

■ Unlike haggling, compromise is probably the finest route to tread in the art of politics-in any sphere, be it domestic, national, or international.

Compromises are complex processes, involving insight, restraint, conviction, and fulfillment backed by a strong will, determination, and intrepidity.

Any compromiser knows and admits that he owns not and cannot own the truth; rather, he approaches the truth in a welcoming spirit of partnership.

Whenever there are compromises and compromisers, there exist no price negotiations or distinctions between right and wrong. There is flexibility aimed toward striking a balance between two opposing poles... toward the convergence of dialogue ... toward mutual benefit and common interest... toward the path of moderation and equity based on different competences and skills, and various expectations and aspirations where each can excel in his own field. As a result, the joy of giving would equate with the joy of taking, and the joy of aspiration would equate with the joy of reality.

The aim of compromise is to ultimately find solutions.

Obstacles, therefore, should be removed, gaps should be filled, and views broadened.

There must also exist discernment, consideration, and mutual understanding...

There must exist in the heart and mind transparency, sincerity, trust, courage, patience, and consistency as well as brimming enthusiasm.

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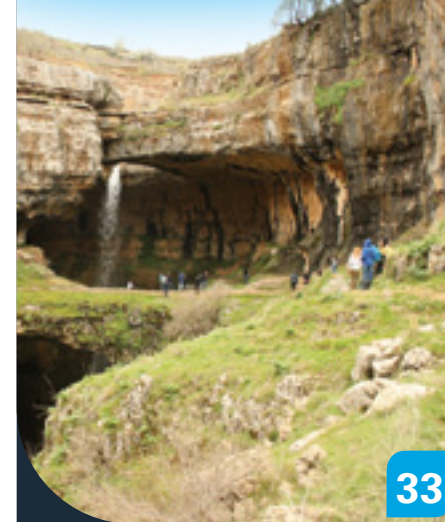
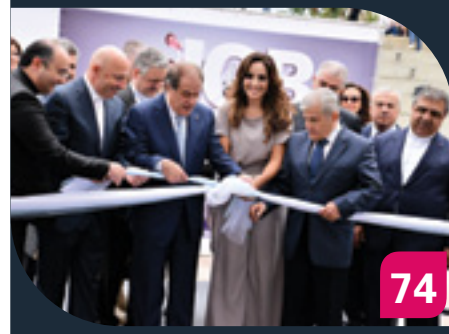
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“ EDUCATION IS THE GREAT ENGINE OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT. IT IS THROUGH EDUCATION THAT THE DAUGHTER OF A PEASANT CAN BECOME A DOCTOR, THAT THE SON OF A MINERWORKER CAN BECOME THE HEAD OF THE MINE, THAT A CHILD OF A FARM WORKER CAN BECOME THE PRESIDENT OF A GREAT NATION. IT IS WHAT WE MAKE OUT OF WHAT WE HAVE, NOT WHAT WE ARE GIVEN, THAT SEPARATES ONE PERSON FROM ANOTHER. ”

Nelson Mandela



MESSAGE TO CLASS OF 2014

As the 2013-2014 academic year draws to a close, all my thoughts focus on the soon-to-be graduates of Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), and that is why I take great pride in delivering this message to our new graduates.

Class of 2014, you will soon be leaving NDU to take on the world armed with the knowledge and values instilled by NDU. While

this day must have appeared so far away when you first enrolled, I can assure you that it will become one of your most cherished memories a few years down the line. The best of luck to you as you prepare to face this challenging world; I am confident that you will leave it in a better state than you found it... simply because you are NDU graduates.

On this eventful day, you owe thanks to many people who made a difference in your lives, most especially your families. And always remember your outstanding Faculties and every NDU staff member who worked so tirelessly to support you ... Bear in mind, this moment matters to all of them just as much as it matters to you.

Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple Computers and of Pixar Animation Studios, once said, "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most importantly, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary."

Speaking from personal experience, I have been a priest, an educator, and now an administrator, and I have loved each aspect of my career. I have turned to many for advice, and now allow me to impart advice to you.

During the era in which my father lived, opportunities were scarce and attending university was never an option. My father, therefore, started working at an early age and continued doing so his entire life. He even worked several jobs at the same time so that he could give his five children a better life than the one he had. He would always say to us, 'Striving for success without hard work is like trying to harvest where you haven't sowed.' I have held my father's advice close to my heart throughout my career. Now it is your time to build the life that you have imagined for yourself and to take your years of well-merited education out into the world and make it a better place.

Our motto at NDU is *gaudium de veritate*, Joy from the Truth. The late Pope Saint John Paul II in his *Apostolic Constitution, Ex corde ecclesiae*, described Catholic universities as coming from the heart of the Church. He stated, 'A Catholic university shares that *gaudium de veritate*, so precious to St. Augustine, which is that joy of searching for, discovering and communicating truth in every field of knowledge.'

As you embark on new beginnings, my hope today is that you will always keep your eyes peeled for those golden opportunities and through dedication and honesty go on to achieve outstanding success. I look forward to greeting each of you personally and conferring upon you your hard-earned degree, and then welcoming you into the Alumni family. There are momentous times ahead for you, and I cannot wait to hear of your achievements.

Congratulations! Now, go out and make your lives extraordinary.

Father Walid Moussa O.M.M.
President

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES



COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICE

CSO Organizes 3rd NGO Social Fair

The Community Service Office (CSO) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) in collaboration with the Human Rights Club (HRC) launched on June 4, 2014, its 3rd NGO Social Fair under the patronage and in the presence of H.E the Minister of Social Affairs Rachid Derbas and H.E the Minister of Culture Raymond Arayji. The Fair, which brought together 40 NGOs, ran under the slogan: *"Inspire, Connect, Deepen, and Broaden."*

Based on its slogan, the aim of this annual event was to educate and encourage students to cultivate empathy, commitment, awareness, and initiative.

NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa stressed on the fact that NDU is not only an academic institution but also an institution that must teach its students to "prioritize the human being, because the human being is ultimately the core of any society... And that is how we start building better societies."

Students who, during the course of the academic year, performed 1,000 hours of community service were honored at the end of the opening ceremony.



LEBANESE EMIGRATION RESEARCH CENTER

LERC Honors Three Personalities Contributing to the Building of Japan-Lebanon Relations
- JASMIN LILIAN DIAB, LERC

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) under the patronage of the Japanese Embassy in Lebanon, and in the presence of H.E. the Ambassador of Japan to Lebanon Mr. Seiichi Otsuka, honored in June 2014 Professor Hidemitsu Kuroki from the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa at the Tokyo University of Foreign Affairs, Professor Mary Rose Abdul Jalil-Ishiguro, and Ms. Madeleine Jalil-Umewaka.

Ms. Margot Nasir Abdul Jalil, aunt of the Jalil sisters, and their cousin, Ms. Jacqueline Maamari, accepted the award on their behalf. Both women married Japanese men during the Lebanese war and moved to live in Japan where they became active in the fields of migration, education, public relations, and cultural rights. This honor was in recognition of their efforts in consolidating Japan-Lebanon relations and in establishing academic and cultural exchanges.



(from left) Dr. Antoine Farhat (VPAA), Ms. Margot Abdul Jalil, and Ambassador Seiichi Otsuka at NDU.

Ambassador of Lebanon to Bulgaria H.E. Mr. Fares Eid and His Spouse Visit the LERC - LERC STAFF

Ambassador of Lebanon to Bulgaria H.E. Fares Eid and his spouse, Nariman Baydoun, visited on Thursday, April 3, 2014, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU).

Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Organizations Visit the LERC at NDU - JASMIN LILIAN DIAB

Officials from the General Directorate of Emigrants at the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and representatives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Austria, visited on Monday, April 7, 2014, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU)



The delegation visiting the Lebanon and Migration Museum at LERC/NDU along with LERC staff and director (April 2014)

Dunia Fayad Taan Gives the LERC Scholarship Grant for Research
- JASMIN LILIAN DIAB, LERC
- RAJWANE KAFROUNI



(from left) Dr. Hourani and Dr. Taan at NDU (April 14, 2014)

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) launched on April 14, 2014, Dr. Dunia Fayad Taan's program on the Lebanese Diaspora in West Africa in the presence of the following: Dr. Taan and her family; Dr. Mohammed Fayad; Dr. Ghazi Asmar, Assistant Vice-President for Research and graduate studies; Dr. Edward Alam, Director of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (CRVP); Dr. Guita Hourani, Director of the LERC; and staff members.

Elementary Students from the IC in Ain Aar Visit the LERC - RAJWANE KAFOURNI

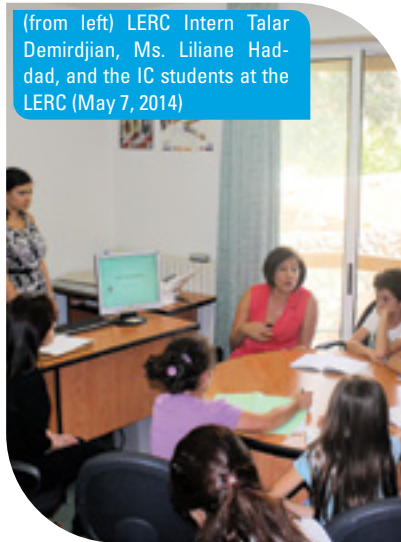
Fifth grade students (Ghazal Altoum, Alexandre Ghawi, Nour Halabi, Joseph Abi Karam, and Kevin Abi Raad) from the International College (IC) in Ain Aar visited on May 7, 2014, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Rosy Daou, and parent, Mrs. Grace Halabi.

WFAP Seeks the LERC for Al-Jazeera Documentary on the Lebanese in Africa - JASMIN LILIAN DIAB

Ms. Eliana Bader, Executive Producer of the Witness For Art Production Company (WFAP), on May 7, 2014, sought the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) to gain access to the Center's unique archive and database on Lebanese migration. She will use data for an upcoming *Al-Jazeera* special documentary series titled, *Taht al-Mijhar*, which will have an episode exclusively dedicated to the Lebanese emigrant population in Africa.

Nathalie Rosa Bucher, Assistant to Filmmaker Philippe Aractingi, Seeks the LERC - LERC STAFF

Ms. Nathalie Rosa Bucher, Assistant to Lebanese filmmaker Philippe Aractingi, on May 19, 2014, sought the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) to obtain information and contacts on Lebanese organizations, associations, and individuals around the world so that she may contact them to organize a screening of Aractingi's new film *Héritages (Mirath)*.



(from left) LERC Intern Talar Demirdjian, Ms. Liliane Haddad, and the IC students at the LERC (May 7, 2014)



(from left) Dr. Hourani and Ms. Bucher at LERC (May 19, 2014)

LERC Attends "Formation Archivistique" Training Seminar at the CPEL in USEK - LILIANE HADDAD

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) was represented from May 19-23, 2014, by Ms. Liliane Haddad, Archivist and Chief Indexer at the Lebanese Emigration Archives and Database, the electronic archiving wing of LERC, at a training seminar titled, "Formation Archivistique."

The six-day training seminar was held at the Centre Phoenix pour les Études Libanaises (CPEL), in the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK) in collaboration with The National Archives of France, represented by Ms. Magali Lagousses, and the Curator at the National Archives Mr. Danis Habib.

Ms. Lagousses and Mr. Habib for the duration of the seminar shared their expertise in collecting, archiving, encoding, and saving public and private archives, according to international standard norms.

LERC Honors South African Mr. Ken Hanna with Acknowledgment Award - RAJWANE KAFROUNI

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) honored on May 21, 2014, Mr. Ken Hanna (born Khalil Hanna Chehadé Kayrouz) from Becharri, a third generation South African of Lebanese descent. He was selected for the award, because he documented, wrote, and published the 40-year history of the Lebanese community in South Africa.

LERC Attends the "Lebanese Diaspora Energy" Conference Organized by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign and Emigrants Affairs - JASMIN LILIAN DIAB

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) was heavily represented at the three-day "Lebanese Diaspora Energy" conference organized by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, which was held from May 30 to June 1, 2014, at the Hilton Beirut Grand Habtoor Hotel in Sin el-Fil, Lebanon. The initiative brought together hundreds of Lebanese expats from around the world.

LERC Attends ILO and Caritas Workshop on "Access to Justice for Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon" - RAJWANE KAFROUNI

Representatives of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) attended on Friday, June 13, 2014, a workshop organized by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center, to share their findings of a report on the legal, procedural, and institutional challenges facing migrant domestic workers seeking justice in Lebanon. Titled, "Access to Justice for Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon," the study is a part of an ILO project titled, "Decent Work for Domestic Workers: Advocating Institutional Reform in the Middle East," which aims to provide options to reform national policies and institutions to protect the rights of migrant domestic workers.

LERC's Associate Researcher Dr. Suzanne Melhem, LERC's Research Assistant Ms. Jasmin Lilian Diab, and LERC's International Intern Ms. Rajwane Kafrouni represented the LERC.

Dr. Najwa Chelala-Tarazi Creates at the LERC a Collection in Her Family Name - RAJWANE KAFROUNI

Dr. Najwa Chelala-Tarazi, Professor of Law and Attorney-at-law, visited on June 12, 2014, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) to learn more about the Center, its mission, and activities, as well as to establish a collection in her name. Mrs. Liliane Haddad, the LERC's Chief Indexer and Archivist, gave Dr. Chelala-Tarazi a guided tour of the Center and its electronic archive. In return, Dr. Chelala-Tarazi presented the LERC with a collection of photos of her maternal family members (Al-Zayek) and relatives in Argentina and Uruguay.

The collection contains 61 pictures of her family and relatives, dating from the 1930s to 1950s, especially of her relative Mr. Habib Assaad al-Zayek, who was an elected member of the Argentine National Congress.

STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICE

TEDxNDULouaize: "Breaking Boundaries"

- TALA SMILEY*

Note from the Organizer:

Each university campus is distinctive in its own way. At Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), I could see that one of the University's distinctive features was in the student body itself. After completing my fourth year of teaching in the Faculty of Humanities (FH), and before jumping into my fifth, I decided to help that student body shine a little bit more. With a TEDx license in hand, and an approval from the Student Affairs Office (SAO), I resorted to the one person I knew I could completely rely on, my current partner and friend, Prof. Nadine Robehmed. Together we formed a team of roughly 30 students and faculty members who launched the first TEDxNDULouaize Salon, "Leadership in Action," on January 16, 2014, as well as the first TEDxNDULouaize main event, "Breaking Boundaries," on May 21, 2014, introducing NDU to a concept the majority on Campus had never heard of, TED. Our slogan matches that of TED: "Ideas Worth Spreading." Our goal is to get students involved in organizing on-campus entertaining and educational events under the TEDxNDULouaize logo.

TEDxNDULouaize Curator
NATALIA GEHA



TEDxNDULouaize team of volunteers and speakers.

* TEDxNDULouaize Attendee

**Hope, Passion, and the Unknown
- An Attendee's Account**

White, red, and black hung on their wrists, as if those three colors were enough to guide them through the night. White for hope, red for passion, and black for the unknown, all three representing TEDx. Without hoping to inspire others, without being passionate about the topics, or without wanting to grasp a glimpse of the unknown, we would not have known TEDx.

On May 21, 2014, NDU experienced three inspirational hours of ideas worth spreading. The first TEDxNDULouaize main event was held on campus, thanks to a team of student and faculty volunteers.

To say that the preparations went perfectly well, and that everyone was dancing around like in a musical would be an insult to all those who were volunteering. Their hard work helped make this event happen.

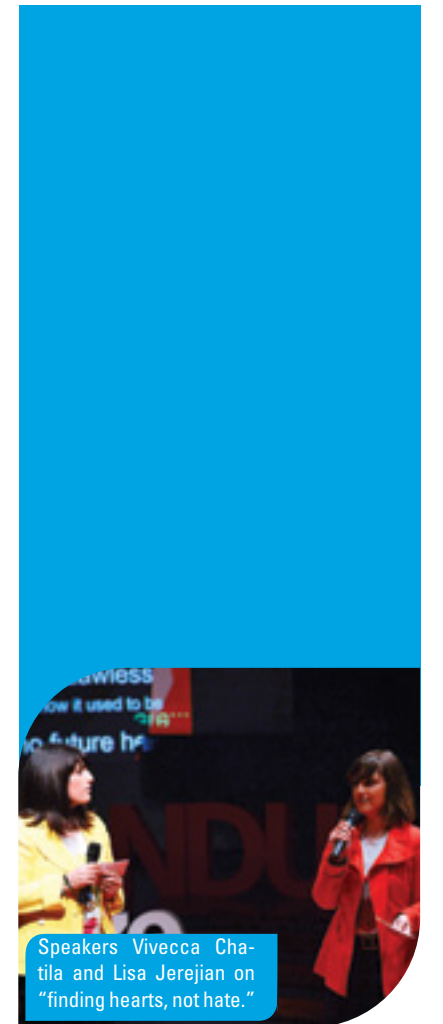
As for the speakers, they had their own thing going on. Each had a special vibe emanating from him/her. You could see that they were nervous, but they had the power to deliver their message to the audience.

The first speaker, NDU student and illusionist Amine Jabbour started with a mesmerizing performance. He uses illusions, hoping that imagination will help break the realms of reality, hoping that it will help break this prison of reality that we have built for ourselves. At the end of his speech, Amine unexpectedly set the stage for the next speakers by performing magic tricks that ended by scattering heart-shaped rose petals all over the stage.

The next speech was all about finding hearts, but before that May el-Khalil's TED talk, *Making Peace is a Marathon*, was screened.



Speaker Amine Jabbour on "breaking reality through magic."



Speakers Vivecca Chatila and Lisa Jerejian on "finding hearts, not hate."

The two founders of "Find the Hearts", Vivecca Chatila and Lisa Jerejian, started their talk with a heart-warming video that showed Lebanon's beauty. Lisa said, "I was looking for La Vie en Rose." Their talk was about always looking at the bright side of things, like finding hearts everywhere you go. "Beirut has been a phoenix", they said. They believe in the power of love, not hate. At the end of their talk, they mentioned a project they were working on which will take place in Beirut near Hamra, Corniche. This project is for everyone who wants to show their love for anything, especially Lebanon.

Paul Yatim was the third speaker that night and his talk was most probably the most inspiring for any struggling student. Paul explained to the audience that he comes from a poor background, yet that did not stop him from achieving what seemed impossible to him and to others around him. Paul followed his dream and got a one-year scholarship into NDU, one of Lebanon's private universities, by building a tank for a science competition. It was an extremely difficult task since most of the resources were unavailable to him. He also had to teach himself advanced math and physics lessons just to be able to complete his project in time for the science fair.

Afterwards, the second pre-recorded TED talk, Ji-Hae Park's *The Violin and My Dark Night of the Soul*, was screened. Consequently, the event's two hosts, Yara Asmar and Gali Ajemian, asked the audience to dig in into their minds and hearts so that they can understand what their boundaries might be. Attendees, including Vice-President of Academic Affairs Dr. Antoine Farhat, and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities Dr. Mary-Angela Willis, proudly wore their boundaries on their nametags and discussed them with those around them.

The fourth talk carried a somewhat weird title: "Shakespeare, Sex Education, and a Lighthouse." Marya Abdul Rahman stood on stage and told her personal story. She expressed her love for books and how her love for the written word made her study literature. Yet, later on in life, she realized that she had developed another love for health sciences through her work with the Red Cross, and specifically in AIDS awareness and sex education campaigns. The lighthouse part comes in the end where Marya combines both literature and science to give us another meaning for the lighthouse she saw in Tyre, south of Lebanon. She saw the lighthouse as a symbol for hope even though it had not been functioning for years.

There are all these secrets underlying our everyday life. NDU student, Charbel Tadros, ended the talks with his seven secrets to prayer. He explained how positive energy could attract the good in life. Charbel spoke of how his students inspired him when he taught them the seven secrets during tough times the class was going through.

The event did not end with the seven secrets to prayer. A short surprising performance took place when NDU Mechanical Engineering students Rhea Mkanna and Pierre Ouba stepped onto the stage with their dancing shoes. The dance was a mixture of dance styles, yet salsa was the dominating style.

"Breaking Boundaries" was about breaking society's reality through illusions. It was about waking up and being courageous enough to step out into a new world, where our will and imagination bulldoze all the walls suffocating us.

The audience left the theatre in awe, and all I can say is that I left that theatre with a new inspiration settled in my heart. I left with a new hope for what the future holds. I left with a gift bag filled with memories of that evening. I left with a bracelet around my wrist to remind me of hope, passion, and the mysterious future. I am still wearing that bracelet to be reminded that boundaries are meant to be broken.



Mechanical Engineering students Pierre Ouba and Rhea Mkanna, showing their artistic side.



Speaker Paul Yatim on "breaking educational boundaries."

NDU Inter-schools Sports Challenge 2014

For the ninth consecutive year, the Sports Office at Notre-Dame University-Louaize (NDU) organized its annual mixed gender inter-schools competition titled, "NDU Sports Challenge 2014." The events included: tennis, volleyball, football, and basketball.

The Sagesse School, Beirut, was awarded the Fair Play Award, the Providence (Montana) was awarded the Appreciation Award, and Champville was awarded the Most Participating School Award.

Special thanks go to Robert Massaad, Joe Chamma, Joseph Matta, Georges Tahtah, Studio Services, Security Control, Maintenance, and NDU coaches.

RESULTS

Tennis (Men's Category)	First Place: Michel Saadeh (Antonine School, Ghazir) Second Place: Karim Slaiby (Deutsche Schule, Beirut) Third Place: Alex Baumgartner (Deutsche Schule, Beirut) and Abdo Obeid (NDL)
Tennis (Women's Category)	First Place: Nour Dib (Champville) Second Place: Bruna Khoury (Deutsche Schule, Beirut) Third Place: Myriam Massoud (SJS) and Aurore Antoun (Deutsche Schule, Beirut)
Volleyball (Men's Category), (score: 2-0)	First Place: NDL Second: Place SJS
Football (score: 5-2)	First Place: Antoura Second Place: NDL
Basketball (Men's Category), (score: 48-40)	First Place: Champville Second Place: NDL
Basketball (Women's Category), (score: 37-12)	First Place: Antoura Second Place: Champville



Fr. Bechara Khoury (center) with participating students and organizers

WATER, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH CENTER

Water, Energy, Food, and Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean Region: Current Challenges and Future Insights

The Water, Energy and Environment Research Center (WEERC) at Notre Dame University–Louaize (NDU) organized from May 22 to 23, 2014, the “5th Beirut Water Week” in collaboration with Global Water Partnership–Mediterranean (GWP-Med), the Mediterranean component of the EU Water Initiative (MED-EUWI), and the Mediterranean Network of Basins Organization (MENBO). The event was held under the auspices and in the presence of the Lebanese Minister of Energy and Water H.E. Eng. Arthur Nazarian, and gathered approximately 100 participants, representing national administrations, international organizations, NGOs, universities, research centers, and Mediterranean projects and initiatives relevant to water resources management in Arab and Mediterranean countries.

The event was divided into four main themes: *Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems Nexus at the National and Transboundary Level, Water Financing and Economics, Non-Conventional Water Resources: Within the IWRM Context, and Innovative Scientific and Technological Tools and Methodologies.*

Dr. Fadi Comair, Director of WEERC and Honorary President of Mediterranean Network of Basins Organization (MENBO), welcomed all guests. He stressed that Mediterranean Water Platform is a “think-tank” that gathers prominent water experts and leaders from across the Mediterranean to work together and overcome critical barriers to guarantee the equitable use of water resources for the future generations of the Basin.

The 5th Beirut Water Week is one of the activities of the Mediterranean regional process leading to the 7th World Water Forum.

The participants of the 5th Beirut Water Week agreed on the following:

- The water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus, which encapsulates the interconnectiveness among these important aspects of life and economy of societies, is of particular importance for the water security in the Mediterranean as it offers a powerful tool for integration, allowing other sectors beyond water, to contribute to workable and sustainable solutions;
- In view of increasing challenges in the region, the scarce water resources of the region become even further stressed due to population growth, climate variability, and change and lifestyles based on unsustainable consumption and production patterns. To address these challenges, parallel action at various levels is required: Effective water demand management; improved and advanced management approaches; innovative technologies for the minimization of water losses and effective use of energy; promotion and wise use of non-conventional water resources; appropriate regulatory frameworks; adequate funding; international cooperation; and comprehensive education and awareness raising campaigns.



- Water demand management is not merely a technical issue. It includes social involvement and economic efficiency across sectors;
- Management is constantly evolving. In coastal river basins, integrated water resources management (IWRM) can be complimented by integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) incorporating the ecosystem approach, using advanced tools such as ICT and modeling. A welcome development is the announced application of such combined approach in the Awali River Basin;
- The potential savings from losses and misuse through the employment of innovative technologies are considerable; this is perhaps the most cost effective intervention for water security. Furthermore, combination of water technologies with renewable energy sources offer sustainable solutions, which also gradually become economically attractive;
- Non-conventional water resources need to be developed and widely used, coupled with renewable energy sources, where possible, including, *inter alia*, rainwater and storm water harvesting, safe greywater and treated wastewater reuse, exploitation of undersea springs;
- Regulatory frameworks, adopted through participatory processes, are prerequisites for good water governance. Laws, such as the proposed draft for the public Private Partnerships (PPP) and the law on Decentralization in Lebanon, may create the enabling environment for more efficient management of resources and services, with involvement of stakeholders. Such frameworks provide the necessary conditions for reduced risk private investment accountable to the society at local and national level. Given the lack of frameworks regulating PPP in the Mediterranean countries, the Lebanese example can offer a useful good practice to be replicated throughout the region;
- International cooperation is of utmost importance for the region because of its many shared waters. Ratification and implementation of the relevant UN Conventions, in conjunction with hydro-diplomacy, could offer the necessary framework for such cooperation. The recently completed project supported by the Italian Cooperation in Lebanon in Orontes, employing ICT and proposed for a UNESCO publication to support hydro-diplomacy, could be replicated for other transboundary rivers;
- The revision of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development provides an additional framework for useful regional cooperation and synergies; and
- The recently endorsed by the UfM Ministers of Environment (Athens, May 2014) Mediterranean Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development offers an important framework for comprehensive education and public awareness programs on water and other nexus aspects. Such programs are necessary for the proper understanding of the issues and change of attitudes and behaviors towards a new water culture.

Participants strongly support the establishment of an individual SDG on water and sanitation and request that the present recommendations be considered as an input to all relevant regional and international processes, particularly to:

- The 7th World Water Forum (Korea 2015);
- The 2nd Arab Water Forum (Qatar 2014);
- The post-2015 dialogue on Sustainable Development Goals;
- The drafting of Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development; and
- The drafting of the Action Plan of the Mediterranean Strategy of Education for Sustainable Development.

FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE, ART, AND DESIGN - Music Department

End-of-year Concert 2014 - DR. LOLA BEYROUTI

The Department of Music at the Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design (FAAD), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), organized on June 9, 2014, at noon, its End-of-year Concert. The concert, which was held in Issam Fares Hall, showcased students' progress during the academic year 2013-2014. These talented students played to an audience comprised of administrators, faculty members, NDU community members, and parents. The concert covered many genres and languages, and faculty members were asked to judge performances based on technique, semiotics, student effort, and reaction in front of a live audience. works; adequate funding; international cooperation; and comprehensive education and awareness raising campaigns.



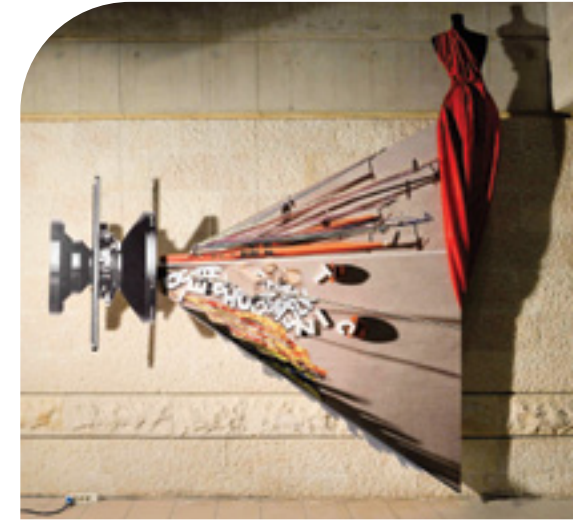
End of Year Exhibition: EYE 14 – FLUX - MARLYSE CHAMOUN HAMATI*

The Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design (FAAD) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) organized on Friday, June 27, 2014, its 14th annual End of Year Exhibition titled, *EYE 14-FLUX*, which puts on display students' senior projects in the disciplines of Architecture, Interior Design, Graphic Design, Multimedia, Fashion Design, Photography, and Musicology. The theme for this year's event was *FLUX*, which symbolizes senior students leaving academic life and joining the labor force to pursue a career in their chosen discipline.

Each End of Year Exhibition offers a distinctive program, depending on the number of graduate students and the diversity of projects exhibited. Given that the FAAD is a growing Faculty and the majors it offers are increasing, this year's exhibition was brimming with rich diversity.

Months before the event, FAAD Dean Dr. Jean-Pierre el-Asmar appointed a committee composed of selected faculty members from each major in the FAAD with Mrs. Marlyse Chamoun Hamati as its Chairperson. Before the event, the committee convened weekly from Fall Semester (2013-2014) to the last week of Spring Semester (2014). The committee was tasked with organizing and structuring the exhibition by following up with each Department in the Faculty to gather senior projects from each major.

The media played a key role making this event a resounding success. Mrs. Chamoun was invited to appear on *Future TV* and *MTV's* live morning talk shows to promote the event. Mrs. Chamoun used the opportunity to inform millions of viewers of the benefits of studying at NDU, one of the leading and most modern universities in the country.



*Chairperson of the FAAD End of Year Exhibition EYE 14 - FLUX.

The program of events for EYE 14-FLUX was divided into two parts and held in two separate locations: Issam Fares Conference Hall and the new FAAD building, Ground Floor.

PART I: Opening Ceremony at Issam Fares Conference Hall. Speakers were Ms. Joceline Issa; Mrs. Chamoun; Dr. El-Asmar; Mr. Souheil Mattar, Vice-President for Public Relations and Cultural Affairs; Dr. Antoine Farhat, Vice-President for Academic Affairs; and Mr. Jack Liger Belair, French-Lebanese Architect (Guest Speaker).

Afterward, Musicology students performed classic opera songs and 10 Fashion Design students exhibited 60 outfits in an impressive Fashion Show, followed by Musicology students taking the stage to perform on Flamenco Guitar before Multimedia students screened their sound and visual projects. Part I of the event ended with Musicology students performing a host of pop and international songs.

PART II: Exhibition inauguration, ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new FAAD building, Ground Floor, in the presence of Mr. Belair; Fr. Bechara Khoury, Vice-President for Finance; Dr. Farhat; Mr. Matar; Dr. El-Asmar; Dr. Lola Beyrouthi, Chairperson Musicology Department; Mr. John Kortbawi, Chairperson Design Department; Dr. Nicolas Gabriel, Chairperson Architecture Department; Mrs. Chamoun; and all faculty members.

Guests were treated to a walk-around cocktail amid a backdrop of live music performed by the Musicology Department band and students. Photography Department students had their senior project shoots displayed on banners. The photography students also shot models showing off outfits designed by senior Fashion Design students who also put on display



their senior projects designs.

Senior Architecture students put on display their projects, which received great feedback from visitors while senior Graphic Design students operated their two stations: One at the entrance of the Faculty where Multimedia senior projects were screened, and the second where print projects were exhibited on banners and tables. Senior Interior Design students were eager to discuss and explain their projects to visitors.

The FAAD believes in the future of its graduates who made this exhibition and event truly unique. The Faculty will continue to encourage its students by keeping the premises open to them to help them gain more confidence and continue to improve.

Word from the Committee

To students of the FAAD to whom this event was dedicated, we believe in you and in your chosen career path, we believe in each of you because you are the ones who carry the Mission of NDU to the world. We wish you the best of luck, and we always count on you.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following individuals and institutions for their invaluable support: NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, NDU Administration, Bank Byblos and Matta et Associes for being the main sponsors of this event, the NDU Design and Brand Guardian Office (DBGO), faculty staff, and all members, Dr. Asmar for all his support and hard work, and last but not least, the EYE 14 – FLUX committee members for making this event such a success.



FE SOCIETIES' 2ND ANNUAL DINNER

The Faculty of Engineering (FE) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) organized on Friday, April 25, 2014, its 2nd Annual Dinner at Le Royal Hotel, Dbayeh. Khatib & Alami and CCC sponsored the event.

Engineering students along with NDU President Fr. Father Walid Moussa, the Dean of the FE Dr. Michel Hayek, and faculty members enjoyed a walk on the red carpet, a welcome drink, a presentation of the hard work of the engineering societies: SCE, ASME, IEEE; and a delicious Lebanese dinner.



Members of the three societies.



Members of the societies with NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa and the Dean of the FE Dr. Michel Hayek.



Attendees with faculty members, cutting the Event's cake.



Students enjoying the moment.

FH Media Studies Forum (MSF14)

"Ethics of Digital Media and Online Knowledge Production"

ROUBA EL-HELOU
MARIA BOU-ZEID

Digital media are shaping the concept of the profession of journalism, particularly publishing, which is in the hands of citizens, while the Internet encourages different types of immediate and interactive platforms for journalism and online knowledge production.

This new type of converged media requires new guidelines for both professionals and amateurs. Media, thus, needs to be reinvented, to be revolutionized, starting from the classroom. For these reasons, the Media Studies Department at the Faculty of Humanities (FH), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), held on May 6, 2014, its Media Studies Forum (MSF14) as an initiative to create a knowledge hub, a space to meet, to discuss, and to share ideas for professionals, journalists, students, and experts. Mr. Suheil Matar, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications at NDU, in his welcome speech reflected on the importance of responsible freedom of speech in this digital era. He then noted that freedom should not be confiscated nor reduced to personal agendas. Freedom means respect to culture and to tradition.

Likewise, Dr. Mary-Angela Willis, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, stressed on the importance of values and ethics in academia, particularly among future media practitioners. She said, "Active collaboration and engagement in these subjects will allow all participants, including students, to contribute to the creation of solutions to current issues that are pertinent to the Lebanese context. It is a forum where knowledge is exchanged, where experts will act as role models, and where students will be empowered.



(from left) Dr. Antoine Farhat, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Mary-Angela Willis, Dean FH, Andre Kassas, Information Minister representative, and Suhail Matar Vice-President for Cultural Affairs and Public Relations.



(from left) Professor Edward Alam, Bassam Haddad, and Fadi Tofeili.



(from left) Elsy Moufarrej, Simon Kremer, Charbel el-Kareh, and Magda Abu-Fadil.



(from left) Pierre Gedeon, Director of International Relations, Sandra Whitehead, Languages and Humanities Chair at Rafik Hariri University, George Awad Communication & Information Officer at UNESCO, and Dr. Guita Hourani, Director of the LERC, NDU.

MSF14 is the first such endeavor being held at NDU and, given the importance and the need for such dialogue; it will surely not be the last."

Andre Kassas spoke on behalf of the Minister of Information Ramzi Jreij. He considered the power of journalism as a fourth one, where news reporting became vital in everyday society.

The forum included two panels focusing on online media freedom and ethics in addition to online publishing and new modes of knowledge production.

Ms. Elsy Moufarrej, Managing Editor of *Al Majala Al Kadaiya* moderated the first panel, which comprised of Dr. Charbel el-Kareh, a Juris Doctor, and an Attorney, Ms. Magda Abu-Fadil, a veteran Journalist and a *Huffington Post* blogger, in addition to Mr. Simon Kremer (Germany), a journalist and co-Founder of *Soukmagazine*. El-Kareh discussed the available e-law media projects, the implications and measurements applied in different cases, focusing on the e-media license. Kremer focused on the idea of the freedom of speech in Germany, and the challenges that face online journalists, such as death threats, trials, or the inability to access information as stated by law.

From her perceptive, Abu-Fadil raised ethical issues, such as misspelling people's names, mispronouncing foreign words, and misattribution of sources (intentionally or by ignorance). She concluded, "Videos and photos can easily be manipulated and it's becoming increasingly difficult to tell what's accurate and what's fake." Abu-Fadil launched during the forum, an Arabic Online Media Ethics Guide, which is available online, for download as a PDF, on the following URL: <http://media-unlimited.info/abu-fadil-launches-arabic-online-media-ethics-guide-at-msf14/>

Professor Edward Alam, Director of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (CRVP) at NDU, moderated the second panel

el titled, "Digital Media and New Modes of Knowledge Production."

The speakers were Dr. Bassam Haddad, Associate Professor (George Mason University) and co-founder of *Jadaliyya* e-zine, and Mr. Fadi Tofeili, a writer, poet, and co-founder of *Portal 9* magazine. The panel stressed on the differences between the print and digital publications. Mr. Tofeili, presented the philosophy and vision of *Portal 9*, as a print magazine portraying urban life in imaginative situations by either poetry or storytelling. Dr. Haddad elaborated on the tools provided to researchers for publishing through the digital media technologies. He spoke about the creation of an interactive user-friendly website such as *Jadaliyya*, and its importance on the process of sharing info and producing knowledge based on currents in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Mr. Sam Lahoud, Chairperson of the Media Studies Department, ended the forum with a series of recommendations. He insisted on the necessity of acknowledging ethics and implementing the ideas that resulted from the day and put them into practice.

To be noted, guidelines for Lebanese media should be set clearly, despite the fact that there currently exists no policy, regarding media in Lebanon. The debate will no doubt continue during the coming year with journalists, students, and academics hoping to generate new paradigms of ethics and online knowledge production during MSF15.



(Courtesy the Branding Office)

NDU/FIFA/CIES

Sport Management Certificate

First Edition Graduation Ceremony

The Faculty of Humanities (FH) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) organized on Wednesday, May 18, 2014, the graduation ceremony of the First Edition of the NDU FIFA/CIES Sport Management Certificate. The graduation ceremony took place at 5 p.m. in the Issam Fares Hall, NDU Main Campus.

FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) created



the CIES (International Centre for Sports Studies) in 1995 to provide research, education, and consulting services to answer the new needs and challenges of the sport industry.

In the same perspective, the CIES started in 2000 a Master's degree in Sport Management, Law and Humanities in partnership

with DeMontfort University (Leicester, United Kingdom), SDA Bocconi (Milan, Italy), and the Université de Neuchâtel (Neuchâtel, Switzerland). In 2014, the magazine *Sport Business International* ranked the Master's degree, commonly called the "FIFA Master," first in the world.

FIFA and the CIES also founded in 2004 the FIFA/CIES International University Network to create a certificate in Sport Management with a program that will adapt to the local realities of the different regions in the world. Today, through an initiative taken by NDU in which an agreement with the CIES was signed on May 25, 2012, this network has partner universities in 16 countries, namely: Argentina; Chile; Costa Rica;

Trinidad & Tobago; Venezuela; Brazil; Peru; Senegal; South Africa; Egypt; Spain; Russia; Poland; Palestine; United Arab Emirates; and Lebanon.

The First Edition of NDU/FIFA CIES Sport Management Certificate started on March 2, 2013, and ended on February 8, 2014. Fifteen students graduated from this program: Maria Saad (valedictorian); Tony Tarraf; Hussein Kanso; Ricardo Rubeiz; Anthony Saleme; Charbel Richa; Chebl Yassine; Nisrine Wazen; Christeena Bado; Hovsep Seraydarian; Jamil Tayar; Jean Hanna; Michline Slim; Rachid Haidar; and Ziad Saadeh.

Similar to all the FIFA/CIES International University Network programs, students completed a group project that was presented on February 8, 2014, to the:

- CIES Scientific Coordinator (Professor Lanfranchi);
- Local CIES Scientific Coordinator in Lebanon (Mr. Wadih Abdelnour);
- Heads of the Program Modules (Mr. Ezzat Kraytem, Mr. Mazen Ramadan, Mr. Tony Khalil, and Maitre Joseph Yazbeck);
- Dean of the Faculty of Humanities (Dr. Mary-Angela Willis);
- Chair of the Department of Psychology, Education and Physical Education (Dr. Maha Mouchantaf); and
- NDU FIFA/CIES Sports Management Program Manager (Dr. Nadim Nassif).

Nisrine Wazen, Christeena Bado, Hovsep Seraydarian, and Jamil Tayar presented the winning group project, titled "Road Map to Qatar 2022." This research paper will now compete in the annually held FIFA/CIES International Universities Network prize, which will include other winning projects from various universities.



The winner of this competition will have the opportunity to present his/her work to FIFA at its headquarters in Zurich.

Among the attendees of the graduation ceremony were NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, CIES Senior Manager Mr. Vincent Monnier, and Mr. Joseph Saadallah, representing H.E. the Lebanese Minister of Youth and Sports Mr. Abdel Mottaleb Hennaoui.

The Second Edition of the program will start on September 27, 2014. Interviews for applicants' acceptance will be conducted on September 9, 10, and 11, 2014.

NDU Students Attend 9th International Student Byron Conference in Messolonghi, Greece DANA HARB*

The 9th International Student Byron Conference titled, "Byron's Life and His Eastern Tales," was held from May 21 to 25, 2014, in Messolonghi, Greece, and gave us the opportunity to learn a great deal about Lord Byron's life and Eastern Tales. We also had the opportunity to interact with world-renowned Byron scholars and their students. As an MA student in English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Humanities, Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), I was privileged to participate in this conference along with Ms. Grace Nakhoul and Mr. Bassem Kamel. NDU Prof. Naji Oueijan, who is also Joint President of the International Association of Byron Societies (IABS), accompanied us. This international conference is held annually and provides Byron scholars, and students worldwide with the chance to meet, interact, and exchange their thoughts and opinions on Lord Byron's life and poetry.

The conference started on Wednesday, May 21, with a visit to the Byron Research Center in the Byron House. Mrs. Rodanhti-Rosa Flouru, President of the Messolonghi Byron Society, was waiting for us with a warm welcome. The Byron House has truly become a shrine for Byron scholars, as Prof. Oueijan emphasized in his address, as it conserves rare volumes and manuscripts, covering almost all works by Byron and works about him. After the ceremony, we visited the Cathedral of Agios Spyridon, and then we headed to the Municipal Museum of History and Art Gallery. The day ended with a downtown dinner, during which we had the chance to get to know the international

*Harb is a graduate student of English Literature, NDU.



Prof. Naji Oueijan.



Grace Nakhoul presenting and Dana Harb in the background.

professors and students participating in the conference.

The Academic Program started on Thursday, May 22, with a welcome address by the President of the Messolonghi Byron Society, Mrs. Rodanth-Rosa Flouru, the Joint President of the International Association of Byron Societies, Prof. Oueijan, and the Director of International Relations Prof. Peter Graham. The first session started with Prof. Oueijan, who talked about *"Eroticism in Byron's Oriental Tales as 'An alter-ego to the Occident;'"* Mr. Bassem Kamel discussed *"Goethe's and Byron's Oriental Affiliation: The Poet as a Bridge between East and West";* and Ms. Dana Harb gave a presentation on *"Byron and Greek Women."*

After a coffee break, the conference resumed with Ms. Grace Nakhoul's presentation, *"Emotionally Adjusted Elements: Time and space in The Corsair."* Presentations by other participants from England, the U.S.A., and Greece followed. The day ended with an Official Ceremony at the Theoxenia Hotel where two keynote speakers, Prof. Jonathan Gross and Dr. Stephan Minta, delivered two interesting lectures. A gala dinner and a performance by Greek folklore dancers followed the lectures.

On Friday May 23, the conference began with other enriching sessions. Later, the participants followed Byron's footsteps to the Chapel of Panayia Finikias, and we visited Aitoliko, the picturesque island town, visited twice by Byron during his sojourn in Messolonghi. On Saturday May 24, the participants departed for a wreath-laying ceremony at the site where Byron breathed his last while fighting for Greece's liberation from the Ottomans and where the University of Athens dedicated a memorial column, commemorating the cen-

tenial of his death. Then, we visited the Garden of the Heroes, stretching alongside the defensive walls of Messolonghi and decorated with Byron's statue and other statues of Greek heroes. In the afternoon, we departed from the Port of Messolonghi for a wonderful sailing experience crossing the lagoon and visiting the historic Isle of Vssiladi, where Byron landed on January 1824, and from whence his remains were sent to England after his death. Our day ended with a cozy Greek dinner at St. Thomas village.

Here, I would like to thank NDU and especially Prof. Oueijan for giving us, students, the opportunity to attend this conference, which was an added academic value for our education and experience for not only did it give us a wider overview on Byron's scholarship but also allowed us to have impressive notions of the world's most ancient culture, history, language, and customs. Finally yet importantly, I would like to note that what really made this conference so special were the opportunities we had to meet and interact with international professors and students and to appreciate the high standards of our education at NDU. On the whole, the conference was an unforgettable and enriching academic experience.

Letter from Prof. Jonathan Gross, DePaul University, USA
Joint-President of the International Association of Byron Societies (IABS)
June 7, 2014

Dear Prof. Oueijan,

Congratulations on bringing such gifted students, Ms. Grace Nakhoul, Ms. Dana Harb, and Mr. Bassem Kamel, to the *"9th Messolonghi Student Byron Conference,"* held at the International Research Center for Lord Byron and Philhellenism on May 21-25, 2014. Grace Nakhoul's essay, *"Emotionally Adjusted Elements: Time and Space in The Corsair"* was a perfect talk, particularly the focus on the etymology of Medora and Medusa, which she explained with great care and originality. I also learned so much from Dana Harb's *"Byron and Greek Women,"* noting inter-disciplinary connections between Byron's Eastern Tales and paintings of the 19th century. Finally Bassem Kamel's *"Goethe's and Byron's Oriental Affiliation: The Poet as a Bridge between East and West,"* was an enriching exploration of Goethe's appropriation of Hafiz's poetry. Mr. Kamel's knowledge of Eastern verse has clearly benefited from your own scholarship on Byron and the Mediterranean world, particularly the poetry of Sadi and Persian poets.

Your ability to attract such vibrant scholarship speaks well of the program, MA English at Notre Dame University, as I was able to witness when I visited Beirut in 2012. Again, congratulations on bringing such gifted students to Messolonghi!

Best Wishes,
Jonathan

Workshop: "Peace Education in Context"

The Department of Psychology, Education and Physical Education at the Faculty of Humanities (FH), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), hosted on June 7, 2014, a one-day workshop titled, *"Peace Education in Context,"* which was held at Friends Hall. Educators from schools and universities across Lebanon attended what proved to be a positive, reflective, and inspiring day. The educational institutions represented included College St. Joseph Aintoura, SSCC Baalbek, Sainte Famille, Zalka, Adma International School, Jesus and Mary School, USL, USEK AGBU, LU, and NDU.

Dr. Mary-Angela Willis, Dean of the FH, opened the workshop by stressing the importance and relevance of peace education in meeting the challenges of our time. According to Dr. Willis, one is never too young to learn peace-making skills and values that will help shape an environment that is just, inclusive, accepting of the other, and nurturing for all.

Guest speakers representing Adma International School, Dr. Nabil Husni, Principal, and Ms. Aycha el-Sayed, Section Director, presented insights and experiences related to the implementation of peace education at the school level. According to Dr. Husni, peace education components should be integrated into the school at all levels, but individual efforts by teachers are also highly effective. Ms. El-Sayed stressed that with respect to young learners, simple projects and activities, such as having a recycle bin in the classroom, tending to the needs of a pet, or singing a song about peace are integral to peace education.



The workshop culminated in an overview of the steps needed to integrate peace education into the school curriculum, such as identifying needs, establishing objectives, preparing action plans, and running and evaluating programs. Moreover, a practical application on how to integrate peace components into formal subject matter was presented by Dr. Harvey Oueijan and coordinated by Dr. Maria Ghosn-Chelala and Dr. Wessam al-Chibani, Assistant Professors at the Department of Psychology, Education and Physical Education, NDU.



NDU Attends Annual International Byron Conference in Tbilisi, Georgia

PROF. NAJI OUEIJAN

Professor Naji Oueijan, Dr. Savo Karam, Dr. Maya el-Hajj, and Ms. Amal Rizkallah Abou Sleiman, a graduate major of English Literature at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), formed NDU's delegation to the Annual International Byron Conference titled, "Byron Original and Translated," which was held from June 23 to 28, 2014, at the Tbilisi State University, Georgia. Ms. Rizkallah received a student scholarship from the conference organizers; she and other members of the delegation presented research papers at the conference, which included more than 100 participants from 20 countries.

Prof. Naji Oueijan, Joint President of the International Association of Byron Societies, an association including 40 national societies and around 2,000 scholars and members from around the world, was one of three keynote speakers. He also met with Chairman of the Georgian Parliament Mr. David Usupashvili, and Georgian Minister of Culture Mr. Guram Odisharia. Besides, Academician Vladimer Papava, Rector of Tbilisi State University, offered the University "Honor Medallion" to Prof. Oueijan for his role in promoting Byron scholarship and for helping the Georgian Byron Society organize the conference.



(from left) Georgian Minister of Culture Mr. Guram Odisharia, Georgian Chairman of Parliament Mr. David Usupashvili, and Prof. Naji Oueijan.



Prof. Naji Oueijan receiving the University Honor Medal.



Prof. Naji Oueijan (center) offering the Association's gifts to the Conference Organizer Prof. Innes Merabishvili, and the Conference Assistants.



Dr. Maya el-Hajj presenting her paper.



Ms. Amal Bou Sleiman (far right) presenting her paper.



Dr. Savo Karam (far left) being introduced to present her paper.

**FNAS
GEO 201 – PHYSICAL
GEOLOGY,
DR. LEILA KHALAF-KAIROUZ,**

**A Journey Beneath the
Earth's Surface**
KAREN SAAD,
CHRISTOPHER ARIDA,
NASSIF HAKIM,
MARIO KARAM

Exploring the earth's deep inner surface and its underground formations is the ideal way to increase our knowledge and widen our perspective of Mother Earth. For this reason, The GEO 201-Physical Geology course students, along with the course instructor, Dr. Leila Khalaf-Kairouz, joined a field trip on March 25, 2014, organized by Mr. Omar Sakr, instructor of TTM 326-Domestic Travel and Tourism, in collaboration with the ALES (Association Libanaise d'Etudes Speleologique). The full-day trip included visits to Hakel Fish Fossils Quarry, Beloua Baatara (*sinkhole*), and the Roueiss Cave.

Roueiss Cave

The Roueiss Cave is located in central Mount Lebanon between the villages of Kartaba and Aakoura at the head of the Nahr Ibrahim Valley. It is the ideal cave for students to know more about the geology of our Lebanese mountains. This cave has two entrances and is the second longest horizontal cave in Lebanon, measuring 5,460 meters and maintaining an all year round temperature of 16° C.

Students were split into groups of 10 each with two expert guides from ALES. Each member in the group was provided with a safety helmet mounted light. The middle level only was planned for exploration given time limitations and the fact that the upper and lower



Pic 1 to 4: Roueiss Cave.

galleries require special training and equipment to reach them.

Once in, except for the sound of the dripping water, silence and total darkness engulf the cave. The cave floor contained differently sized rocks and some of which were slippery. The guide requested that all

flashlights be turned off in order to 'feel' the cave. The extreme darkness and silence with expectation of the sound of dripping water helped us appreciate this phenomenal masterpiece lying beneath the earth. Due to the deposits of calcium carbonate and other minerals, stalactites and stalagmites covered the ceiling and

floor. The ground level has passages of varied sizes, meaning that climbing, crawling, and squeezing through these openings was the only way to pass through. On top of that, Guano, which is excrement of cave-dwelling bats, was observed as black spots on the ceiling. Furthermore, "Marmite de Geant" were observed due to active streams, which drive the stones in a rotational motion forming big holes in the ground of the cave.

Belouaa Baatara

The Baatara sinkhole is located in Balaa near the village of Tannourine on the Lebanon mountain trail. The sinkhole consists of three natural bridges, rising one above the other over a height of 100 meters. For this reason, this sinkhole is also known as "Cave of the Three Bridges."

Nature's wonderful masterpiece is illustrated by this sinkhole, which was carved by water in its top sequences. This geological formation forms one of the most important sources of fresh water for Lebanon. Water from the Wadi Baatara stream infiltrated into the limestone and dissolved the rocks to reveal the top bridge. Over the years, vertical and circular erosion coupled with a series of collapses resulted in the formation of the middle and bottom bridges. The sinkhole is still developing and is connected to an existing underground network.

This natural reserve has an amazing waterfall, which drops 255 meters. During winter and spring, the sinkhole entirely swallows the Wadi Baatara spring; thus, creating the magnificent waterfall with water vapors rising to the surface. The stream is mainly fed by the springs of Ain Daaouq and Ain Arbit, in addition to runoff from rain and snowmelt during the winter and spring seasons.

In 1985, SCL injected a dye in the sinkhole. It reappeared 13 hours later in Nabaa Ed Dalli spring, which



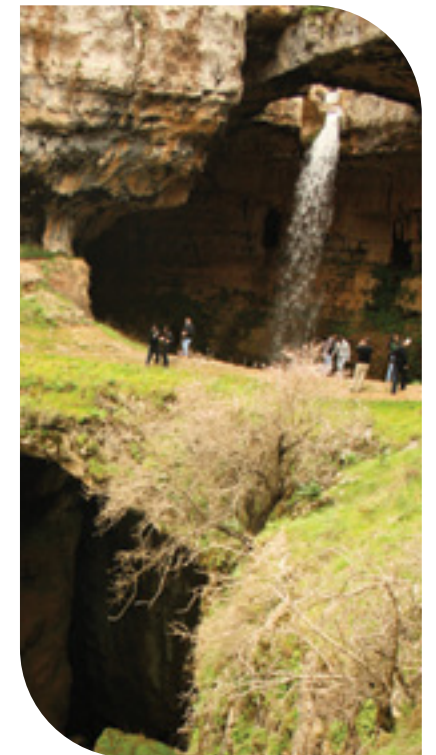
Pic 5 to 7: Baatara Sinkhole.

immerses from a cave in Kfarhilda, about 6 kilometers to the northwest at an altitude of 620 meters above sea level (or 860 meters lower than Baatara).

The Balouaa Baatara sinkhole, like many other sinkholes and geological features in Lebanon, is under threat from contamination of water flowing into the Sinkhole, uncontrolled sports activities inside the sinkhole and others...

One cannot but only be amazed by such places that illustrate how much the underground world is a complicated system. This is God's work!

As a conclusion, this adventurous day led the students to widen their perspectives and to understand the greatness of Mother Nature, which is full of mysteries both above and below ground.



GEO 201 – PHYSICAL GEOLOGY,

DR. LEILA KHALAF-KAIROUZ,

A Journey into the Dormant Seas of Lebanon

NIZAR ABOUL HOSN,
FOUAD EL-KHATIB

The GEO 201-Physical Geology course students, along with the course instructor, Dr. Leila Khalaf-Kairouz, on March 25, 2014, joined a field trip organized by Mr. Omar Sakr, instructor of TTM 326-Domestic Travel and Tourism, to the dormant seas in Haqel, home of Lebanon’s fish fossils. The Lebanese village Haqel (meaning, *field*) with a population of 400 lies in the highlands of the district of Jbeil (Byblos), 650 meters above sea level and 57 kilometers from Beirut. Haqel, Hjoula, and El-Nammoura are located near Byblos; these sites are famous for their quarries rich in marine fish fossils (1,300 species), such as starfish, crustaceans, and sunfish, among others. These fish fossils are also found worldwide in countries, such as Monte Bolea in Italy, Solnhofen in Germany, and Green River in the U.S.A.

History

Eusebe de Cesaree, Bishop of Palestine, was the first to write about the fish fossils in Lebanon. He considers them as the witnesses of the Deluge of Noah. These fish fossils, however, are considered a valuable gift. Sire de Joinville narrates how a fossil fish was presented to Louis IX of France during one of his crusades to the Middle East.

Genesis of the Sites

The Mediterranean Sea (Thetys Sea), which covered the Leba-



Students walking to the site in Haqel.



Students “fishing” for fossils at the Haqel quarry site.



1 Sunfish, a valuable species.

nese territory more than 200 million year ago, is the first homeland of the fish fossils. The location of the fossil animals varies between two to 200 meters in depth at the coastline. The presence of these numerous animals, well preserved (without post-mortem displacement) at the same level, indicates a sudden and simultaneous death that can be described as follows: After a stretch of heavy rainfall, microscopic animals and plants (plankton) developed on the water surface, sometimes changing the color of the sea and turning its color to a reddish or greenish tint. Such a phenomenon is currently witnessed on some coasts and is known as “water bloom.”

This plankton does not only deplete the water of its dissolved oxygen, but also releases some substances that are poisonous to aquatic animals and causes their sudden death in what is known as massive fish kills. Upon their death, the fish sink to the bottom and due to the excellent fossilization conditions, allowing a fast deposition of sediments on the bodies of the dead animals, will not have time to decompose; thus, remaining intact.

Due to the movement of the continental plates and the drop in sea level, these marine fossils appear in the mountains, Mount Lebanon in particular. Erosion subsequently reveals the layers where the fish originally were preserved. The fossils discovered are usually beautiful with dazzling colors due to the presence of mineral salt in the sediments ranging from red and blue to green and brown.

Excavation and Fossil Studies

Pierre Abi Saad and his family are the guardians of this treasure; they preserve 80 percent of this quarry for the next genera-

tion. They use only manual tools, such as hammers, chisels, picks, and spades to avoid damaging the stone or its “inhabitants.” It is possible to detect the presence of fossil fish through minor signs, such as shade changes, cracks, and swellings in the rock. The role of luck in this process is also significant. “Sometimes,” Saad says, “we dig for days without finding a fossil and sometimes one simple stroke is sufficient to unveil a whole epoch of the Earth’s history.”

This quarry has been visited by many, including:

- The National Museum of Beirut, the Lebanese Direction of Antiquities that co-founded a fossil museum in Jbeil with the help of UNESCO;
- The Lebanese University (LU) and the American University of Beirut (AUB) in Lebanon;
- The National History Museum of London in the U.K.;
- The University of Lyon 1 in France.

Conclusion

There is no site in the world that offers diversity, such as the one found in Lebanese sites. The fossils available are an extraordinary sample of the Mediterranean region at that epoch (100 million years ago). Among the fish, some still exists while others disappeared a long time ago. Today, more than 400 species of fish, sea urchins, worms, bugs, plants are identified with more than 800 other species still not identified, raising the total number of species found in the Lebanese sites to more than 1,200.



Mr. Pierre Abi Saad, the fossil specialist and guardian.

“Trees for Life”

Thilda Hajj RIACHY*

Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) is a leading private institution of higher education and one that is permanently setting executive procedural plans toward enhancing the process of planting trees within the University Campus and its vicinity. The main aim of the University is to strengthen students’ commitment to their land and improve students’ environmental awareness, concerning the benefits of the planting process.

Based on this outlook, the Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences (FNAS) and the Department of Sciences at NDU, in collaboration with the NGO Save Energy Plant Trees (SEPT), organized on Thursday, May 29, 2014, a tree planting event titled, “NDU Forest.”

Present were H.E. the British Ambassador to Lebanon Mr. Tom Fletcher, NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, the Dean of the FNAS Dr. George M. Eid, Chairperson of the Sciences Department Dr. Colette Kabrita Bou-Serhal, and SEPT President Mr. Pierre Haddad. In addition, many professors, lab instructors, and a large number of students were actively involved and demonstrated great enthusiasm during the event. Participants were given the opportunity to plant a tree and express their respect for the environment in which they live.

More importantly, H.E. Mr. Fletcher and Rev. Fr. Moussa participated in the planting process, and both delivered speeches, focusing on the environmental and patriotic significance of participating in such an event. The ambassador’s involvement reflected his commitment to both Lebanon and NDU.



Laurel seedlings planted by students during the event.



Ambassador Fletcher and Fr. Moussa participating in the planting event.



A memorable picture of event organizers, faculty, and staff with H.E. on site.

Trees play a vital role in rural and urban populations. They are needed to enrich and anchor soil, maximize water supplies, beautify and humanize townships and urban areas, and provide shade and shelter to all living organisms. Trees are also crucial for biodiversity conservation. Products and services from trees include food, timber, medicines, and energy.

Forests play an important role in climate change. The destruction and degradation of forests exacerbate the problem through the release of carbon dioxide (CO2). Planting new forests; however, can help mitigate against climate change by removing CO2 from the atmosphere.

Combined with the sun's energy, the captured carbon is converted into trunks, branches, roots, and leaves via the process of photosynthesis. It is stored in this "biomass" until being returned back into the atmosphere, whether through natural processes or human interference; thus, completing the carbon cycle.

Tree planting and plantation forestry are well established in both the private and public sectors.

In Lebanon, many governmental institutions and NGOs, as well as institutions of higher education have been attempting to restore the mountains of Lebanon to their original glory. Such institutions are setting procedural plans to plant trees in various areas in Lebanon.



NDU students of all majors answering the call the FNAS and SEPT to plant trees on Campus.



The sciences body: Faculty and students.

*MS Biology

FNHS

Organizes Awareness Campaign

DR. JESSY EL-HAYEK

The Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences (FNHS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) in collaboration with the Student Union (SU) organized between April 10 and 11, 2014, a two-day nutrition awareness campaign titled, "Nutricise." The aim of the campaign, which Byblos Bank sponsored, was to encourage NDU community members to assess their health and nutritional status on regular basis as well as to help them to adopt healthier food choices and engage in a more active lifestyle.

During the event, members of the SU, nutrition and nursing students, and FNHS faculty members volunteered to assess participants' anthropometric and biochemical measurements (measurements included height, weight, body composition, blood glucose, total cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood pressure).

In addition, DiaLeb, a Non-governmental Organization (NGO) involved in diabetes awareness in Lebanon, participated in the measurement of blood glucose. Ms. Rana el-Said (a graduate of the nutrition program) offered attendees tailored nutritional advice. On the first day of the event, attendees attended a grocery-shopping workshop held by Ms. Melissa Abs, senior student in the nutrition program, which was accompanied by the distribution of healthy snacks from many of the sponsors (Food Engineers, Special K, Ergo Tea, Virginia's Chocolates, and Holter Candies). Faculty, students, and staff also gathered around a "healthylicious" cooking competition with Chef Hicham Abi Frem and Dr. Doris Jaalouk, acting as jury members.

The jury awarded three prizes to the winners: Ms. Eliane Bassil took

first prize (US\$300), Ms. Christie Zgheib took second (US\$200), and Ms. Diane Sarkis took third (US\$100). Chef Abi Frem then shared one of his secret healthy salad recipes with the audience.

On the second day of the event, Ms. Yelena Saad and her team from the NDU Gym ignited the Main Campus with their Zumba martial arts moves to hip-swaying Latino beats. In addition, a team of faculty members and a team of students enthusiastically competed in three sports activities (rope pulling, dodge ball, and push-ups); surprisingly, faculty members won the competition. Daily nutrition trivia accompanied the event and more than ten winners were awarded jerseys from Sports Experts and gym memberships from Energy Sports. "Nutricise" was a popular event; it attracted more than 300 participants from NDU and fulfilled its intended objectives.



Ms. Yelena Saad and her team (Outside Space, April 11, 2014).



Ms. Melissa Abs (New Exhibition Hall, April 10, 2014).

"NUTRICISE" WAS A POPULAR EVENT; IT ATTRACTED MORE THAN 300 PARTICIPANTS FROM NDU AND FULFILLED ITS INTENDED OBJECTIVES.

ACADEMIC & STUDENT ACTIVITIES



Winners of the competition: Student Union members, faculty members team, Ms Jocelyne Issa, and a Bank Byblos representative (Outside Space, April 11, 2014).

Nutrition Fair, Spring 2014

DR. KHALIL BADAoui,
DR. JACQUELINE DOUMIT

The Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences (FNHS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) organized on June 6, 2014, its annual activity-filled Nutrition Fair. The NTR 201 students put great efforts into their interactive presentations, which were filled with important nutrition information and shared on the Main Campus with all Faculties, staff, and students. The Fair also included healthy samplings of food and drinks, as well as an active fitness show organized by one of our sponsors, The Fitness Academy Tour, where some students and instructors got into the spirit and enjoyed a heavy half an hour exercise class with Mr. Chadi Hatem.

It was nice to see all students and faculty members cheerfully interacting outside the classroom, as NTR 201 students explained their nutritional topics while actively applying what they learned in class. The cake-cutting ceremony to celebrate the achievements of the FNHS honor students concluded the event.

Special thanks to our sponsors: Fitness Academy Tour, Diet Delights, Argo Tea, and Kaak Zaman.



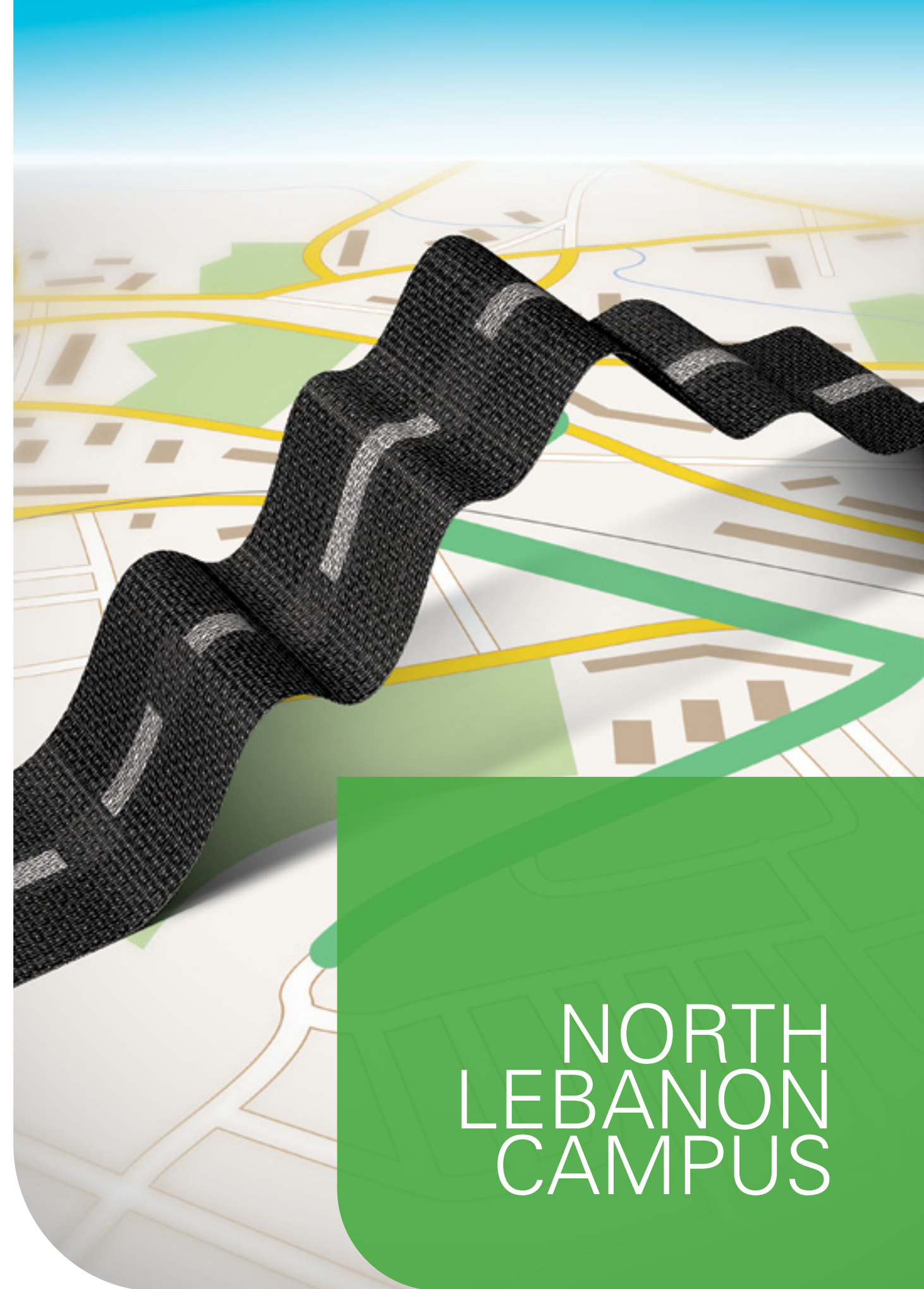
NTR 201 students: Dalia Hachem and Abeer Lteif sharing with other NDU students their topic, "Veganism," and Tabouleh.



NDU students partaking in a sports competition.



The FNHS celebrating the Dean's Honor List (Fall 2013-2014).



NORTH
LEBANON
CAMPUS

ENG 201 PROJECT

Within the scope of the course Introduction to Engineering (ENG 201) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), engineering students carried out a project in May 2014 at both the Main Campus and North Lebanon Campus (NLC). The teams built Rube Goldberg machines, which are contraptions purposely over-engineered to perform a simple task in a complex fashion, usually including a chain reaction. The projects were showcased in front of a jury on both Campuses. These striking projects are currently on display at NLC's Amphitheater.



FIELD SAMPLING: AMCHIT AND BYBLOS COASTLINE

Within the scope of CEN 599: Engineering Design II, Dr. Elsy Ibrahim supervised a group of three students who worked on coastal flooding along the Byblos coastline. As part of the project, she and her students held several visits to the area during Spring 2014, surveying the coastline under study and meeting with engineers from the municipality.



2ND IEEE LEBANON LCRD 2014

The IEEE Lebanon Chapter Communication Society in collaboration with the Faculty of Engineering (FH) at the Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) organized on Saturday, May 3, 2014, an event titled, "2nd IEEE Lebanon Communications Research Day (LCRD) 2014."

The Research Day gathers researchers and professors from the most prestigious universities in Lebanon, such as NDU, American University of Beirut (AUB), Balamand,

Lebanese University (LU), etc., as well as foreign and local research centers, such as Université Européenne de Bretagne, Telecom Sud-Paris, Université de Lille, Orange Telecom, and Mobinet.

The theme gleaned the latest technologies and challenges in the field of Telecommunications and the 4G and 5G mobile services, such as security issues, networks, green communication, antennas, coding, etc.

The program started at 8.30 a.m.

with a welcome speech delivered by Dr. Chady el-Mou Cary, Coordinator of the FH at NLC, and Dr. Bachar el-Hasan, Chairperson of the IEEE ComSoc Lebanon Chapter, presented a comprehensive introduction and summary of the IEEE ComSoc activities.

The program included three plenary sessions enriched by discussions and a Q&A session, which involved around a hundred attendees. Students from across Lebanon, including NLC's EE and CCE students, commented on the benefits of having attended the event.



INTERVIEWING NAAMEH MUNICIPALITY EMPLOYEES AND VISITING ITS LANDFILL

Within the scope of CEN 599: Engineering Design II, Dr. Elsy Ibrahim supervised a group of four students, studying temporal changes of the Naameh landfill and its environs. Dr. Ibrahim went with her students on June 7, 2014, to Naameh to interview employees of the municipality regarding the landfill before making a stop at the landfill itself.

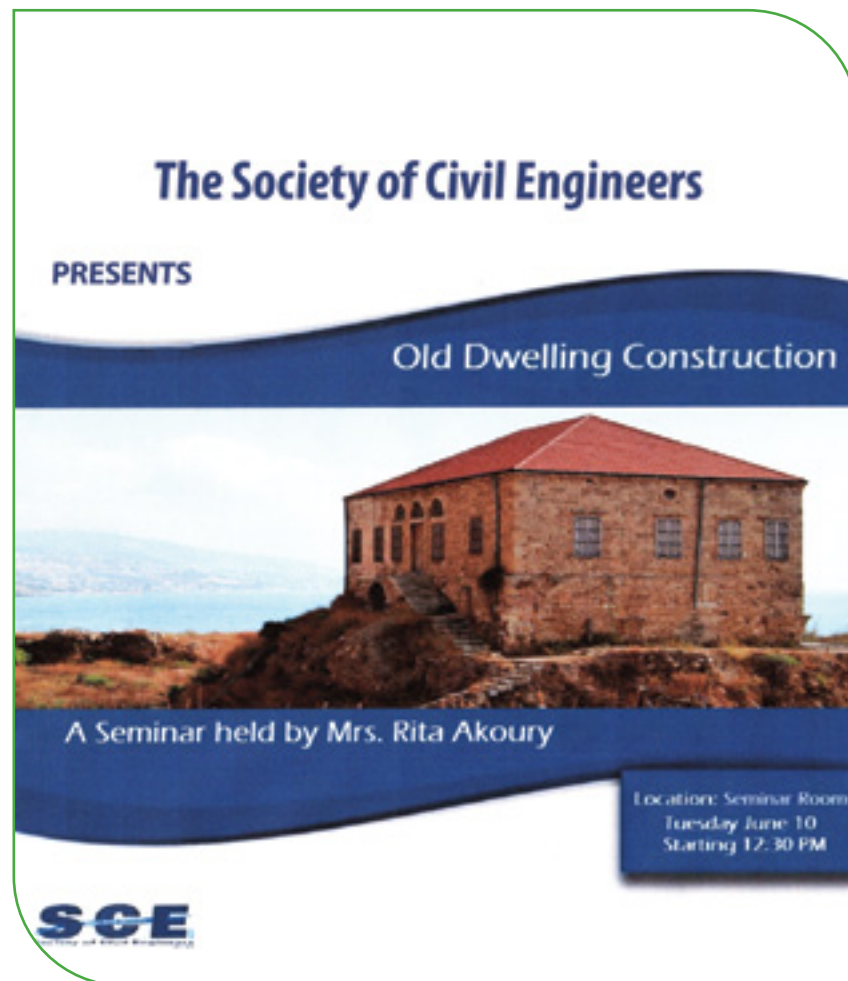


SEMINAR:

“Old Dwelling Construction”

The Society of Civil Engineers (SCE) at Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) organized on Tuesday, June 10, 2014, at 12.30 p.m., in the NLC Seminar Room, a seminar titled, “Old Dwelling Construction,” which was presented by Mrs. Rita Akoury.

The seminar, which targeted Civil Engineering and Architecture students, covered old building techniques used in Lebanon and the energy efficiency of these dwellings, such as ventilation and lighting techniques. Mrs. Akoury also showed the different types of construction and compared the dwellings of old Lebanese cities to the construction of villages during the same period. The PowerPoint presentation revealed the evolution of materials used in both the interior and exterior of those dwellings.



SCE STUDENTS CONDUCT BEACH CLEAN-UP

Students of the Society of Civil Engineers (SCE) at the Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) on Sunday, May 11, 2014, participated in a nationwide coastal clean-up campaign organized by Operation Big Blue Association (OBBA). NLC students were tasked with cleaning up a public beach in Batroun. Several locals appreciated this initiative and were motivated to help the team accomplish their beach clean-up efforts. Before the day was through, the NLC students ensured that the beach was spotless for bathers and surfers to enjoy.

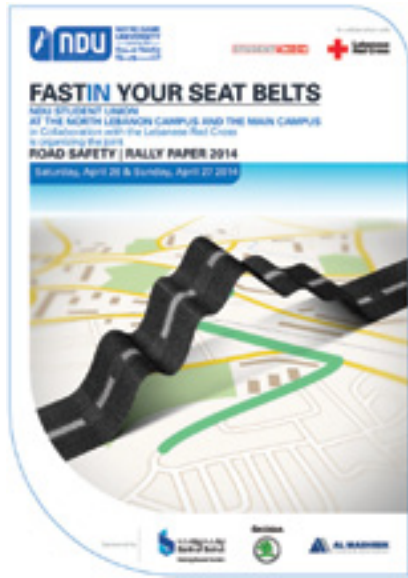


NDU RALLY PAPER-14

Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) organized between April 26 and 27, 2014, an exceptional event, the NDU Rally Paper-14. This first-of-a-kind event at NDU involved the Main Campus and NLC. The event was themed, “Road Safety,” and its mission was to raise funds for the Lebanese Red Cross. The first round of the Rally Paper involved an educational competition in which participants were tested on their general knowledge.

On the NLC side, the Active Student Club (ASC) and the Society of Civil Engineers (SCE) in collaboration with all Student Clubs and Societies organized the event. The event took six months to prepare, but it was well worth it as 50 cars revved their engines at the NLC start line amid cheers and music blaring, and screeched off to the finish line.





The organizers were tasked with:

- Arranging and hosting on April 25 a briefing event at NLC, which included a presentation of the rules and regulations, registration of teams, and a presentation of safety regulations by the Lebanese Red Cross;
- Managing the launch event;
- Preparing car safety protocols and implementing safety checks procedures for the two-day event;
- Organizing and planning the routes for the first day, which started at NLC, covered various coastal and mountainous areas in the North, and ended in Mount Lebanon;
- Organizing games for the first day at NLC, including riddles, challenges, games, IQ tests, etc.;
- Advertising the event through TV interviews, radio ads, and flyers that were distributed to various universities;
- Collecting and structuring up to 600 clever and multi-themed questions;
- Sourcing sponsors to fund the event;
- Shooting videos and taking photos for the entire event;
- Providing a DJ for the various activities, including the closing ceremony at the Main Campus;
- Recruiting 20 teams from various universities and many scouts to participate in this event.

The prizes were a combination of cash and gifts that amounted \$10,000, \$5,000, and \$2,000, for the first, second, and third places respectively. The winners of the first NDU Rally Paper were:

- 1st: Rotaract- AUB
- 2nd: Scout Green Feel
- 3rd: Engineering Without Borders (EWB)- NDU

Celebration and awards distribution took place on Monday May 12, 2014, at the NDU Main Campus. The event was able to raise US\$2,500 for the Lebanese Red Cross.



VISIT OF THE DEAN OF THE FE AND DEPARTMENTS' CHAIRS

The Dean of the Faculty of Engineering (FE) Professor Michel Hayek and the Chairs of Departments (ECCE, CEE, and ME) visited on December 12, 2013, and May 2, 2014, the Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU) to meet with faculty members, staff, and students.

These semestrial visits are initiated by a meeting held with NDU-NLC Director Fr. Samir Ghsoub and followed by a series of purposive meetings and seminars, regarding the latest issues that need be announced and/or shared with the NDU Community. The major subject on the agenda for the 2013-2014 academic year was the ABET accreditation for the FE. In this regard, Dr. Najj Houry, the Coordinator of the ABET accreditation process, gave an updated and comprehensive presentation. In addition, specific surveys have been collected, concerning Student Outcomes (SOs), Course Learning Objectives (CLOs), and others. Every time, the visit concludes with a tour of the facilities and the engineering labs where various CE, EE, and CCE labs have been installed and/or upgraded.



GIS DAY AT NLC

The Department of Computer Science at the Faculty of Natural & Applied Sciences (FNAS), Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC), organized on Saturday, May 3, 2014, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., a GIS Day.

The objectives of the workshop, which was conducted by Mr. Wassim Katerji, were to introduce participants

to the basics of GIS and spatial analysis, using available open-source GIS tools, specifically Quantum GIS.

Participants were faculty members and students from the Departments of Science, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer and Communication Engineering, and Civil Engineering.

The workshop began with an in-

roduction to GIS and an overview of Quantum GIS. The workshop covered Geographic Data Creation and Manipulation, Data Queries, Vector-Based Analysis, Raster/Terrain-Based Analysis, and Additional Plugins.

The feedback received from participants was positive. Certificates were distributed to everyone who completed the workshop.



PRESENTATION

The Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences (FNAS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) organized on Friday, April 4, 2014, at noon, a presentation titled, *"Divine Rhythm of Algorithm: An Analogy Between Religion and Computer Science,"* which Fr. Tony Rouhayem delivered in the NLC Conference Room.

Fr. Rouhayem's talk was about drawing similarities between science and religion, and proving that these approaches are not in conflict but that they complement each other. The speaker gave reasonable evidence to prove that religion is the basis of everything, especially science. He also introduced the concept of algorithm and proved that it is applicable in both science and religion. He defined and explained how God's algorithm works. He concluded that the perfect algorithm is choosing God and that love leads to salvation; therefore, if human beings resort to love, then they will overcome all obstacles that hinder their lives.



PUBLIC LECTURE AT NLC

The Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences (FNHS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) organized on Tuesday, April 29, 2014, at 12:30 p.m., a public lecture in the Conference Room (second floor) titled, *"Syrian Refugees and the Rise of Communicable Diseases in Lebanon - An Update."*

The lecture was delivered by both Dr. Nada Ghosn, Head of the Epidemiological Surveillance Program at the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health, and Mrs. Samar Abou Assaly, Foe-cal Point of Case Managers at the International Medical Corps (IMC).



The first speaker, Dr. Ghosn, discussed the polio status in Lebanon and went on to explain how the infectious poliovirus is rapidly spreading across the Arab region due to the influx of Syrian refugees. Her activities focus on raising awareness to this regional crisis. Dr. Ghosn explained that she belongs to a group whose main mission is to enhance surveillance and find solutions to this dangerous virus.

The first solution is garnering the support of professionals who take action after the various municipalities inform them of those infected with the virus or those who show symptoms of the virus. Another solution is conducting vaccination campaigns to reduce the possibility of Lebanese children being affected by this looming virus that has already circulated in Palestine, Iraq, and Egypt. She also discussed the status of measles, which has originated in Lebanon, and stressed the enhancement of a national vaccination program to reduce its spread. The last virus she elaborated on is Leishmaniasis, which is infecting Syria refugees only and whose origin is from Syria. She gave the audience the website — www.moph.gov.lb — to read further on the national protocol for diagnosis and treatment of these communicable diseases: Polio, measles, and Leishmaniasis. The speaker concluded that polio is a real threat, because it is invading the Arab region and especially the hosting Lebanese communities since the Lebanese borders are open. She warned that the Lebanese children are at high risk to catch these diseases if swift measures are not taken to reduce the risks of these threats.

The second speaker, Samar Asayli, is a delegate from the IMC group that has several health centers in Belha, Akkar, Tripoli, and South Lebanon. She elaborated

on the role of the IMC, which pays doctors who examine Syrian or Lebanese patients and also provides or donates medicine for patients who visit the dispensaries. The Medical Mobile Unit (MMU) also trains Syrian refugees or Lebanese citizens to prevent the spread of diarrhea, bronchitis, etc., and to raise awareness on the importance of hygiene and vaccination. This organization is also providing a free drug called Pepkit for rape victims. In addition, these centers care for the mental health of Lebanese/Syrian patients.



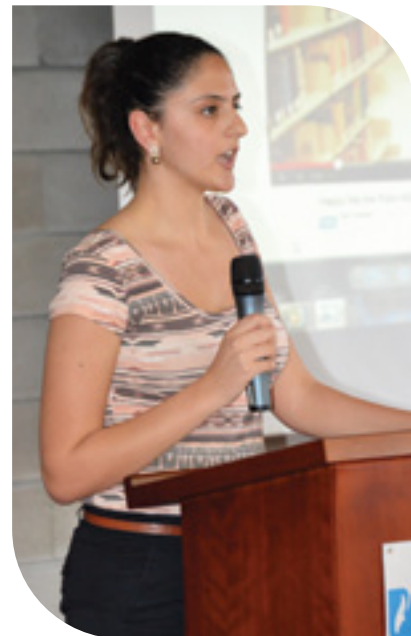
CELEBRATING YOUR NEXT STEP 2014

Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) in collaboration with the Alumni Affairs Office organized on Wednesday, May 28, 2014, the annual event titled, "Celebrating Your Next Step 2014." The event gives the Graduating Class of 2014 the opportunity to talk with NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, Assistant Vice-President for Academic Support Mr. Simon Abou Jaoude, and NDU-NLC Director, Fr. Samir Ghsoub.

Following Fr. Ghsoub's welcome address, Mr. Abou Jaoude spoke to the students about the privileges attached to being an NDU Alumni. Ms. Melissa Areigy, a tentative Spring graduate, then took the podium and

talked about her great experiences as an NDU student. A documentary was screened in which four NDU Alumni (one from NDU /NLC) talked about their success stories and their experiences at NDU.

Finally, Fr. Moussa delivered an inspiring address in which he called upon the students to be brave when tackling the challenges they would face in the future. He also reminded them to remain true to the moral standards of NDU and all its teachings.



DEAN'S HONOR LIST: SPRING 2014

Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) through its Mission encourages its students to achieve academic excellence. One of the many means of encouragement and recognition is the Dean's List of Excellence.

A ceremony was held on June 3, 2014, at 6:30 p.m., at the North Lebanon Campus (NLC) to honor all NLC's outstanding students who were on the Dean's Honor List. Proud parents were invited to attend this ceremony to support their children. Others present were the NDU-NLC Director Fr. Samir Ghsoub, coordinators, and deans of different Faculties from the NLC and the Main Campus, part-timers, and staff.

The event began with the Lebanese national anthem, followed by a speech delivered by Dr. George Eid. Dr. Eid praised the efforts of the University in trying to help students face social challenges and pursue academic endeavors. He said that he was pleased with the cordial, family-like interaction between NLC faculty members and students. He also said that he was proud of the way NDU made every effort to help its student find job opportunities in Lebanon so that they would not be forced to emigrate. Dr. Eid praised the University on its efforts to obtain international accreditation, and he also praised the new developments in its curricula. He specifically commended Fr. Ghsoub on his hard work in developing a viable transportation means for students, giving financial aid, and considering the economic situation of some parents.

Ms. Elsie Gerges, the event's host, then started calling faculty coordinators individually to present the Honor List certificate to the students of their respec-



tive Faculty. Upon hearing their names called, each student went up to stage, accepted the certificate from their respective coordinator, and had their picture taken with Fr. Ghsoub. In between the awarding ceremony, Vivian Saade, an NLC student with a beautiful voice, took to the stage to sing a few classic Arabic songs, inspiring hope and strength. After the certificate-giving ceremony ended, some students from the Faculty of Humanities (FH) and the Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design presented a small play titled, "Fart Zen," which cracked up the audience.



Following the hilarious play, Fr. Ghsoub reiterated on how proud he was of all students and commended their hard work. He also confirmed that over the course of the next two months, NLC would witness new construction projects in its ongoing bid to expand the Campus. The event then moved to the second floor where everyone enjoyed a big buffet.



FOUNDERS' DAY AT NLC

Every year, Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) eagerly awaits the special day that commemorates its founding: Founders' Day, which is observed with a sense of pride, unity, and passion. The North Lebanon Campus (NLC) celebrated Founders' Day on Friday May 23, 2014. NLC faculty members, staff, and students brought along with them friends from outside the University to enjoy this special occasion and all its activities.

The crowds began arriving on Campus as all the booths, sponsors, and amusement and entertainment stands were being set up. The anthems of both Lebanon and the University were played, and the crowd stood up to show their respect.

Fr. Samir Ghsoub, Director of NDU-NLC, delivered a succinct but rousing speech and officially declared Founders' Day open. In his speech, Fr. Ghsoub thanked all students and staff for attending and announced that given the significant increase in the University student population, NLC would start adding new buildings to the Campus.

Some clubs then entered with their huge vehicles and started cooking meat and roasting marshmallows over previously prepared fires. The Radical Fitness Group then rushed on stage and enthusiastically demonstrated to a highly receptive audience some fight and dance moves. The band Headache then took the stage and played a number of exhilarating instrumental tunes. The presidents of NLC Clubs then walked on stage to introduce their stands.

Afterward, the winners of the NDU-NLC Rally Paper Event were announced and invited on stage



to receive their trophies. In addition, Dr. Elsie Ibrahim and Dr. Rim Houry were offered a humble token from NDU/NLC for their dedicated efforts in organizing the event. Finally, NLC staff took to the stage for a group photo and the cutting of the celebration cake.

Before the guest singers arrived, the celebrations continued with a DJ spinning some tunes for the club parades to follow. When the singers arrived, they fired up the atmosphere and had the crowd dancing, cheering, and doing the national *dabkeh*. In between the singers' performances, the winners of the tombola were announced, and the event ended around 1:00 a.m.

For the University, it has always been and will always be a special day to remember.

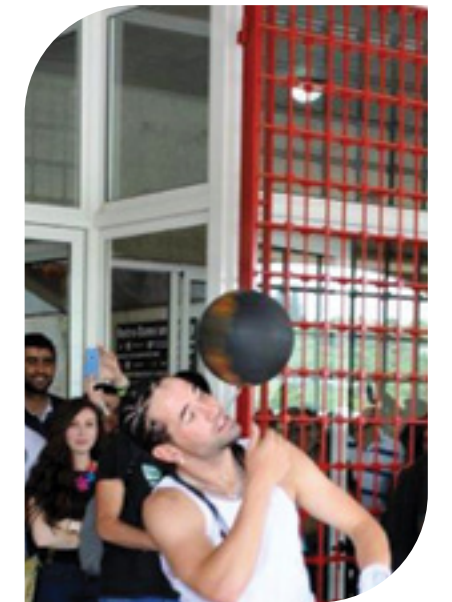


SOCCER SHOW

The Freewill Club at Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) invited on May 29, 2014, Frenchman Arnaud Sean Garnier, the first world champion of Red Bull Street Style, to visit NLC as part of the ongoing Red Bull campaign.

During his introductory speech, Garnier expressed his passion for football and how he became what he is now. He then started asking the audience to cheer him on and made clever jokes to grab the audiences' attention. Garnier demonstrated superior skills and abilities by maneuvering the ball around his legs even, with his eyes closed, which impressed even the most experienced players in the audience.

Garnier then challenged people in the audience to play a friendly match of mini-football with him to show not only his skills in freestyle but also his professionalism in playing soccer in general. At the end of the act, he even demonstrated his most sophisticated moves, which affected the audience positively. In conclusion, the audience really loved Garnier and would definitely love to see more of him.





SHOUF
CAMPUS

“CELEBRATING YOUR NEXT STEP 2014”

Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) held on June 3, 2014, its annual event titled, “Celebrating Your Next Step 2014.” NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa and Assistant Vice-President for Academic Support Mr. Simon Abou Jaoude visited the SC to meet with the Graduating Class 2014.

NDU-SC Director Fr. Francois Akl welcomed Fr. Moussa and spoke to the graduating students, emphasizing that graduation is not an end but a beginning. Fr. Akl told them that despite the national and global woes, they are Lebanon’s everlasting sunshine. He

likened the student-Alma Mater relationship to that of a mother and child. Children move on, but the bosom of their mother is always there for them. He concluded by saying, “Education is not about gathering information and reciting formulas. Education is continuous attainment of knowledge through self-development and reading; it can only reflect itself in the high religious and moral standards of the graduating students along with their seriousness, humbleness and open-mindedness.”

Mr. Abou Jaoude then took the podium to discuss the graduation

process and the importance of taking part in both the Commencement Ceremony and Commencement Dinner, which bring together all three Campuses under one roof. He told them to keep abreast of NDU news via social media networks and the NDU Website. He then gave the floor to Fr. Moussa.

Fr. Moussa thanked Fr. Akl for his efforts in helping to produce such a high caliber of graduating students. He told the Graduating Class that many challenges lay ahead, but that he was certain that they were ready to face them all by breaking the barriers and



building solid careers in their chosen disciplines. He stressed that the ultimate goal of NDU is to build citizens who are morally, spiritually, and psychologically up to the challenge. What sets them apart from other graduating students from other institutions is an identity that is built on good reputation, sincerity, and high moral standards. He reassured them that academically they are ready for the job market, because they have received the best education; however, he advised them to continually stay abreast of the latest developments in their respective fields to maintain those high standards. Finally, he expressed his pride in the SC and the quality of students that graduate from it, promising to develop the Campus even further.

Ms. Marlene Ghanem then took the podium. She thanked the NDU Administration for having the foresight to open the SC, which has since its founding been a great success. She spoke highly of the SC Faculty and staff, and thanked them for helping her and her classmates throughout the years. Ms. Ghanem pleaded with the Administrators to start MA/MS programs at SC so that hundreds of students would not have to study elsewhere for those degrees.

Fr. Moussa then took the podium again to address the eager students. "Come back," he said, "and visit these buildings where you spent so many good days; bring your spouses and children and show them where your

classes were and where your futures were shaped." He encouraged them to dream and keep on dreaming, but not to do so alone, because without sharing a dream, it becomes a nightmare.

Mr. Abou Jaoude then spoke again to the students about the Alumni Association and screened a short video of NDU Alumni from different Campuses talking about their majors, their present careers, and their best times at NDU.

Finally, Ms. Niyamar Bou Ajram spoke on behalf of the SC Graduating Class 2014, thanking the Administrators, Faculty, and staff members for the help they extended to them over the years.

DEAN'S LIST AWARDS FOR FH AND FBAE STUDENTS

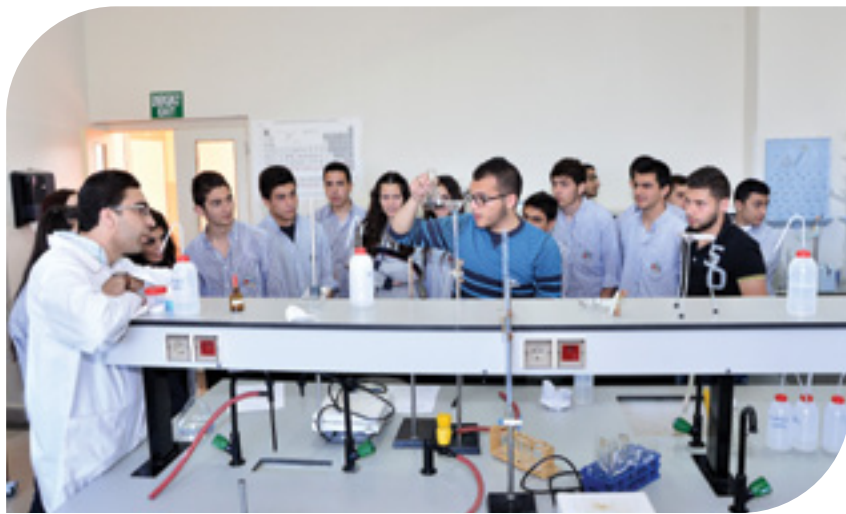
The Faculty of Business Administration and Economics (FBAE), and the Faculty of Humanities (FH) at Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) organized on June 6, 2014, their annual event, honoring students eligible to receive the Dean's List Award. The coordinators of both Faculties began the ceremony with a short speech, followed by a word delivered by Ms. Jessica Hanna, the student with the highest GPA. After the distribution of awards, students and faculty members celebrated the success of these high achievers over some refreshments offered by the University.



OPEN DOORS AT SC

Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) organized on Wednesday, April 9, 2014, its annual "Open Doors." Despite the nationwide school strikes, students from many schools in the Shouf, Aley, Choueifat, Eklim, Jezzine, and Saida toured the Campus, met with their future advisors and instructors, and were introduced to Campus facilities and services. Some students also gathered information regarding the Financial Aid Program.

The Clubs decorated the Campus outdoor area with attractive displays, games, competitions, and many other fun activities.



SC HONORS HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) recently organized a special dinner on Campus in Deir el-Kamar to honor high schools principals from the regions of Shouf, south Lebanon, Jezzine, Aley, and Metn. Present were: Fr. Joseph Bou Aoun, representing the Superior General of the Maronite Order Abbot Boutros Tarabay, esteemed members of the clergy, chairpersons, coordinators, deans and directors from both the SC and the Main Campus.

Following the Lebanese national anthem, NDU-SC Director Fr. Francois Akl welcomed the guests saying, "There is no greater respect than to open one's heart and one's home to friends." Fr. Akl went on to explain the prominent role the SC plays in academia and in keeping abreast of global advancements in science and technology.

NDU President Fr. Walid Mousa in his speech stressed that the SC has played a remarkable and pioneering region in the Shouf by working hard to build strong and lasting bonds with high schools. He also thanked the SC administrators, Faculty, and staff for their hard work and commitment.

The dinner concluded with the promise that NDU representatives and school principals would continue to build even stronger bonds.



CONFERENCE: "CIVIL MARRIAGE IN LEBANON"

Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) held on May 30, 2014, its annual conference titled, "Civil Marriage in Lebanon." The event was held on Campus in Deir el-Kamar under the auspices the Minister of Education and Higher Education Mr. Elias Bou Saab, who was represented by Mr. Eli Naim.

NDU-SC Director Fr. Francois Akl in his opening speech welcomed attendees, guests, and speakers, and reassured them that the best place to debate controversial issues, such as "Civil Marriage in Lebanon," is the university platform.

NDU President Fr. Walid Mousa then took the podium to present his opinion on the subject, clarifying that, contrary to common belief, the fact that he is a member of the clergy does not negate his academic nature when dealing with such sensitive and important social and religious issues. After his speech, Mr. Naim took the floor.

The first session was titled, "The Struggling Rituals/Beliefs." The speakers were Mr. Ibrahim Shamseddin and Mr. Ghassan Mahmoud. The mediator was Mr. Anwar Daou.

The second session was titled, "Toward a Better Society: Keep the Law!" The speakers were President and Judge Ghaleb Ghanem and Mr. Farjallah Fawwaz. The mediator was Mr. Antoine Sfeir.

A few minutes were given before each session to Nidal and Khoulood, the famous couple who were the first to hold a civil marriage ceremony in Lebanon and register it under Lebanese law.

The conference concluded with the following recommendations:

- 1- Civil marriage still does not exist in Lebanon while all the civil marriages conducted abroad are registered in Lebanon.
- 2- The civil marriage contract must not violate the belief in personal freedom and must not have negative implications on the issue of faith.
- 3- Legalizing the civil marriage contract in Lebanon can be the first step toward a civil government.
- 4- Due to the different religious backgrounds of the Lebanese, a civil marriage should only occur when there is consensus and absolute agreement on this issue.



The conference was concluded with a lunch where the discussions continued.

The NDU-SC administration promised attendees that more of these co-academic conferences, covering contemporary issues and topics, would be held regularly to help create social awareness, tolerance, and progress.



SC CELEBRATES FOUNDERS' DAY 2014

Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) celebrated on Friday, May 23, 2014, Founders' Day on its Campus located atop Mar Abda Hill in Deir el-Kamar, Shouf. Administrators, Faculty, staff, students, special guests, and communities from the Shouf region all gathered to enjoy the much-looked forward to annual event.

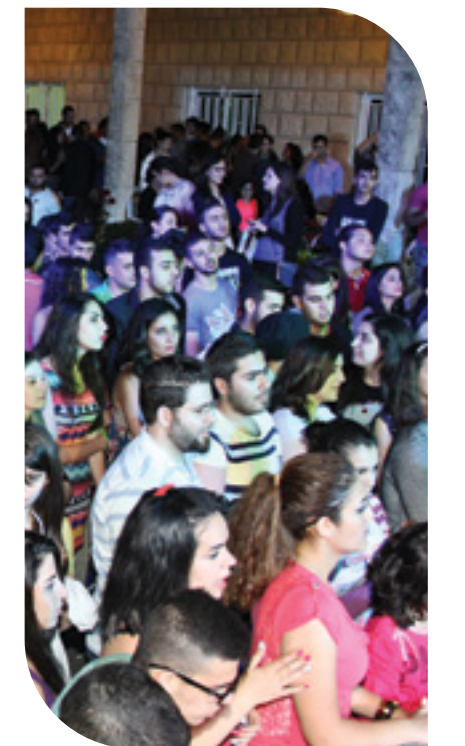
The Lebanese national anthem and NDU anthem kicked-off the celebrations at around 3:00 p.m. NDU-SC Director Fr. Francois Akl warmly welcomed all those present for the event. He spoke about the importance of having a sense of belonging to the University and of being true "NDUwiyyoun" or "NDUers" who uphold the academic, social, and moral standards of their Alma Mater. Renowned Lebanese director Mr. Michel Khattar then took the stage to speak about the theme used in the movies and pictures for NDU-SC Founders' Day 2014. He spoke about the daily 'pictures' we keep in our lives and the bigger picture of our achievements and successes. He discussed looking at life from different and positive perspectives, and cherishing special moments. He also encouraged SC students to start an audiovisual club.

Fr. Akl then presented tokens of appreciation to select guests and sponsors. The cutting of the cake ended the opening ceremony while singer and musician



Nicolas Saadeh Nakhleh roused the audience with some much-loved tunes. After Nakhleh's performance, club parades and student dances followed, leading to a frenzy of all-night musical performances.

The celebrities that graced the Campus stage were: Michel Azzi, Zeinat, and Wissam al-Amir. The singers put on extraordinary hip-swaying performances. Fr. Akl honored them with special awards for their contribution in helping to make Founders' Day 2014 a memorable one.

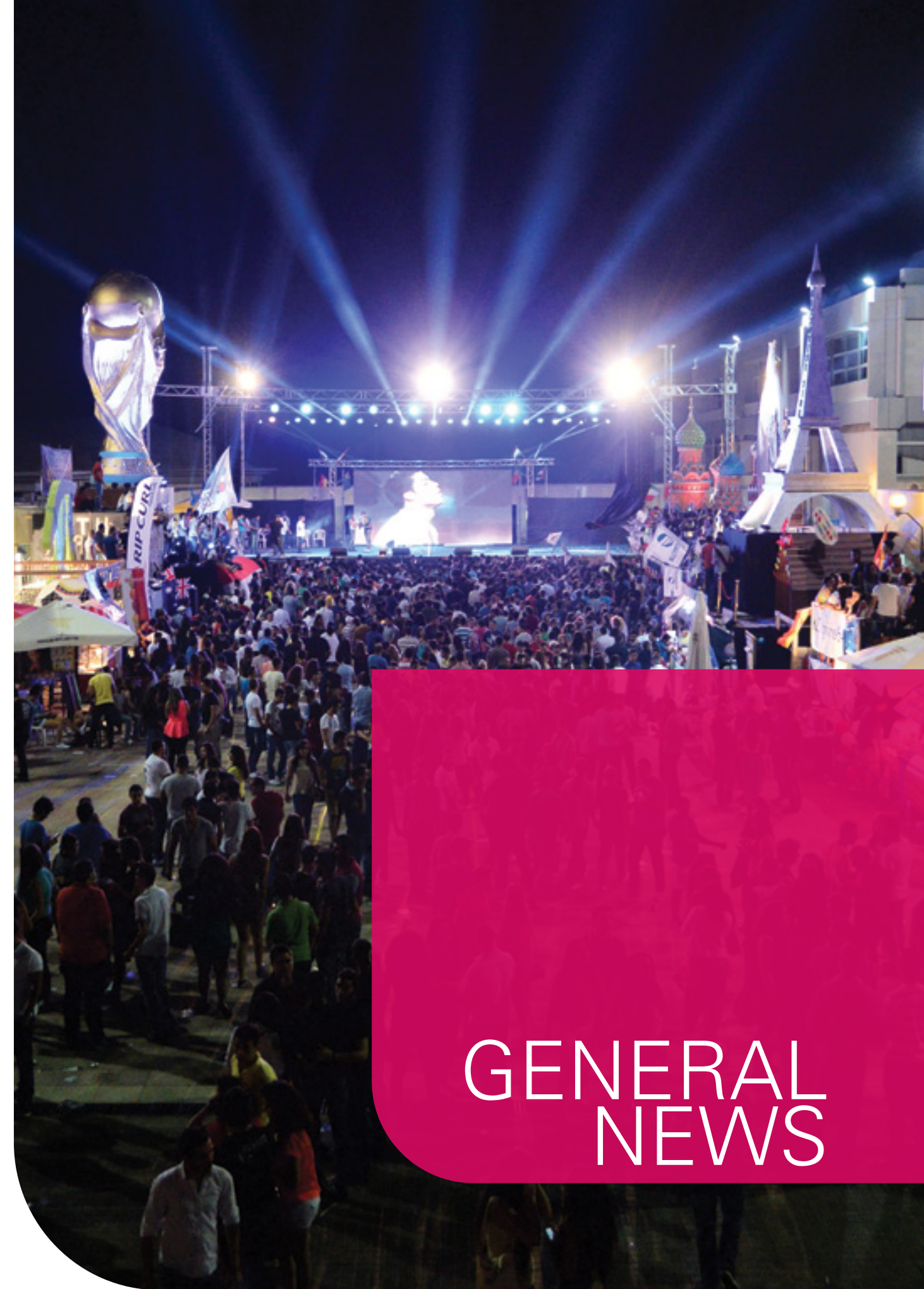


EVENT: "LET'S TALK POETRY"

During Poetry Month, the Library at Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC), in collaboration with the PR Office, organized on April 24, 2014, an event titled, "Let's Talk Poetry."

The event started with the Lebanese national anthem followed by a welcome speech delivered by SC Director Fr. Francois Akl. Dr. Sawssan Najjar, the host of the event, then introduced and talked about the life and works of renowned Lebanese poet and writer Said Akl. A song written by Akl and performed by legendary Lebanese diva Fairouz followed the talk. After the song, Dina Thebian, an NDU-SC student, read one of Akl's poems.

Afterward, it was time to listen to the special guest of the event: The famous poet and songwriter Nizar Francis, who read to the audience two of his best works. Later, Hanin Ghanam and Refaat Ghanem, two talented NDU-SC students, took the podium to recite some of their beautiful poems. Finally, Fr. Akl presented Francis with an "Acknowledgement Award" in honor of his great works.



GENERAL NEWS

NDU CELEBRATES 27TH FOUNDERS' DAY

Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) celebrated Founders' Day on May 8 and May 16, 2014. The 27th Founders' Day event commemorates the rich heritage and promising future of NDU.

The celebrations at the Main Campus were launched on May 8 with the annual Founders' Day address delivered by NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa (*reprinted here*), which focused on his nine-year experience as President of NDU. Present were: Administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, NDU friends, invited guests, and public figures.

Three documentaries, prepared by the Division of Audio Visual Arts at NDU, were screened. The themes of these documentaries were inspired from new technologies introduced at NDU, including the all-new Observatory. The montage highlighted important events during the Academic Year 2013-2014. After the screening, Fr. Moussa joined administrators in cutting the celebratory cake.

May 16 began with a special Mass organized by the Pastoral Office in which Fr. Ziad Antoun, Vice-President for Administration at NDU, was the main celebrant. Following Mass, the Students Activities Office (SAO) gathered students and members of the various NDU Clubs in the open area to light a candle to commemorate NDU's 27th Anniversary. The theme of the event was titled, "The Future is Our Goal."

Actors Youssef el-Khal and his wife, Nicole Bardawil, as well as many singers, and public figures joined in the fun to make it a memorable night.



Fr. Walid Moussa delivering his speech on Founders' Day 2014.



Fr. Ziad Antoun (pictured center), Vice-President for Administration, during Mass.



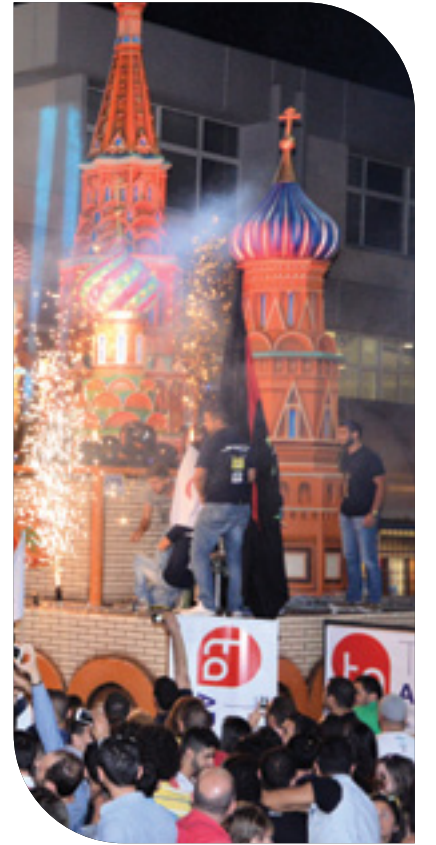
"THE FUTURE IS OUR GOAL."



GENERAL NEWS



THE 27TH FOUNDERS' DAY EVENT COMMEMORATES THE RICH HERITAGE AND PROMISING FUTURE OF NDU



"RUN, LEAP, AND CELEBRATE FOR YOU ARE ALIVE TODAY!"

- BRYANT MCGILL



Address of Fr. Walid Moussa
 President of Notre Dame University – Louaize
 Founders' Day 2014

Dear Friends,

What would a university president say were he to become a student again, attend classes, and then be asked to evaluate nine years of education?

Yes, I admit before everyone here today that during my nine-year tenure as President of NDU, I have learned more than I have taught. I am not sure whether that is a transgression or a mistake, or an undeniable slip of human frailty.

Today, I stand before you, before my colleagues, and before other university presidents and delegates to open my heart to you and to share with you some lessons I have learned during my tenure in terms of higher education and national endeavor.

I have learned that becoming president of a university is not the culmination of an individual's career in this institution; rather, it is a journey of personal development and growth. For us, priests and monks dedicated to God, the presidency is a mission that can be assigned to any one of us so that, through God's grace, we may fulfill this mission, and as Jesus Christ said, 'Whoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.' (Mark 10:43-44). Woe unto us should we be led astray or be misled by appearances, or be conceited fools. Do not think the presidency— any presidency for that matter, even if it is the presidency of the republic — is the be all and end all for the tallest tree has never been the one to yield the most or the best fruit.

I have learned that no institution of higher education is an island alienated from the realities of the nation, society, politics, economics, religion, and security... We cannot simply say on a whim, 'Let them stew in their own juice...'

We are invited through cultural competence to willingly face these challenging realities and find solutions. Yes, we, as educational institutions, ought to assume an important role in Lebanon to save our nation from meandering through the current minefields of personal conflicts of interest, which could in turn lead our country and us to creep ever closer to the cliff edge. The question then arises: 'Are we ready to assume our role?' We have been entrusted with the task of shaping leaders and not blind followers.

I have learned that higher education should not discriminate on the basis of religious, confessional, or political affiliation, or constituency and social class.

I affirm that I have learned that I must immerse myself in the service of the entire nation, just as Mary—whose name our University carries—is the Mother of all communities and all peoples. I also affirm that we have transcended narrow political interests and shameful financial practices. In reality, one-third of our students (from a student population of seven thousand and five hundred) are unable to settle their tuition fees in full, and despite this looming truth, we never abandoned them, and they in turn have never abandoned this University.

I also affirm that despite all circumstances, we, without prejudice, have respected the rights of students to express themselves freely. We have encouraged Student Elections because such elections exemplify democratic life.



I have learned that higher learning cannot be fitted into a mold or confined within four walls. Modernity, technology, and the digital world compel us to ride in the groove of perpetual motion and constant change: We refuse obsolete curricula or 'fossilized' teaching methods. With the break of every new dawn, a novelty arises and imposes itself... It is, therefore, our responsibility and the responsibility of the authorities concerned to keep abreast of these new developments. We should break with conventions that are no longer in harmony with the constant revolutions of a new era. But how can we strike a balance between convention and modernity? During these past nine years, I have learned greatly from this challenging question. I would not be exaggerating to say that our University has witnessed significant developments in this new era, especially in the field of Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

I have learned that University work is a collective effort in which the President, faculty members, staff, and students must work as a team. We are all on the same 'battlefield' – a battlefield where the President's authority is not authoritarian and where the superior-subordinate relationship is not the norm. During the past nine years, I have always embraced everything that I have done in a spirit of cooperation, solidarity, and partnership with all members of the University community. If I have ever committed the mistake of making sole executive decisions, then such acts were due to urgent needs.

What have I learned? What have I not learned? I will leave those answers to colleagues and friends.

Today, on the occasion of NDU's Twenty-seventh Anniversary, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to:

First, God for all He has given us, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, and for protecting our University.

Second, the Maronite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary, represented by Most Reverend Abbot General Boutros Tarabay, His Beatitude Patriarch Cardinal Mar Bechara Boutros al-Rahi, founding father of NDU, the Supreme Council, and all priests and colleagues with whom I have worked here and who have assisted me in all endeavors.

Third, the entire NDU community, starting with the Board of Trustees (BOT) presided over by Dr. Francois Bassil; vice-presidents; deans; chairpersons; faculty members; staff; and all personnel, including everyone in the cleaning, maintenance, security, and gardening units.

Thanks to all of you, NDU will always distinguish itself as a prominent institution of higher education.

Thank you all.

Long live NDU!

Long live Lebanon!

NDU JOB FAIR 2014

The Placement Office, a unit under the Office of Public Affairs and Communications at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), held from May 20 to 21, 2014, its annual Job Fair on the Main Campus. The Job Fair 2014 took place under the patronage of the Minister of Labor H.E. Mr. Sejaan Azzi.

The Job Fair brought together many leading companies and organizations, and featured a range of employers from diverse industries, including banks, insurance companies, contracting and engineering firms, computer and communications businesses, catering companies, hotels, schools, airlines, transportation businesses, retail and distribution firms, logistics, NGOs, libraries, etc.

This event gives students, graduates, and alumni the opportunity to discuss with various company representatives career opportunities (from internships to seasonal, part-time, and full-time jobs). These representatives are in a position to give prospective candidates company and career information, and to offer them assignments with some of the top marketers.

The official opening was attended by H.E. Mr. Azzi.; NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa; NDU Vice-Presidents; NDU Shouf Campus (SC) Director Fr. Francois AKI ; NDU North Lebanon Campus (NLC) Director Fr. Samir Ghsoub; NDU Faculty Deans; NDU faculty members, staff, students, alumni; and representatives from various companies and organizations as well as media representatives.

Dr. Nada Saad Saber in her welcome speech welcomed participants and stressed the importance of hosting this annual event, which opens new horizons to NDU graduates and alumni.



Mrs. Loyal Nehme Matar, Placement Officer, said in her speech, "We are indeed blessed that the Job Fair has become an annual event in which our graduates and alumni can meet with prospective employers. This interaction is a bridge over the dark and turbulent waters of suffering and the harrowing sounds of menacing thunder, and rest assured that our will, faith, and means of education are far stronger than these destructive forces. Together, we will try to surmount these challenges and stand resolute in the face of this economic stagnation, political vacuum, and psychological misery that has become our daily bread... We are proud to have you all here today to invest and build your homeland. You are the yeast kneaded with love. Before you stand our youth educated on all fronts: Academic, humanitarian, cultural, and fiducial. Hold them tightly as you would a holy relic, keep watch over them, and guard them with your hearts. Minister Azzi, the patron of this event, has honored us here today with his presence. He loves his country and its youth, and carries on his shoulders the burden of our nation's citizens who trust him. He is here today to share in our success..."

Mr. Souheil Matar, NDU Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications, said in his speech, "Many strive for personal benefit, but we strive for the benefit of our children. The government uses the words 'national interest' as its slogan, and we, in our optimism, believe them; yet, true national interest starts here... The harmonious connection between employer/employee relationships cannot exist if students are unable to obtain their degrees and enter the job market. For this reason, we are here with His Excellency Mr. Azzi, who is an open-minded, honest, patriotic, self-made man. We ask him to provide us with

specific research studies that indicate objectively what the market in Lebanon needs, and based on this information, we will be willing to review our curricula ..."

NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa in his speech said, "This Fair is a bridge between employers and our graduates. These two segments form a united society and without them neither Lebanon nor the future can exist. I liken this interaction to a University exam. Successfully passing an exam at NDU is insufficient; successfully passing a job interview and choosing the right job opportunity is the real exam... This year's Job Fair has an added value, because it is being held under the patronage of His Excellency Mr. Jejaan Azzi whom we consider a dear friend and brother, and who cares about our students as much as he cares about his children... Lebanon, unfortunately, is suffering from a massive brain drain. Let us all work together at every level to develop a strategic, educational, social, and economic plan to help do away with this disturbing reality."

For his part, Mr. Azzi said, "I have every intention to lay a plan out for job opportunities in Lebanon in collaboration with the MoL and NDU, and through the financing of the World Labor Organization (WLO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The aim would be to study the issue of competition between local and foreign workers in Lebanon."

Mr. Azzi went on to praise NDU students who are politically active and mentioned that Lebanon is not lacking in education; rather, it is lacking in culture. He congratulated NDU on being able to provide its students with both education and culture. Mr. Azzi, moreover, stressed the fact that students need guidance when they graduate so that they can decide which path to follow. He

thanked the participators for creating job opportunities; rather, than simply being present to sell products, and he reminded students to remain deeply involved in the future of their country.

After all the opening speeches were delivered, the Job Fair 2014 was officially declared open.



JOB FAIR 2014: GALA DINNER

Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) invited on Friday, May 23, 2014, at 8:30 p.m., all Job Fair 2014 participants to a Gala Dinner at the NDU Restaurant. Attending the dinner were: NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, Vice-Presidents, Faculty Deans, and owners and representatives of companies, institutions, banks, and organizations.

During the Gala Dinner, Beirut Circle, a participating organization, was selected to participate free-of-charge in next year's Job Fair, following a Lucky Draw Contest. Other worthy gifts were disturbed by various companies, such as Fiordelli Men's and Women's Wear, Dany Mouawad Jewelry, Beirut Circle, Four Seasons Hotel, Said Akl book collection, Souheil Mattar book collection, and a free hair styling session offered by Charbel Abboud, while Akira Paris distributed complimentary cosmetics.

Singers Paul Zougheib and Walid Boulous performed a large repertoire of oriental and occidental songs that flavored the gathering.



OFFBEAT

BITE-SIZE NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD...

(compiled from various sources by MARIO NAJM)

LEBANON

Hookah Smoking Worse than Cigarettes

Researchers at the American University of Beirut (AUB) reported that smokers in a hookah café inhaled more often and for longer periods than typical cigarette smokers. Some smokers inhaled 10 times as often as the typical cigarette smoker, and each inhalation contained as much as 10 times the amount of smoke obtained from an entire cigarette. The WHO scientists estimated that by puffing longer and inhaling puffs of greater volume, a waterpipe smoker could inhale the equivalent of 100 cigarettes (five packs) or more during a single waterpipe session!



MIDDLE EAST HUMAN BODY PARTS

"Fall From the Sky" in KSA

Human body parts recently fell from the sky in the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah, according to the Huffington Post. Horrified residents called officers after the body parts landed in the road in the Mushrefa neighborhood of the city at 2.30 a.m. in June 2014. Early indications suggest the body parts belong to a man stowed away in a passenger jet's wheel bay, police spokesman Nawaf bin Naser al-Bouq said. In a desperate attempt to cross borders, it is not uncommon for people at poorly monitored airports climb inside the bays housing aircraft landing gear. Most of them freeze to death once the aircraft reach cruising altitude, but some survive.



WORLD

Too Much Love Can "Break" You

Sometimes too much love can be a bad thing as Paris discovered last month when thousands of "locks of love" attached to a footbridge caused part of the railing to collapse, forcing an evacuation. Thousands of lovers from across the world visit the Pont des Arts every year and seal their love by attaching a lock carrying their names to its railing and throwing the key in the Seine. The Pont des Arts crosses the French capital's river Seine just in front of the Louvre museum and is known the world over for its "locks of love." The phenomenon has become something of a headache for officials in the City of Light, who would prefer something that poses fewer problems of security and aesthetics.



BUSINESS

Tap Into The Organic Craze

Need to invest? Go the for the organic food market, experts advise. The natural and organic food market is an attractive one, with producers able to sustain premium pricing and a customer base that is more loyal than that of the broader packaged-foods industry. According to the Nutrition Business Journal, sales in the US\$40 billion niche market grew by 11.5% in the past several years, but are expected to grow more than 14% through 2014. With people increasing opting for a healthier life, the percentage of U.S. consumers buying at least some organic products has grown from 40% in 2001 to nearly 85% in 2013.



ENTERTAINMENT

Jackson Was "Desperately Broke" Before He Died

Michael Jackson complained of being "desperately broke" before his tragic death in the lead up to the This Is It comeback concerts at London's O2 Arena back in 2009, according to AEG Live's chief executive Randy Phillips testifying in June 2014 at the trial against the late King Of Pop's wrongful death. According to Phillips, the Thriller mega star needed to perform the mammoth 50 dates at the London venue recalling an emotional meeting with the star who confessed he and his family "were living like vagabonds."



OUT OF THE ORDINARY

Oldest Man Dies at Age 111

Born February 4, 1903, in Poland, Alexander Imich, who was recently declared the oldest living man, died on June 8, 2014, in New York, U.S.A., at the age of 111, according to reports. "In my life, I have witnessed the development of flight, the automobile, electrification of nations, the telephone, the radio and television, atomic energy, the wonders of bio-scientific medicine, computer technology, great advances in our knowledge of the cosmos, men walking on the moon – the list could go on and on," Imich once said at the age of 99.



SPORTS

**World Cup 2014:
The Adidas Brazuca**

The Adidas Brazuca is the official match ball of the 2014 FIFA World Cup, which was held in Brazil. Created by Adidas, this is the first FIFA World Cup ball named by fans. The colors and ribbon design of the ball panels symbolize the traditional multi-colored wish bracelets (fita do Senhor do Bonfim da Bahia) worn in the country, in addition to reflecting the vibrancy and fun associated with football in Brazil. According to FIFA, "The informal term 'brazuca' is used by Brazilians to describe national pride in the Brazilian way of life," and "mirroring their approach to football, it symbolizes emotion, pride and goodwill to all."



CULTURE

Harvard Confirms Antique Book is Bound in Human Skin

Harvard scientists have all-but confirmed that a 19th century book in the university's Houghton Library is bound by human skin, reports the New York Times. The book in question, Arsène Houssaye's French treatise, *Des destinées de l'ame* (On the Destiny of the Soul), may have been bound, using the skin of a woman's back. Though the test does not eliminate the possibility that the book is bound by the skin of a "great ape or a gibbon," scientists claim this is "extremely unlikely." The practice dates back to at least the 16th century.

SCIENCE

Healing Any Wound Through Science

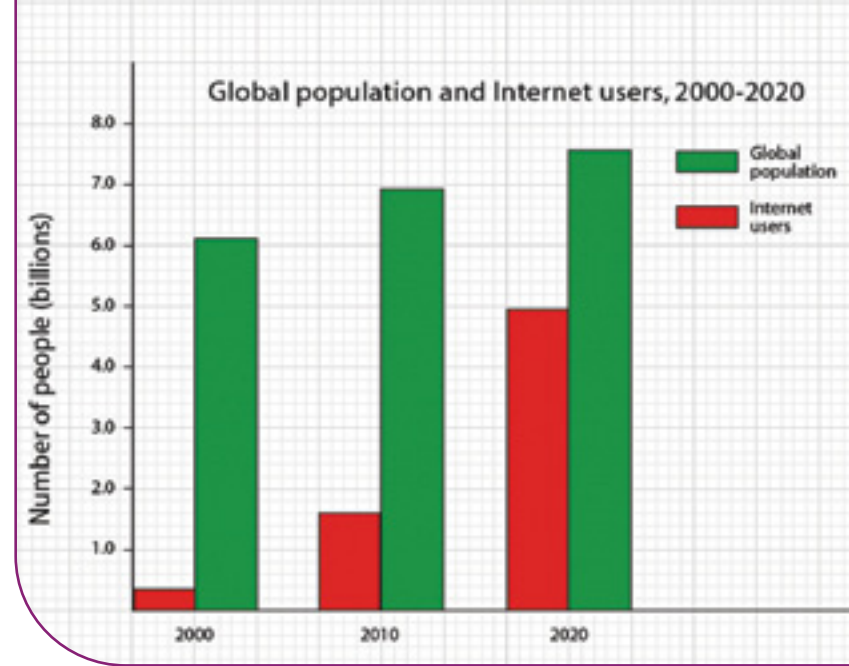
Genetics will soon be combined with other technologies in the future to heal the damage created by trauma, burns, and even cancer, says Australian of the Year Professor Fiona Wood from the University of Western Australia. "We'll see the construction of three dimensional tissues in the lab, such as skin, cartilage, cardiac and bone tissue: growing organs in Petri dishes, if you like," predicts Wood. We will also start to see a multi-level characterization of the wound, cancer, or whatever is being treated, from the external appearance right down to changes at the genetic level, she says. "Once we understand what's going on at the genetic level, we'll enhance gene activity to make wounds heal faster and better."



TECHNOLOGY

Internet Use to Reach 5 Billion Worldwide in 2020

The number of Internet users will reach almost five billion in 2020, equivalent to the entire world population in 1987. This compares with 1.7 billion users in 2010 and only 360 million in 2000. Vast numbers of people in the developing world will soon have access to the web, thanks to a combination of plummeting costs and exponential technology improvements. This includes laptops, phones, and tablet devices costing only a few tens of dollars, together with explosive growth in mobile networks. Even some of the most remote populations on earth will soon take advantage of the web, thanks to expanding infrastructure.



HEALTH

Is Cardio Making You Fat?

The answer is "yes," according to recent studies. In fact, if you want to gain weight, you should get on the treadmill or go out for a nice slow jog. Several new studies show that long and boring cardio workouts actually sabotage your body's natural ability to burn ugly belly fat. When you spend 30 or 60 minutes pounding away on a treadmill, you send your body a powerful signal to start storing fat instead of burning it. This is because when you do cardio, your body reacts to the stress by suppressing a very important hormone that is produced by the thyroid to burn fat. When this hormone, called T3, is suppressed, your body

starts gaining and storing fat immediately. This happens because the body needs fat to function, and its automatic response to stress is fat storage for survival. According to a study in the *European Journal of Applied Physiology*: People who performed intense cardio suffered from decreased T3 hormone production.



TOP JOKE

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went camping. They pitched their tent under the stars and went to sleep. Sometime in the middle of the night, Holmes woke up Watson and said, "Watson, look up at the sky, and tell me what you see." Watson replied, "I see millions and millions of stars." Holmes said, "And what do you deduce from that?" Watson replied, "Well, if there are millions of stars, and if even a few of those have planets, it's quite likely there are some planets

like Earth out there. And if there are a few planets like Earth out there, there might also be life." And Holmes said, "Watson, you idiot! It means that somebody stole our tent."



DAUGHTERS OF THE SOIL:

Rima Fakh

Rima Fakh is widely believed to be the first Lebanese-American, the first Arab-American, and the first Muslim to win the Miss USA title. Born on September 22, 1985, in Srifa, a small village in the Jabal Amel region of south Lebanon, Fakh grew up in Mount Lebanon and attended St. Rita's School. Her parents moved the family to New York in 1993 where they opened a restaurant. Following the September 11, 2001, attacks, the family was subjected to threats and vandalism based on their ethnicity. Fakh's father decided to move to a safer zone and opted for Michigan.



Fakh competed in her first pageant when she was 19, placing fourth runner-up at Miss Wayne County, a preliminary pageant for Miss Michigan in the Miss America system. In 2008, Fakh was selected to represent Michigan in the Miss Lebanon Emigrant competition, which was held in Batroun, Lebanon. She finished behind Carina el-Kaddissi of Brazil and Jessica Kahaway of Australia.

In May 2010, she represented Michigan at the Miss USA 2010 and won. During and after the Miss USA pageant, Fakh's religious and ethnic identity became the subject of widespread discussion. On the subject of identity, she was quoted as saying, "I'd like to say I'm American first, and I am an Arab-American, I am Lebanese-American, and I am Muslim-American."

SOCIAL

OBITUARIES

It is with deep regret and sorrow that we announce the deaths of the following individuals:

- **NADIA E. CHAAYA**, mother of Ms. Roula Majdalani, full-time staff member at the FAAD;
- **FADI EMILE YAACOUB**, cousin of Dr. Savo Karam, assistant professor at the North Lebanon Campus (NLC), Faculty of Humanities.
- **MANSOUR ASSAAD HANNA EL-KHOURY (EL-HOUT)**, father of Dr. Rim el-Khoury, Assistant Professor, FBAE
- **AGNES GOFF**, mother of Dr. Carol Kfoury, Department of English Translation and Education, FH;
- **MOUSSALLEM MOUSSALLEM**, father of Nada Moussallem, Student Affairs Officer at NDU-NLC.
- **HUSSEIN HAMADEH**, father of Dr. Mohamad Hamadeh, Chairperson of the Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics at the FBAE;
- **MICHEL GERGI DRAKEBLI**, father of Zoya Awky, Academic Services Supervisor, DAVA.

May all the souls of the departed rest in eternal peace.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

We are happy to announce the birth of Antonia Bou Zgheib who was born on Thursday, July 3, 2014. Antonia is the daughter of Theresa Bassil Bou Zgheib, Secretary, Office of Admissions at NDU. May God bestow his blessings on Antonia.



MEMORIAL MASS FOR PETER DAGHER

FADIA EL-HAGE

A Memorial Mass was held on May 27, 2014, at the Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) Chapel for the repose of the soul of one of its outstanding students, Peter Dagher, who passed away in France on May 8, 2014, (St. Charbel's birthday), after an agonizing battle with blood cancer.

Fr. Ziad Antoun, Vice-President for Administration, served the Mass along with Fr. W. Moussa, NDU President, Fr. G. Nassif, and Fr. F. Bou-Chebl. Fr. Antoun's sermon centered on life after death and how everyone who will eventually die will be safe in the arms of Jesus. After Mass, Fr. Moussa conferred the degree in Electrical Engineering to Peter's parents. Peter, a brilliant student, had successfully passed three years of study before his death with a GPA of /4.00/. May his soul rest in eternal peace and may God grant his parents strength.



GENE THERAPY TO TREAT SPINAL CORD INJURY:

Concept and Application

SERGE G. SAMAHA*

Gene therapy holds promise to cure genetically predisposed disorders and diseases that were once thought to be incurable. The FDA approved this therapy in 1990 after a patient, Ashanti DeSilva, volunteered to cure herself from Severe Combined Immunodeficiency (SCID) syndrome, using gene injection to compensate for the loss of one properly functional enzyme that aids in the maturation of her immune cells [1]. Many clinical successes have been achieved since then, including therapies to treat retinal diseases, hemophilia, and lymphocytic leukemia.

This therapeutic technique consists of engineering and delivering new genetic material into host cells to either compensate for a defective gene or to produce new beneficial proteins. The direct insertion of the therapeutic genetic material into a cell is not trivial; thus, viruses and bacteria are most frequently used as vectors to deliver the therapeutic genes (*Figure 1*). Vectors can be either directly injected into a specific tissue in the body or given intravenously.



THE
INTRODUCTION
OF SPECIFIC
ENZYMES
THAT DIGEST
SCAR TISSUE
PROTEINS
PROMOTES
THE GROWTH
OF INJURED
NERVE
TISSUES.

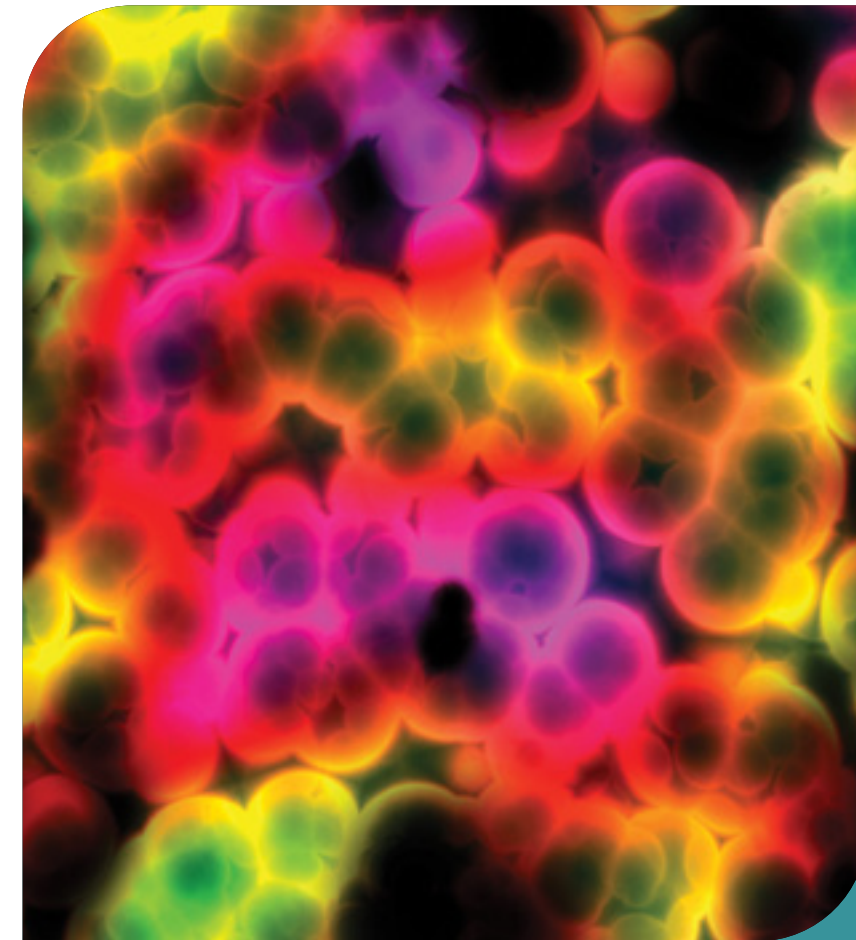


Figure 1. This image is retrieved from the U.S. National Library of Medicine. A gene therapy mechanism is based on the use of a virus (Depicted as an icosahedral object) or a bacterium as a vector to deliver the gene of interest into the targeted host cells.

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Recently, a group of researchers led by Elizabeth Bradbury, at King's College London, achieved another milestone in this field in which Bradbury extended the therapy to cure spinal cord injuries in rats [2]. Many spinal cord injuries result from damages to axons, which are the long extensions protruding from brain cells to the rest of the body through the spinal cord, impairing their role in transferring messages from the brain to the remaining parts of the body. Spinal cord injuries are followed by both scar tissue formation and immune cells invasion, which prevent the regeneration of nerves causing irreparable tissue damages [3]. Interestingly, previous animal studies have shown that the introduction of specific enzymes that digest scar tissue proteins promotes the growth of injured nerve tissues. Invasive and repetitive administration of such enzymes is required, however, given that proteins have a short life span and are prone to degradation once introduced into the body. Making use of this fact, Bradbury et al. delivered the gene that encodes the healing enzyme into the matrix of injured spinal cord in rats using a single injection. Twelve weeks later, an electron micrograph showed an increase in the number of nerve cells in the rats that had received the therapeutic gene coding for the healing enzymes. Gene delivery and insertion of the digesting-scar enzyme did not only serve in revitalizing nerve cells but also in reducing the inflammation at the site of injury by increasing the count of specialized macrophages that enhance tissue repair and by up-regulating endothelial growth hormones (Figure 2).

Bradbury claims, "This scar-busting gene therapy represents an important advance since it reveals a novel interaction between the supportive matrix and the immune cells following an injury." She also is aiming at translating this therapy to clinical applications to treat human spinal injuries in the not-too-distant future.

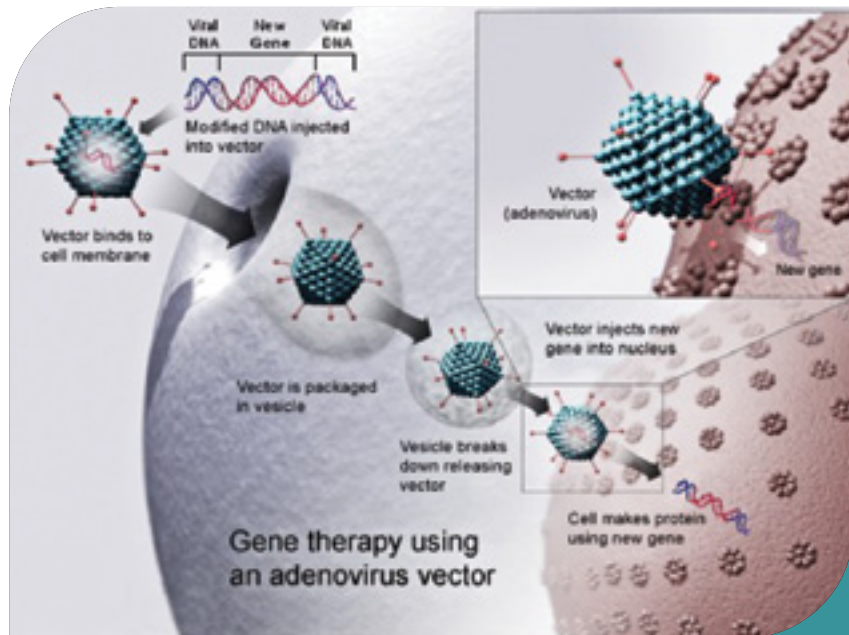


Figure 2. Confocal micrograph taken from the lesion core of a spinal cord injury in rats after gene therapy treatment. The reparative macrophages are presented in green and vascular endothelial growth factors are presented in red. (Journal of Neuroscience, 34: 4822-36)

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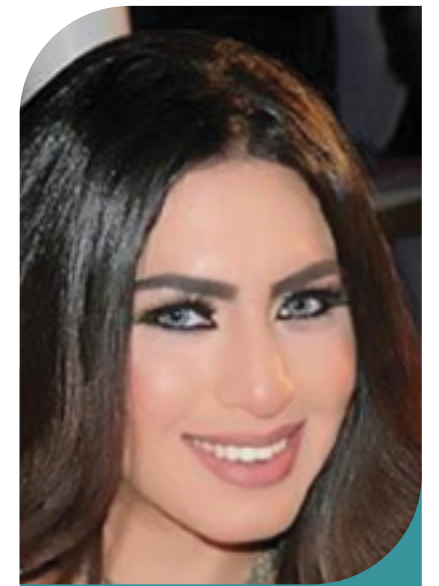
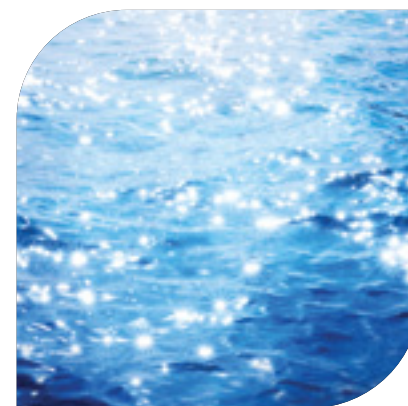
LIFE AND ITS SHAPES

TERRY BITAR

Nowadays, philosophers are trying to look at the entire world through a lens of objectification in an attempt to create a complete understanding of the whole. Many people live in this world without any understanding of the "why" associated with their lives. Trying to understand the origin of the whole world and the purpose of existence is difficult. In religion, it is mainly explained as God's will. To gain eternal life, people follow a certain way of life to fulfill the Creator's will. But, what about earthly life? What about the elements we interact with daily? What are those? What is their purpose of existence? What is their origin?

Numerous questions are asked about life and its components. It is difficult to explain everything and find the final answer. Over the course of time, however, philosophers and researchers have tried to piece together a reasonable answer.

In a way, some have turned to the classical elements (water, fire, air, and earth), explaining them as components that resume the main basics of life. People live on earth which is considered their physical space. They cannot live without water, which constitutes the main nurture. They need air to breath and fire to warm them. It is believed that if the world were returned to its basic character, these four basic elements would form the result. Through time, numerous studies have been performed to find more elements, but these four constitutes are the principle.



"GEOMETRY IS A BRANCH OF MATHEMATICS CONCERNED WITH QUESTIONS OF SHAPE, SIZE, RELATIVE POSITION OF FIGURES, AND THE PROPERTIES OF SPACE."

Given this simplistic vision to perceive and explain the world, mathematicians and researchers turned to geometry. What is geometry?

"Geometry is a branch of mathematics concerned with questions of shape, size, relative position of figures, and the properties of space."

Geometry was studied to define spacial relations between objects and their forms. It also had some particular features, such as symmetry.

And from symmetry, some element transpired such as, squares, equilateral triangles, etc. These elements have some special features in 2D geometry. Going to 3D geometry, we have the platonic solids. Each one is a polyhedron (a solid with flat faces). They are special because every face is a regular polygon of the same size and shape. Example: Each face of the cube is a square. They are also convex (no "dents" or indentations in them). [http://www.halexandria.org/dward099.htm.]

Why only five platonic solids?

The basis of the answer is that platonic solids are based on regular polygons. Mainly we have three: Regular pentagon, square, and equilateral triangle. A mathematical solution is done to demonstrate that there are no more than three main polygons.

After defining these platonic solid forms, Plato linked these pure geometrical figures to the world. He did not use all the elements constituting the world to link them to our universe; rather, he used the more simplistic icons

representing the universe, i.e. air, water, fire, and earth, as earlier defined. Plato linked the cube with earth, the tetrahedron with fire, the octahedron with air, and the icosahedron with water. The last platonic solid, the dodecahedron, had no link. Plato obscurely remarks, "...the god used for arranging the constellations on the whole heaven." [http://mitu-bobs.blogspot.com/2011/02/aa-e1-plato-and-elements.html.]

That is where the fifth element, the dodecahedron, was born with the material of which the constellations and heavens were made. Finally, we have our five platonic solids associated with the five basics of life.

The link was based on the purity of the geometrical shapes and the importance of the five basic elements reducing the whole world. Both components are as important, but each referee had a clear explanation, as in why is air associated with the octahedron and not the icosahedron?

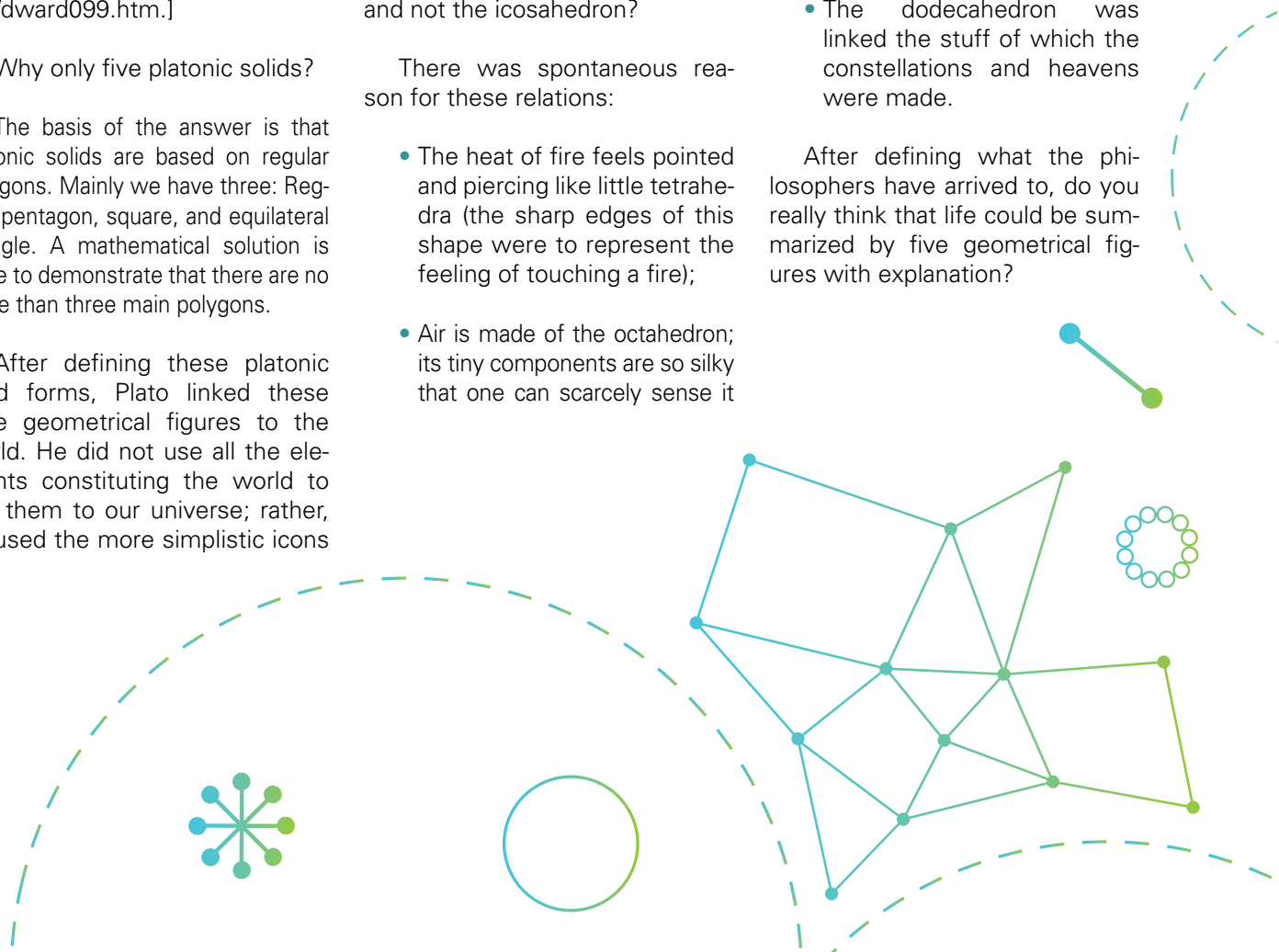
There was spontaneous reason for these relations:

- The heat of fire feels pointed and piercing like little tetrahedra (the sharp edges of this shape were to represent the feeling of touching a fire);
- Air is made of the octahedron; its tiny components are so silky that one can scarcely sense it

(the shape of the octahedron allows movement into any direction without interference and therefore represented air);

- Water, the icosahedron, flows out of one's hand when pulled out, as if it is made of miniature slight balls (the smoothest and most spherical of all these shapes was to describe the flowing nature of water);
- The hexahedron (cube) represents earth. These awkward small solids cause dirt to fall down and split when picked up, in stark difference to the smooth flow of water. Furthermore, the solidity of the Earth was believed to be due to the fact that the cube is the only regular solid that tessellates Euclidean space (this shape is the least smooth of all shapes and describes the brittle and crumbling nature of the dirt that is made of it);
- The dodecahedron was linked the stuff of which the constellations and heavens were made.

After defining what the philosophers have arrived to, do you really think that life could be summarized by five geometrical figures with explanation?



WHAT WE TRULY LACK...

GEORGES MGHAMES*

Takfiri and *apostates* are the words on everyone's lips these days. Apart from the terms *terrorism* and *terrorists*, no other words, without exception, rival or surpass the use of the former. All these terms are really flip sides of the same coin—a coin that bears the effigy of rejection, isolation, exclusion, and elimination of the other—any other who is different. It is a coin devoid of love!

Those whose hearts are devoid of love or have little love in them are lost, empty, and confused souls... They are cruel oppressors who have neither conscience nor the ideals of manhood. They murder human rights and human dignity in the cradle, and hate beauty at the source!

Since time immemorial and without a valid motive, human beings have spared no effort in circulating this vile currency, which the sword of Cain first materialized and continued to Pontius Pilate, and to every murderous hand at the Battles of Saffin¹, Hattin², and Karbala³. The repercussions of these battles still resonate today in the wails and grief heard from the Levant and the Islamic Maghreb to the Muslim world...

Yes. It was a lack of love and prejudice that killed Socrates, Al-Hallaj⁴, Galileo, and other "heretics, apostates, and takfiris" ... It is this lack of love that also instigated the massacre of the native American Indians, black Africans, Catholics, and Protestants... Lack of love gave birth to the Inquisition in Europe and its colonies... It asphyxiated the freedom of choice, which ended up in the hands of tyrants who falsely accused and executed masses of people... burned libraries in Alexandria,

Antioch, and Bagdad... and burned at the stake the hearts, minds, and goodness of man...

And it is this lack of love, which has built dams of blood among groups and individuals with the evil intent of causing division among them and instigating sectarian strife through blind fanatical bigotry.

It is this lack of love that has caused true faith to shun religion and banished God to arbitrary and capricious courts where atrocities are perpetrated in His name, perhaps causing Him to regret ever uttering the words, "*Let there be; and there was*" ... Perhaps He even regrets ever creating Man!

And, by extension, I would say, "No. God has no identity. He is not exclusively *my* God; he is *our* God. Since God is for us, why then do we fight over Him? And why do we drag Him into our differences?

Truly, we are wolves in sheep's clothing. Stemming from our lack of love, we all are to varying degrees *takfiris* and terrorists due to different reasons and cultures. And if in doubt, look around your home, neighborhood, educational system, house of worship, and homeland...

We are under the unyielding grip of terrorism, which strangles us, cutting through the spinal cord. We threaten people with fire this world and hell fire in the next... We threaten to take away their rights, freedoms, dignities, livelihoods, and destinies... We threaten them all under the guise of security and peace.

Our very own hands are choking us to death!

* Translated by Christine Rayess Atallah



1. The Battle of Siffin (May–July 657 A.D.) was fought between Ali Ibn Abi Talib and Muawiyah I, on the banks of the Euphrates River, Syria.
2. Saladin declared jihad and recaptured Jerusalem after defeating the Crusaders at Hattin in 1187 A.D.
3. The Battle of Karbala took place in 680 A.D. in Karbala, located in present-day Iraq.
4. A Persian mystic and revolutionary writer and teacher of Sufism, accused of heresy and executed under the orders of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Muqtadir in 922 A.D.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE

BY MARIO NAJM

The so-called grammar police, or editors, are notorious for making a writer's temper flare to volcanic proportions. A main bone of contention between writer and editor is more often than not the "Oxford comma." In a list of three or more items, a comma (sometimes know as a serial or Harvard comma) is placed before the coordinating conjunction ("and," "or," and sometimes "nor"). Some say this is mandatory, while others say it is an irrelevant rule, and these conflicting rules have led to all-out hostilities between the two camps.

Mind you, wars have been fought over less.

Have a look at the following to see why it is preferable to use the Oxford comma:



WHY I STILL USE THE OXFORD COMMA
www.sportscasualblog.com

WITH:
After beating the Steelers, Tim Tebow thanked his parents, God, and Ms. Trunchbull.

Thanks everyone!

WITHOUT:
After beating the Steelers, Tim Tebow thanked his parents, God and Ms. Trunchbull.

WHY I STILL USE THE OXFORD COMMA

WITH:
I had eggs, toast, and orange juice.

WITHOUT:
I had eggs, toast and orange juice.

This train is full of crazies, you, and your friends.
This train is full of crazies, you and your friends.

Don't be crazy, use the Oxford Comma.
TeamOxfordComma.com



DE LA DÉCENTRALISATION

DR. DANY GHSOUB

Des milliers d'années séparent l'homme moderne de l'homme vivant à l'état de nature. De chasseur-cueilleur, l'aptitude de l'homme lui a permis de bâtir des sociétés industrielles et agricoles. D'une administration rudimentaire, voire même inexistante, sa sophistication lui a permis de bâtir une administration complexe pouvant répondre à ses aspirations et à ses attentes.

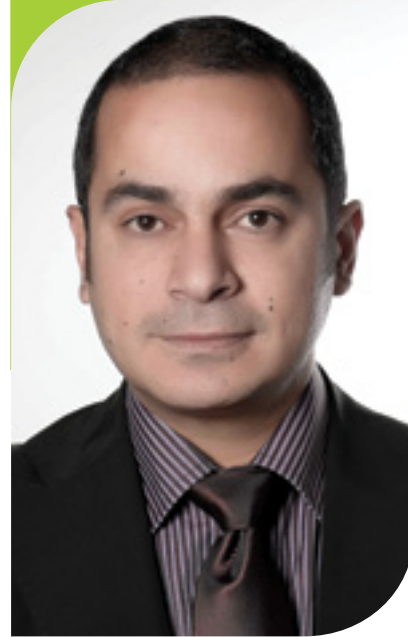
À l'état de nature, la question de savoir qui exerce le pouvoir et comment ne se posait pas: chacun était libre de ses faits et gestes, à ses risques et périls. Pour garantir sa survie et assurer sa sécurité, l'homme a dû faire des concessions. Il a dû, selon John Locke¹, Thomas Hobbes et Jean-Jacques Rousseau², signer un pacte implicite, renouvelable par tacite reconduction: le Contrat social. Tout contrat étant générateur de droits et d'obligations; l'homme social a dû abandonner une partie de ses droits absolus - à vrai dire les limiter - pour garantir sa survie parmi ses pairs. C'est alors qu'une autre préoccupation est née. S'il est vrai que la vie en société offre à l'homme une sécurité qu'il ne pouvait avoir à l'état de nature, il n'en demeure pas moins vrai qu'elle nécessite une architecture administrative et institutionnelle permettant de sauvegarder l'ordre public; le risqué étant, le cas échéant, de sombrer dans le chaos.

Différentes formes de gouvernement ont alors vu le jour à travers l'histoire. Des sociétés primitives où il était suffisant pour un chef de tribu d'exercer sa force physique pour obtenir l'obéissance de tous, en passant par les sociétés politico-spirituelles des monarchies divines, jusqu'aux démocraties modernes où la source légitime de tout pouvoir est le peuple.

La question n'est plus désormais de savoir si la démocratie est la meilleure forme de gouvernement, mais quelle forme de démocratie garantit un meilleur gouvernement.

Longtemps, la centralisation administrative fut synonyme d'unité nationale, d'uniformité, d'égalité et de prospérité. Le pouvoir central n'avait aucun rival dans la prise de décision, de peur que cela soit justifié ou pas, que des velléités autonomistes ou même indépendantistes se manifestent ici et là. Raison pour laquelle, des États fortement centralisés comme la France, afin de maintenir l'ordre public sur un vaste territoire - car c'est la préoccupation première de tout État - ont dû faire usage du concept bien connu: la déconcentration. Autrement dit « c'est le même marteau qui frappe mais on en a raccourci le manche³ ». Pour ainsi dire, les décisions sont toujours prises au centre et relayées dans les périphéries par des autorités nommées par le pouvoir central. Leur objectif était de veiller à l'application de la loi de la République sur tout le territoire national de manière uniforme.

Pour des décennies, voire même des siècles, la démocratie centralisée et déconcentrée a montrée qu'elle peut être efficace, mais elle a aussi montrée, à l'usure, qu'elle ne peut être infaillible, surtout qu'elle ne répondait plus aux aspirations des peuples des démocraties modernes. Les soucis d'unité nationale, d'uniformité, d'égalité et de prospérité n'étaient plus les seuls maîtres du jeu, d'autres considérations sont venues s'y greffer. Ce qui jadis pouvait être compris ou interprété comme un affront au



pouvoir central est devenu désormais le symbole de la modernisation démocratique. D'autres concepts sont venus faire un pied de nez à ceux que nous avons déjà mentionnés. Ces concepts ont été confortés par une désaffection généralisée des gouvernements centralisés perçus de plus en plus comme étant bien éloignés (non seulement physiquement) des préoccupations quotidiennes des citoyens. La décentralisation s'est donc imposée comme une solution car elle apporte aux collectivités territoriales - et par voie de conséquence aux populations locales - un pouvoir de participation dans la prise de décisions, c'est-à-dire une plus grande participation dans la vie politique de la Cité. Les autorités locales sont aussi plus réceptives quant aux attentes des administrés. La démocratie étant, in fine, populaire, elle renforce sa légitimité par son rapprochement du peuple. La décentralisation libère enfin les populations locales de la tyrannie et de la corruption d'un pouvoir central qui même s'il est omniprésent n'est pas omniscient.

Qu'est-ce que la décentralisation ?

La décentralisation n'est pas fédéralisme: En effet dans un état

fédéral nous assistons à un partage de la souveraineté nationale entre les états fédérés et l'état fédéral, même si l'état fédéral garde un monopole dans des domaines vitaux. Nous prenons, à titre d'exemple, la défense nationale, les relations internationales, etc.

La décentralisation nécessite, selon qu'elle soit étendue ou non, une délégation de pouvoirs. Cette délégation est faite par le pouvoir central qui désormais ne pourra plus interférer dans les affaires des collectivités territoriales, à moins que ses autorités se rendent incapables de gérer les affaires de leurs administrés. Les collectivités territoriales auront également des assemblées élues qui bénéficient de cette délégation de pouvoirs. De plus, et c'est de loin la prérogative la plus importante, les collectivités territoriales jouiront d'une quasi-indépendance financière car ils auront la capacité de collecter des taxes qui leurs sont propres.

Dans quelle mesure la décentralisation peut-elle convenir le cas libanais ?

Le Liban ne vivant pas en autarcie, les préoccupations des peuples du monde sont aussi celles du peuple libanais. Leurs aspirations aussi. Devant l'incapacité endémique du pouvoir central d'offrir une vie décente aux administrés, que l'on oublie souvent qu'ils sont aussi des citoyens de la République, quelques voix réformistes n'ont cessé de proposer la décentralisation comme alternative à la sclérose institutionnelle⁴. Des courants politiques jadis réfractaires à toute idée qui puisse mettre en danger l'unité nationale ont admis l'idée que la seule voie de secours possible est la décentralisation administrative⁵.

Mais la décentralisation n'est pas un remède miracle. Les maux dont souffre l'état centralisé peuvent également affecter un probable état décentralisé. La corruption

ne connaît pas de frontière administrative, le clientélisme non plus. La diversité au Liban n'est pas ou plus symbole d'enrichissement malheureusement, elle est devenue une cause de déchirement national. Au lieu de travailler pour la nation, nous travaillons chacun pour sa confession dans les meilleurs des cas. Dans cet état d'esprit, la décentralisation sera dénaturée et déviée de son sens initial. Les valeurs mêmes de la décentralisation seront utilisées à mauvais escient dans l'absence totale de responsabilité citoyenne.

À l'heure où certains (Eric Verhaeghe⁶) parlent de « démocratie liquide » dans les démocraties modernes, nous sommes encore au balbutiement de la décentralisation. Si notre hymne national commence par ces mots: « Tous pour la Nation », nous constatons qu'en réalité nous sommes tous « chacun pour soi » et « personne pour la Nation ».

1. 1689, *Two Treatises of Government*.

La théorie politique de Locke a été fondée sur la Théorie du Contrat Social. Contrairement à Thomas Hobbes, Locke croit que la nature humaine est caractérisée par la raison et la tolérance. Comme Hobbes, Locke croit que l'Homme est égoïste par nature.

2. Dans le *Contrat social*, Rousseau cherche

le fondement d'une autorité légitime parmi les hommes. Il s'agit pour lui de définir à quelles conditions l'homme peut se soumettre à une autorité, ici de nature politique, sans rien perdre de sa liberté. L'homme étant naturellement libre, ce fondement ne peut être qu'une convention. Comment les hommes peuvent-ils associer leurs forces, sans renoncer pour autant à la liberté? Tel est le problème du contrat social, énoncé en ces termes: « Trouver une forme d'association qui défende et protège de toute la force commune la personne et les biens de chaque associé, et par laquelle chacun, s'unissant à tous, n'obéisse pourtant qu'à lui-même,

et reste aussi libre qu'auparavant ». 1762, *Du Contrat social*.

3. Odilon Barrot. Ce dernier fut à l'époque le premier vice-président du Conseil d'État de la IIIe République. Il se déclare très attaché aux principes de la Révolution de 1789 et appartient au courant doctrinal des « gauches dynamiques ». Cet homme a prononcé cette expression qui reste dans l'histoire de France: « Dans le cadre de la déconcentration c'est toujours le même marteau qui frappe mais on en a raccourci le manche ». Avec celle-ci il donne sa définition et sa représentation imagée du système de déconcentration. Cette dernière peut être définie comme un système d'organisation administrative qui découle par la création à la périphérie, de relais du pouvoir central. Cette citation est extraite de son célèbre livre « De la centralisation et de ses effets » où il développe son opposition à la centralisation.

4. Le Parti Phalangiste: www.kataeb-program.org

5. C'est le sens du discours de l'ancien Premier Ministre Saad Hariri avant les élections législatives de 2013 (qui n'ont pas eu lieu par ailleurs): Répondre aux plaintes chroniques de toutes les régions et groupes libanais qui sont liées aux obstacles au niveau du développement et de l'administration, en adoptant immédiatement les dispositions de l'accord de Taëf concernant la décentralisation administrative élargie. - Pour plus d'informations: <http://www.iloubnan.info/politique/77336/Legislatives-2013-les-quatre-points-de-l'initiative-de-Hariri#sthash.zEJYpty.dpuf>

6. <http://www.eric-verhaeghe.fr/a-propos/>. 2011, *Au cœur du MEDEF 2012, Faut-il quitter la France?*

SI LE LIBAN M'ETAIT CONTÉ

ABOU YOUSSEF ET LE SACRIFICE DE LA TERRE

PROFESSEUR GEORGES LABAKI

Président de l'École Nationale d'Administration

Un des derniers humanistes

Tous droits réservés à l'auteur

Abou Youssef rentrait ce jour-là bredouille du travail des champs. Contrairement à ses habitudes, il avait l'air fort préoccupé. Tous les matins, il allait travailler dans ses champs jusqu'au crépuscule. En rentrant sur les chemins sablonneux qui sillonnent son village, il avait l'habitude de s'attarder chez les villageois qu'il trouvait sur son chemin. Tout cela conformément aux traditions de la montagne libanaise qui veut que tout passant s'arrête dans chaque maison qui se trouve sur son parcours pour boire un café ou bien pour échanger quelques propos.

Abou Youssef respectait les traditions. Coiffé de son **Lebeddé¹** et vêtu de son **cherwal²** noir, il portait à la main un **sallé³** en bambou rempli des produits de sa terre. Il offrait alors généreusement aux gens des figues rouges au goût inégalé ou bien d'autres fruits cueillis selon les saisons. Abou Youssef portait des moustaches blanches impressionnantes et avait une peau basanée fruit du travail intense dans ses champs. Son visage sillonné par de profondes rides creusées par le temps lui donnait un air de masculinité qui caractérise les hommes de la montagne libanaise.

Sa terre qui formait son royaume était située sur le flanc d'une montagne rocailleuse et abrupte que plusieurs générations de ses ancêtres avaient transformé en une terre fertile taillée en terrasses étroites où il cultivait la vigne, les figuiers et les oliviers car les montagnards les trouvaient les plus utiles pour leur subsistance. En effet, les figues servaient à produire la confiture et les fruits secs, les oliviers arbres bénis du Seigneur produisaient l'huile nécessaire à la cuisson, alors que le raisin servait à confectionner **l'arak⁴** distillé trois fois pour le rendre pur et fortement alcoolisé pour égayer les longues soirées d'hivers quand l'activité des champs s'arrête.

Cette terre, Abou Youssef en connaissait tous les contours jusqu'au moindre détail. Il avait porté sur son dos d'énormes rochers pour en construire les terrasses qu'il avait inlassablement remplies de terre qu'il transportait à longueur de journée dans un grand pot noir en caoutchouc. Il était fier d'avoir parachevé le travail de toute une lignée de fermiers à tel point que cette terre avait fini par porter son nom. Quant ils évoquaient cette partie du village, les villageois parlaient de la vallée d'Abou Youssef. Il magnait la terre avec une telle douceur et affection comme pour ne pas la blesser. D'ailleurs, avant de rentrer chez en fin de journée, il essuyait ses habits de manière à ne pas perdre les moindres poussières de sa terre adulée.

A ce propos, il a fallu déployer des efforts herculéens et beaucoup de patience pour le convaincre de céder quelques mètres de terrain pour permettre l'élargissement d'une route. En effet, situé aux alentours de la capitale, le village commençait à voir débarquer les citadins attirés par la douceur de son climat et la beauté féérique de sa nature. Les



prix des terrains commençaient à monter et la spéculation foncière battait son plein. Les prix avaient augmenté de plus de cinq cent pour cent en l'espace de quelques mois. Attirés par l'appât du gain, les villageois vendaient à tour de bras. C'est comme si l'interdit existentiel de vendre la terre avait été brisé. La terre n'était plus cet héritage transmis de génération en génération qu'il fallait préserver au prix de sa vie mais une simple commodité vendue au plus offrant. Pis encore, ce n'était pas les terres les plus fertiles qu'on cherchait pour valoriser l'agriculture mais les mieux exposées. Si par le passé le prix du terrain était fixé en raison du nombre et de la qualité des arbres qu'elle contenait, ce prix était fixé dorénavant en raison de sa situation géographique fut elle escarpée ou rocailleuse. En effet, les citadins étaient intéressés par l'érection de constructions et d'immeubles plutôt que par les terres fertiles condamnées à une urbanisation massive.

Les agents immobiliers rodaient autour de la maison d'Abou Youssef mais n'osaient pas se présenter chez lui. Ils risquaient d'expérimenter la force légendaire

et terrible de son poignée. En effet, Abou Youssef était connu pour avoir effacé avec les doigts de sa main l'inscription qui figurait sur une pièce de monnaie en métal. Pourtant, un matin, profitant de la présence d'Abou Youssef dans ses champs, l'un d'eux se présenta à son domicile. L'occasion était trop belle : la vente de la vallée d'Abou Youssef lui rapporterait une commission fort juteuse.

L'agent immobilier tomba sur le fils aîné d'Abou Youssef qui était assis devant la porte de l'humble maison familiale en train de jouer aux cartes.

- **Marhaba⁵** Ya Youssef, comment vas-tu ?

- Je joue aux cartes pour voir si le sort va me porter bonheur.

- Ya **Khailé⁶**, la vie de nos jours devient de plus en plus difficile. Les besoins de la vie moderne sont de plus en plus pressants. Au fait, tu n'as encore pu t'acheter une voiture. Pourtant une belle **Desoto⁷** t'irait très bien. Tu sais ton voisin, le fils d'Abou Hanna a acheté une très belle voiture américaine, Il se promène partout sans être obligé de faire de long parcours à pied pour se déplacer comme tu le fais toi-même.

- Et qu'à-t-il fait pour gagner tout cet argent ?

- Il a vendu le lopin de terre qu'il possédait juste à coté de chez vous.

- Et à combien l'a-t-il vendu ?

- A un très bon prix : dix fois plus que sa valeur réelle. Il a fait une très bonne affaire.

Youssef resta hagard et pensif pendant de longues minutes. Profitant de l'hésitation de Youssef, l'agent immobilier renchérit :



Montagnard libanais (Blanche Loheac Amoun)

- Tu sais, mieux vendre maintenant plutôt que d'attendre car les prix vont bientôt baisser très fortement. En effet, l'offre risque de beaucoup augmenter et la demande de baisser. Youssef était connu pour être un vaurien dans le village. Il accompagnait Abou Youssef malgré lui aux champs. Profitant de la complicité de sa mère Imm Youssef, il feignait souvent de tomber malade pour échapper au travail. Profitant du départ de son père dans la vallée, il allait jouer aux cartes avec ses amis. Il prenait soin de revenir au domicile familial avant le retour de son père pour se mettre au lit. Abou Youssef connaissait les ruses de son fils mais faisait semblant de les ignorer. D'ailleurs, il détestait Youssef car il considérait son fils aîné comme un descendant indigne de la famille. Il voulait qu'il l'accompagnât aux champs pour s'imprégner de l'amour de la terre paternelle et continuer la destinée des Abou Youssef connus pour être les plus grands propriétaires du village. Mais à la longue, il finit par abandonner ses desseins sur Youssef pour concentrer son attention sur ses trois autres fils.

L'agent immobilier se pressa de filer avant le retour d'Abou Youssef. Il lâcha en se retirant :

- **Ya⁸** Youssef il est vrai vous possédez beaucoup de terrains mais tous les gens du village vivent aujourd'hui mieux que vous. Ils ont des voiture, de beaux meubles et pleins de produit de luxe. Pourquoi ne vendez vous pas une de vos innombrables parcelles pour vivre comme il faut. Après tout, que vaut cette vie ? Tout passera vite car la vie est très courte. Il faut en profiter le plus vite possible. Quand on mourra un jour tout restera ici, mais nous on sera parti. En tout cas, si vous décidez de vendre faites moi signe.

L'idée de vendre les biens familiaux ou une partie d'entre eux ne fit qu'un tour dans la tête de ce vaurien de Youssef. Mais comment faire? Non, il n'osera pas affronter son père sur ce terrain car il pourrait le payer très cher. Surement son père n'hésiterait pas à le tailler en pièces. Youssef n'arrivait plus à dormir à force de réfléchir sur la manière

d'aborder son père et de le convaincre de vendre. A force de réfléchir, il trouva la bonne parade.

Il décida de concentrer ses efforts sur sa mère qui avait un faible pour lui. Et comment donc ? Il était le premier garçon né dans la famille et cela compte pour une nouvelle mariée qui doit selon les coutumes avoir un garçon qui portera le nom de la famille pour les générations futures. Et puis sa mère porte son nom. Tous les gens l'appellent au village Imm Youssef selon la tradition de la montagne qui consiste à appeler les parents par le nom de leur fils aîné.

Youssef mis au point un plan de bataille bien huilé. Il commença par se mettre aux petits soins de sa mère. Il l'aidait à porter l'eau de la fontaine, à donner à manger aux vers de soie et à nourrir le bétail. Le moment venu, il l'aborda sur un ton mielleux en disant :

- Ya **immé**⁹

- Que veux-tu **ya t'ouborné**¹⁰ ?

- Tu sais, je pense me marier pour te donner une descendance. Et, si le Bon Dieu me donne une fille, elle portera ton nom.

- Mon fils, c'est la meilleure nouvelle que je n'ai jamais entendue depuis belle lurette.

Youssef renchérit :

- Mais tu sais, maman, que je n'ai pas le moyen de fonder une famille.

- Je te donnerai la prune de mes yeux répondit sa mère. En effet, à la montagne il était convenu que les parents avaient une obligation morale de mener leurs enfants surtout les garçons jusqu'au mariage en leur fournissant toute l'aide financière nécessaire. Leurs soucis ne s'apaisaient que lorsque leurs fils leur assuraient une descendance mâle qui portait le nom de la famille.

- Mais que faire **Ya Habibé**¹¹ ?

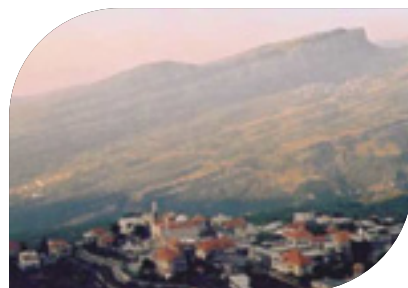
Comme une bête qui attire sa proie lentement mais sûrement, Youssef répondit :

- Je ne sais pas maman. Cette histoire me travaille car j'avance en âge et le temps passe très vite. J'espère qu'il ne sera pas un jour trop tard.

- **Ya albé**¹² que puis-je faire pour toi ?

- Ya Immé, est-ce possible que le fils d la famille des Abou Youssef qui possède la plus grande partie des terrains du village ne puisse pas se marier ?

- C'est vrai mon fils, mais la terre est sacrée pour nous.



■ Vallée verdoyante du Liban



■ Les enfants d'Abou Youssef avaient érigé de modestes appartements de fortune au-dessus de la vieille maison familiale

- Mais à quoi sert la terre si on ne peut pas en profiter pour bien vivre. D'ailleurs, la terre a de moins en moins de valeur de nos jours. Les gens la délaisent pour aller travailler en ville.

- Mais, ils vont le regretter un jour.

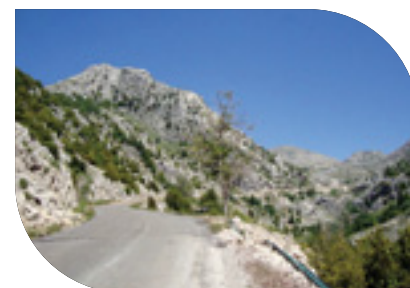
- Oui, mais tous les gens du village vivent aujourd'hui mieux que nous. Ils ont des voitures, de beaux habits et pleins de choses. Moi je n'arrive même pas à fonder une famille.

Profitant de cette dernière phrase qui fit tiquer Imm Youssef, Youssef adopta un profil bas et lança sur un ton pensif et rêveur :

- Pourquoi mon père ne vendrait-il pas un de ses nombreux terrains pour que je puisse fonder une famille comme tout le monde ?

Imm Youssef tressaillit au plus profond de son être. L'idée de vendre la terre le n'avait jamais effleuré. Connaissant l'attachement ombilical de son mari à la terre, elle ne répondit pas et vaqua à ses occupations quotidiennes.

Youssef revint à la charge le lendemain. Il harcelait sans cesse sa mère tout en multipliant les égards à son encontre. Il mit ses trois autres frères dans le coup en leur expliquant que les choses ont changées et qu'il fallait profiter de la vie le plus tôt possible. En tacticien rusé, il concentra ses efforts sur chacun de ses frères l'un après l'autre. Il aborda le premier en lui disant :



■ Les routes qui écornent les montagnes du Liban et détruisent ces sanctuaires millénaires

- Dis donc frérot, jusqu'à quand continueras-tu à aller au travail en bus que tu es parfois obligé d'attendre pendant des heures.

- Mais, je n'ai pas d'autre choix, tu le sais très bien.

- Eh bien si ! Si on vendait un de nos terrains t'auras assez d'argent pour avoir la plus belle voiture du village. Tu sais avec les prix qui flambent tu peux te payer le dernier modèle.

- C'est vrai, mais même le Bon Dieu ne pourra convaincre mon père de céder un seul pouce de terrain.

- Eh bien tu te trompes, nous sommes majeurs et nous avons notre mot à dire dans la direction des affaires de notre foyer. D'ailleurs, j'en ai parlé à ma mère.

Youssef alla voir le deuxième frère et l'aborda de front :

- Dis donc Jamil, tu as toujours rêvé d'être chauffeur de taxi.

- Oui grommela ce dernier, mais comment le faire si je n'en ai pas les moyens.



■ Vallée fertile du Liban

- Eh bien voilà, nous nous sommes mis d'accord moi et ton frère pour en parler à mère et à mon père pour vendre un des ses innombrables terrains. Es-tu avec nous dans cette affaire ?

- Bien entendu car j'en ai marre de travailler sous les ordres de mon père. D'ailleurs, ma femme rêve d'avoir une voiture pour ses sorties.

Le troisième frère fut le plus facile à convaincre car, il aimait Youssef et lui exécutait tous ses désirs.

Il restait Samer le benjamin. Ce dernier était le bien-aimé de son père. Si Abou Youssef était strict et intraitable avec les trois frères et même avec Imm Youssef, il avait une affection toute particulière pour Samer. Il ne lui refusait aucune requête quoiqu'elle fût. En réalité, Abou Youssef avait mis tous ses espoirs sur Samer après avoir perdu confiance dans ses trois autres fils. Il passait de longues heures à lui parler de la terre et des moyens de la fructifier. Il cherchait à lui passer les leçons de son éprouvante expérience de la vie et les moyens nécessaires pour réussite.

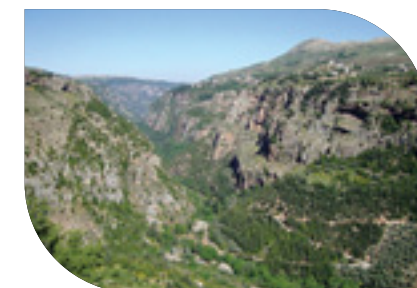
Youssef aborda Samer de façon filiale :

- Cher frère lui dit-il, je sais que tu as toujours aimé avoir ton propre travail.

- Oui, mais je n'en n'ai pas les moyens.

- Eh bien les moyens existent. Il suffit de les prendre.

- Mais encore !



■ Vallée bénie du Liban

- Eh bien si mon papa vendait un de ses terrains tu pourrais réaliser ton rêve.

- Mais tu sais que notre père adore la terre. Il ne peut s'en séparer. L'amour de la terre est inscrit dans son ADN.

- Bien entendu. Mais tu sais il est déjà trop âgé et il faut qu'il pense à sa santé et cela est juste car il a beaucoup souffert dans la vie. D'ailleurs, un jour il devra arrêter de travailler et il n'y a personne pour prendre la relève.

- Mais la vente de ses terres va le tuer.

- Nous ne voulons vendre qu'une seule parcelle. Il lui répéta lentement : une seule, rien qu'une seule. D'ailleurs, quand tu auras ta boîte tu en rachèteras dix autres.

Samer finit par se rendre et acquiesça d'un coup de tête.

- Alors, reprit Youssef, qui voulait prendre de vitesse Samer car il avait peur qu'il ne changea d'avis au dernier moment, tu vas venir avec nous pour en parler à notre mère.

Les quatre allèrent voir leur mère qui préparait le dîner et lui exprimèrent leurs doléances.

Partagée entre sa fidélité conjugale et son lien filial avec ses enfants, elle finit par choisir ces derniers. Elle cherchait le moment propice pour parler à Abou Youssef du désir de ses enfants. Elle n'osait pas affronter son mari de front car elle le savait implacable sur un certain nombre de principes dont la fidélité à la terre. Maintes fois, elle avait expérimenté sa mauvaise humeur quand elle le contrariait. Il l'avait alors immergé dans l'eau de la fontaine pour lui donner une solide correction et la dissuader de lui tenir tête.

Rusée, Imm Youssef savait qu'il était trop risqué de l'affronter directement. Au cours des années, elle avait petit à petit deviné ses faiblesses, ses sauts d'humeur et ses moments de détente.

Un matin, profitant d'un moment d'intimité avec son mari, elle aborda le sujet.

- Tu sais Ya Abou Youssef, les enfants grandissent et toi tu avances en âge. Youssef pense fonder une famille mais il n'en a pas les moyens. Et puis, tu ne peux plus travailler comme lorsque tu avais vingt ans.

Abou Youssef se ressaisit et lança à haute voix à sa femme:

- Ce fainéant de Youssef n'a qu'à trouver du travail. Quant à moi ne vous inquiéter pas pour moi.

- Mais tu sais bien qu'il est très difficile de fonder une famille de nos jours. Les salaires sont trop faibles et nul ne peut y arriver sans l'aide de ses parents. Quant à toi tu sais que ton père est mort en travaillant dans ses champs. Il s'est assis sous un olivier pour ne plus se relever. La fatigue est venue à bout de lui. Et puis, tu as beaucoup travaillé dans ta vie. Il est temps que tu te reposes.

Abou Youssef se leva et se retira dans sa chambre fort vexé. Imm Youssef considéra dans son fort intérieur qu'elle avait gagné la première manche avec son mari en réussissant à éviter la foudre de sa réaction.

Imm Youssef revint à la charge le lendemain. Elle en fit de la sorte tous les jours sur plusieurs mois en devenant de plus en plus explicite sur ses intentions. Elle savait que le temps travaillait pour

elle et qu'à force d'insister Abou Youssef finirait par se rendre de guerre lasse. Elle se rendait bien compte après des années de vie conjugale, qu'Abou Youssef réagissait violemment aux propos que le vexait mais finissait par y acquiescer aussi vite qu'il s'était enflammé. Imm Youssef en rajoutait en parlant des trois autres garçons qui devaient s'installer dans la vie. Tous les garçons de leurs âges dans le village sont déjà installés et ont fait leur place dans la vie. Et elle s'écria : Comment se fait-il que toutes les personnes de la génération de mes enfants sont déjà bien établies alors que les enfants d'Abou Youssef le plus grand propriétaire du village ne le sont pas ?

Abou Youssef répondait toujours par la même réponse :

- Qu'ils aillent travailler la terre car tout paysan qui a une autosuffisance alimentaire est un roi caché.

- Le travail de la terre est de plus en plus ingrat. La terre ne rapporte plus. Chaque année, les intempéries détruisent les récoltes. S'il fait trop chaud, la récolte est foutue. Même résultat s'il fait trop froid. Et puis les marchés sont remplis de toutes sortes de denrées agricoles. C'est le temps de l'abondance. Et puis, parlant des produits de la terre, elle s'exclama : **mieux vaut les acheter que les cultiver** comme dit le proverbe. Vends au moins une parcelle des énormes surfaces que tu possèdes. Elle répéta la même idée sous forme d'une supplication :

- Vendons une parcelle, la plus petite que nous possédons pour aider nos enfants à s'installer.

Les enfants d'Abou Youssef se mirent dans la partie. Après leur mère, ils l'abordèrent cordialement au départ, puis ils se firent de plus en plus insistants. Ils finirent par ne plus lui adresser la parole. Des querelles s'ensuivirent. Tous les soirs, Ils criaient à tue tête. Ils ne lui prêtèrent plus la main dans les travaux de la terre. Abou Youssef leur répondait :



Chêne sous lequel les montagnards se reposaient. Mémé Saint Louis rendait la justice sous un chêne !

MIEUX VAUT LES ACHETER QUE LES CULTIVER?!

- Faites ce que vous voulez de ma terre après ma mort mais pas de mon vivant.

Vue la bonne santé que le travail quotidien de la terre lui donnait, ça risquait de durer un certain temps.

Les comploteurs passèrent ensuite à une phase supérieure. Ils envoyèrent son plus jeune fils lui parler car ils savaient l'affection qu'Abou Youssef portait à son dernier fils.

- Père lui répétait Samer, tu sais bien que j'ai envie d'avoir ma propre entreprise. Je te promets de racheter la vallée et de doubler nos propriétés comme personne ne l'a jamais fait dans notre famille.

Abou Youssef se contentait de hocher la tête sans répondre. Il se contentait de se retirer dans sa petite chambre au lieu de se mettre sur sa terrasse pour saluer les passants et les inviter à prendre un bon verre d'**arak**.

Un beau matin, de guerre lasse, Abou Youssef dit à Imm Youssef :

- Faites ce que vous voulez mais vous le regretterez un jour. Il fut bref car il ne voulait pas prononcer les mots sacrilèges à ses yeux: vendez la terre.

Cela dit, il sortit à la hâte sans savoir où il allait.

Imm Youssef était remplie de joie. A force de patience, de rôlements continus et de persévérance, elle avait fini par remporter la manche sur son mari. Elle avait vaincu un homme inflexible et redoutable pourvue d'une volonté aussi solide que celle des rochers de la montagne. Elle avait compris après des années de vie commune qu'Abou Youssef avait l'apparence d'un homme dur mais qu'en réalité il avait un cœur d'enfant et

qu'au fond il ne refusait rien à sa famille. En vérité, Abou Youssef se démenait pour sa famille à qui il avait tout donné. Il voulait que le fruit de ses labeurs leur assure une vie facile pour eux et pour leurs descendants. Mais ces efforts pour inculquer à ses enfants le sens de l'effort ont été perçus comme de signes d'agressivité et de manque d'affection. La forme ayant été sacrifiée au profit du fond.

Voilà donc pourquoi ce jour-là, Abou Youssef rentrait bredouille et n'adressa pas la parole aux personnes qu'il croisait sur son chemin. Imm Youssef porta la nouvelle à ses fils d'un air complice mais réservé non pas par égard à Abou Youssef mais parce qu'il était prudent de ne pas montrer ouvertement sa victoire à un homme de la trempe de son mari. Elle risquait de le payer cher surtout qu'à la montagne, les femmes ne peuvent se targuer ouvertement d'avoir la dernière parole sur leur maris.

Les choses allèrent ensuite très vite. Les fils d'Abou Youssef avertirent les courtiers qui accoururent comme des vautours attirés par leurs proies. Très vite, il fut question de l'achat de toute la vallée. En réalité, le promoteur immobilier était désireux d'acquérir le terrain dans sa totalité car avait de grand projet pour la vallée. Secrètement, il pensait la transformer en une zone résidentielle de grand luxe. En effet, la vallée de Abou Youssef dominait le paysage et jouissait d'une vue superbe sur toute les montagnes situées aux alentours. Tout cela sans compter son climat clémente à la fois en hiver et en été.

Les enfants d'Abou Youssef ne trouvèrent aucun inconvénient à cette offre. Au contraire, cela permettait d'arrondir davantage leur bourse. Et puis, ils n'avaient plus aucun désir d'exploiter la terre. Trop difficile pour eux. Le promoteur immobilier restait dans l'ombre. Il avait confié le soin de négocier le prix à un de ces vieux coyotes du village promu du jour au lendemain agent immobilier.

Ce dernier avait une revanche à prendre sur Abou Youssef qui le méprisait car il venait d'une famille mal nantie et réputée être de troisième rang dans le village car elle ne possédait aucune propriété. De plus sa famille vivait en bas du village dans un coin inhospitalier et très pauvre. Ce courtier se rendait compte qu'il était tombé sur une bande d'imbéciles et de crétins. Seul leur père pouvait démasquer ses desseins mais il avait le dos au mur. Le courtier caressait le dessein d'avoir été celui qui mis fin à la grande lignée des Abou Youssef en la privant de la source de sa force et de sa grandeur à savoir la terre. Et puis ce qui l'intéressait, c'était la commission sur la vente.

Le courtier qui portait un costume et une cravate acquis grâce aux juteuses commissions qu'il réalisait, donna rendez-vous aux quatre enfants d'Abou Youssef chez lui car il craignait de rencontrer ce dernier qui était capable de le tailler en pièces en l'espace de quelques secondes. Et puis, on ne sait jamais, Abou Youssef pouvait changer d'avis au dernier moment. Le courtier accueillit la bande des quatre très courtoisement. C'est une règle d'or dans ce monde des commissions et des affaires.

Il ouvrit une grande carte foncière et l'étala sur la table en disant:

-- En vérité, dit-il d'emblée, la moitié de votre terre est fortement escarpée et ne sert à rien. Malgré cela, je vais vous offrir six livres au mètre carré sachant que les prix dans le coin sont de loin inférieurs. Votre voisin Abou Samir a vendu pour quatre livres le mètre.

Vorace, le plus grand des quatre frères pris la parole et dit :

- Nous voulons huit livres par mètre carré et pas un rond en moins. Le courtier se mit à grommeler des paroles incompréhensibles et à jurer que l'offre était imbattable.
- Vous savez il, ces prix sont inégalés dans notre village ou la valeur marchande de la terre ne dépassait pas les quelques piastres il y a juste quelques mois. Le courtier savait qu'il avait affaire à une bande de novices. Il lisait dans leurs yeux l'appât de l'argent frais facilement acquis du travail de plusieurs générations de nobles montagnards qui s'étaient battus pour agrandir leurs propriétés centimètre par centimètre au fruit de leur sang et de leur sueur.
- Je vous offre six livres et demie par mètre carré et pas un rond de plus, car votre propriété est fortement vallonnée et rocailleuse reprit le courtier.
- Sept répondit Youssef, sinon je m'adresse à un autre courtier. Le courtier acquiesça en maugréant qu'il allait essayer de convaincre son client puis changea de sujet. Il parla de lui-même et de la belle voiture qu'il s'était offert et de ses performances techniques. Enfin, il s'adressa à la bande des quatre avant de prendre congé :
- Je m'occupe de tout et je vous fais signe. D'ailleurs, voilà une petite avance sur le prix.

Les quatre fils d'Abou Youssef rentrèrent à la maison tout contents de leur prouesse et du bon prix obtenu. Ils mirent Imm Youssef au courant de l'affaire et allèrent se coucher. Bien entendu, ils n'en soufflèrent un mot à quiconque.

Deux jours plus tard, le courtier appela et informa la bande de quatre que tout était prêt. Imm Youssef se chargea d'informer Abou Youssef que l'affaire était conclue et qu'il devait signer le contrat de vente. Prudente, elle lui dit qu'il recevrait sa part de la vente. Abou Youssef se retira sans lui répondre.

Le jour venu Abou Youssef se coiffa de son **Lebeddé**. Il sortit de la maison vêtu de son **cherwal** noir et d'une redingote dorée. Ses énormes moustaches blanchies par les années lui donnaient un air majestueux.

Tout l'esprit de noblesse de la montagne se dévoilait à travers son allure. Cela contrastait avec le l'aspect de ses enfants fagotés dans des habits colorés d'un gout fort douteux qui ressemblaient à celles des gueux. Abou Youssef arriva chez le notaire. Il entra sans saluer et demanda à signer le contrat de vente. Cela ne gêna personne car tout le monde avait hâte de conclure l'affaire. Ensuite, le notaire lui tendit un chèque libellé à son nom qui représentait sa part du prix de vente divisé par cinq. Imm Youssef était l'oubliée de l'affaire car à la montagne les femmes n'héritent rien surtout s'il s'agit de la terre qui se transmet uniquement aux enfants mâles de la famille. Abou Youssef refusa de prendre le chèque qu'il compara dans son fort intérieur aux trente pièces en argent qui servirent à vendre le Christ. Abou Youssef sortit sans broncher et rentra chez lui tout seul à pas rapide.

On ne le revit plus au village. Les gens s'inquiétèrent de cette absence inopinée. De mémoire d'hommes, Abou Youssef ne manquait jamais à

l'appel. Il avait travaillé sa terre sans relâche. Intrigué, un curieux du village finit par se présenter à son domicile pour demander de ses nouvelles. On lui dit qu'Abou Youssef était alité et qu'il était souffrant. De plus, il refusait de rencontrer quiconque. Intrigué, le curieux doubla d'hardiesse :

- Mais Abou Youssef n'a jamais été malade dit-il. Comment cela se fait-il qu'il est tombé subitement malade. Après de longues tergiversations, on finit par lui dire qu'Abou Youssef avait vendu toute sa vallée à un citadin.

La nouvelle se répandit dans le village comme une trainée de poudre. Comment se fait-il que cet adorateur de la terre puisse faire une chose pareille ? Les choses se décantèrent rapidement et tout le monde fut au courant de la trahison d'Imm Youssef qui avait convaincu son mari de vendre.

Une semaine plus tard, jours par jours après la date de la vente, le glas de l'église du village sonna fortement. Les gens accourent comme de coutume pour savoir qui était décédé. La nouvelle fit l'effet d'une bombe : Abou Youssef avait été retrouvé gisant inanimé dans son lit. Il avait l'air amaigri et fortement vieilli de trente ans dirait-on en l'espace d'une semaine. Abou Youssef n'avait pu supporter son éloignement de sa terre qui faisait partie de son être le plus profond. Il paraît que ses dernières paroles furent : il faut arroser les arbres, surtout ne toucher pas au vieux chêne ! Il fut dignement enseveli comme les coutumes de la montagne l'exigent. Tout le monde accusait à voix basse Imm Youssef et ses enfants de sa mort.

Les retombées de la vente de la vallée ne se firent pas attendre. Les bulldozers géants attaquèrent la vallée lui taillant sauvagement le flanc pour construire des routes. Les pierres des terrasses érigées

par des générations de fermiers pour préserver la terre et la cultiver furent enlevées et ensevelies sous l'asphalte des routes. Quand aux arbres, ils furent carrément rasés pour laisser la place aux futures maisons privées. Toute la vallée fut défigurée à tel point que les villageois n'arrivaient plus à retrouver aucun des repères qu'ils utilisaient pour repérer telle ou telle partie de la montagne. Les changements étaient tels que toute un passé plusieurs fois millénaire avait été éradiqué en l'espace de quelques mois. Même le chêne plusieurs fois centenaire sous lequel s'assirent des générations de villageois pour palabrer et reposer un instant du travail de la terre ne fut pas épargné. La mémoire de toute une communauté fut éradiquée à jamais.

Les enfants d'Abou Youssef s'acapèrent du magot en se partageant la part abandonnée par Abou Youssef parmi eux. Attirés par les intérêts élevés sur les dépôts bancaires, trois des quatre frères placèrent leur argent auprès des banques. Ils perdirent toutes leurs économies en l'espace de trois ans en raison d'une forte dévaluation de la monnaie nationale. Quand au quatrième frère, il acheta une voiture de taxi qu'il perdit rapidement en raison d'un accident de voiture dont il réchappa de justesse.

Aujourd'hui la famille d'Abou Youssef vit dans l'ancienne maison familiale sur laquelle ils ont érigé trois vétustes étages de fortune mais ne trouvent plus où loger leurs progénitures. Quant à la vallée d'Abou Youssef elle a changé de nom pour prendre celui du Val du Soleil. Elle est le lieu de villégiature le plus huppé de tout le pays, et ses prix ont été multipliés au centuple en l'espace de quelques années.

Abou Youssef avait eu raison de dire :

- Vous regretterez un jour ce que vous avez fait!



1. Un chapeau conique fait en laine et qui remonte aux phéniciens.

2. Pantalon bouffant.

3. Un grand panier fabriqué en bambou.

4. Alcool libanais qui ressemble à l'anisette.

5. Bonjour.

6. Mon frère.

7. Marque de voiture américaine.

8. Interjection qui veut dire O.

9. Maman.

10. Façon de communiquer des mamans libanaises avec leurs enfants qui veut dire enterre-moi (et prends ma vie).

11. Mon amour.

12. Mon coeur.