

Lecturer Dima Issa of Balamand University Explores the LERC

*Reine Zahreddine, LERC Akiki Grant Recipient
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The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), received Ms. Dima Issa who visited the LERC as part of her continuing work on her PhD at the University of Westminster, England. “*Song Is The Secret Of Existence: Fairouz As A Voice For The Displaced*” is the tentative title of her dissertation.

Having been an emigrant herself in Qatar, Canada, London, Los Angeles, Ms. Issa sees “Fairouz as the ‘voice of Lebanon,’ the ‘symbol of resistance,’ and is by excellence the ‘flying bird of the east’ and its ambassador abroad. For many Arabs in the diaspora, Fairouz’s music is a tool of expression, a proxy for nostalgia and a call for resistance. For this and more, Fairouz had and still play a major role in the daily lives of the Arab Diaspora.”



Ms. Issa at the LERC Nucleus Museum (NDU, July 2015)

Following an introduction by Mrs. Liliane Haddad, LERC's Chief Indexer and Archivist, to the LERC's research offices and museum, Ms. Issa discussed with Dr. Guita Hourani, LERC Director, the subject of her PhD and her interest in migration. The result of this discussion led Ms. Issa to be invited to become an affiliate with the Center to facilitate her access to the Center's research material, as well as to the various databases that will help her in her research endeavor. Ms. Issa was also invited to publish her latest research in the Center's *Research Paper Series*.

Ms. Issa is a lecturer of Mass Communication at the University of Balamand in Lebanon. She graduated from the Lebanese-American University (LAU) with a B.A. in Communication Arts, emphasizing in Journalism and Theatre. She also has a M.Sc. from the London School of Economics in Global Media and Communications and an M.A. from the University of Southern California in Global Communications. Her research over the years has focused on the roles of media in the construction of identity within the diaspora audiences. Ms. Issa's professional experience includes working for the Doha Asian Games 2006, as the Head of Publications and Website. In addition she worked as a Television Anchorwoman in Qatar for over five years and took on various projects in the capacity of a consultant.

Her PhD dissertation's quest is to enquire whether Fairouz through her music creates a collective 'belonging' by tapping into an individual 'longing' or whether Fairouz is a path toward home or a destination point, or whether she is both.