les autres et à partager sur ce plan. L'enfant est donc isolé, ne recherchant pas le contact des autres et particulièrement des enfants de son âge. Il ne parvient pas à développer de jeux sociaux avec les autres enfants et ne s'adapte pas aux situations de groupe.

b) Anomalies de la communication

Il existe un retard dans l'acquisition du langage. Certains autistes n'atteignent jamais le niveau de l'expression verbale. Dans tous les cas, l'enfant n'utilise pas spontanément d'autres modes de communication

(gestes, mimiques) qui lui permettraient de compenser le langage. Le langage n'est pas bien compris, surtout lorsqu'il est abstrait. Lorsqu'un langage apparaît, il se développe en général tardivement, et comporte des anomalies:

- *Echolalie immédiate*: l'enfant répète en écho ce que l'adulte dit. Il peut par exemple répéter une question qui lui est posée au lieu d'y répondre. L'adulte demande: "Tu veux boire?" et l'enfant, au lieu de fournir une réponse, dit "tu veux boire?". Cette absence d'inversion des pronoms et la confusion entre le "je" et le "tu" montre que la fonction d'outil de communication qu'a le langage n'est pas comprise.

- *Echolalie différée*: des mots ou phrases qui ont capté l'attention de l'enfant dans une situation donnée vont être répétés dans un autre contexte où ils n'ont plus de sens. Par exemple, l'enfant répète inlassablement une phrase entendue aux informations télévisées "demain il fera beau".

- *Utilisation idiosyncratique du langage*: l'enfant utilise des mots ou expressions qui lui sont propres.

L'expression verbale peut comporter des anomalies du rythme, de l'intonation et du volume. Notons que même lorsque le langage est élaboré, il est peu utilisé socialement. La personne autiste initie peu de conversations à caractère purement social (pour le plaisir de bavarder) et a du mal à soutenir une conversation qui ne concerne pas directement ses propres intérêts.

- *Les conduites d'imitation à caractère social* se mettent difficilement en place.

- *Les jeux symboliques de "faire semblant"* sont absents ou apparaissent tardivement et gardent un aspect plutôt répétitif et peu créatif.

c) Intérêts restreints, comportements répétitifs

L'enfant oriente son intérêt vers un objet ou un type d'objets à l'exclusion d'autres. Le plus souvent, les objets qui retiennent son attention sont utilisés dans des activités répétitives: objet rond que l'enfant fait tourner,

brindille qu'il agite devant ses yeux, agitation de ficelle, transvasement d'eau ou de sable. C'est parfois seulement une partie de l'objet qui capte l'attention. Par exemple, seule la roue de la petite voiture intéresse l'enfant qui, au lieu de jouer à faire rouler la voiture, fait tourner cette roue.

Les activités répétitives concernent aussi le corps. On peut observer des balancements, des postures anormales ou des mouvements des mains ou des bras. Les changements sont mal supportés et l'enfant affectionne les activités routinières. Il peut insister pour utiliser le même itinéraire ou pour que l'on fasse les choses de la même manière. Des rangements ou alignements d'objets sont aussi observés.

d) Autres anomalies

A côté de ces troubles qui constituent les critères principaux de diagnostic, d'autres anomalies peuvent être relevées. On peut ainsi observer:

- *Un retard de développement*, une hétérogénéité du développement avec des secteurs retardés et d'autres où l'enfant a une performance proche de la normale, voire supérieure. Certains enfants présentent des aptitudes particulières dans des domaines comme la musique, le dessin ou les jeux ayant une composante visuelle (puzzles). La mémoire peut aussi être très développée.

- *Des troubles du sommeil;*
- *Des troubles de l'alimentation;*
- *Des problèmes dans l'acquisition de la propreté;*
- *Des problèmes moteurs sous forme d'incoordination.*

Ces troubles ne sont pas systématiques et certains enfants peuvent manifester une grande aisance corporelle associée à un sens important de l'équilibre.

- *Des problèmes sensoriels* avec une insensibilité à des signaux spécifiques dans certains cas, une réactivité très importante dans d'autres et parfois une fluctuation dans les réponses données aux stimulations.

- *Troubles du comportement:* Ils sont fréquents dans le développement de l'enfant. Les crises de colère peuvent être liées à différentes situations: difficultés de compréhension de l'environnement, problèmes d'adaptation aux changements imprévus, frustration engendrée par l'impossibilité de poursuivre un rituel ou une activité stéréotypée, problèmes physiques (douleur, sensation désagréable...). Généralement, ces problèmes de comportement s'atténuent lorsque les capacités de communication se développent, que l'environnement est

adapté aux capacités de compréhension de l'enfant, et qu'une éducation adaptée a été mise en place. On relève aussi très souvent des manifestations d'anxiété. Avec l'âge, les manifestations anxieuses peuvent s'estomper. Dans certains cas cependant, les manifestations phobico-obsessionnelles s'installent durablement et s'amplifient. Des éléments dépressifs peuvent aussi apparaître, surtout à partir de l'adolescence et avec la prise de conscience des difficultés.

II- Le Diagnostic de l'Autisme

a) Le diagnostic précoce

Les progrès de la recherche clinique ont conduit à repérer certains signes précoces, durant les deux premières années de vie, susceptibles d'orienter le diagnostic. La précocité du diagnostic permet de mettre rapidement en place une prise en charge thérapeutique qui influencera l'évolution de la maladie.

On peut en effet légitimement penser que plus les modes relationnels autistiques ont longtemps fonctionné, plus il sera difficile ultérieurement d'en inverser le cours. Le retard dans l'établissement du diagnostic est généralement attribué à une sensibilisation insuffisante aussi bien des parents que des praticiens aux symptômes très précoces de l'autisme et au fait que les examens de routine effectués durant les premières années de la vie se réduisent presque uniquement à l'évaluation du développement moteur, intellectuel et perceptif (qui peut apparaître normal dans l'autisme) mais n'apprécient pas les signes les plus fins, notamment ceux du registre de la communication.

Toutefois si certains signes observables chez le nourrisson doivent attirer l'attention, ces derniers n'ont de véritable signification que s'ils sont associés à d'autres. En effet, dans la relation interactive de l'enfant avec son entourage, un signe isolé observé en dehors de tout contexte n'a aucune valeur. Il en est de même s'il s'inscrit dans un contexte immédiat particulier évident, personnel ou familial, comme par exemple une séparation prolongée d'avec le milieu habituel, quelle qu'en soit la cause. Ces signes évoquent davantage des problèmes réactionnels passagers. Or, les signes autistiques sont durables.

La question du diagnostic précoce de l'autisme infantile renvoie à certains débats sur les causes et les origines de l'autisme: s'agit-il d'une affection innée qu'il importe de détecter le plus tôt possible afin d'espérer mieux la soigner, ou s'agit-il d'un processus évolutif que l'on pourrait qualifier d'"autisant", dont il faudrait identifier les premiers signes afin d'en empêcher l'évolution vers l'autisme ?

Les différents "signes d'alerte" à retenir sont:

Durant le premier semestre

- Absence d'échange avec la mère, indifférence à la voix et au visage de la mère, absence d'échange de regard avec celle-ci et d'intérêt pour les autres personnes.
- Indifférence au monde sonore et impression de surdité.
- Troubles du comportement: calme excessif ou agitation désordonnée.
- Troubles psychomoteurs:
 - défaut d'ajustement postural et d'agrippement lors de la prise de l'enfant par l'adulte;
 - absence d'attitude anticipatrice de l'enfant lorsque l'on ébauche le mouvement de le prendre dans les bras;
 - troubles du tonus: hypotonie ou hypertonie.
- Retranchement des processus perceptifs: pose dans la visualisation et indifférence au monde sonore.
- Anomalie du regard.
- Troubles graves et précoces du sommeil: insomnies calmes, les yeux grand ouverts ou insomnies avec agitation.
- Troubles oro-alimentaire avec défaut de succion.
- Absence ou pauvreté des vocalisations.
- Absence de sourire au visage humain, qui apparaît normalement vers le 2ème-3ème mois et qui constitue un bon signe des capacités relationnelles de l'enfant (premier organisateur de Spitz).

Durant le deuxième semestre

Durant cette période, les signes précédents se confirment (désintérêt pour les personnes, défaut d'ajustement postural, indifférence au monde sonore et visuel), mais d'autres signes apparaissent:

- Quête active de stimuli sensoriels entraînant une sorte d'état extatique (fixation du regard sur des lumières, des objets qui tournent, jeux de doigts devant les yeux).
- Intérêt compulsif pour des objets insolites, souvent durs, contrastant avec le désintérêt général pour le monde environnant et l'utilisation d'objets dans le jeu.
- Absence de réaction aux bruits ou réaction inconstante ou paradoxale.
- Rareté d'émissions vocales.

- Absence d'intérêt pour les personnes (défaut de contact).
- Absence de participation à des activités ou d'imitation d'activités comme "faire coucou", "bonjour".
- Absence d'angoisse lors de la séparation d'avec les personnes qui s'occupent habituellement de l'enfant.
- Absence d'angoisse de l'étranger.

On sait que l'angoisse de l'étranger apparaît normalement vers 8 mois. Ce stade du développement de l'enfant constitue le deuxième organisateur de Spitz qui le considère comme le témoin de la capacité nouvelle du bébé à se représenter mentalement sa mère. En effet, lorsque l'enfant est mis en présence d'un étranger en l'absence de sa mère, il montre, à cette période, des manifestations plus ou moins importantes d'angoisse qui traduisent l'installation d'une image intériorisée de la mère (représentation psychique) dont la confrontation avec la perception de l'étranger vient signifier pour lui l'absence maternelle, source d'angoisse. Cette capacité n'existe pas chez le petit enfant autiste.

Durant la deuxième année

Les signes précédents se confirment, notamment le désintérêt pour les personnes, une fascination trop vive pour les stimulations sensorielles. D'autres signes peuvent être notés à cette période:

- Absence de "pointage" (c'est-à-dire d'utilisation, à partir de 9-14 mois, de l'index pour indiquer à une autre personne un objet source d'intérêt). L'absence de pointage est considérée comme très caractéristique de l'autisme.
- Absence de jeux de "faire semblant" (c'est-à-dire de jeux symboliques, apparaissant dès l'âge de 12-15 mois, dans lesquels les objets sont utilisés comme s'ils avaient d'autres propriétés) également très spécifique.
- Les troubles du langage constants:
 - peu ou pas de gazouillis;
 - apparition tardive des premiers mots (après 18 mois);
 - absence d'utilisation du "je";
 - écholalie.
- Pauvreté des jeux, absence d'imitation des mimiques, des gestes...
- Anomalies de la marche avec évitement de l'appui plantaire en position debout entraînant une marche sur la pointe des pieds.

- Phobies de certains bruits.
- Manifestations d'autoagressivité, automutilations.
- Stéréotypies gestuelles.

Le diagnostic ne peut s'appuyer que sur la présence d'une constellation de signes et surtout sur l'impression persistante de difficultés majeures de la communication de la part de l'enfant.

(b) Le DSM IV-TR

La définition de l'autisme, selon le DSM-IV-TR, est mondialement reconnue (sinon utilisée). Les caractéristiques essentielles en sont "un développement nettement anormal ou déficient de l'interaction sociale et de la communication, et un répertoire considérablement restreint d'activités et d'intérêts. Les manifestations du trouble varient largement selon le stade de développement et l'âge chronologique" de la personne.

Les critères diagnostiques du Trouble autistique (toujours selon le DSM) se retrouvent dans trois sphères et douze éléments:

A) Un total de six (ou plus) parmi les éléments décrits en (1), (2) et (3), dont au moins deux de (1), un de (2) et un de (3):

(1) altération qualitative des interactions sociales, comme témoignent au moins deux des éléments suivants:

- (a) altération marquée dans l'utilisation, pour réguler les interactions sociales, les comportements non verbaux multiples, tels que le contact oculaire, la mimique faciale, les postures corporelles, les gestes;
- (b) incapacité à établir des relations avec les pairs correspondant au niveau de développement;
- (c) le sujet ne cherche pas spontanément à partager ses plaisirs, ses intérêts ou ses réussites avec d'autres personnes (par ex: il ne cherche pas à montrer, à désigner du doigt ou à apporter les objets qui l'intéressent);
- (d) manque de réciprocité sociale ou émotionnelle.

(2) altération qualitative de la communication, comme en témoigne au moins un des éléments suivants:

- (a) retard ou absence totale de développement du langage parlé (sans tentative de compensation par d'autres modes de communication, comme le geste ou la mimique);
- (b) chez les sujets maîtrisant suffisamment le langage, incapacité marquée à engager ou à soutenir une conversation avec autrui;

- (c) usage stéréotypé et répétitif du langage, ou langage idiosyncrasique;
- (d) absence d'un jeu de "faire semblant" varié et spontané, ou d'un jeu d'imitation sociale correspondant au niveau de développement.

(3) caractère restreint, répétitif et stéréotypé des comportements, des intérêts et des activités, comme en témoigne au moins un des éléments suivants:

- (a) préoccupation circonscrite à un ou plusieurs centres d'intérêts stéréotypés et restreints, anormale soit dans son intensité, soit dans son orientation;
- (b) adhésion apparemment inflexible à des habitudes ou à des rituels spécifiques et non fonctionnels;
- (c) maniérismes moteurs stéréotypés et répétitifs (par ex: battements ou torsions des mains ou des doigts, mouvements complexes de tout le corps);
- (d) préoccupations persistantes pour certaines parties des objets.

B) Retard ou caractère anormal du fonctionnement, débutant avant l'âge de trois ans, dans au moins un des domaines suivants:

- (1) interactions sociales,
- (2) langage nécessaire à la communication sociale,
- (3) jeu symbolique ou d'imagination.

C) La perturbation n'est pas mieux expliquée par le diagnostic de Syndrome de Rett ou de Trouble désintégratif de l'enfance.

III- Évolution de l'Autisme

Cette question est essentielle. Deux grands volets sont à distinguer: celui du pronostic lors de la découverte de la pathologie, et celui de l'évolution réellement constatée lors du suivi longitudinal des patients.

a) Les facteurs pronostics

- Facteurs liés à l'enfant lui-même

On retiendra comme éléments de meilleur pronostic:

- l'absence de déficience intellectuelle précoce
- l'apparition du langage avant 5 ans
- les formes d'apparition plus tardive (dysharmonies psychotiques) par rapport aux formes d'apparition plus précoce (autisme de Kanner)

- Facteurs liés à l'environnement

On retiendra comme facteurs de meilleur pronostic:

- la précocité du diagnostic et donc de la prise en charge
- la qualité de la prise en charge
- la qualité de la coopération et du soutien familial.

b) L'évolution à long terme

Elle est extrêmement variable et fonction de multiples facteurs (dont les facteurs pronostics déjà évoqués) parfois d'ailleurs difficiles à identifier clairement.

Au mieux, certains patients (environ 20 %) s'inséreront correctement sur le plan professionnel et social.

Certains autres développeront une certaine autonomie mais seront gênés par un certain déficit intellectuel ou certains traits de personnalité pathologique. D'autres auront une évolution plus sévère avec, en particulier, une faible autonomie liée à un déficit intellectuel moyen ou sévère.

Un dernier groupe, de faible importance, est constitué de sujets qui évoluent à l'âge adulte vers une schizophrénie de l'adulte, avec un faible niveau d'adaptation psychosociale.

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Tears Within

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It is amazing how the body reacts to emotions. Every drop of salty water gushing from your eyes carries with it bitter reflections. Every drop implies merciless stabs, ones which are residues of scars and tears within. It is amazing how the eyes flicker and shine with helplessness just before the weakest of tears makes its way down the abused cheek whilst collecting shattered pieces of a hurtful past story. Memories of rape, violence, and torment produce a generation of their brutal kind inside the unstable mind.

You weeper of tears, what sort of victim are you? And you at least are not alone; releasing those tears from within calms your pain. It is good to take time for the release of tears, surrendering weaknesses to moments of tranquility. Playing the hero all day under a mask of fearlessness is not easy. The birth of these tears begins with every new heartbeat, every new life, for the first experience a man ever had was that of crying. You might fear that these little drops of water trickling down your cheek might be shameful and disfigure your manhood, but that fear is only the reflection of your inner being. Your eyes are the only witness to your bitterness and only they know how to release you from hurtful stories of the past in the form of those clear drops.

Take time to cry these tears which have their worth, for they come to ease your forward progress in life. If what you shed are not tears of misery, they must be tears of wisdom and ultimate bliss. Tears designate our humanity, drops of water from rushing streams within.

Susannah Wesley, 1669-1742

K.J. Mortimer



"I pride myself, said Susannah Wesley, "that nobody entering my house ever hears the sound of children weeping. I have taught my children never to cry when I flog them."

I suppose that Susannah Wesley's ideas on education would not have received the whole-hearted approval of John Dewey and the Progressive Educationalists. However, she must not be judged by one statement taken out of context. In fact she was a remarkable woman with high but practical ideals.

She was the twenty-fifth child of twenty-five children, née Annesley. In 1688, at the age of nineteen, she was married to Samuel Wesley. They were always hard up for money and twice their house was burnt down. The couple had nineteen children, nine of whom died as infants. The most famous child, the fifteenth, was John Wesley the religious revivalist. Susannah could have received very little formal education, if any, but all her children, including her daughters, learnt Latin and Greek. John went on to obtain an MA at Oxford, while his brother Charles wrote over six thousand hymns.

For a certain time, Susannah and her husband lived apart as the result of disagreement, with the children in Susannah's charge. During this period, she wrote the absent Samuel the following letter:

I am a woman, but I am also a mistress of a large family. And although the superior charge of the souls contained it lies upon you, yet in your long absence I cannot but look upon every soul you leave under my charge as a talent committed to me under a trust. I am not a man nor a minister, yet as a mother and a mistress I felt I ought to do more than I had yet done. I resolved to begin with my own children; in which I observe the following method: I take such a proportion of my time as I can spare every night to discuss with each child apart. On Monday I talk with Molly, on Tuesday with Hetty, Wednesday with Nancy, Thursday with Jacky, Friday with Patty, Saturday with Charles. (N.B. The English here does not always conform to modern usage.)

One can only admire the way conscience and religion ruled this woman's attitude to marriage and children. It should serve as an example to all young people, married or considering marriage. In fact through her sons John and Charles she was to transform life for the English

working classes. In both Britain and France bishops and other clergy were receiving their appointment for purely political reasons and had no spiritual life that they could transmit to others. While the clergy of the official Church of England enjoyed their emoluments, the working classes were totally neglected. John and Charles were driven to seek their congregations in any building available and even in the open air. Against the gloomy Calvinist tradition they preached a Christ-centred religion of joy with vibrant hymns. Downtrodden masses sodden with gin and despair were aroused to work and improve their social status, forming an industrious and God-fearing society. This was known as the Wesleyan Methodist movement.

Susannah lay down fourteen rules for bringing up children, binding parents and children alike. They were based on sound psychology and several show deep sympathy and understanding.

1. Allow no eating between meals.
2. Put all children to bed by 8 o'clock. (At this time the only lighting was by candles, so early to bed and early to rise!)
3. Require them to take medicine without complaining. (Those were days when most medicine tasted horrible.)
4. Subdue self-will in a child and thus work together with God to save his soul.
5. Teach each one to pray as soon as he can speak.
6. Give them nothing that they cry for and only what they ask for politely.
7. To prevent lying, punish no fault which is first confessed and repented of.
8. Never allow a sinful act to go unpunished.
9. Never punish a child twice for the same offence.
10. Commend and reward all good behaviour.
11. Reserve property rights, even to the smallest matters.
12. Any attempt to please, even if poorly performed, should be commended.
13. Strictly observe all promises.
14. Teach children to fear the rod.

The last rule may be taken as meaning that children need a sanction for bad behaviour that they really respect. A few years ago a Muslim school in England applied for state funding. Government inspectors came, no doubt expecting something like a Taliban madrassa. They were agreeably surprised to find excellent discipline and a very high standard of studies. The only trouble was that the European Union had outlawed corporal punishment and the headmaster of this school kept a stick in his cupboard. In fact it was never used; it was enough that the boys knew it was there. Of course, the efficacy of frequent corporal punishment is doubtful; in the nineteen-forties I knew schoolboys who were proud of the number of times they had received the "ferula" on their hands. It showed they were tough. Detention for bad work or behaviour is far more effective on condition that it is strictly applied according to rules.

Most important is that youngsters at home or in school should understand that any sanction is applied for their own good and never because parent or teacher has lost self-control. Now what the world needs most in politics, in education, in public administration or in any other activity is conscience. Let Susannah Wesley serve as an example.

Women's Voting War

K.J. Mortimer

One hundred years ago, the "suffragettes" were making the headlines in British newspapers. These were women demanding the right of suffrage, women having so far been classed with lunatics and criminals as being unable to vote. One satirist wrote an article demanding the right to vote for monkeys. The insulting implications for women are clear. In any case, it was thought, women would only vote as their husbands directed them. The "Establishment" scoffed at women's rights.

One problem had been that only the possession of property gave even a man the right to vote and married women had no property of their own, everything they had being passed in those days to their husbands. However, women had been able to take part in elections for town councils, school boards and health authorities and had shown their ability.

In 1872 the National Society for Women's Suffrage was formed and later the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), but they achieved little. However in 1903, Emmeline, Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst formed the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), a militant body that went so far as to advocate violence. Women pinned their hopes on the Liberal government which emerged from the elections of 1906, but Prime Minister Herbert Asquith was an anti-suffragist, unmoved even by the 250,000-strong demonstration in Hyde Park in June of that year.



Women chained themselves to the railings of public buildings and systematically smashed windows. Women's violence was met by police violence. In 1913 a women "martyr" threw herself under the King's horse at the Derby race and was killed. But violent protest subsided in 1914 as women, the Pankhursts included, played a vital role in the war effort, replacing in field and in factory the men who had gone to the fighting fronts. In February of 1918 an act was passed in Parliament giving the vote to women over thirty years of age who owned property or were married to a property owner and in 1928 all women over twenty-one were allowed to vote.

Without the right to vote, there is no protection against discriminatory laws and in many countries, especially those bound by tradition, much remains to be done for women and for minorities, numerical or political. Where there are steps in the right direction, these are to be encouraged, but violence is the last resort to be used only *in extremis*.

Fixed or Floating Exchange Rate? Or else?

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A fixed exchange rate system: Under a fixed exchange rate regime, a central bank announces a target for the exchange rate. To keep the equilibrium exchange rate equal to its target, the central bank intervenes on the money market by buying and selling the domestic currency. Therefore, the essence of a fixed exchange rate system is to adjust the money supply in order to keep the equilibrium exchange rate equal to the announced exchange rate. Thus, money supply increases if exchange rate is above its target level and decreases if it is below its target level. To maintain exchange rates fixed, stabilization policy requires important reserves of foreign currencies. The Mundell-Fleming model explains well this adjustment.

The Lebanese monetary policy in the postwar period and its consequences: The main objectives of the monetary policy in the postwar period were financial stability and the maintenance of capital inflows to finance the reconstruction plan proposed by the postwar government and called "Horizon 2000". To fight the

high inflation rate (120%) and achieve external balance, the government and the Central Bank used the nominal exchange rate as an anchor in the post-1992 stabilization program. This policy was successful in bringing down the inflation to an acceptable 10-12% level by 1995. Since 1992, the Central Bank has maintained a currency tightly banded against the US dollar. Even though the Lebanese pound has hovered around 1500 since September 1993, it has withstood severe pressures and predictions of an impending currency crisis. The Central Bank intervened many times on the currency market when the Lebanese pound came under severe market pressure. During these periods the Central Bank faced a decrease in its foreign reserves as shown in Figure (1). The latter shows major episodes of intervention by the Central Bank in support of the Lebanese pound.¹ In addition, in 1997 the Saudi Kingdom deposited \$600 million at the Central Bank and in 2001 Hariri solicited deposits from Arab governments totaling around US\$1 billion in order to prop up the Central Bank foreign currencies and calm down the currency market.

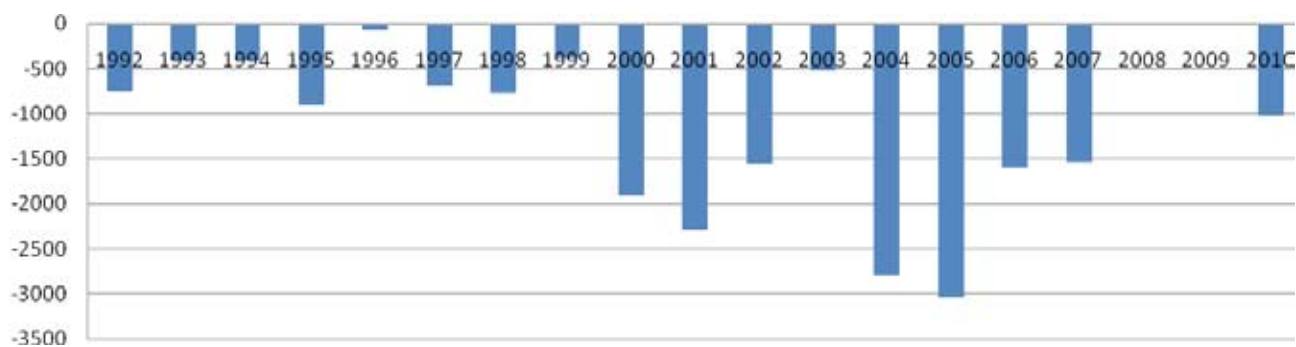


Figure 1: Central Bank intervention in support of the LBP (1992-2010) in millions of US\$

In order to ease pressure on the Lebanese pound and attract funds to finance the reconstruction plan, the Central Bank raised interest rates. This resulted in a rise in real interest rate that created a rentier economy with Dutch disease effects. It also caused a crowding-out effect of private investment. Commercial credits to the private sector stagnated and were crowded-out by the commercial banks supply of credit to the public sector. It also caused a deindustrialization of the economy. The average annual growth rate for industry from 1993 to 2003 was -0.4% and for manufacturing -1.8% per annum (World Bank database). The crisis was aggravated after

1997 and became a structural crisis. The exchange rate based stability policy, in conjunction with persistent deficits and growing public debt, led to sluggish economic growth and put an end to the short-lived postwar reconstruction boom. Lebanon faced a period with real GDP growth in 1998-2002 well below the early postwar era. Thus, corruption of the public sector, discouragement of the private investment and political instability caused the failure of the Horizon 2000 plan. Fixed exchange rate and trade. Do we profit? A fixed exchange rate makes trade and investment between the two countries easier and more predictable. It is especially

¹ Figure (1) is compiled from data available on www.bdl.gov.lb.

useful for small economies where external trade forms a large part of their GDP. This is not the case for the Lebanese economy. As shown in table (1), terms of trade are more important with the euro zone than with the United States of America for the two periods 2007-2008.¹ In addition, Lebanon is not an exporting country. If it had been the case, the Lebanese economy could have benefited from the recent US\$ devaluation, which makes goods and services priced in US\$ less expensive and more competitive. Does this mean that we should peg the LBP to the euro? Or maybe a basket of foreign currencies?

		EU	USA
2008	Exports	10.1%	1.1%
	Imports	28%	12%
2007	Exports	12%	2%
	Imports	30%	10%

Table 1: Lebanese foreign trade

Fixed exchange rate and time horizon: A fixed exchange rate system fixes the nominal exchange rate. Whether real exchange rate is fixed or not depends on time horizon. In the long run prices are flexible and real exchange rate can change even if the nominal exchange rate is fixed. Therefore, in the long run a fixed exchange rate based stability system will not fix the real exchange rate. It will influence the money supply and consequently the price level. In the short run prices are sticky, thus a fixed exchange rate will also fix the real exchange rate. By 1997, it was obvious that high interest rates and real exchange rate appreciation were causing a loss of competitiveness, a drop in tradable sector activity and private investment outflow. Under a fixed exchange rate the only objective of monetary policy is maintaining an exchange rate equal to its target. Other targets such as stabilizing employment and prices are neglected. Should we free the monetary policy and adopt a floating exchange rate? Especially that unemployment rate increased from 8.3% in 2005 to 10% in 2010² accompanied by a catastrophic brain drain.

Fixed exchange rate, arbitrage and speculation: The Lebanese economy relies on transfers from the Lebanese Diaspora to their relatives living inside the country. The capital market in Lebanon is relatively liberal; there are no restrictions on buying or selling the domestic currency. According to the Mundell–Fleming model, with perfect capital mobility, a fixed exchange rate prevents

the government from using domestic monetary policy in order to achieve macroeconomic stability. Normally, an expansionary monetary policy lowers the exchange rate. Because the Central Bank guarantees a fixed exchange rate, arbitrageurs buy US\$ from the Central Bank and then sell them on the marketplace at a higher price. Thus, the money supply returns to its original level. A contractionary monetary policy increases the exchange rate. Because the Central Bank guarantees a fixed exchange rate, arbitrageurs buy US\$ in the foreign-exchange market and then sell them to the Central Bank at a higher price. Thus, the money supply returns to its original level. Hence, monetary policy is ineffectual. Even more, speculative attacks tend to target the currencies with fixed exchange rate. If there is a rush to convert LBPs into US dollars, the Central Bank's dollar reserves might drop to zero and the Central Bank might be obliged to abandon the fixed exchange rate and keep the LBP depreciates. This rush, in a fragile economy like the Lebanese economy, may be caused by rumors that the Central Bank will abandon the exchange rate peg. Thus, such a system should be abandoned smoothly and gradually before it becomes completely rooted in the household and company psychology. To avoid the possibility of a speculative attack, a fixed exchange rate should be supported by a currency board. The latter and the US dollar creation by the Lebanese private banks had resulted in a high dollarization in Lebanon. The only monetary instrument available for the Central Bank now is to keep the spread between the Lebanese discount rate and the American Federal Funds rate high. In order to control money creation in US dollars and thus the money supply in US dollars, the Central Bank should keep the required reserve ratio on the US dollar deposits higher than the required reserve ratio on the LBP deposits. After a high dollarization and dollar creation by national banks will the next step be an abandon of the LBP toward the US dollar?

Conclusion: It is known that a nation cannot have a free capital market, a fixed exchange rate and an independent monetary policy. This is known as the impossible trinity. Lebanon will have to choose whether to sacrifice its monetary policy for a fixed exchange rate and a free capital market as is the case at present or adopt the other two options. The first is a floating exchange rate with the risk of a volatile exchange rate but with a free capital market and an independent monetary policy. The second is a fixed exchange rate and an independent monetary policy but restricting the international flow of capital in and out of the country.

¹ Table (1) is compiled from data published on www.cas.gov.lb. Because of lack of data, time series are not available.

² See the Euromonitor International Statistics website.

Humanity as I Understand It

Dr. Joseph Yacoub

Psychology Program

Humanity possesses freedom of speech, logic, rationality and all the faculties and their contingencies. In humanity we grasp, though maybe without understanding, other human beings and we live our underlying unity. Living thus, we realize that faculties and their contingencies, such as styles, manners and tact, are contingencies that cannot displace their preconditions. Humanity makes them possible through its two pillars, the body and the mind (brain). I shall discuss each separately.

The biological body, as Terry Eagleton teaches us, reminds us that we are all equal. There is no one person superior to the other, for superiority implies arrogance and hatred. We all breathe the same way, go to the bathroom the same way and digest our food the same way. Unfortunately, the tidal wave of making ourselves more beautiful is eclipsing the grace of spiritual beauty. Exteriorization has taken the place of interiorization. Although the tendency to interiorization had never entirely faded away, this attention to exteriorization has been outweighing the tendency for interiorization.

Essentially, humanity cannot be defeated so long as it strives for its perfectibility. Even death cannot conquer it. It assumes itself in a presence intrinsic to its nature. Teilhard de Chardin teaches us that humanity is essentially spiritual. It assumes itself in a presence intrinsic to its nature, what Gabriel Marcel calls "la Présence". Accordingly, the faculties possessed by humanity are like time (chronos). They survey the world, yet remain ill at ease with the Eternal. However, by virtuous actions, these faculties water the gradual fulfillment of the human spirituality. In other words, to borrow from Goethe's Faust, they are like the "skin" of the body that sheds itself to naught. That is why I think that the fashion of excessive revealing of the body points to a spiritual death. Mephistopheles declares himself to Faust as a being who cannot go beyond the skin. Goethe also teaches us that knowledge is like the skin. If it is not linked to human spirituality, it will ever remain deprived of passion and wisdom.

It also sheds itself to naught. Mephistopheles is highly knowledgeable but lives a perpetuating emptiness. "I would rather have an Eternal Emptiness," he says (Faust, Part II). That is why Mephistopheles is not strong; only human weakness responds to him. Sometimes human weakness overwhelms strength, but it cannot conquer human striving as it obeys the "Unpleasure Principle".

As it is for the body, so it is for the brain. Contemporary research in neurology shows us that the human brain is neither logical nor rational. Logic and rationality are acquired through human development. Gerard Edleman tells us that the human brain has the characteristic of "grasping" the environment. The brain of the child is the best exemplification of this ability to grasp. Unfortunately, education emphasizes logic and rationality and divorces students from their childhood, which is a crucial level before adulthood. Being divorced from their childhood, students are taught to think logically and rationally without encouragement of the ability to grasp. Logic and rationality must be complemented by feelings and emotions in order that they may have the ability to grasp totalities rather than only particulars. Neurology shows us that any idea divorced from feelings and emotions are not complete ideas. The issue of humanity must be introduced as a universal existence the same as life and death.

Within this context, education blends all the human faculties in the same way that a master chef blends all the ingredients for a delicious meal. The art of cooking is a great metaphor for education. That is why I recommend the use of Escoffier's *Guide culinaire* (1903). Escoffier tells us that the "stock" is what makes the meal delicious. Similarly, humanity is the stock of education. It gives a taste for life over assuming arguments and definite proofs. The tools must not be prioritized over their precondition that possesses them. The heart doesn't go to school. Our contemporary education is enamored of roles, models, experiments and their like, which are so limited and do not involve the passionate questions implied by a theory. We are dealing with a compilation of knowledge similar to a high-rise in New York which is composed of an accumulation of floors. Questions come from the heart as well as from a witty mind, turgid with the passion that creates allegories and metaphors which help to grasp the revelations of the hidden parts of life. It is grasping cooked with the inner virtues of the mysterious depth of the self. It is also an inquisitorial desire originating not from "emptiness" but from the depth of a consecrated humanity.

This leads me to the importance of the subjective certainty rather than that of the objective certainty, about the validity of which the New Physics has some doubts. Love, sincerity, compassion, care, etc., are radically essential for any truthful scientific inquiry. During the decade

of the 1980s, Tomas Nagel wrote a philosophical article under the title *What is it Like to Be a Bat?* In this article he recommends the bridging of the subjective and the objective. To a great extent, the academic world, naively following the achievements of the Age of the Enlightenment, has stressed the primacy of reason, of which Voltaire makes fun in his book *Candide*. In the same vein, Chesterton, who breathed the air of British empiricism, tells us that a mad person is not one who has lost his mind but one who has lost everything except his mind. Psychologically speaking, the paranoid is a good example of this. He is one who has used his reason to excess. To be a prisoner of reason is a malady of the soul, to use Julia Kristeva's expression. Reason must take refuge in the heart and vice versa. We need a reasonable reason as well as a reasonable desire, as Aristotle teaches us. This is what the life of virtue demands of us; there is "no-thing" that confiscates "any-thing". Freedom of speech cannot confiscate humanity. It implies ideas and opinions which could be changed by certain agencies, such as the media. But should we change humanity, its spirituality does not change since this un-changeability offers us the dignity of transcendence.

Humanity, gracefully in love, implies equality. By this I do not mean the mechanistic quality whereby a human being is interchangeable like a part in a machine. What I mean is that equality is complementarity in diversity. Psychologically speaking, it does not entangle feelings,

emotions and reason. It makes them coexist harmoniously within the framework of an imperfectability striving for perfectibility. It is a promise strengthened by virtue which both solidify the inner life of the person. Humanity is a smiling gaze that grasps different and contradictory traces and puts them in an articulate form. It reconciles pathology and normality. It prefers the person to his picture. Humanity floats and hovers. It contains, but cannot be contained. As it floats and hovers it makes knowledge the daughter of a floating and hovering attention; and as it contains but cannot be contained it houses our spiritual homes in the Eternal. It grasps the general and articulates within it the particular. It opens possible spiritual and intellectual worlds rather than restricting the mind within oppressive contingencies. It does not allow us to be deceived by others. Humanity is thankfulness expressed in the breath of life. This is to say that humanity is the mobilizing virtue of the heart and the mind: spirituality.

Let us go back to humanity, otherwise we shall all become partners in destruction. Our humanity is not our memories, not our ideas, not our feelings and emotions, and not even our desires. It is our lived presence-of-an-unexpected-life that fills us with well-spirited-being beyond the threshold of time. Humanity is "The Word made Flesh". For this humanity the jaws of hell will never yawn.

Visiting Turkey

Sally Akiki

FAAD student

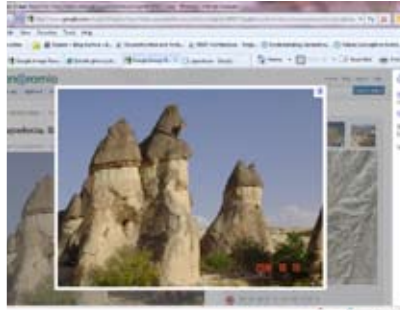
It all happened as part of the bioclimatic architecture course that develops an understanding of environmental aspects in architectural design and gives the opportunity to use these aspects in the design for a better function. The purpose of this tour was to cross different areas with varying climate and so to observe the effect of the latter on architecture.

For this we toured around the perimeter of Turkey. For ten days we hopped on and off our Pullman, dropping into hotels, touring around an area, and enjoying the sights..

From Day One, we started a new experience by using the different transportation means available, namely the Pullman coach, which was the main means of transportation and became during the long journeys our "bed", the boat to cross between the Asian and the European parts of Turkey, the chariots, and the bicycles.



Several factors affect the architecture in the areas we visited. First of all, the change in continent from the European to the Asian side leads to a change in the cityscape from high-rise buildings to traditional ones. In the two continents there was also a difference in the building techniques, depending on the materials, the climate, and the history.



For instance, reaching Cappadocia, we thought we had gone back in time to the Stone Age, to the village of the Flintstones; whoever thought that the stone shelters of the Flintstones were just cartoony is proven wrong! This village has a rich history from Kingdom of Cappadocia to Roman and Byzantine province and then Turkish Cappadocia. Its history is reflected in the architecture of the troglodytes, who hewed out shelters in the rock in which the inhabitants, notably Christians, used to hide. We had the opportunity to pass through the underground villages and visualize their organization, from the fantastic underground chimneys that allowed the air to circulate, the defense mechanism, the life support to satisfy the basic needs, and finally the tunnels connecting the underground villages. In addition to this, we visited churches cut of the rock and decorated with early Christian frescos.

Continuing our trip, we toured villages, passing from mere shelters to actual dwellings. We observed how the building materials change according to what is available in the surroundings, from brick to mud construction.

As most cities around the world, the introduction of concrete has changed the aspect of Turkish cities, where there are houses in concrete with red tiles in some areas and high towers in others.

Turkey's location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia makes it a country with a rich ancient culture and material prosperity. To know how the present is formed, we have to understand past history. In order to do so, we paid visits to historical sites such as the Aghia Sophia mosque, the blue mosque, and Konya.

Natural sites were also included in our visit. We walked through the waters of Pamukkale. Here, chemical reaction during precipitation has resulted in the formation of a gel in the water holes which we could feel under our feet. In the glow of sunset we enjoyed a wonderful view over the Travertines.

And of course, we were introduced to the Turkish food specialties, folklore dance, music and handmade crafts. Finally, we had to come home.

I expect that everyone wishes that he/she could take the bioclimatic course. WE RULE!

PLAN B

NDU Architecture Creativity Award 2011

Melhem Sfeir

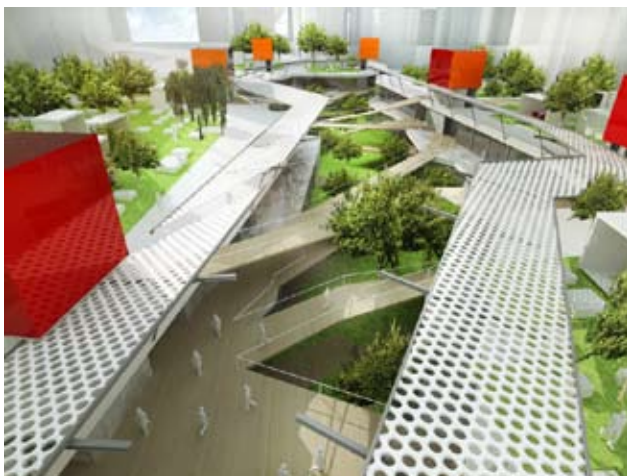
Senior Student

Department of Architecture, FAAD



Creativity Award

At the end of spring '11, the FAAD and the Department of Architecture announced the launching of a new yearly prize, the "Creativity Award", reserved for senior architecture students and presented, as the title indicates, to the most creative senior project. Almost three weeks before the final senior presentation, Mr. Habib Melki, Dean of FAAD, announced that for this year's prize the University would sponsor a fully paid trip to Belgium to attend the Passive and Low Energy Architecture conference (PLEA 2011), in Louvain-la-Neuve. Note, that PLEA is an international yearly conference, inviting architects, researchers and students from all over the world to present their studies and findings in matters of architectural sustainability and renewable energies. NDU hosted PLEA in 2005, with FAAD and Mr. Melki organizing.



Plan B

On June 23rd we senior students presented our final projects - almost a year after presenting the first proposal to a Jury of ten professors, headed by Dr. Jean-Pierre El-Asmar (Chairperson, FAAD) It was during the above-mentioned year that I worked on "Plan B", my senior project; In short, "Plan B" is a public

war shelter that would receive and shelter people in the event of war. One might consider this a rather pessimistic idea, but I would like to think about it more as a realistic approach to the omnipresent threat that we got a taste of in the 2006 war. It is a situation about which we can do nothing; the least we can do is to have a "Plan B". The project itself raised some questions and presented multiple challenges, such as how it could be useful during peace, how architecture would show or be visible in an underground structure, and above all how it would work passively to reduce refugees' fear during clashes, which is one of the main aims. It was solving these questions, along with other issues, that eventually led to a final design, one which I presented on the morning of the 23rd, and to my being contacted in the late afternoon by the Dean, who announced to me that I had won the creativity award.

Belgium/ PLEA

We took the plane to Brussels on the 13th of July. We were a group of nine people from NDU, including the Dean. Just by riding in the coach from the airport, to the hotel downtown, you can already see how beautiful the city is, with its low-level pitched roofs on the city peripheries, and the high rises in the city center. After we had put our luggage in the hotel, there was an hour's train ride to Louvain-la-Neuve, where the conference was taking place. Once we got there, we found out that the university campus had a small "village" growing up on its periphery, somehow feeding on the university's energy. After that it was conference time: there would usually be more than one presentation taking place at the same time, in different amphitheatres; each speaker had ten minutes to present his paper or research, and each session would last an hour. Topics were quite varied: for example an Indian professor exposed the traffic problems in a city in India, and then proposed sustainable answers. An English PhD student introduced a new software for sustainable design. Another speaker presented a study on the heat loss at his university in Brussels, and proposed green solutions to reduce energy consumption.



The conference organizers also put together two trips to sustainable buildings around Brussels: the first was a mall and the second was a residential building. The conference would usually go on till 6pm. After that, we'd take the train back to Brussels, and that was the routine for the next three days.

When it got dark, (which was usually around 10 p.m.!) the group would meet over a two-hour dinner: I mention this because the gathering, along with the food that was served, really left an impression on me; from the two-meter long beer pitcher (that was eventually consumed!), to the Dean-recommended "Jambonnée", that, for me was the main landmark of Brussels.

Thank you

I would like to thank the Department with all of its members, not only for the award or trip, but also for the past five years, because Architecture is not simply a major that you go through quickly; it's technically "half a decade" when you will live everyday with the same teachers, who will eventually become part of your life, and will help you mature. So for that I want to thank Mr. Melki, Dr. Jean-Pierre el-Asmar, Mr. Nicolas Gabriel, Dr. Fishfish, Dr. Iskandar, Dr. Hani Zgheib, Dr. Younes, Mr. Chartouni and Miss Kristine Samra for putting up with me during the years! I also want to thank Ms. Eliane Harfouche and Ms. Jessica Saba for all the help that I got from the financial aid office, and Miss Lea Ghorayeb for everything she has done for me. And last but not least, a big Thank-you for Ms. Cynthia Sfeir, Ms. Andrée Kahi and Ms. Marcel Kossaiyf for everything they have done for me. They are all family to me.

Dubai....Highs and Lows

Remi Sfeir

"Green" is the subject that is currently most in fashion. In fact, it has to be considered in all human actions and especially in architecture. In our field, one aspect of being green is to be able to design with the least damage to the environment. The first step is to study how buildings are adapted to their context in the different geographic and climatic zones of the world.

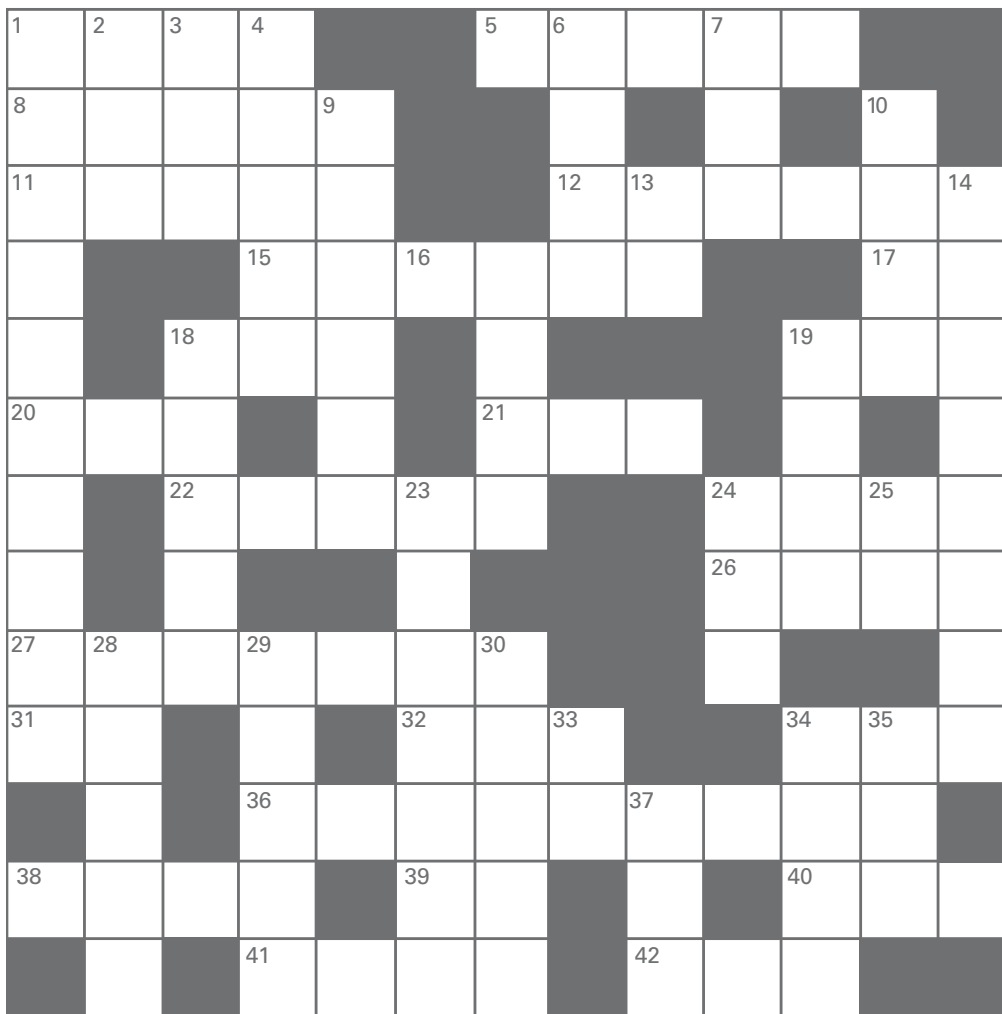
As part of the Bio-Climatic Architecture course, we students participated in a trip to Dubai, where we had the opportunity to visit and experience some of the country's oldest as well as newest buildings.

First, the visit to Al-Bastakia showed us firsthand how "vernacular" architecture reflected the life and culture of the Emiratis and how it responded to the nature and the site context. The buildings of Al-Bastakia are made of local materials – coral-reef stones – and included features such as the wind towers which are one method for cooling. When in these buildings, you find yourself in the desert questioning the need for coolers.

On the other hand, Al-Bastakia remains one of the rare examples of indigenous architecture in Dubai. The scenery is dominated by an endless number of towers competing in a race towards the moon. These towers are living proof of what ambition and abuse of resources can achieve. In such towers as Burj Al Arab and Burj Dubai, we experienced the meaning of luxury and more importantly the technological achievements in such challenging structures. Nevertheless, these new buildings, however impressive, disregard any contextual element; they are universal and can belong to any site on the globe.

After this trip, the main question remains: should we, as future architects, pursue our goals by realizing dream buildings that neglect all aspects of culture and nature? Or should we redirect our dreams towards a greener path?

Something for your grey matter



Clues

Across: 1. unique 5. exhausted 8. bitter fruit 11. bovine mammary gland 12. appearance 15. tool with an eye 17. no plaything! (initials) 18. and so on 19. Spanish gentleman 20. nice distraction for Cerberus (mythology) 21. speak and exasperate, old horse 22. beginning (e.g. of bad weather) 24. Italian currency 26. It controls oil production 27. godless one 31. Japanese opera 32. period 34. diocese 36. purity of conscience 38. used for beer production 39. with (suffix) 40. beer 41. percolate 42. noise, racket

Down: 1. new country 2. venerable 3. cover for jar 4. happening 6. symphony of church bells 7. short siesta 9. puts up 10. reflected sound 13. direction (initials) 14. cephalopod's arm 16. deformation of metal panel 18. long geological time 19. release water slowly 23. vital element 24. cut off, prune 25. thing, concerning, subject of letter 28. complete, sum 29. prepares for publication 30. company of cavalymen 33. for cooling rooms (initials) 34. look around, scrutinise 35. serpentine fish 37. termination.

Answers to issue 52

Across: 1. Michelangelo 7. gab 8. sapped 11. phobia 14. aim 16. lodestone 20. ode. 22. I.D. 23. Nile 24. or 25. notch 27. pi 28. E.R. (Elizabeth Regina) 29. auto 33. Leo 34. ultimate 37. ETA 38. naval 40. fret 41. Norman 43. eel 44. den
Down: 1. masculine 2. capped 3. nip 4. ego 5. lab 6. obi 8. ears 10 Di (Diana) 12. hotel 13. anterior 15. moon 17. odor 18. escalate 19. nil 21. dope 26. hut 30. tin 31. Oman 32. star 34. Ute 35. Avon 36. elm 37. err 39. one 42. ad

La quête identitaire chez Amin Maalouf, premier écrivain libanais promu un des « immortels » de l'Académie française



Georges Labaki



Amin Maalouf (2009)

Amin Maalouf est né le 25 février 1949 à Beyrouth. Le cheminement de sa vie témoigne d'une identité plurielle qui se retrouvera dans toute son œuvre. Les premières années de l'enfance d'Amin Maalouf se passent en Égypte, où avait émigré - comme beaucoup de libanais - son grand-père maternel. De retour au Liban, sa famille s'installe à Beyrouth mais passe l'été dans un village de la montagne libanaise dont les Maalouf sont originaires. Ses ancêtres, grecs-catholiques d'origines, se sont convertis au protestantisme au XIXe siècle.

Le père d'Amin Maalouf était un journaliste renommé au Liban. Sa mère est issue d'une famille dont une branche vient d'Istanbul. Cette multiplicité d'origines habite l'œuvre de Maalouf qui cherche à surmonter ses multiples affiliations en se présentant comme un citoyen du monde qui cherche à joindre l'orient et l'occident. Amin Maalouf effectue ses études chez les pères Jésuites à l'Ecole de Notre Dame de Jamhour où il reçoit une solide formation en arabe et en lettres françaises dont il lit les classiques. A l'université, il étudie la sociologie et les sciences économiques. Puis, il travaille comme journaliste pour le quotidien libanais de langue arabe Al-Nahar : il y écrit des articles de politique internationale.

La guerre qui éclate en 1975 pousse la famille Maalouf comme des milliers d'autres familles libanaises sur le chemin de l'exil. Dès 1976, Maalouf s'établit en France où il trouve un emploi dans un mensuel économique. Sa femme et leurs trois enfants le suivent quelques mois plus tard pour s'établir à Paris.

Après un rapide détour par une carrière journalistique dans des revues économiques, Maalouf décide de se consacrer à la littérature. Il exploite son point fort alias sa connaissance de l'Orient et se lance dans le genre romanesque. D'inspiration orientale, les romans d'Amin Maalouf sont marqués par la guerre du Liban, la quête identitaire, l'exil, l'humanisme et l'immigration. Ces héros sont des voyageurs ambulants entre les terres, les langues et les religions. Le romancier a le talent de joindre dans le même roman l'Orient et l'Occident, et les croyances orientales héritées depuis des siècles.

Sa carrière littéraire prend son point de départ effectif avec la publication, en 1983, de son œuvre *les Croisades vues par les Arabes*. L'auteur se dit influencé, entre autres, par les œuvres de Thomas Mann, Albert Camus, Léon Tolstoï, Marguerite Yourcenar, Charles Dickens, Stefan Zweig, ainsi que par la poésie arabe et Omar Khayyâm.

Léon l'Africain paru en 1986 marque son premier succès littéraire. Suivent ensuite les romans *Samarcande*, sur le poète persan Omar Khayyâm, *Les Jardins de lumière* sur le prophète Mani et *Le Premier Siècle après Béatrice*, en 1992 qui porte un regard inquiet sur l'avenir de la civilisation. Cependant, le grand tournant de la carrière littéraire de Maalouf se passe en 1993 quand il obtient le célèbre prix Goncourt pour *Le Rocher de Tanios*, qui a pour cadre

une lutte pour le pouvoir sous les Ottomans dans la montagne libanaise. Dans *Les Échelles du Levant*, paru en 1996, il évoque pour la première fois la guerre du Liban qui sera un de ces thèmes littéraires favoris. Il publie en 1998 son deuxième essai, *Les Identités meurtrières*, pour lequel il obtient, en 1999, le prix européen de l'essai Charles Veillon.

Il s'essaye ensuite pour la première fois à l'écriture de livret d'opéra, avec *L'Amour de loin*, pour la compositrice finlandaise Kaija Saariah qui sera suivi de trois autres opéras, dont le dernier, *Emilie*, qui a été créé en 2010 à l'opéra de Lyon. Son dernier roman à ce jour, *Le Périple de Baldassare*, est publié en 2000. Ensuite, l'auteur se tourne à la rédaction d'essais (*Origines*, en 2004, et *Le Dérèglement du monde : Quand nos civilisations s'épuisent*, en 2009).

Le 23 juin 2011, il est élu, au premier tour de scrutin par 17 voix sur 24 contre trois à Yves Michaud, au fauteuil 29 de l'Académie française succédant à Claude Lévi-Strauss. Il est le premier libanais à ravir ce poste fort attendu qui couronne à la fois son œuvre, les relations franco-libanaises et la littérature libanaise d'expression française.

La question identitaire constitue la trame de fond des œuvres de Maalouf qui s'étend en long et en large sur la question de l'identité. Pour résoudre les conflits générés par la question identitaire qu'il qualifie de tribale, Maalouf suggère que la notion d'identité ne se limite pas à une seule appartenance : elle est une somme d'appartenances mais toutes significatives, qui font la richesse et la valeur propre de chacun, rendant ainsi tout être humain unique et particulier. Pour lui, l'identité n'est pas innée mais s'acquiert à travers l'influence d'autrui sous toutes ses formes. Et comme chaque individu possède plusieurs appartenances, il apparaît extrêmement dangereux de vouloir englober les personnes sous un label collectif. Dans cette dernière hypothèse, les identités deviennent meurtrières, car conçues de manière tribale qui oppose le « Nous » aux « Autres ». Il en résulte une attitude intolérante et sectaire qui implique : la négation de l'autre, l'intégrisme et la désintégration. Selon Amin Maalouf les individus hybrides issus de plusieurs appartenances peuvent jouer le rôle de relai et de médiateurs entre les hommes. Mais en réalité, se sont les premières victimes de la conception tribale de l'identité. Amin Maalouf prend l'exemple d'un homme né en Allemagne de parents turcs : « *Aux yeux de sa société d'adoption, il n'est pas allemand ; aux yeux de sa société d'origine, il n'est plus vraiment turc.* » Plusieurs questions se posent alors : pourquoi de telles personnes ne peuvent-elles pas

assumer leurs appartenances multiples ? Pourquoi sont-elles constamment mises en demeure de choisir l'une ou l'autre ? Réponse : « *A cause de ces habitudes de pensée et d'expression si ancrées en nous tous, à cause de cette conception étroite, exclusive, bigote, simpliste qui réduit l'identité entière à une seule appartenance.* »

Ce comportement identitaire tribal conduit à l'intolérance et au fanatisme religieux et au refus de la modernité qui est rejetée car estimée dangereuse pour la protection de l'identité. Dans cet ordre d'idées, Maalouf aborde le « cas » du monde arabe qui semble rejeter tout changement au non d'une identité qu'il croit menacée. « Le XX^e siècle nous aura appris qu'aucune doctrine n'est, par elle-même, nécessairement libératrice, toutes peuvent déraiper [que ce soit les doctrines religieuses, politiques, etc.] [...] Personne n'a le monopole du fanatisme et personne n'a, à l'inverse, le monopole de l'humain. » (*Les identités meurtrières*: p. 62).

A l'heure de la mondialisation, une nouvelle définition de l'identité s'impose sous peine de l'impossibilité d'assumer la diversité car, « pour aller résolument vers l'autre, il faut avoir les bras ouverts et la tête haute, et l'on ne peut avoir les bras ouverts que si l'on a la tête haute » (*Les identités meurtrières* : p. 53).

Amine Maalouf considère que les êtres humains se définissent par un itinéraire. Il ne conçoit pas l'identité comme étant une chose statique ou immuable, établie au moment de la naissance dans un lieu spécifique ou dans une religion héritée des parents. En effet, loin de croire à une conception univoque et immuable de l'identité, il préfère la concevoir comme un processus évolutif, une construction fonctionnant à la fois par accumulation et par sédimentation, qui regroupe la totalité des appartenances de chacun. Le héros de son roman *Léon l'Africain*, revendique le droit d'être non pas défini ou reconnu par son lieu de naissance, mais par les facteurs constituant le mouvement de son devenir, suivant le fil de son parcours dans la vie. Dans ce contexte, Léon l'Africain affirme qu'il n'appartient qu'à Dieu et à la terre : c'est à eux qu'il reviendra un jour.

Au terme de « racines » qu'il trouve inadéquat, il préfère le mot origine plus mobile : « Nous ne sommes pas des arbres ! » « Quoi qu'il en soit, il s'agit pour moi de dire que la racine est quelque chose de figé, alors que l'origine est un point de départ pour un chemin à parcourir. Et c'est cela qui compte. Cela a à voir avec l'Histoire. » (Interview avec Abdo Wazen dans le Magazine *Le Courrier International* en 2006). L'identité se construit dans la verticalité, certes mais aussi dans l'horizontalité comme laisse entendre Amin Maalouf dans "Les identités meurtrières": Les origines

déterminent l'identité (dans la verticalité) mais elle est complétée par l'adhésion au monde qui nous entoure (dans l'horizontalité). Il compare l'identité à une panthère qui doit être maîtrisée.

Mais si l'histoire humaine croule sous des conflits de nature identitaire sévères, l'histoire personnelle fait également partie des problèmes identitaires car Paradis et enfer cohabitent dans la même personne. De façon hautaine et presque exagérée, il raconte dans un essai intitulé *Origines*, publié en 2004, l'histoire de la grande famille ou tribu dont il est issu au Liban : les Maalouf. L'auteur affirme que suite à la découverte au cours d'un voyage au Liban de quelques documents dans une vieille malle familiale qui raconte l'histoire de ses illustres ancêtres, il a décidé de raconter cette histoire. L'auteur se défend du choix de ce sujet et prétend qu'il fait uniquement un devoir de mémoire envers les membres de sa tribu : « Pour moi, en tout cas, la poursuite des origines apparaît comme une reconquête sur la mort et l'oubli, une reconquête qui devrait être patiente, dévouée, acharnée, fidèle... Je suis le fils de chacun des ancêtres et mon destin est d'être également, en retour, leur géniteur tardif. »

S'en suit alors une vaste fresque qui retrace le livre généalogique des Maalouf, leurs voyages en Amérique ou leur rêve d'un grand empire ottoman moderne et tolérant. Origines reprend à sa façon une conception de l'identité façonnée par la succession des appartenances, conception analysée plus en profondeur dans *Les identités meurtrières*. Finalement, l'auteur après avoir bien avoir ancré et délimité son appartenance cherche à transcender cette affiliation ou appartenance trop bien assumée :

« Je suis d'une tribu qui nomadise depuis toujours dans un désert aux dimensions du monde. Nos pays sont des oasis que nous quittons quand la source s'assèche, nos maisons sont des tentes en costume de pierre, nos nationalités sont affaire de dates, ou de bateaux. Seul nous relie les uns aux autres, par-delà les générations, par-delà les mers, par-delà la Babel des langues, le bruissement d'un nom. »

Si l'identité tirée d'une appartenance nationale originelle peut être source de risque, l'identité religieuse l'est tout autant. Intolérante, elle réfute les autres religions car elle se croit la seule détentrice de la vérité *VERITAS*. Amin Maalouf appelle à la séparation des deux histoires, afin d'éviter la récupération de l'une par l'autre, et propose d'encourager les êtres hybrides à assumer la pluralité de leurs appartenances. De la sorte, ils peuvent jouer le rôle de passeurs entre des univers hermétiquement clos. Amin Maalouf dénonce les dangers inhérents à

toute conception univoque préétablie, qui risque alors de devenir meurtrière dans la mesure où elle se crispe autour d'une appartenance exclusive.

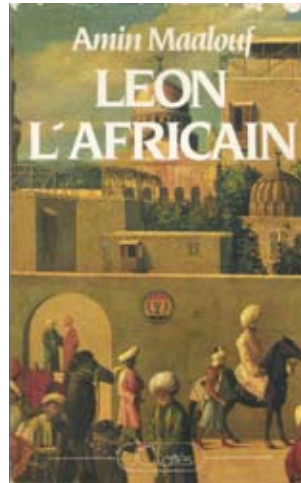
Après avoir abordé rapidement l'Histoire de l'Occident chrétien et du monde arabe, et de leurs relations, l'auteur pose une question de fonds : « Pourquoi l'Occident chrétien, qui a une longue tradition d'intolérance, qui a toujours eu du mal à coexister avec « l'Autre », a-t-il su produire des sociétés respectueuses de la liberté d'expression, alors que le monde musulman, qui a longtemps pratiqué la coexistence, apparaît désormais comme une citadelle du fanatisme ? » Ces interrogations le conduisent à aborder la notion d'influence : à son avis, on exagère l'influence de la religion sur les peuples. Pour l'auteur, ces influences se passent dans un cadre d'influence réciproque: si les religions influencent les peuples, ces derniers également influencent les religions.

L'auteur essaie d'analyser les raisons qui poussent, de nos jours, les hommes à exhiber leur appartenance religieuse. Pour **Maalouf** c'est un phénomène d'origine politique due à la chute du bloc communiste qui voulait bâtir une société sans religion, la crise de l'Occident et la mondialisation accélérée : « Il ne fait pas de doute que la mondialisation accélérée provoque, en réaction un renforcement du besoin d'identité [...] et un renforcement du besoin de spiritualité. Or, seule l'appartenance religieuse apporte, ou du moins cherche à apporter une réponse à ces deux besoins ».

Il s'insurge contre **la manie contemporaine de tout catégoriser**, de tout classer et étiqueter. Il s'agit d'une tentation réductrice préjudiciable pour les identités. **Maalouf** distingue deux uniformisations possibles toute deux dangereuses : l'« uniformisation par la médiocrité », et l'« uniformisation par l'hégémonie ». L'uniformité est un risque inhérent à la démocratie car elle s'en remet à la loi du nombre et empêche la diversité culturelle.

Devenue la civilisation de référence, la civilisation occidentale a placé toutes les autres dans une position secondaire : modernisation est devenue synonyme d'occidentalisation, et cette réalité est perçue de manière négative par ceux qui n'en font pas partie. Historiquement, le monde arabe a très tôt considéré la modernisation comme une nécessité. Ce sont les nationalistes et non les islamistes qui ont mené leurs pays à l'Indépendance. Le fanatisme religieux a été l'ultime réponse quand les tentatives de modernisations ont échouées.

Pour Amin Maalouf, il est indispensable que la civilisation universelle n'apparaisse pas comme exclusivement



occidentale d'où son attachement au principe de réciprocité entre les diverses cultures. Le monde est une « immense arène, ouverte de toutes parts » et n'appartient à personne. On éloigne les menaces hégémoniques par l'ouverture et non le contraire. Si la mondialisation menace la diversité culturelle, « le monde d'aujourd'hui donne aussi à ceux qui veulent préserver les cultures menacées les moyens de se défendre ». Dès son premier essai, *Les croisades vues par les Arabes*, Maalouf travaillait à contrer le choc des civilisations, allant dans le sens d'une réconciliation entre des entités culturelles : plutôt que de regarder ce qui sépare, regardons ce qui unit. Il dira lui-même que ce qui importe le plus dans ce titre, c'est l'épithète « vues par », c'est-à-dire l'endroit à partir duquel l'on pose son regard sur le monde. « Je n'accepte pas l'idée selon laquelle les hommes se répartissent une fois pour toutes entre des civilisations imperméables les unes aux autres, et destinées à s'affronter bloc contre bloc. La réalité est plus subtile. Il n'y a pas seulement "moi", et "l'autre" ; en moi, il y a un peu de l'autre, et dans l'autre, il y a un peu de moi. Les cultures deviennent chaque jour un peu moins imperméables. »

Amin Maalouf explique alors sa notion de « tribus planétaires » qui désigne les communautés de croyants qui tentent « la synthèse entre le besoin d'identité et l'exigence d'universalité ». Maalouf appelle alors à la séparation entre identité et religion pour atténuer les frictions car les conflits planétaires sont désormais fondés sur l'identité plutôt que sur l'idéologie. « Je ne rêve pas d'un monde où la religion n'aurait plus de place, mais d'un monde où le besoin de spiritualité serait dissocié du besoin d'appartenance. [...] Séparer l'Eglise de l'Etat ne suffit plus ; tout aussi important serait de séparer le religieux de l'identitaire. »

Somme toute, homme de culture Amin Maalouf réaffirme l'importance fondamentale de l'art, dont le rôle est, lui aussi, d'être une passerelle entre les différentes cultures. « Le fait que les hommes appartenant à des cultures différentes puissent lire les mêmes histoires, réagir, sourire, s'indigner autour des mêmes textes, est

certainement une manière de créer des passerelles entre diverses cultures. C'est une des fonctions de l'art. » La réciprocité est un thème cher à Maalouf. Selon lui, les échanges sont à la base de ce qui pourrait être une richesse culturelle mondiale, pour autant qu'un respect s'installe de part et d'autre.

La langue identitaire constituerait une des appartenances rivale de la religieuse car non-exclusive, contrairement à la religion. « Séparer le linguistique de l'identitaire ne me paraît ni envisageable, ni bénéfique », car la langue est le « pivot de l'identité culturelle » et « la diversité linguistique le pivot de toute diversité ». Si le maintien de la langue identitaire est souhaitable, il est également nécessaire de connaître une langue universelle comme l'anglais tout comme une troisième langue, celle qu'on pratique par amour. En effet pour l'auteur, la consolidation de la diversité linguistique permet de progresser dans la « voie de la sagesse » afin de « tirer du formidable essor des communications l'enrichissement à tous les niveaux ».

Il s'agit là d'un vœu pieux ou d'un souhait exprimé par Amin Maalouf qui nourrit l'espoir de contrer les soubresauts constants d'une histoire qui ne cesse de répéter ses erreurs sanglantes. « Quand on a vécu au Liban, la première conviction que l'on doit avoir, c'est celle de la coexistence. » Pour Maalouf, le dérèglement du monde ne peut être évité que par la sagesse qui permet la coexistence et l'alternance ! C'est le thème récurrent dans toute l'œuvre d'Amin Maalouf.

Se fondant sur une citation de Marc Bloch : « Les hommes sont plus les fils de leur temps que de leurs pères », il insiste sur le fait que nous soyons dépositaires de deux héritages : l'un « vertical », celui de nos ancêtres, l'autre « horizontal », celui de notre époque, de nos contemporains. Dans un élan spontané vers une France bienfaitrice se laisse dégager une certaine opposition à la négation d'une certaine attache identitaire, à une obligation d'engagement national pour atteindre un désir ardent d'un retour vers les sources. Amin Maalouf ne trouve aucune ambiguïté à se considérer appartenant à un Liban aussi fier que ses cèdres et à une France si généreuse et si grande.

Que de libanais se sont trouvés à la lisière de ces deux pays, la France et le Liban, au cours des années de guerre ? Combien sont-ils nombreux ceux qui se sont trouvés appartenant à deux traditions culturelles en même temps ? Maalouf l'exprime clairement dans le premier chapitre de son livre, *Les Identités meurtrières*, quand il se déclare incapable d'oublier « son village de la montagne, le village de ses ancêtres », où il a connu ses premières joies d'enfant et entendu les contes qui

furent pour lui une source d'inspiration. D'ailleurs il le dit :

« ... Certaines histoires dont j'allais m'inspirer plus tard dans mes romans. Comment pourrais-je l'oublier ? Comment pourrais-je jamais m'en détacher ? »

Mais d'un autre côté cette double appartenance est vite justifiée par l'auteur, il explique : « Je vis depuis vingt-deux ans sur la terre de France, je bois son eau et son vin, mes mains caressent chaque jour ses vieilles pierres, j'écris mes livres dans sa langue, jamais plus elle ne sera pour moi une terre étrangère ».

Face à ces propos, la France paraît constante à son image qu'elle s'est faite, prônant l'égalité, la fraternité et la liberté. Les libanais expatriés qui ont vécu l'amertume de l'exil n'ont jamais parlé d'incompréhension, de méfiance ou d'hostilité. Serait-ce car le libanais directement ou indirectement a été imprégné par la culture française ? Qu'il s'agisse de la langue, des cultes religieux, du mode de vie, des goûts artistiques, des traditions culinaires, les influences françaises se mêlent en lui et s'épanouissent naturellement.

Il s'agit donc pour Maalouf, d'une expérience riche et féconde et créatrice car ces derniers se sont sentis libres de la vivre pleinement grâce aux encouragements multipliés de la part de leur pays d'accueil et par la suite ces exilés ont assumé avec courage toute la diversité de leur entourage. En contre partie, la France lui a facilité la tâche. Consciente de la gravité de la situation elle n'a point renoncé à jouer le rôle de médiateur et de conciliateur. Il est vrai qu'en tout individu convergent différentes appartenances qui s'opposent des fois et provoquent des conflits durs et douloureux. Maalouf parle de ce déchirement et invite les observateurs de porter un regard plus précis :

« Qui, dans l'Europe d'aujourd'hui, ne perçoit pas un tiraillement, qui va nécessairement augmenter, entre son appartenance à une nation plusieurs fois séculaire - la France, le Danemark, l'Angleterre... et son appartenance à l'ensemble continental qui se construit ? ».

Devant tant de défis, la France n'a eu cesse de persévérer sa mission : tisser des liens d'amitié entre le peuple libanais et le peuple français au fil des années, dissiper les malentendus entre les deux nations, raisonner les uns et tempérer et calmer les autres, aplanir les difficultés d'entente réciproque. Elle avait toujours été à la hauteur de sa vocation d'être un trait-d'union, de trouver des passerelles entre ces deux communautés si proches dans leur histoire et si différentes dans leur appartenance.

Parallèlement les libanais ont pu assumer leur double appartenance car ils ont pu lutter constamment contre une certaine prise de position stagnante. Maalouf réfute

catégoriquement, en tant qu'un libanais expatrié, « des habitudes de pensée et d'expression si ancrées en nous tous, à cause de cette conception étroite, exclusive, bigote, simpliste qui réduit l'identité entière à une seule appartenance, proclamée avec rage ».

De plus, cette prise de position correspondrait aussi à la mise en évidence de l'hybridité, du tragique et des défis d'un exil réussi. Il est question donc d'écrivains partis en exil et qui en assumant les conditions. Ils cherchent à se détacher du passé de leurs prédécesseurs et, en même temps, revendiquent leur liberté créatrice. Dès lors, sont promus l'individualisme et l'engagement de l'écriture, ce qui ouvre la voie au récit à la première personne.

Cette présence de l'individualisme dans les productions littéraires des écrivains de la période de l'après-guerre entrerait en conflit avec leur société d'origine qui serait hostile et peut-être incompréhensive : dans cette société, l'individu s'effacerait derrière l'idéal communautaire et lorsqu'il s'affirme, il se manifeste toujours comme rebelle par rapport à l'ensemble de la société dominante ». Dans une perspective plutôt politique, Amin Maalouf formule l'idée de respect des équilibres en matière de diversité identitaire. « L'évolution actuelle pourrait favoriser, à terme, l'émergence d'une nouvelle approche de la notion d'identité. Une identité qui serait perçue comme la somme de toutes nos appartenances, et au sein de laquelle l'appartenance à la communauté humaine prendrait de plus en plus d'importance, jusqu'à devenir un jour l'appartenance principale, sans pour autant effacer nos multiples appartenances particulières. Empathique, Maalouf se met à la place de l'autre et essaye de comprendre ses sentiments et ses émotions : cela pourrait résoudre bien des conflits.

L'auteur tire sa propre conclusion: « *Il faudrait faire en sorte que personne ne se sente exclu de la civilisation commune qui est en train de naître, que chacun puisse y retrouver sa langue identitaire, et certains symboles de sa culture propre, que chacun, là encore, puisse s'identifier, ne serait-ce qu'un peu, à ce qu'il voit émerger dans le monde qui l'entoure, au lieu de chercher refuge dans un passé idéalisé. Parallèlement, chacun devrait pouvoir inclure dans ce qu'il estime être son identité, une composante nouvelle, appelée à prendre de plus en plus d'importance au cours du nouveau siècle, du nouveau millénaire : le sentiment d'appartenir aussi à l'aventure humaine.* ». Dans *Le Périple* de Baldassare, les trois religions monothéistes font irruption pour le même sujet : l'apocalypse. Et, en fin de compte l'auteur affirme que si apocalypse il y a, elle loge dans l'esprit des hommes.

Somme toute, l'élection d'Amin Maalouf à l'Académie française marque une grande réalisation libanaise qui s'inscrit dans la tradition de ce pays depuis des millénaires. Le Liban, écrit le poète Salah Labaki « **a toujours été ce poète, ce voyageur à travers les souvenirs et les pensées, les sensations et les sentiments, les mélodies et les images, les profondeurs et les secrets, les hauteurs et ce qui est au-delà des hauteurs, le descriptible et ce qui dépasse la description, à travers l'humanité. Il a chanté pour lui et pour le monde, en sa langue et dans les langues du monde entier.** » Mais cet écrivain libanais aura-t-il droit de cité dans la littérature française ? Sera-t-il traité comme écrivain francophone ou comme un pur écrivain français de France ou d'Europe ? Il s'agit d'un premier test ou de mise en pratique de la conception d'Amin Maalouf de l'identité, de l'appartenance et de son affiliation à l'héritage européen et particulièrement français. Verra-t-on les œuvres de Maalouf faire partie des programmes scolaires et universitaires français ? En réalité la littérature libanaise d'expression française –comme il convient de l'appeler et non littérature francophone libanaise - n'a pas encore gagné droit de cité en France. Espérons qu'elle le sera avec l'élection d'Amin Maalouf à l'Académie française.

Samar Labaki & Georges Labaki

-Samar Labaki prépare un doctorat en Lettres françaises
-Docteur Georges Labaki, écolier
Professeur à L'université Notre Dame de Louaizé
Œuvres d'Amin Maalouf



Romans

- Léon l'Africain, Jean-Claude Lattès, 1986.
- Samarcande, Jean-Claude Lattès, 1988.
- Les Jardins de lumière, Jean-Claude Lattès, 1991.
- Le Premier Siècle après Béatrice, Grasset, 1992.
- Le Rocher de Tanios, Grasset, 1993.
- Les Échelles du Levant, Grasset, 1996.
- Le Périple de Baldassare, Grasset, 2000. En 2011, le roman fait l'objet d'une adaptation en bande dessinée par Joël Alessandra.

Essais

- Les Croisades vues par les Arabes, éditions Jean-Claude Lattès, 1983.
- Les Identités meurtrières, Grasset, 1998.
- Origines, Grasset, 2004.
- Le Dérèglement du monde : Quand nos civilisations s'épuisent, Grasset, 2009. Livrets d'opéra
- 2001 : L'Amour de loin de Kaija Saariaho ; création en août 2000 au Festival de Salzbourg. édition Grasset, 2001.
- 2004 : Adriana Mater de Kaija Saariaho ; création mondiale en mars 2006 à l'Opéra de la Bastille . Edition : Grasset, 2006.
- 2006 : La Passion de Simone, oratorio de Kaija Saariaho ; création mondiale 2006 à Vienne
- 2010 : Émilie de Kaija Saariaho ; création mondiale 2010 à l'Opéra de Lyon



Prix Littéraires

- 1986 : Prix de l'Amitié franco-arabe pour Léon l'Africain
- 1988 : Prix des Maisons de la Presse pour Samarcande
- 1993 : Prix Goncourt pour Le Rocher de Tanios
- 1999 : Prix européen de l'essai Charles Veillon pour Les Identités meurtrières
- 2004 : Prix Méditerranée pour Origines
- 2000 : Prix Jacques Audibert-ville d'Antibes pour Le Périple de Baldassare
- 2010 : Prix Prince des Asturies des lettres

Citations d'Amin Maalouf

- *Il y a deux formes de destin : un destin vertical et un destin horizontal.*
- *L'identité n'est pas donnée une fois pour toutes, elle se construit et se transforme tout au long de l'existence.*
- *C'est notre regard qui enferme souvent les autres dans leurs plus étroites appartenances, et c'est notre regard aussi qui peut les libérer.*
- *Le fait d'être à la fois arabe français et chrétien est une situation fort spécifique, très minoritaire, et pas toujours facile à assumer.*
- *Rien n'est plus dangereux que de chercher à rompre le cordon maternel qui relie un homme à sa langue. Lorsqu'il est rompu, ou gravement perturbé, cela se répercute désastreusement sur l'ensemble de la personnalité.*
- *La dénonciation de la « conception tribaliste de l'identité car L'humanité, tout en étant multiple, est d'abord une ».*

Les signes du temps entre René Gérard et Amin Maalouf

De l'avant religieux au pendant (le religare), continuité ou discontinuité du temps ?



Abdo Kahi
Juillet 2011

Introduction

L'avant, comme l'après, n'appartiennent pas au temps, car le temps, comme on avait pu le constater dans nos analyses tout au long de nos parcours précédents des sentiers escarpés de la mémoire, n'a ni d'avant, ni d'après.

Quand on parle d'avant religieux, on veut mettre en relief l'avant existence d'un lien de concordance et de causalité communes entre l'homme et le temps, ce lien qui, une fois noué avec l'humanité, a accordé à chaque être humain le potentiel de devenir un être de lecture et de relecture du temps (religare).

Cependant, cet avant n'est qu'une façon de se situer avant le déclenchement du fil de déroulement de la chronologie des événements et des histoires des vies telles qu'elles se sont enregistrées graduellement dans la mémoire de l'homme.

Oui, l'avant dont on parle ici, c'est bien ce qui s'est passé avant le début d'une nouvelle ère dans le déploiement du temps. L'avant, c'est ce qui est arrivé avant l'avènement de la matrice d'enregistrement du temps dans une mémoire biologique spécifique, mémoire qui le conservera en elle à jamais, et tel que capté par le tronc cérébral de l'être vivant en question. Or, il s'est avéré, à partir des recherches archéologiques et biologiques menées à partir de la deuxième moitié du XIXème siècle, que cet être n'est autre que l'être humain qui nous est parvenu dans sa morphologie actuelle après avoir été retrouvé sur terre depuis plusieurs centaines de milliers d'années.

L'avant, c'est ensuite, ce qui s'est passé avant l'existence du tronc cérébral de l'être humain, ce tronc qui est le foyer central de sa mémoire binaire, où tout ce qui va s'y inscrire aura à dépendre, concrètement, du résultat d'un débat intérieur qui est ordonné à se déclencher automatiquement en son sein, entre ses instincts défensifs primitifs, et sa nature seconde portée vers l'altérité et l'amour.

Cependant, cette nature ne pourra naître en lui que suite à un acte de reconnaissance simple et gratuit qui aura à être admis par lui à partir de la force de conviction de sa

non logique d'amour, ou la force qui aide l'homme à se maintenir dans la foi (Dieu).

Mais l'avant peut se perpétuer aussi, ne serait-ce que formellement, à l'infini, quand l'homme, dans son débat intérieur, refuse de reconnaître sa binarité de manière à pouvoir y remédier en traitant ses attitudes agressives dans un espace de ternarité, et/ou quand il opte pour son objectivité totale, en allant rechercher, consciemment ou inconsciemment, ses éléments de réponse à ses questions et d'une manière unilatérale, auprès de la science, comme voie unique basée sur la confirmation logique de ses résultats selon les conditions de la rationalité établie dans une espace-temps défini.

Or, l'on sait de plus en plus actuellement que le sujet de connaissance reste non épuisé, ou qu'il est peut-être dans sa nature même non épuisable par la connaissance que l'on peut avoir sur lui. Cela fait que l'on doit toujours avoir l'humilité de reconnaître l'immensité de la perfectibilité qui est en soi et qui demande sa patience pour se voir révéler le secret du savoir ce qu'on manque d'avoir par son manque d'amour.

Tout cela a fait que, la science n'a pu lui fournir qu'une méthode de travail qu'il aura à dépasser pour pouvoir relire ses produits scientifiques, non épuisables par ses lectures qui restent limitées par leurs spacio-temporalités et qui ne cessent d'exiger son jugement éthique sur le chemin de leur libération par son savoir sur eux.

À partir de là, l'avant devient ce qui reste en dehors du temps, à chaque fois que l'homme, en confrontant les exigences éthiques concernant les différents champs de rapport qu'il est susceptible de lier entre lui et lui-même, et entre lui-même, les autres et le monde, tels qu'ils sont inscrits en son for intérieur, avec ses croyances, qui le mettent souvent en concordance avec ses instincts défensifs primaires, va opter au profit de ses intérêts ainsi que ceux des siens, contre l'intérêt général.

Mais, arrivé à ce point, l'avant ne peut plus que représenter, l'absence de l'être au niveau de la matrice du temps. Il est ce qui s'installera dans le registre de l'histoire des temps, mais qui restera soumis aux aléas

de cette histoire, jusqu'à ce que l'homme accepte de maîtriser ces aléas en se reconnaissant comme maître de l'histoire par son appartenance à la loi d'amour qui fait la perpétuité du temps.

Avec ces percées analytiques, l'avant religieux ressort dans son rapport au temps comme appartenant à l'espace de discontinuité qui fait fonctionner le paradoxe des parcours conflictuels de la dialectique des histoires des temps où l'on aurait succombé à la tentation de ne pas écouter la logique de l'autre, en se laissant entraîner dans les sillons de la logique établie, ce qui veut dire par extension qu'on serait sorti du religieux pour pouvoir avancer dans son histoire particulière sans l'autre, l'autre qui est le seul à avoir l'autorité d'assurer la continuité du temps par l'ouverture à l'infinité des perspectives de l'acceptabilité au sein des logiques de la vie.

Suite à cela, nous pouvons affirmer que le temps n'existe que là où existe un vécu expérientiel d'universalisme, et que c'est le religieux, qui, dénué de toute obligation de croyance, et qui, en devenant choix d'amour pour la vie dans tous ses aspects, qui va s'accorder la tâche de sa protection tous les moyens de la vie, et en en faisant un projet d'espérance pour la continuité du temps.

Oui, c'est en luttant avec les plus faibles et les plus démunis, pour se parfaire et pour parfaire le monde, que l'être humain aura œuvré à assurer la continuité du déroulement du temps à travers sa relecture orale, dans la parole et dans l'action, de ce qui fait son histoire par delà ses histoires de conflits qui provoquent des déchirures dans le lien du temps, et qu'il aura à oublier pour avoir la paix.

De ce fait, l'avant religieux veut dire tout ce qui se situe ou veut se situer avant l'existence du temps ou par delà cette existence, cette existence au travers de laquelle, l'homme arrive à se reconnaître dans son histoire continue de vie et d'amour des autres dans le dépassement de son histoire de vie concrète qu'il partage avec les autres dans des espace-temps définis au travers desquels il se rapporte à ces derniers dans la discontinuité, jusqu'à l'instant où il aurait peut-être à les reconnaître différemment.

Partant de là, la question qui se pose ici serait de savoir si le parcours des histoires des temps peut recouper avec celui de l'histoire infinie du temps sur lequel l'homme est appelé à se brancher pour appartenir au religieux. Les réponses prophétiques à cette question sont symboliques, mais claires.



Nous retrouvons dans la Bible, et plus exactement dans le livre de Job qui date du Vème siècle avant J.C, l'image de l'échelle de Jacob qui représente le symbole du genre de recouplement que l'homme pourrait nouer entre la continuité et la discontinuité, entre le temps et les temps, entre l'histoire du temps et les histoires des temps, entre le religieux (religare, lien qui ne peut se nouer avec le souffle de l'esprit qui fait appartenir l'homme au temps infini qu'après la reconnaissance par ce dernier de la parole fondatrice de son être) et l'avant religieux (avant le religare), entre la foi (confiance en son altérité) et les croyances (attachement à ce qu'on connaît et méfiance à l'égard de ce qu'on ne connaît pas), entre le ciel (la promesse) et la terre (la contrainte), entre l'être humain qui a pu renaître dans l'esprit et l'homme dans sa condition primaire.

Il s'agit en fait d'attirer l'attention sur ce symbole d'échelle qu'on emprunte à Job qui a voulu imaginer Jacob s'élevant vers le ciel sans oublier son peuple sur terre.

Il s'agit par la suite, et pour tout un chacun, de se servir de ce symbole d'échelle, pour s'élever vers les lieux de l'éthique humaine et pour répondre à ses exigences telles qu'elles sont inscrites dans son cœur, à l'exemple de Moïse qui avait osé affronter la supposée loi divine, qui justifiait la guerre sainte en lui préférant les pourparlers de paix, pourparlers qui devaient nécessiter de lui autant d'haleine et de la patience qu'il fallait pour monter et descendre mille fois sur l'échelle qui joint le ciel à la terre, telle qu'imaginée par Job sept siècle après lui.

Il en est ainsi, car, à chaque fois qu'on arrive au ciel en empruntant cette échelle, il va s'agir de redescendre vers la terre pour la revisiter et essayer de vivre sur elle de l'éthique du cœur, en cherchant à garder le contact avec elle à l'infini.

Le religieux entre l'avant et le pendant une parole qui se relit et un temps qui s'accomplit

Qu'en est-il de la parole tout d'abord ?

Je me prononce, dès le départ, en ce qui concerne la parole, comme empreinte d'un code signifiant qui porte le secret de la vie et dont l'homme serait dépositaire, sur la lignée de pensée et de vision empruntée par René Gérard, dans sa quête de sens de l'absolu.

C'est ainsi, qu'en l'accompagnant dans ces analyses, j'ai pu comprendre, que la vraie recherche est celle au travers de laquelle le chercheur arrive à lire et à relire les événements qui se passent en lui et en dehors de lui, en traversant la scène de sa vie ou celle des sujets soumis à son observation, pour atteindre les objets désirés de son altérité manquée ou de l'altérité manquée de ses sujets. J'ai pu surtout comprendre que les vrais objets désirés de l'homme sont ceux qui l'attirent spontanément vers eux, et qui le font souffrir quand ils arrivent à lui manquer, au point de le mener à les martyriser et à en supporter la culpabilité.

Je suis arrivé à comprendre suite à cela, que les objets de désir qui se laissent attirer par l'homme, sujet désirant, finissent par le posséder eux-mêmes pour en faire un objet de désir pour eux, ou un esclave.

J'ai pu aussi comprendre, que l'homme est un être de désir manqué d'objets qu'il voudrait posséder sinon mimer, et dans le cas contraire, exterminer, et qu'un chercheur comme René Gérard, a pu théâtraliser, une fois il est devenu capable d'en prendre conscience.

De ce fait, selon René Gérard, le religieux est devenu ce projet humain qui est implanté au cœur de l'humanité, et qui a été éveillé par le Christ comme un appel d'espérance, pour donner à chaque être humain la chance de dépasser la loi naturelle qui ordonne son existence.

Ce projet a permis ainsi à l'humanité, selon lui, de s'élever vers une loi supérieure qui l'a autorisé à sortir de son complexe de (culpabilisation – victimisation) en ayant recours au symbolisme du bouc émissaire chargé d'un message d'amour qui va œuvrer à neutraliser la haine à travers la mort du Christ sur la croix.

En fait, ce message reproduit la scène originelle du symbole représenté par l'image paradoxale du sacrifice expiatoire qui vient réparer un désir manqué se transformant en crime par celle d'un sacrifice auto infligé et bâti sur l'amour inconditionnel. Or, ce genre de sacrifice ne peut, selon René Gérard qu'éliminer par le fait même la raison d'être de l'idée de sacrifice, par la résorption de l'assujettissement de l'homme à la binarité du désir une fois que ce dernier aurait accepté de faire le choix de l'amour inconditionnel.

Il est onze heures du vendredi qui tombe le premier jour du mois de juillet deux mille onze. Ce matin est un matin différent des autres au Liban. En effet, les libanais savent ce matin qu'ils sont en train de mentir officiellement les

uns aux autres en laissant s'abattre sous leurs yeux les lois du Vendredi et du Dimanche et probablement aussi celle du Sabbath, lois qui devaient les unir face à la loi terrestre qui s'était déclarée nettement la veille au profit du plus fort sur le double plan régional et mondial, dans les ramifications de ses capacités d'influence sur le territoire libanais.

Bien évidemment, qu'il y a tout un tribunal qui a été mis en place et bien évidemment que ce tribunal a dû fonctionner, en toute impartialité, avec les plusieurs centaines de personnes, qui ont été mises à sa disposition.

Bien évidemment, surtout, que ces personnes, ont dû être choisies parmi celles les plus qualifiées dans les différentes disciplines des sciences militaires et des sciences humaines, et qu'elles ont pu éclairer les vastes champs d'études nécessaires pour élucider la compréhension des motifs substantiels et socioculturels du crime, de manière à pouvoir mener une jurisprudence saine en matière de choix scientifiques et de droit, et ceci pendant plusieurs années sur un plan international pour sortir sa sentence qui semble formellement impeccable. Mais le tribunal qui a jugé Galilée d'hérétique, était aussi impeccable formellement, aussi impeccable que celui qui a jugé le Christ d'imposteur, Hypatie d'ennemie de l'humanité, Christophe Colomb de dissident, et le seul parti qui a pu combattre Israël comme État occupant dans la région, de criminel.

En fait, le problème qu'on retrouve ici, réside dans les définitions. Il est dans la définition du mal et du bien. Il est dans la définition du crime en tant qu'événement qui a un sens entre le bien et le mal, et dans celle de l'événement ainsi que dans l'acte fondateur des faits qui font tourner cet événement. Il est dans l'observation des faits, et dans les faits eux-mêmes, quand ils se manquent à leur histoire pour devenir histoires particulières chargées de sentiments binaires ou de sentiments d'amour et de haine, sentiments qui les font inscrire dans les mémoires, en les colorant par leur teneur socio-confessionnelle.

Nous avons été habitués à habiller nos définitions à partir de nos croyances et à partir de ce qu'on nous fait croire ou persuader par l'argent ou par le conditionnement mental que nous fait imposer directement et/ou indirectement notre éducation formelle et informelle. Pour en revenir à notre problème, ce problème qui est de premier ordre, et qui sera le plus dur à traiter, est à mon sens, celui de la définition des mots. Or il se trouve que dans l'histoire de l'humanité, cette dernière a toujours préféré se tenir du côté de la parole dans ce qu'elle veut dire ou plutôt de ce qui y est véhiculé formellement et non pas du côté de la promesse que cette parole annonce, et qui n'existe pas encore dans la forme de ce qui est dit,

car cette promesse reste à formuler par l'homme sur la base de son éthique.

Le problème réside dans le fait, que, pour que Créon puisse gouverner, il fallait qu'Œdipe se crève les yeux et meure, bien que ce soit lui qui avait été le seul à avoir eu le courage et la sagacité nécessaires pour en finir du Sphinx qui terrifiait les visiteurs de la ville de Thèbes, et que sa fille Antigone ait tout fait pour le rapatrier et pour l'enterrer dignement aux côtés de sa famille.

Le tragique dans l'histoire est souvent le fruit d'une justice qui s'oblige à ne pas chercher à regarder du côté de l'essentiel, là où se trouvent les vrais motifs du crime. Or, les vrais motifs du crime se trouvent souvent dans nos désirs manqués.

Le tragique dans l'acte d'accusation n'est pas dans la pauvreté des arguments qui permettent d'inculper ou de disculper les accusés, mais dans la recherche des raisons profondes qui ont pesé lors de la perpétuation de l'acte, et qui ont fait que cet acte ait pu se produire de cette manière-ci et non pas de cette manière-là, avant d'accepter de faire chuter en enfer des gens qui représentent des symboles communautaires significatifs dans les tensions régnantes au Liban et dans la région.

Ce qui est encore plus tragique dans cet acte, c'est de venir légaliser un travail d'investigation, basé principalement sur les paroles des témoins à partir des poursuites effectuées par les Agents des Services Secrets des Grandes Puissances, agents qui se seraient présentés comme les forces défensives des Droits de l'Homme et des symboles communautaires des pouvoirs alliés.

Le nœud du drame qui a soulevé toute cette allure tragique au sein de cet acte, dont on parle ici, se trouve dans l'alliance conjoncturelle qui a été nouée entre les forces susmentionnées et leurs partenaires alliés.

En effet, cette alliance aurait disposé systématiquement les parties concernées à se redéfinir contre les redéploiements communautaires des forces dissidentes avec leurs symbolismes adverses, redéploiements qui se seraient de plus en plus confondus avec ceux des forces émergentes dans cette partie du monde, où les sociétés sont fortement communautarisées, et où les communautés entretiennent entre elles des relations fortement radicalisées socio-confessionnellement, et extrêmement tendues socio-culturellement.

Ce qui serait donc à désigner par le plus tragique dans l'acte d'accusation, c'est que cet acte, en s'adressant à des individus, ne peut pas ne pas s'adresser au parti qu'il représente, et à la communauté que ce parti défend avec tous les symbolismes religieux extrêmement exaspérés en ces jours et qui risquent de se transformer en sentiments de haine collective.

De ce fait, le tragique dans cette affaire, qu'un homme de théâtre, tel Sophocle, serait prêt à saisir, réside dans le fait qu'un pareil acte d'accusation ne pourrait pas passer

sans ébranler les liens socioculturels et politiques entre les communautés libanaises, en mettant en opposition radicale celles qui ont été le théâtre de cet acte.

Le tragique est, en fait, dans le risque qu'on suscite au sein d'un état de conflit qui a dû conduire à un acte criminel, jusqu'à pousser les parties concernées par cet état à la polarisation totale de leur perspectives, après avoir justifié la scène du crime comme un acte signifiant socio-politiquement, par le simple fait de donner raison aux uns à la défaveur des autres, à partir de leur soumission ou non aux critères de valeur qu'on leur propose, ces critères qu'on n'avouera jamais d'avoir flirté avec l'échelle : deux poids deux mesures à leur propos.

Le problème ici n'est pas dans celui de savoir qui a pu tuer un autre, mais dans la composition de la scène qui a mené au crime et de celle qui se construit pour élucider ses secrets, là où le crime réel se trouve dans l'acte de violence, justifié ou non, qui atteint à la vie de personnes concrètes, d'une manière intentionnelle ou non.

La justice ici doit ressembler à celle de Salomon, qui a voulu protéger l'intégrité du bébé, que seule sa vraie maman sera en mesure d'en être sensible, et ceci en faisant appel, non pas aux calculs justiciers habituels basés sur les normes morales, mais en se référant à la miséricorde humaine qui est à la base du droit, car, il n'y a de droit que dans le rapport à l'autre, dont sa préservation dans son intégrité est au fondement de la vie humaine.

Pour faire justice, nous ne pouvons pas diaboliser l'autre, c'est-à-dire celui que nous soupçonnons être le plus en situation de conflit avec nous, et aller à la quête du criminel à partir de là, sans risquer de ne pas trouver le vrai criminel, car celui là, peut être caché dans les plis multiples des histoires qui nous séparent de l'autre, et qui ne manqueront, sur notre chemin de quête de preuves, de nous empêcher de le dénicher et de le dévisager. Il en est ainsi, parce que le vrai criminel, se meut à l'intérieur de nos désirs profonds manqués, désirs que nous voudrions refouler, car appartenant à une vérité lointaine, extrêmement troublante et viscéralement blessante.

En effet, c'est là, en ce lieu, et à ce moment précis, où se trouve la vérité, non pas la vérité ponctuelle du crime, qui peut être là ou ailleurs, mais n'importe, car à ce niveau l'événement particulier devient secondaire. À ce moment là et à ce lieu, la vérité se présente comme étant celle justement que nous voudrions éviter de reconnaître pour nous préserver dans nos liens sociaux défensifs primaires, ces liens qui nous renforcent dans nos liens primaires pour pouvoir résister contre l'ennemi imaginaire qui nous attend à l'extérieur (l'autre), et que nous devons nous représenter à partir de nos croyances comme quelqu'un qui ne pourrait pas cesser de nous vouloir du mal s'il fallait qu'il respecte, de son côté, ses croyances qui le font porter contre nous.

Qu'en est-il du message ensuite ?

Pour ce qui concerne le message, je voudrais m'adresser à mon grand ami Amin Maalouf qui est incontestablement l'un des écrivains les plus célèbres de ces temps. Oui, je vais m'adresser à cet ami écrivain que j'ai toujours considéré comme étant l'un de mes compagnons de combat les plus favorisés dans la lutte pour la libération humaine, et qui est devenu, par la force de sa plume, membre de l'Académie Française, pour lui dire, qu'un message se mesure à partir de l'image qu'on a du message et de celle qu'on projette sur le récepteur, ce qui fait que le message a toujours investi notre parole, sans nous demander notre avis.

Quant à nous, en tant qu'auteurs, informateurs, nouvellistes, chercheurs, découvreurs d'images du passé et du présent, nous ne pouvons pas échapper à ce que nous soyons infiltrés par la binarité de nos attitudes et de nos valeurs, binarité qui se réfère à l'armature de nos croyances telle qu'elle est inscrite en nous, jusqu'à ce que nous nous mettions à questionner cette armature en toute conscience.

Ce que je voudrais dire à mon ami l'écrivain Amin Maalouf, à partir de la lecture de ses livres, et surtout de la « relecture » de certains d'entre eux, c'est qu'une nouvelle qu'on annonce, ou bien une histoire qu'on raconte, ou encore un simple fait qu'on relate, et même si l'on avait attifé ses idées par les atours littéraires les plus prestigieux, et les plus éthérés linguistiquement, et si l'on avait été très méticuleux dans ses recherches disciplinaires, sans avoir questionné sa conscience sur l'aboutissement de son chemin, reste comme un psaume, (les psaumes de David à titre d'exemple). Or, dans un psaume, où l'on restreint son rôle à voir la lumière pour soi sans la reconnaître, ni en soi ni en l'autre, c'est-à-dire, le psaume nous met dans une situation de non reconnaissance de la lumière comme lien qui peut traiter ici tout en venant d'ailleurs, de quelque part et se perdant toujours comme un mythe.

À partir de là, je voudrais dire à mon romancier préféré, que prononcer un message, c'est offrir un nouveau contenu à la parole, une nouvelle promesse. C'est un choix de renaître autrement, dans une cité différente, pour que le livre de *Les Croisades vues par les Arabes* nous aide à mieux relire les travaux d'Emmanuel Levinas et de Paul Ricœur sur la Mémoire, ainsi que sur l'Histoire et sur l'Oubli. En effet, présenter brillamment les Croisades comme étant aussi féroces que les autres Arabes, en remettant en surface les historiettes de sang qui ont déchiré nos mémoires, sans rechercher les voies de dépassement humain qui se retrouvaient peut-être chez les combattants eux-mêmes, et qui pouvaient nous aider à reconstruire Jérusalem comme lieu de paix humaine, en voilà, des constructions littéraires qui n'ont pas facilité le rétablissement de la paix dans la Jérusalem d'aujourd'hui.

À partir de là, je voudrais lui dire aussi que : Léon l'Africain pouvait devenir Léon le Messager, et non plus Léon le simple observateur ou le simple « témoin », c'est-à-dire, celui qui a vu, dans le sens de celui qui a visité (ou qui est rentré dans les cultures des autres).

Sur cette nouvelle base, Léon l'Africain aurait pu devenir, ce dont se serait réclamé mon ami Amin Maalouf face au monde : la vraie multiplicité de l'être, qui est la condition maîtresse de l'unité et l'ouverture essentielle vers la pluralité des sociétés.

Léon l'africain aurait accepté en lui avec amour et avec moins de curiosité sceptique toutes les expressions culturelles qu'il avait confronté, en les considérant comme étant humainement égales mais socialement inégales.

Il aurait aussi compris le sens foncier de l'injustice qui l'aurait poussé à retravailler l'égalité par le renforcement des cultures affaiblies en vue de les valoriser à partir de leurs significations profondes. Il aurait surtout œuvré à amener ces cultures à renaître avec leur âme à elles en leur permettant de retrouver leur dignité et de visiter à leur tour toutes les autres cultures.

Et Amin Maalouf, qui est un homme de lettre, d'origine orientale et qui est sociologue, philosophe et nouvelliste, parti en occident, et plus spécialement installé sur la terre de Montaigne et de Molière, aurait décidé de dépasser sa binarité, en la questionnant sur ses fondements et en choisissant de renaître autrement (la renaissance), et non pas de se laisser sentir appartenir à une civilisation archaïque l'Orient et à une autre décadente (l'Occident).

Il aurait décidé de renaître comme on renaît une seconde fois pour pouvoir tout relire bien évidemment à partir d'un lieu qui doit ressembler à un non-lieu, le vide..., ou le vide public, pour s'inculturer à partir de ce vide, et pour pouvoir refaire ce que voulait faire l'Occident, c'est-à-dire, la renaissance, où l'homme aura à se refaire dans une relecture de ses liens à l'autre et au monde, pour arriver à la liberté, l'égalité et la fraternité, dans une non ségrégation totale, et sans tellement insister sur la laïcité.

Amin Maalouf, mon grand ami, que j'ai admiré pour son style et pour la justesse de sa parole dont il s'est armé pour aller à la recherche du sens, loin du bruit, et là où jaillit la source de la connaissance, c'est-à-dire : la scène de l'histoire des faits, telle qu'elle se répercute au niveau du cœur de l'être humain, n'a pas pu et ne pourra jamais échapper à cette règle d'or de production de la mesure du message, ce qui lui a valu la réussite au plus haut niveau selon les critères de l'échelle des valeurs régnautes dans la civilisation occidentale, critères qu'il a voulu défendre dans son livre : le dérèglement du monde.

Amin Maalouf a senti dans ce livre que l'humanité est menacée par trois tentations.

• La tentation du précipice

« La tentation du précipice » est caractéristique de notre époque. Chaque jour des hommes sautent dans le vide en rêvant d'entraîner dans leur chute la cordée entière – un phénomène sans véritable précédent dans l'Histoire. Ces personnes, pour nombreuses qu'elles soient, ne représentent que la mèche incandescente d'un gigantesque baril de désespérance. Des centaines de million de nos contemporains, dans le monde musulman et ailleurs, éprouvent cette même tentation, à laquelle l'écrasante majorité se retient fort heureusement de succomber.

Ce n'est pas tant la morsure de la pauvreté qui cause leur détresse que la morsure de l'humiliation et de l'insignifiance, ce sentiment de n'avoir pas leur place dans le monde où ils vivent, de n'y être que des perdants, des opprimés, des exclus ; aussi rêvent-ils de gâcher cette fête à laquelle ils ne seront pas conviés.

• La tentation du paroi

La « tentation de la paroi » est bien moins caractéristique de notre époque, mais elle y revêt une signification nouvelle. Ce que j'appelle ainsi. C'est l'attitude qui consiste à s'arc-bouter, à s'abriter, à se protéger, en attendant que la tempête passe. En d'autres circonstances, ce serait la position la plus prudente. Le drame de notre génération et de celles qui la suivront, c'est que cette tempête-ci ne passera pas. Le vent de l'Histoire continuera à souffler de plus en plus fort, de plus en plus vite, rien ni personne ne pourra le calmer ni le ralentir.

• La tentation du sommet

La tentation du sommet se fonde justement sur l'idée inverse, à savoir que l'humanité est parvenue, dans son évolution, à une phase dramatiquement nouvelle où les vieilles recettes ne servent plus. Ce n'est pas la fin de l'Histoire, comme on l'a proclamé prématurément lors de la chute du communisme, mais c'est probablement le crépuscule d'une certaine Histoire, et c'est aussi – j'ose y croire, j'ose l'espérer – l'aube d'une autre Histoire.

Ce que je voudrais reclarifier avec mon ami Amin Maalouf, que j'ai toujours admiré pour son humilité et sa clairvoyance, c'est l'idée d'aventure humaine, car rien ne dit que l'homme peut risquer encore de s'aventurer sur une seule voie.

Ce que je voudrais lui dire à ce sujet, c'est que l'aventure de la positivité absolue, si elle ne sera pas accompagnée par une autre aventure d'altérité humaine risquera de nous ramener, et ceci selon les études socioculturelles entreprises pendant les quatre dernières décades, sur le plan sociopolitique, au tribalisme le plus foncier,

qui se traduira, au niveau de nos villes, par une plus grande dislocation de leurs espaces socioéconomiques, selon les variantes culturelles, religieuses et ethniques qui composent ces espaces, sous l'effet de ce que nous avons appelé le phénomène de « Glocal » et que j'avais à maintes reprises expliqué dans mes écrits.

Là-dessus, je voudrais ajouter, en disant à mon ami Amin Maalouf, qu'il est impossible à l'homme de sortir de son Histoire sur terre, car elle est inscrite dans ses gènes et dans les mémoires écrites et électroniques. Je voudrais lui dire que l'ennemi de l'homme n'est pas sa maladie, ni son vieillissement, ni sa mort, ni son ignorance, etc., mais son égoïsme et sa haine, et que son seul combat est celui qui est d'apprendre à découvrir en lui ses forces d'altérité, pour ne plus donner à son égoïsme et à sa haine les raisons de mener les guerres contre l'Autre.

Je voudrais surtout lui dire que personne ne peut échapper à son archaïsme, même pas l'homme ou la femme de la civilisation occidentale, et même pas lui l'auteur des Origines, car ces archaïsmes ne sont pas tellement archaïques, dans le sens de leur habilité à sortir des conditions spatiotemporelles très lointaines qui les séparent du présent. Nous portons en nous la mémoire de ce que nous étions il y a des milliers d'années, avec nos peurs et nos angoisses, ainsi qu'avec nos rêves et aspirations. Refaire l'histoire, c'est écouter ces mémoires du passé pour aider les peuples des temps présents à oublier leurs peurs et angoisses et à se renforcer ensemble dans leurs attentes et aspirations.

Voilà, ce que nous pouvons faire ensemble sur des tables de dialogue dans les grandes cités du monde, pour continuer le projet de la science et pour ré-ouvrir le chapitre religieux sur l'espoir de nous rencontrer ensemble à partir de nos attentes et aspirations communes.

Ce par quoi je voudrais conclure dans ce face à face avec mon ami Amin Maalouf, c'est en lui disant en toute clarté que je suis tout à fait d'accord avec lui sur le fait que l'humanité doit travailler ensemble sur elle-même pour arriver à clore le chapitre de ses histoires tribales, ces histoires qui la minent de l'intérieur, car elles remontent actuellement à la surface des mémoires biologiques, ainsi que des mémoires technologiques qui œuvrent à les retranscrire dans les espaces urbains en les amplifiant.

Ce que je voudrais lui dire surtout à cet effet, est d'une extrême gravité, car notre temps n'est pas, comme il le souhaite, ce temps qui nous permettra d'espérer de ne plus se battre contre l'Autre – la nation adverse, la civilisation adverse, la religion adverse, la communauté adverse

Notre temps, est par contre, un temps qui nous a bien préparé à nous déchaîner les uns contre les autres à partir de nos croyances réciproques.

En effet, ces disputes n'arrêtent pas de traduire les désirs manqués de tous ceux qui sont passés sur cette terre, et qui, en n'arrivant plus de se passer d'elle, l'ont occupé jusqu'à finir par passer pour elle, ou sur elle, après avoir causé la mort ou l'exil de beaucoup de ceux qui voulaient partager le même amour à son égard.

En effet, ce Rocher a vu Tanios partir vers l'occident à la première moitié du XIX^{ème} siècle, ou cette époque durant laquelle l'Empire Ottoman, l'Angleterre, l'Égypte et La France se battaient pour ce pays, en le vouant au déchirement communautaire.

Il a vu pareillement Amin Maalouf, lui-même, partir vers la France, un siècle et demi plus tard, en l'an 1975 plus exactement, pour fuir le climat malsain de la guerre fratricide qui tournait au Liban, et pour débiter une nouvelle vie d'écrivain novelliste en France.

En relisant aujourd'hui le Rocher de Tanios, je me demande si Tanios n'était pas porteur d'un message qui l'aurait aidé, s'il avait voulu vraiment l'écouter, à relire les temps des disputes qu'il avait vécu pour arriver réellement à s'en sortir et à rentrer dans le temps de son altérité, ou dans le temps de son histoire avec l'Autre.

Et en relisant le périple de Baldassare, je me suis senti comme emporté par la curiosité de chercheur qui me pousse à rechercher la recherche à l'infini, là où se trouve le cœur de l'homme.

Et en interrogeant cette curiosité sur la question du passé dans sa relation avec le futur, j'ai cru comprendre d'elle, qu'il faut que l'humanité d'aujourd'hui apprenne à relire son manuel et les manuels des autres, les civilisations du passé, et peut être aussi le Centième Nom de Baldassare, pour qu'elle puisse se repentir et se reconstruire sur une nouvelle base, l'un avec l'autre, et pour qu'elle puisse écrire et réécrire, ce qu'elle n'avait pas écrit encore, c'est-à-dire, ses nouvelles expériences d'altérité.

Quand je dis écrire et réécrire ici, ce n'est plus simplement comme on écrit ou réécrit un livre, mais comme on prononce une promesse sur le cahier du temps, en transgressant l'ordre des temps de la barbarie, et en osant ouvrir le livre généalogique où sont inscrites nos mémoires et les secrets de nos histoires de sang, pour y tracer la voie de l'histoire infinie du temps.

Notre auteur, on le retrouve plus tard dans une œuvre romanesque, qui est un véritable chef d'œuvre d'opéra, sous le titre de L'Amour de loin, où le héros, qui incarne le personnage du prince de Blaye au XII^{ème} siècle de notre ère, était prince et troubadour à la fois à cette époque. Cependant, même dans cette œuvre qui tourne autour de l'amour pur, l'homme doit subir son destin, tel qu'il va se préciser à travers ses propres actions, et malgré tous les efforts entrepris de sa part, sur la base de son amour pour parfaire le système, car ce système va toujours être détourné par le destin.

Oui mon ami, tu as eu raison dans tes conclusions. L'opéra,

lui aussi, a toujours eu raison dans ses conclusions. Cela revient au fait que la raison du plus fort a toujours eu raison sur terre de celle du plus faible.

Mais, cela est tout à fait évident ! Il l'avait toujours été, et le sera peut-être toujours. Des penseurs et poètes appartenant à des temps différents, tels : Jean de La Fontaine, XVII^{ème} siècle (1621-1659), la France, dans ses Fables ; et Ibn Al Mukafaa, neuf siècle auparavant (720-757), la Perse, dans son œuvre célèbre Kalila wa Dumna, sous l'influence de la civilisation arabe, avaient découvert cette lapalissade depuis longtemps.

Oui, on découvre avec la même amertume aujourd'hui, qu'en se renforçant du côté de son cœur, l'homme ne peut plus que perdre du côté de la logique du plus fort ! Mais, qui aurait-il raison en définitive, si l'on voudrait préserver la vie et être heureux sur terre ?... La logique de la raison?.., ou la raison du cœur?.., ou plutôt la raison et le cœur à la fois?

Toute la question de la promesse de l'homme est là !

C'est une question de décision à prendre et tout se passera bien par la suite !

C'est peut-être là où réside le message de l'humanité..!

Discours d'Amine Maalouf à l'Élysée :

Il faudrait lire le texte du discours d'Amine Maalouf à l'Élysée. Il vaut bien la peine. Il prend l'Irak comme exemple pour illustrer la façon dont l'Orient et l'Occident puissent se regarder.

K.J.M.